**EXPERIENCES OF ADVERSITY AND RESILIENCE AMONG LGBTQ+ YOUNG ADULTS**

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**INTRODUCTION**

- Young adults with sexual and gender minority identities (i.e., LGBTQ+) are exposed to stress on individual, interpersonal, community, and structural levels.
- Mental health challenges (i.e., depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress, eating disorders) have a high prevalence in the LGBTQ+ community.
- The minority stress model proposes that mental health outcomes among LGBTQ+ individuals are influenced by interactions among general and identity-specific stressors, as well as various risk and protective factors.
- The aims of the present study were to:
  2. Examine the associations among several dimensions of psychological distress (e.g., anxiety, depression), stress exposure, and risk/resiliency factors (e.g., self-esteem, positive identity, social support) implicated by the minority stress model.

**METHODS**

- **Participants.** N = 69 LGBTQ+ young adults participated in an online study between December 2021 to April 2022. The sample was majority female (57.97%), White (59.42%) and on average, 19.41 years old (Range = 17-25). See supplemental materials for detailed overview of sociodemographic sample composition.
- **Procedures.** Participants completed validated self-report measures of a) lifetime stress exposure, b) risk or resilience factors, and c) mental health symptom outcomes (i.e., IDAS-II, PCL-5, TSDS, and EDE-Q).
- **Data Analyses.** Descriptive statistics were used to characterize the sample and clinical variables. Bivariate correlation analyses were used to examine associations among study variables.

**RESULTS**

- Stress exposure (STRAIN) was associated with distress across clinical variables, with the strongest correlation observed between stress and PTSD.
- The significance and strength of the correlations vary across the various dimensions of psychological distress (e.g., IDAS-II subscales, PCL-5, EDEQ) and the risk/protective factors assessed (see Table 5).
- General protective factors, such as social support (MSPSS) and self-esteem (SISES), were associated with lower psychological distress across several mental health symptom dimensions (see Table 5).
- Higher scores on several minority stress subscales (LGBT-MSM) were associated with greater psychological distress, particularly for traumatic stress and depressive symptoms (see Table 7).

**DISCUSSION**

- Exposure to stress was transdiagnostically associated with greater mental health symptom severity, consistent with the minority stress model.
- Emotion regulation and self-esteem emerged as more consistent correlates of psychological well-being, while identity-specific factors such as positive identity agreement presented with nuanced relationships to mental health outcomes.
- Study limitations include the cross-sectional design, lack of a comparator condition, and convenience sampling in a single geographic location.
- Findings may inform further research tailoring the minority stress model to young adults in the LGBT+ community; the relationship between mental health and identity-related factors, such as commitment to social justice, warrants further attention.