

Abstract

A positive sexual identity may be a key factor in the lives of young people with a lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or other sexual minority identity (LGBQ+). This study examined how levels of positive LGBQ+ identity varied based on demographic factors and investigated the protective role of positive LGBQ+ identity with depression among LGBQ+ young adults. The study was based on cross-sectional data from a sample of 79 LGBQ+ participants (aged 18-28 years) in a Southeastern state. Descriptive results suggest that participants reported moderate to high levels of positive LGBQ+ identity on average. Multiple linear regression models were run with positive LGBQ+ identity, depression, and demographic variables. Results show that age was inversely related to and education level was positively associated with positive LGBQ+ identity. No significant differences were found with other demographics on positive identity. Overall positive LGBQ+ identity and community connectedness was negatively associated with depressive symptoms. Our findings expand the evidence on relations among demographics, positive LGBQ+ identity, and depressive symptoms. Cultivating a positive LGBQ+ identity is likely an important target for intervention programs, mental health services, and social policies supporting LGBQ+ young people.