Abstract

Background: A growing body of research claims that sexual minority individuals have nearly twice the suicidal ideation rate of heterosexual individuals. Method: The main objective of the current study was to test a model wherein internalized sexual stigma (ISS) mediates the association between some gay-related stressors and suicidal ideation. The present cross-sectional survey involved two samples of lesbian and gay young adults from Spain (N = 209) and Italy (N = 345). The total sample included 316 gay men and 228 lesbian women. Path analysis was used to test the direct and indirect (mediated) effects of the variables from different domains on repulsion by life. Results: In both the Spanish and Italian samples, past victimization experiences and ISS had a significant direct effect on repulsion by life. In both samples, ISS acted as a significant mediator in the effect of the concealment of one’s sexual orientation and the religious involvement of repulsion by life. Conclusion: The current study indicates that ISS is a potential moderator of the effect of concealing one’s sexual orientation, religious involvement, and past experiences of victimization on suicidal attitudes.

Keywords

suicidal ideation, internalized sexual stigma, homophobia, sexual minority, gay men, lesbians.