

## ABSTRACT

- Adverse childhood experiences are highly prevalent in the United States; The likelihood of a person knowing someone with at least one ACE is highly likely.
- The present study aimed to analyze the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and social emotional wellness in adulthood, specifically the intersection among LGB individuals and people of color.
- The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between past ACEs and its impact on wellness in adulthood.
- This study uses secondary data from Generations: A Study of the Life and Health of LGB People in a Changing Society.
- The current research study hypotheses were tested using Man The present study findings suggest adverse childhood experiences had an impact in adulthood social emotional wellness.

## INTRODUCTION

- People of color and the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) community have historically been denied involvement in mainstream activities, such as civic duties, cultural and social. Due to lack of inclusion, the intersectionality of all marginalized groups is an area that is understudied, especially in ACEs and social wellness in adulthood.
- Sixty-one percent of adults in twenty-five states in the United States have experienced at least one type of adverse childhood experience (ACE); one in six adults reported they had experienced at least four types of ACEs
- **The present study aimed** to explore the implications of ACEs on social-emotional wellness in adulthood for people of color in the LGB community.
- **Research Question:** What is the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and social, emotional wellness among LBG people of color?"
- **Study Hypothesis:** Individuals who have a higher incidence of adverse childhood experiences will report higher social-emotional dissatisfaction rates than individuals with a lower incidence rate of adverse childhood experiences

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- Children are at risk for poor health conditions and social outcomes if they are exposed to trauma early in their development. Trauma such as abuse, and neglect put children at increased risk for experiencing violence across their development and lifespan.
- Social wellness is an important construct representing the building of bonds within the community at large. Social isolation and loneliness negatively have an impact on wellbeing in adults. Social isolation is defined by the longevity of sustained absence with other people.
- The relationship between mental health and social wellness in the LGB community is a topic that has historically been neglected due to discrimination this population has experienced. Depression and suicide attempts are common among LGBTQ youth.
- Belonging to an ethnic social group contributes to social wellness.
- LGB individuals report a higher prevalence of all ACEs when compared to heterosexuals
- ACEs tend to be more common among those with intersectional disparities; ACEs are more prevalent among people of color and those of a low socioeconomic status.

## METHODS

### Research Design

This study draws on data from the Generations: A Study of the Life and Health of LGB People in a Changing Society, United States, 2016-2019.

The study aimed to explore identity, stress, health outcomes, and the utilization of healthcare among lesbian, bisexual, gay (LGB) community

The Generations study also aimed to measure the differences among cohorts on topics like identity, stress, adverse childhood experiences, mental health, social supports and wellbeing, depression, anxiety, substance and alcohol use, suicide ideation and behavior in relationship to cohort resilience.

The present study utilized data from wave 1 of the original study.

The present study is a cross-sectional study that utilizes secondary data from the Generations Study.

The data utilized in this present study is focused of individuals from the lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB) community who are people of color. Furthermore, the present study aims to explore the relationship between adverse childhood experience and social wellness and wellbeing.

### Sample

The total number of participants in the first wave of the generations study was  $n=1,518$ . The participant demographics were lesbian, gay, and bisexual, cohort age, and all races.

The present study uses a subsample of POC and LBG individuals. The present study sample size is  $n=393$  who are non-white/POC.

### Sampling Method

The sampling frame utilized in the generations study was a random sample drawn from the Gallop Poll respondents

### Measures

The **independent variables** of the study are adverse childhood experiences.

- Cohabitation with an alcoholic
- Witnessed domestic violence
- Physically abused before age 18
- Emotionally & Verbally abused before age 18
- Sexually abused (made to fondle abuser) before age 18
- Sexually abused (molestation) before age 18
- Sexually abused (rape) before age 18



The **dependent variables** of the study demonstrate social emotional wellness in adulthood

- Feelings of belonging to a community
- Feelings of contribution to society
- Suicidal Ideation after the age of 18
- Victimization (abuse) in adulthood

## RESULTS

Whitney  $U$  and Kruskal Wallis  $H$  tests to analyze test the relationship between adverse childhood experiences and social emotional wellness in adulthood.

### Mann-Whitney $U$ test

A Mann-Whitney  $U$  test was used to examine the difference in adulthood victimization among participants in childhood who lived with a problem drinker and who did not live with a problem (Table 2). Participants who did not experience living with a problem drinker had significantly lower adulthood victimization ( $Mean\ rank = 173.82$ ) than those who had lived with a problem drinker ( $Mean\ rank = 210.18$ ;  $U = 14,151.50$ ,  $p < .001$ )

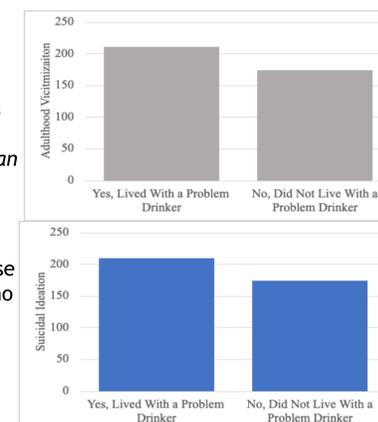
A Mann-Whitney  $U$  test was used to examine the difference in suicidal ideation in adulthood between those participants who grew up with a problem drinker in the household and those who did not. Participants who did not experience living with a problem drinker had significantly lower suicidal ideation ( $Mean\ rank = 173.59$ ) than those who had lived with a problem drinker ( $Mean\ rank = 173.59$ ;  $U = 14,143$ ,  $p < .001$ )

### Kruskal-Wallis $H$ test

Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test was used to examine the remaining independent variables in the study. The following displays the results for the variable "Sexual abuse (rape) before the age 18"

A Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test showed that there was **no statistically significant difference in feelings of belongingness to community** between three different rape groups,  $H(2) = .93$ ,  $p = .63$ , **no statistically significant difference in feelings of contribution to society** between three different victim of rape groups,  $H(2) = 1.70$   $p = .43$ , and **no statistically significant difference in individuals suicidal ideation in adulthood** between three different victim of rape groups,  $H(2) = 1.85$   $p = .40$ .

A Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  test was conducted comparing adulthood victimization among study participants between three different raped or forced to have sex in childhood groups. **A significant result was found ( $H(2) = 6.15$ ,  $p < .01$ , indicating that the three different raped or forced to have sex in childhood groups are different from each other**



## DISCUSSION

### Major Findings

- Participants who had experienced ACEs indicated a significant relationship to future adulthood victimization and suicidal ideation in adulthood than compared to those who had not experienced an ACE
- Participants who experienced **physical abuse in childhood did display significant relationship to each dependent variable related to social wellness.**
- **Sexual abuse (molestation and fondling) and physical abuse were the only ACEs that had an impact on lack of feelings of belongingness to community.** Rape did not have a significant relationship to feelings to community, contribution to community, and suicidal ideation; however, **rape did have a significant relationship to victimization in adulthood.**

### Future Research

- The study findings suggest it is important to consider the intersectionality of an individual when looking ACEs.
- ACEs and child maltreatment should be considered as risk factors for suicidal ideation in adulthood and future victimization in adulthood. Future research of ACEs should be explored in other cultural groups. Furthermore, ACEs play a critical role in understanding the life course development in adulthood.
- The LGBT community is a growing community, as well as the growing number of people of color in the country. From a preventative perspective, more programs and research related to LGBT youth who have experienced ACEs should be an area that is further studied
- Future research should be aimed to study the significance of physical types of abuse are related to future feelings of community belongings.
- Social emotional wellness is an area of study that needs a clearer definition and measure.

### Limitations

- There is a need for more data on ACEs in people of color. The overarching national ACEs data could also benefit from research conducted in a longitudinal study to measure the effects of ACEs on social wellness in adulthood.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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