

Is coming out as a  
sexual minority earlier  
in adolescence  
detrimental to  
psycholo...

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## Is Coming out as a Sexual Minority Earlier in Adolescence Detrimental to Psychological Well-Being?

1. Briefly describe the hypotheses and research design of Jager and Davis-Kean's research study. (1 pt)

The research by Jager and Davis Kean was a longitudinal study which relied on data which had been collected from home questionnaire between 1994 and 1995. The questionnaires covered various topics including health status, sexual partnerships, networks and family structures. The individuals who had participated in the first round of questionnaires took another set a year later. The third round of questionnaires was done seven years after the initial assessment. The final set included topics of romantic relationships, child bearing and education history. The study had four hypotheses. First, it was expected that the sexual minority (SM) group would show lower levels of wellbeing than the sexual majority group. Secondly, the low level of psychological wellbeing began in the onset of adolescence. Thirdly, low awareness of same sex attraction was expected to be associated with low level of wellbeing. The final hypothesis was that the disparities in psychological wellbeing between the two groups were more pronounced among the male participants.

2. What evidence do Jager and Davis-Kean present from their study to support their argument that coming out earlier in adolescence is detrimental to youth? Try to pull out a few (2-3) key findings. (2 pts)

Jager and Davis Kean found out that there were psychological wellbeing disparities between the SM and non SM groups in early adolescence. The

individuals were however able to recover later on with the rate and level of recovery also varying from groups to group. The subsequent finding in this study was that early reporting of the same sex attractions was associated with great deficit in psychological wellbeing. The effect was however noted not to be long lasting. The third finding was that there was a relationship between sexual orientation and adolescence psychological wellbeing, the effect was more pronounced among males (Rye & Drysdale, 2012).

3. Briefly describe the purpose and research design of Rosario and colleagues research study. (1 pt)

Rosario and colleagues carried out a longitudinal study to assess if the relations that exist between sexual minority statuses and lower levels of psychological wellbeing are affected by the onset of adolescence. Moreover, it examined the moderating influence of an individual's sexual orientation, early reporting of the status and gender. The researchers used data obtained from Add Health. It was analyzed by means of multiple group latent curves of growth. This facilitated the examination of the growth patterns in terms of depressive behavior and self-esteem.

4. What evidence do Rosario and colleagues present from their study to support their argument that coming out earlier in adolescence is not detrimental to youth? Try to pull out a few (2-3) key findings. (2 pts)

The study found out that there is no form of relationship between acknowledgement of minority sexual orientation and psychological distress when it comes to early or late expression of the condition. This implies that the formation of identity among people with minority sexual orientation was not related to psychological distress. The second finding was that identity

integration, which is defined as the ability to accept sexual minority status is predictive of the psychological wellbeing of the person. The people who are well integrated identify the most appropriate approaches which ensure that they are psychologically well.

5. Based off findings from both research studies what might school or community programs do to make the coming out process easier for youth. In your response think about if there are certain youth that are more at risk and how we might make this transition easier for them (1pt).

The school and community can make coming out of the condition easier by enlightening the involved individuals on the benefits of doing so. This way, they will see the need to do that. Every youth group is at risk and thus they should all be enlightened about the process.

#### References

Rye, B. J., & Drysdale, M. (2012). *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Adolescence*. 3rd edition. New York: McGraw Hill.