

THE EFFECTS OF HOMOPHOBIA, PARTNERSHIP, SEXUAL SELF-LABELS, AND INVOLVEMENT OF LGBT CENTER ACTIVITY ON COMING OUT IN VARIOUS SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG CHINESE GAY MEN

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ABSTRACT

Objectives

The present study explored the factors that influenced the likelihood of 503 Chinese gay men's choice of coming out in different social relationships in a Chinese cultural context.

Methods

The current study reports on data from a cross-sectional survey analyzing the relationships between the choice of coming out of a homosexual individual's social relationships and its relation to demographics, internalized homophobia, sexual self-label, and attendance at lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) center activity using a multivariate logistic regression model.

Results

Other-oriented identity was a predictor of outness to close friends, friends, relatives, and colleagues. The greater the frequency of attendance to LGBT center activities, the more likely the participants were to choose to come out to their parents, relative, and friends. Other demographic data, such as age, education, number of siblings, and partnership, are also factors related to outness in different social relationships.

Conclusions

The factors related to coming out are varied in different social relationships, which implies that individuals use different principles in different social relationships. The present study provides further evidence that mental health professionals should work with LGBT centers to help homosexual individuals with their identity development and to develop individualized assistance strategies based on different social relationships.

Keywords: *Chinese; coming out; gay men; LGBT*

INTRODUCTION

In different sociocultural contexts, homosexual individuals experience unique stressors, such as homophobia, societal discrimination, and limited social and institutional support because of their sexual orientations.¹

Although attitudes toward sexual minorities in China have become increasingly open in the past decades, the underlying sociocultural and family ideologies often produce stress in sexual minority groups.² In China, the same-sex behavior and desire are still treated as pathological, immoral, and even criminal behavior, and discrimination and prejudice toward homosexual individuals permeate the societal and individual levels. In China, homosexual men are usually stigmatized as being feminine. In particular, bottoms are usually considered to play submissive, protected, and insertive sexual roles that are likely to be compared to the roles of a wife in a heterosexual marriage. Sexism exists not only in the public but also in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) population. Previous research has found that gay men who exhibited higher sexism were more likely to identify as tops than bottoms.³ The perpetuation of negative sociocultural stereotypes about homosexual behavior and traditional masculine norms has been internalized in the minds of sexual minorities, and these stereotypes and sexism have a profound impact on sexual minorities'

self-identity and psychosocial well-being.^{4,5} Previous research notes that internalized homophobia is one of the most important factors that impinges on the identity and the process of coming out to oneself and one's social surroundings.⁶⁻⁸

In Chinese culture, homophobia involves not only individual components but also the sociocultural and family-related components of internalized homophobia.⁹ Several scholars have claimed that homosexual individuals in East Asian cultures describe feelings of guilt and concerns about bringing shame to their parents and family and failing to fulfill the responsibilities of heterosexual marriage and continuation of family line, which is valued by the culture and shapes the way homosexual individuals perceive their sexual identities.^{10,11} In China, gay marriage has not been fully accepted, and coming out is treated as a refusal to produce a male heir, which typically leads to dishonor and shame to one's parents and family.¹² Coming-out behavior in Eastern cultures may lead to discrimination and marginalization in the family, and at workplace, community, and society. Some disclosures may cause harm in the lives of homosexual individuals, such as family crisis, dismissal from the household, parental rejection, loss of friends, or the loss of promotion or mistreatment at the workplace.¹³⁻¹⁷ In the Western context, coming out with regard to one's sexual orientation to oneself and/or to others is

used as evidence of gay developmental progression, and identity disclosure is profoundly influenced by the Western sociocultural and political context.¹⁸ Previous studies have questioned the universality of models of gay identity development across different sociocultural and political and ethnic contexts.¹⁹

Different sociocultural and political environments influence the behaviors of every individual in a culture. Coming out as gay is a social process that involves various social, cultural, psychological and demographic factors that may influence an individual's outness choices.²⁰ Griffith and Hebl found that an employer's positive attitudes toward homosexuality are associated with disclosure behaviors of homosexual individuals at work.²¹ Some researchers have found that coming out to family members correlates significantly and negatively with internalized homophobia.⁵ Another study has shown that coming out to one's best friend was predicted by internalized sexual stigma.²² Acceptance of sexual orientation is the strongest predictor of comfort about the disclosure of individuals' own sexual orientation to their mother, father, and the closest friend.²³ Interestingly, several studies have claimed that homophobia is not related to the outness to parents.^{24,25} Other studies have claimed that good social support from partners and LGBT-identified friends and communities is associated with disclosure to others.^{26–28} These different results imply that the reasons for outness may differ in different social relationships.

Converging sociocultural factors make it difficult for sexual minorities to come out. A previous study failed to assess the components of culturally related internalized homophobia and thus may have failed to understand gay men's choices in relation to coming-out experiences. The current study attempts to measure the correlation between important aspects of the culturally related construct of homophobia, partnership, sexual self-labels, involvement of LGBT centers, and other demographic data and gay men's choices to come out.

METHODS

Anonymous online survey links were distributed through multiple channels from May 2017 to June 2018. The researchers posted online description of the study's objectives and benefits, confidentiality guarantee, and the consent form. The survey was initiated in different social networks of China, such as WeChat group and several social media groups. The researchers also invited participants to distribute the link of online questionnaires to other homosexual individuals through their own social media networks (e.g. WeChat). The solicitation was also posted on China's different LGBT centers.

The study was reviewed and approved by a committee at Southwest Hospital. The data were collected through an anonymous, Internet-based survey platform. The participants in this study were gay men who were Chinese citizens (N = 503). The other baseline characteristics of the cohort are presented in the Appendix.

Assessments and Measurement

Socio-demographic characteristics

The questionnaire included the participants' age, sex, education, religion, occupation, area the participant was brought up, income, sibling situation (only child, with brother, with sister, or with brother and sister), and ethnicity.

Attendance at LGBT center activities

One question asked was as to how frequently the participants engaged in activities at local LGBT centers. The items were rated from 1 (never) to 5 (very frequently).

Chinese internalized homophobia scale

The current research used the Chinese internalized homophobia scale⁹ to assess the participants' experience of internalized homophobia. The scale includes three subscales: internalized heteronormativity (the belief that homosexuality

is abnormal), family-oriented identity (the ideology of maintaining filial piety, family first, and carrying on the family line), and socially oriented identity (the belief about how other people think about me or my identity and my family). The items were rated from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree). The reliability was 0.855 for the entire scale, 0.715 for the internalized heteronormativity subscale, 0.713 for the family-oriented identity subscale, and 0.77 for the socially oriented identity subscale.

Coming out

Four questions were used to assess whether (yes or no) the respondents were out (“Chu Gui” in Chinese, which literally means coming out of the closet) about their sexual identity to their parents, close friends, friends, relatives, classmates, or colleagues at their work environment.

Sexual self-label

A single question was asked to the participants to self-identify their sexual label: “Do you think of yourself as a ‘top’, ‘versatile’, or ‘bottom’?” The participants selected their responses from the list of above three options.

Statistical analyses

A total of 503 participants were included in the analysis. We used the chi square or t test to investigate group differences for categorical variables and variance analysis for quantitative variables. First, we conducted univariate analysis and included factors with univariate $p \leq 0.10$ in the multivariate logistic regression model. Multivariate analysis was performed to separately examine the relative contribution of potential predictors of coming out to the respondent’s parents, close friends, friends, relatives, and colleagues at the work environment using binary logistic regression. A p -value ≤ 0.05 was assumed to be statistically significant. Data analyses were performed using SPSS version 22 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA).

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RESULTS

Basic Characteristics

A total of 503 participants were included. With regard to ethnicity, 93.6% (471/503) of the participants were of Han nationality, and the majority (77.5%, 390/503) had no religious beliefs. With regard to the area where the participants were brought up, 22.1% participants were from villages (111/503), 33.4% were from towns (168/503), and 44.5% were from cities (224/503). Additional detailed characteristics of the included participants are summarized in Table 1.

The Prevalence of Coming Out

Overall, the percentages of coming out were 15.1% (76/503) for parents, 69% (347/503) for close friends, 16.9% (85/503) for friends, 9.1% (46/503) for relatives, and 6.8% (34/503) for work colleagues. Additional detailed characteristics of the included participants are summarized in Tables A1–A3.

Factors Associated with Coming Out

In the univariate analysis, occupation, age, area where the participant was brought up, siblings, attendance to LGBT center activities, and family-oriented identity were significantly associated with disclosure to parents. These seven factors with univariate $p \leq 0.10$ were included in the multivariate regression model. The results of multivariate analysis showed that having a sibling (odds ratio [OR] = 0.343, 95% confidence interval [CI] 0.130–0.880) was associated with disclosure to parents. The results of multivariate analysis further showed that very frequent attendance to LGBT center activities (OR = 2.831; 95% CI 1.043–7.682), somewhat frequent attendance to LGBT center activities

TABLE 1 Detailed Summary of Characteristics of Participants.

	Variable	B	SE	Wald	p	OR	95% CI
Occupation	Worker	-0.157	0.424	0.138	0.711	0.854	0.372–1.962
	Professional worker	0.157	0.401	0.154	0.695	1.170	0.533–2.568
	Student	-0.503	0.495	1.030	0.310	0.605	0.229–1.597
	Management	Reference					
Age (years)	21–30	0.290	0.595	0.237	0.626	1.336	0.416–4.288
	31–43	0.904	0.639	1.999	0.157	2.470	0.705–8.650
	16–20	Reference					
Place brought up	Town	0.308	0.441	0.488	0.485	1.360	0.573–3.228
	City	0.523	0.423	1.533	0.216	1.688	0.737–3.865
	Village	Reference					
Attendance at LGBT center activities	Very frequently	1.041	0.509	4.175	0.041	2.831	1.043–7.682
	Somewhat frequently	1.178	0.431	7.454	0.006	3.248	1.394–7.656
	Occasionally	0.178	0.498	0.128	0.720	1.195	0.451–3.170
	Somewhat infrequently	0.773	0.328	5.539	0.019	2.166	1.138–4.121
	Never	Reference					
Siblings	Brother	-1.070	0.481	4.955	0.026	0.343	0.134–0.880
	Sister	-0.516	0.361	2.044	0.153	0.597	0.294–1.211
	Both	-0.135	0.531	0.064	0.800	0.874	0.309–2.473
	Only child	Reference					
Family-oriented identity		0.029	0.042	0.478	0.489	1.029	0.949–1.117

LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; OR, odds ratio; CI, confidence interval; B, regression coefficient; SE, standard error; Wald, Wald test statistic

(OR = 3.284; 95% CI 1.394–7.656), and somewhat infrequent attendance to LGBT center activities (OR = 2.166; 95% CI 1.138–4.121) increased the likelihood of coming out to parents. Regression results of the associations between different demographic data, psychosocial factors, and coming out to parents are reported in Table 1.

In the univariate analysis, ethnicity, having a homosexual partner, sexual self-label, area where the participant was brought up, internalized heteronormativity, and socially oriented identity were significantly associated with disclosure to close friends. These factors with univariate $p \leq 0.10$ were

included in the multivariate regression model. The results of multivariate analysis showed that having a homosexual partner (OR = 1.936, 95% CI 1.139–3.292), sexual self-label (OR = 0.452, 95% CI 0.241–0.845), and socially oriented identity (OR = 0.935, 95% CI 0.877–0.997) were associated with coming out to close friends. Regression results of the associations between different demographic data, psychosocial factors, and coming out to close friends are reported in Table 2.

In univariate analysis, attendance to LGBT center activities, area where the participant was brought up, internalized heteronormativity, socially

TABLE 2 Logistic Regression Analysis of Influencing Factors for Coming Out to Close Friends.

	Variable	B	SE	Wald	p	OR	95% CI
Ethnicity	Socially oriented identity	0.953	0.508	3.529	0.06	2.594	0.959–7.015
	Han	Reference					
Having a homosexual partner	Yes	0.661	0.271	5.950	0.015	1.936	1.139–3.292
	No	Reference					
Place brought up	Suburb	0.537	0.274	3.849	0.050	1.711	1.001–2.925
	City	0.128	0.255	0.251	0.616	1.136	0.689–1.873
	Village	Reference					
Sexual self-label	Bottom	−0.485	0.270	3.242	0.072	0.615	0.363–1.044
	Top	−0.795	0.320	6.181	0.013	0.452	0.241–0.845
	Versatile	Reference					
Internalized heteronormativity		−0.059	0.039	2.268	0.132	0.942	0.872–1.018
Socially oriented identity		−0.067	0.033	4.159	0.041	0.935	0.877–0.997

OR, odds ratio; CI, confidence interval; B, regression coefficient; SE, standard error; Wald, wald test statistic.

oriented identity, and family-oriented identity were significantly associated with disclosure to friends. These factors with univariate $p \leq 0.10$ were included in the multivariate regression model. The results of multivariate analysis showed that internalized heteronormativity (OR = 0.847, 95% CI 0.758–0.946) and socially oriented identity (OR = 0.815, 95% CI 0.738–0.899) were associated with disclosure of the participants’ sexual orientation to friends. The results of multivariate analysis showed that somewhat frequent attendance to LGBT center activities (OR = 2.680; 95% CI 1.170–6.136) and frequent attendance to LGBT center activities (OR = 3.081; 95% CI 1.139–8.335) increased the likelihood of coming out to friends. Regression results of the associations between different demographic data, psychosocial factors, and coming out to friends are reported in Table 3.

In the univariate analysis, attendance at an LGBT center, area where the participant was brought up, education, internalized heteronormativity, socially oriented identity, and family-oriented identity were significantly associated with

disclosure to relatives. These factors with univariate $p \leq 0.10$ were included in the multivariate regression model. The results of multivariate analysis showed that education (OR = 0.235, 95% CI 0.08–0.693), area where the participant was brought up (OR = 3.363, 95% CI 1.089–10.384), frequency of attendance to LGBT center activities (OR = 4.309, 95% CI 1.464–12.686), and socially oriented identity (OR = 0.863, 95% CI 0.764–0.974) were associated with the likelihood of coming out to relatives. Regression results of the associations between different demographic data, psychosocial factors, and coming out to relatives are reported in Table 4.

In the univariate analysis, education, age, internalized heteronormativity, socially oriented identity, and family-oriented identity were significantly associated with disclosure to colleagues. These seven factors with univariate $p \leq 0.10$ were included in the multivariate regression model. The results of multivariate analysis showed that age (OR = 0.325, 95% CI 0.108–0.979), education (OR = 4.395, 95% CI 1.264–15.281), and socially oriented identity

TABLE 3 Logistic Regression Analysis of Influencing Factors for Coming Out to Friends.

	Variable	B	SE	Wald	p	OR	95% CI
Place brought up	Town	-0.338	0.411	0.676	0.411	0.713	0.319–1.595
	City	0.286	0.369	0.601	0.438	1.331	0.646–2.743
	Village	Reference					
Attendance at LGBT center activities	Very frequently	1.125	0.508	4.909	0.027	3.081	1.139–8.335
	Somewhat frequently	0.986	0.423	5.436	0.020	2.680	1.170–6.136
	Occasionally	0.722	0.469	2.375	0.123	2.059	0.822–5.160
	Somewhat infrequently	0.492	0.347	2.013	0.156	1.636	0.829–3.229
	Never	Reference					
Internalized heteronormativity		-0.167	0.056	8.710	0.003	0.847	0.758–0.946
Family-oriented identity		-0.012	0.054	0.051	0.822	0.988	0.889–1.098
Socially oriented identity		-0.205	0.05	16.724	0.000	0.815	0.738–0.899

LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; OR, odds ratio; CI, confidence interval.

TABLE 4 Logistic Regression Analysis of Influencing Factors for Coming Out to Relatives.

	Variable	B	SE	Wald	p	OR	95% CI
Education	Above university	-1.448	0.552	6.8884	0.009	0.235	0.08–0.693
	University	-0.128	0.382	0.112	0.738	0.880	0.416–1.862
	Below university	Reference					
Place brought up	City	1.213	0.575	4.443	0.035	3.363	1.089–10.384
	Town	0.832	0.599	1.888	0.169	2.277	0.704–7.368
	Village	Reference					
Attendance at LGBT center activities	Very frequently	1.461	0.551	7.029	0.008	4.309	1.464–12.686
	Somewhat frequently	0.042	0.583	0.005	0.942	1.043	0.333–3.271
	Occasionally	0.158	0.666	0.056	0.812	1.171	0.318–4.320
	Somewhat infrequently	0.257	0.446	0.332	0.564	1.293	0.540–3.097
	Never	Reference					
Internalized heteronormativity		-0.079	0.069	1.325	0.250	0.924	0.807–1.057
Family-oriented identity		0.028	0.067	0.177	0.674	1.029	0.902–1.173
Socially oriented identity		-0.148	0.062	5.707	0.017	0.863	0.764–0.974

LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; OR, odds ratio; CI, confidence interval; B, regression coefficient; SE, standard error; Wald, Wald test statistic.

(OR = 0.667, 95% CI 0.569–0.783) were associated with disclosure to colleagues. Regression results of the associations between different demographic data, psychosocial factors, and coming out to colleagues are reported in Table 5.

DISCUSSION

The study demonstrates that different types of social relationships affect communication about sexual orientation.²⁹ The factors related to coming out

TABLE 5 Logistic Regression Analysis of Influencing Factors for Coming Out to Most People.

	Variable	B	SE	Wald	p	OR	95% CI
Age (years)	31–43	–1.249	0.731	2.923	0.087	0.287	0.068–1.201
	20–30	–1.124	0.563	3.991	0.046	0.325	0.108–0.979
	16–20	Reference					
Education	Above university	0.505	0.760	0.442	0.506	1.658	0.374–7.352
	University	1.480	0.636	5.422	0.020	4.395	1.264–15.281
	Below university	Reference					
Internalized heteronormativity		–0.098	0.085	1.321	0.250	0.907	0.768–1.071
Family-oriented identity		0.022	0.076	0.087	0.768	1.023	0.881–1.187
Socially oriented identity		–0.404	0.081	24.645	0.000	0.667	0.569–0.783

OR, odds ratio; CI, confidence interval; B, regression coefficient; SE, standard error; Wald, wald test statistic.

vary in different social relationships, which may be due to the use of different principles toward different social relationships. These findings are inconsistent with the results of a previous study suggesting that gay men with higher internalized heteronormativity are less likely to come out to family members, relatives, and other social networks.^{5,30} Our research found that only internalized heteronormativity was negatively related to coming out to friends. The current research further revealed that gay men with higher socially oriented homophobia were less likely to come out to their friends, close friends, colleagues, and relatives, but there was no relation to coming out to parents. Hwang³¹ identified three typical relationship patterns in Chinese society: expressive ties, mixed ties, and instrumental ties. In expressive ties, the family tends to satisfy each other’s needs and maintains conflict within the family. Instrumental ties are those which are established with strangers for the purpose of obtaining resources and emphasize equity principles. Mixed ties are related to acquaintances and emphasize reciprocal principles.³¹ Relationships with parents are based on expressive ties and are different from other social interactions. In social interactions other than those with parents, the individual privileges and cultivates identification with relevant others, which means that how the “other” thinks about oneself must always

be taken into account.³² The relationships between close friends, friends, relatives, and colleagues are other-oriented; in these relationships, homosexual individuals are concerned about how other people think about them and their family, which pushes them to conceal their sexual orientation in public.³³ Thus, identity of other-oriented makes an individual less likely to come out to close friends, friends, relatives, and colleagues. Another explanation for this finding is that an underlying other-oriented ideology makes individuals within a certain context more vulnerable to others’ opinions about them; thus, homosexual individuals encounter significant difficulties and psychological barriers in disclosing their sexual orientation. Furthermore, homosexuality is still largely unaccepted by the public; coming out may lead to a loss of face for the family and the individual, which may contribute to rejection or stigmatization by the community and could lead to a type of “social death.”¹⁰ Therefore, socially oriented homophobia could discourage homosexual individuals from coming out to their social networks.

The current research is not consistent with our intuitive thinking about gay men who have brothers who can continue their family line and take on the responsibility of the family, which may make it easier for homosexual individuals to come out to their parents. This research has found that gay

men are less likely to come out to their parents if they have lived in an environment with a brother compared to an only-child family. The underlying reason may be that gay men who have brothers may also have families with rigid gender roles for men, such as an emphasis on masculinity. Gay men may be treated as feminine, which makes it very difficult for them to come out to their parents. Another interesting finding involves sexual self-labels: men who identify as tops are less likely to come out to close friends, which suggests that their self-identity as a top in the same-sex relationships implies self-ascribed masculinity.³⁴ Homosexual behavior may be ascribed to femininity, which may prevent these men from coming out to their close friends.

The current research has found that having a stable relationship and many LGBT contacts could affect individuals' choice to disclose their sexual orientation. Specifically, having many LGBT contacts is positively associated with coming out to parents, friends, and relatives. There are several potential explanations for this result. LGBT centers may provide emotional and professional support to help participants learn coping strategies to address the issues of coming out, and involvement with LGBT centers may provide emotional and social support that can buffer the eventual negative consequences related to the issue of coming out.^{35,36} The results are consistent with previous minority social contacts theory, which emphasizes that through the process of social comparison, intergroup contact can help homosexual individuals reduce their own prejudice toward their orientation and provide support to cope with potential barriers to coming out.^{37,38} The current research has found that having a stable relationship may make it easier to conceal one's sexual identity toward close friends, although an intimate partner may provide support for homosexual individuals to come out to close friends.

Homosexual individuals who grow up in cities are more likely to come out to their relatives, which implies that the openness of their growth environment leads to fewer stereotypes and less stigma

toward sexual minorities, which can help them to be less frightened about coming out to their relatives.

Gay men aged 21–30 years have much more difficulty coming out to their colleagues. This age period is a critical stage of career development that may make individuals concerned about how other people think about them or about their career development. An interesting result is that gay men with a university education find it easier to come out to their colleagues than do gay men with a below-university education. Gay men may find it much easier to come out to colleagues because they feel that they are in an equal relationship. Coming out to colleagues involves personal issues that are not related to family members. Gay men with a background of graduate education find it much more difficult to come out to their relatives than do gay men with a below-university education level. This implies that gay men in a family system with higher education may have much higher expectations in the family, which may make them reject coming out to maintain a “good” image for their relatives. Furthermore, coming out to relatives involves not only personal issues but also issues of family reputation. It is also worth noting that because of the restrictions and stigmatization of homosexuality, men who have sex with men (MSM) often marry to conceal their homosexuality and to deal with their families' expectations. Wang et al. estimated that there are 14 million mixed-orientation marriages between homosexual men and heterosexual wives in China.³⁹ Considering the age range of our subjects, marital status could be an important factor affecting their choice of coming out. Unfortunately, our online survey did not collect information on marital status; thus, we suggest that the future research should further explore the relationship between MSMs' marital status and their choice of coming out.

CONCLUSIONS

Our results indicate a significant association between coming out and socially oriented identity.

Our findings suggest that higher levels of socially oriented identity create psychological difficulties for homosexual individuals to accept their own sexual orientation, which may inhibit them from disclosing their sexual identity. In an other-oriented context such as China, sexual minorities have a greater risk of overreaction to other people's perspectives, which may cause them to neglect their own needs and their own perspectives. Social support for the gay community can help homosexual individuals disclose their sexual orientation. These results have important implications for identifying the potential predictors of coming out by taking into consideration the need to provide systematic training at LGBT centers. Moreover, the present study provides further evidence that mental health professionals should be involved in working with LGBT centers.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this research. First, all measures were self-reported. The future research should use other instruments to compensate for the biases inherent in self-reported data. Second, few measurements used in the current study were not precise enough and may be further optimized. For instance, the object of coming out was classified in categories such as parents, close friends, friends, relatives, classmates, or colleagues at their work environment. Overlapping may exist among these categories and produce vague results. The engagement of LGBT center activities was only assessed by frequency of attendance, without considering the duration and quality of attendance, which may limit the interpretation of results. Third, the generalizability of our findings is limited by the convenience sampling methodology. Thus, the results may not be applicable to the rest of the population. Last but not least, all participants were from mainland China, a conservative and family-oriented country, so the results may not be generalizable to more liberal cultural contexts.

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APPENDIX

TABLE A1 Characteristics of the Study Population.

		Out to parents		χ^2/Z	p	Out to close friends		χ^2/F	p
		No	Yes			No	Yes		
Ethnicity	Ethnic Han	397	30	1.419	0.234	151	320	3.783	0.052
	Ethnic minorities	74	2			5	27		
Religion	Nonbeliever	330	60	0.103	0.749	116	274	1.309	0.253
	Religion yes	97	16			40	73		
Having a homosexual partner	No	330	62	0.692	0.405	134	258	8.342	0.004
	Yes	97	14			22	89		
Occupation	Management	52	12	8.945	0.03	15	49	4.989	0.173
	worker	121	20			53	88		
	Professional worker	125	32			45	112		
	Student	129	12			43	98		
Age group (years)	16–20	54	4	12.097	0.002	19	39	0.182	0.9132
	21–30	292	45			105	232		
	31–43	81	27			32	76		
Place brought up	Rural	101	10	6.041	0.04	44	67	6.706	0.035
	Town	145	23			42	126		
	City	181	43			70	154		
Sexual role	Versatile	318	54	0.884	0.643	103	269	8.545	0.014
	Top	43	7			23	27		
	Bottom	66	15			30	51		
Siblings	Only child	216	51	8.481	0.037	75	192	6.108	0.106
	Brother	77	6			35	48		
	Sister	100	13			33	80		
	Brother and sister	34	6			13	27		
Attendance at LGBT center activities	Never	258	31	12.705	0.013	96	193	3.284	0.511
	Somewhat infrequently	80	21			28	73		
	Occasionally	36	6			15	27		
	Somewhat frequently	32	11			10	33		
	Very frequently	21	7			7	21		

(Continues)

TABLE A1 (Continued)

		Out to parents		χ^2/Z	p	Out to close friends		χ^2/F	p
		No	Yes			No	Yes		
Education	Below university	96	11	2.606	0.272	40	67	2.754	0.252
	University	201	41			69	173		
	Above university	130	24			47	107		
Annual income	Below 40,000	162	21	3.161	0.367	55	128	1.548	0.671
	Between 40,000 and 80,000	83	17			30	70		
	80,000–150,000	112	22			47	87		
	More than 150,000	70	16			24	62		
Homophobia	Internalized heteronormativity	8.89 + 2.84	8.48 + 3.16	1.106	0.269	9.43 + 3.03	8.56 + 2.80	3.169	0.002
	Family-oriented identity	11.94 + 3.40	11.83 + 3.31	2.487	0.013	12.13 + 3.50	11.83 + 3.33	0.933	0.351
	Socially oriented identity	13.57 + 3.46	12.47 + 4.04	0.267	0.790	14.14 + 3.64	13.08 + 3.49	3.115	0.002

LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

TABLE A2 Characteristics of the Study Population.

		Out to friends		χ^2/Z	p	Out to relatives		χ^2/F	p
		No	Yes			No	Yes		
Ethnicity	Ethnic Han	390	81	0.471	0.493	428	43	0.002	0.963
	Ethnic minorities	28	4			29	3		
Religion	Nonbeliever	321	69	0.779	0.378	355	35	0.061	0.805
	Religion yes	97	16			102	11		
Having a homosexual partner	No	327	65	0.127	0.721	357	35	0.10	0.752
	Yes	91	20			100	11		
Occupation	Management	56	8	1.464	0.691	60	4	4.684	0.196
	worker	118	23			122	19		
	Professional worker	127	30			144	13		
	Student	117	24			131	10		
Age group (years)	16–20	46	12	2.608	0.271	52	6	0.126	0.939
	21–30	277	60			307	30		
	31–43	95	13			98	10		

(Continues)

TABLE A2 (Continued)

		Out to friends		χ^2/Z	p	Out to relatives		χ^2/F	p
		No	Yes			No	Yes		
Place brought up	Rural	98	13	9.936	0.007	107	4	7.27	0.026
	Town	147	21			154	14		
	City	173	51			196	28		
Sexual self-label	Versatile	308	64	3.809	0.149	338	34	0.068	0.967
	Top	46	4			45	5		
	Bottom	64	17			74	7		
Siblings	Only child	217	50	1.432	0.698	242	25	0.264	0.967
	Brother	70	13			75	8		
	Sister	97	16			104	9		
	Brother and sister	34	6			36	4		
Education	Below university	89	18	0.287	0.866	94	13	7.448	0.024
	University	203	39			215	27		
	Above university	126	28			148	6		
Annual income	Below 40,000	146	37	3.930	0.269	164	19	2.704	0.440
	40,000–80,000	81	19			91	9		
	80,000–150,000	116	18			120	14		
	More than 150,000	75	11			82	4		
Attendance at LGBT center activities	Never	260	29		0.000	268	21	14.473	0.006
	Somewhat infrequently	81	20			92	9		
	Occasionally	33	9			39	3		
	Somewhat frequently	27	16			38	5		
	Very frequently	17	11			20	8		
Homophobia	Internalized heteronormativity	9.20 + 2.81	6.99 + 2.58	6.693	0.000	8.97 + 2.88	7.37 + 2.68	3.621	00.000
	Family-oriented identity	12.39 + 3.24	9.61 + 3.14	8.865	0.000	12.08 + 3.32	10.837 + 3.68	3.300	0.001
	Socially oriented identity	14.00_3.38	10.49 + 3.01	7.254	0.000	13.64 + 3.45	11.13 + 4.00	4.628	0.000

LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

TABLE A3 Characteristics of the Study Population.

		Out to most people		χ^2/Z	p
		No	Yes		
Ethnicity	Ethnic Han	440	31	0.371	0.542
	Ethnic minorities	29	3		
Religion	Nonbeliever	362	28	0.486	0.486
	Religion yes	107	6		
Having a homosexual partner	NO	365	27	0.046	0.829
	Yes	104	7		
Occupation	Management	61	3	2.037	0.565
	worker	134	7		
	Professional worker	145	12		
	Student	129	12		
Age group (years)	16–20	50	8	6.181	0.064
	21–30	315	22		
	31–43	104	4		
Place brought up	Village	108	3	3.992	0.136
	Town	156	12		
	City	205	19		
Sexual self-label	Versatile	351	21	2.610	0.271
	Top	45	5		
	Bottom	73	8		
Attendance at LGBT center activities	Never	276	13	8.906	0.063
	Somewhat infrequently	94	7		
	Occasionally	38	4		
	Somewhat frequently	37	6		
	Very frequently	24	4		
Siblings	Only child	245	22	2.436	0.487
	Brother	79	4		
	Sister	108	5		
	Brother and sister	37	3		
Education	Below university	102	5	5.635	0.06
	University	219	23		
	Above university	148	6		

(Continues)

TABLE A3 (Continued)

		Out to most people		χ^2/Z	p
		No	Yes		
Annual income	Below 40,000	168	15	1.348	0.718
	40,000–80,000	93	7		
	80,000–150,000	126	8		
	More than 150,000	82	4		
Homophobia	Internalized heteronormativity	8.98 + 2.85	6.74 + 2.79	4.441	0.000
	Family-oriented identity	12.13 + 3.32	9.09 + 2.99	8.072	0.000
	Socially oriented identity	13.73 + 3.40	8.91 + 2.70	5.187	0.000

LGBT, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.