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Effects of Violence and Discrimination on the Mental Health of Bisexuals, Lesbians and Homosexuals in Mexico City

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Objectives: Estimate the frequency of harm to mental health (perception of one’s state of health, suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, common mental disorders, and alcoholism) among bisexuals, lesbians and homosexuals in Mexico City, and analyze the relationship among violence, discrimination, and mental health.

Methodology: Observational, cross-sectional and analytical study. A questionnaire was used to collect information from 506 bisexuals, lesbians and homosexuals in Mexico City. To obtain a heterogeneous sample, interviews were conducted in a variety of organizations and institutions that cater to the study population, a café, a psychological services center, social groups, two religious institutions, an HIV/AIDS clinic, and a high school for the arts.

Results: The authors found the following prevalence rates: suicidal thoughts 39.0%, suicide attempts 15.0%, common mental disorders 27.0%, and alcoholism 18.0%. The incidence of alcoholism was 7 times higher among lesbians and bisexuals than among other women. Discrimination was related to suicide attempts and common mental disorders, while violence was found to be a risk factor for suicidal thoughts, suicide attempts, common mental disorders, and alcoholism.

Conclusions: The authors found a relationship between discrimination and violence, and the mental health of bisexuals, lesbians and homosexuals in Mexico City. They recommended implementing policies and programs to remedy the situation.