

Abstract

Historically speaking, sexual and ethnic minorities have been dreadfully treated by society at large, the legal system and the scientific world. Even today, homosexuality is associated with life-threatening risks in many countries, which constitute one migration motivator for sexual minorities. From a Swedish perspective, this dissertation explores what it's like to be homosexual or bisexual and have an immigrant background; what lived experiences these individuals have and how these experiences affect self-identity and well-being. When I began my project, there existed quite a lot of research on immigrants, and on sexual minorities, but the Swedes who belong to both of these groups had been severely overlooked.

From the international literature, it was clear that it was socially difficult to be neither heterosexual nor white. My overall aim with this dissertation was to explore what the situation for this population looked like in Sweden. To achieve this, I conducted one or more interviews with 22 individuals, with first-generation immigrant background (N=11) or second-generation immigrant background (N=11). These in-depth interviews formed the basis for three separate studies. In addition, I conducted a study where I coded and analyzed roughly 700 profiles on a dating site for sexual minorities.

The analytic methods I used were: phenomenological interpretive analysis (where the individual's lived experience and meaning-making is in focus), thematic analysis (where patterns in stories at a group-level are analyzed) and statistical methods (where possible differences between groups are clearly evident). Overall, the results demonstrated that homosexual and bisexual people with immigrant backgrounds in Sweden experience an in-betweenness, a sort of social twilight.

The participants often experienced a sense of dis-belonging and felt that they were not seen as fully human in a variety of social groups. The participants had been exposed to other people's prejudices, biased assumptions, bullying, racism, homophobia and misogyny. The online dating member profiles reflected the participants' accounts on discriminatory practices and unattainable ideals within the Swedish LGBTQ world. At the same time, the results demonstrated people's impressive resilience, strength and ability to create new group affiliations and positive changes for themselves and others.

To better understand the results, I used theories from social psychology and critical psychology on, among other topics, identity development, self-

presentation, stress, mental health, separatism and belonging. In the discussion, I scrutinize my own work as well as the contemporary perspectives and terminologies used in subject-related research fields. Lastly, I propose some ways to create changes that could improve people's lives and lessen injustices.