

Inequality in Socioeconomic Status Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Japan: Findings from the Osaka City Residents' Survey

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Abstract:

In recent years, public interest in sexual and gender minorities has increased in Japan. However, quantitative research relating the prejudice and discrimination experienced by these populations to their socioeconomic statuses, such as education, occupation, and income, is extremely limited. This paper uses data from the "Survey on Diversity of Work and Life, and Coexistence among the Residents of Osaka City" to describe inequality in socioeconomic status based on sexual orientation and gender identity in Japan. This is one of the first population-based surveys that ask about sexual orientation and gender identity in Japan. In this paper, I compare the findings from this analysis to studies using non-random sampling surveys in Japan. I also make comparisons with previous studies in the United States. The results indicate that there are gender differences in how sexual orientation and gender identity are associated with socioeconomic statuses including the proportion of college graduates, occupational segregation, and hourly wages. The findings also suggest that there are differences from the previous studies the United States, such as gay men achieving less education than heterosexual men, and gay men being more likely to occupy blue-collar jobs than their heterosexual counterparts in Japan. The existence of sexual and gender minorities has been obscured and erased in the field of social stratification in Japan, and it has been assumed that social survey respondents are all cisgender and heterosexual in quantitative sociology more widely. This paper illustrates the significance of considering sexual and gender minorities that have been rendered invisible in these fields as a distinct group and comparing their demographic characteristics with the majority.

Key words: earnings; education; gender identity; occupation; sexual orientation

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