

Childhood Adversity and Memory in Mid-to-Late Adulthood: Evidence of Elevated Risk Among LGB+ Adults in the CLSA

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In the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA), the link between childhood adversity and poorer memory is specific to older LGB+ adults, and becomes clearer after accounting for differential loss to follow-up.

INTRODUCTION	METHODS	RESULTS	CONCLUSIONS	REFERENCES
Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are associated with poorer later-life cognition^{1,2}, but whether this association differs by sexual identity is largely unknown^{3,4}. In longitudinal cohorts, ignoring loss to follow-up can bias the estimated association between ACEs and cognition⁵. This attrition may be especially informative for members of minoritized groups. Objective: test whether ACEs predict poorer memory in mid-to-late adulthood, and whether associations differ between LGB+ and heterosexual adults, comparing estimates with and without adjustment for attrition.	Sample: CLSA data.⁶ Self-reported identity at baseline/first follow-up (2015 to 2018): LGB+ (n=799) or heterosexual (referent; n=26,481). Exposure: ACEs recalled at Follow-up 1. Outcomes: Immediate and delayed memory recall at Follow-up 2 (2018 to 2021), dichotomized at the median. Analysis: Adjusted modified Poisson regression, stratified by sexual identity. Estimates compared with and without censoring weights (IPCW).	ACEs were associated with poorer delayed recall among LGB+ adults but not heterosexual adults. Adjusting for attrition changed estimates little but sharpened the LGB+ pattern (Figure 1). For immediate recall, LGB+ associations ran in the same direction but were not statistically significant; the effect was clearest for delayed recall.	Findings point to a sexual-minority disparity in the cognitive consequences of early-life adversity. There was evidence of selection bias, but point estimates were similar with and without attrition adjustment. Accounting for attrition mainly improved precision and consistency rather than changing magnitude. Attrition (censoring) in the CLSA appears to be informative for sexual minority participants, meaning it is related to both adversity and memory. Accounting for it is therefore warranted, particularly for small, harder-to-retain populations.	1. O'Shea BQ, Demakakos P, Cadar D, Kobayashi LC. Adverse childhood experiences and rate of memory decline from mid to later life: evidence from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing. <i>Am J Epidemiol</i>. 2021;190(7):1294-1305. 2. Lin L, Cao B, Chen W, et al. Association of adverse childhood experiences and social isolation with later-life cognitive function among adults in China. <i>JAMA Netw Open</i>. 2022;5(11):e2241714. 3. Correro AN, Nielson KA. A review of minority stress as a risk factor for cognitive decline in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) elders. <i>J Gay Lesbian Ment Health</i>. 2020;24(1):2-19. 4. Flatt JD, et al. Subjective cognitive decline higher among sexual and gender minorities in the United States, 2015-2018. <i>Alzheimers Dement (N Y)</i>. 2021;7(1):e12197. 5. Howe CJ, Cole SR, Lau B, et al. Selection bias due to loss to follow-up in cohort studies. <i>Epidemiology</i>. 2016;27(1):91-97. 6. Raina P, Wolfson C, Kirkland S, et al. Cohort profile: the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging (CLSA). <i>Int J Epidemiol</i>. 2019;48(6):1752-1753j.
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