



## Homosexual Students' Experiences in a Higher Education Institution in South Africa

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**KEYWORDS** Homosexuality. Peers. Psychodynamic Theory. Social Exclusion. Un-African

**ABSTRACT** The most prominent debate in institutions of higher learning today is the manner in which homosexual students are treated. This paper examines the experiences faced by homosexual students in a purposefully selected South African University. Thirty-six participants were selected using purposeful and snowball sampling techniques. The participants were students who voluntarily identified themselves as gay and lesbian persons in long-lasting relationships. Data was collected through in-depth interviews and analysed thematically. The findings indicate that all the participants occasionally found themselves in difficult positions such as discrimination, stigmatisation, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases and exclusion. It is concluded that LGBT University students go through numerous challenges to establish their own identity within the university, which affects their academic performance. In this regard, social workers and other stakeholders owe these students a duty to educate and train different population groups on the diverse nature of the South African society.