HOMOSEXUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE SOCIETY: IMPLICATIONS FOR HIV/AIDS PREVENTION

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of the research are to study social discourses on homosexuality in contemporary China based on space-time specific encounters; to explain discourses and personal agency interactions and the creation of sexual subjectivities and sexual partnerships; to explore sexual subjectivities and sexual partnerships and the influence of safe or unsafe sexual practices. The study utilizes a qualitative research approach, and the research methods include secondary resources, narratives and semi-structured interviews, ethnographic observations and informal interviews. Data is interpreted by discourse analysis.

The study concludes that: In different space-time specific encounters, different kinds of discourses exercise power differently. In the family, workplace, or other social situations, authoritative discourses exercise more power than individualized discourses. In homosexual venues, homosexual group discourses and individualized discourses exercise more power. In personal sexual encounters, individualized discourses exercise more power. Homosexual Chinese men can utilize their agency to use competing discourses to negotiate and renegotiate with authoritative discourses to create their sexual subjectivities and their homosexual world. In the sphere of sexual practices, individualized discourses, such as sexual pleasure, sexual desire, or individualized consciousness and knowledge, exercise a great deal of power, while authoritative discourses, such as the HIV/AIDS prevention discourse, are very weak. The use and non-use of condoms, or not, is a result of individualized evaluations of sexual desire, disease risk, and the side effects of condom usage.

KEY WORDS: HOMOSEXUALITY/DISCOURSE/SPACE-TIME SPECIFIC/SAFE AND UNSAFE SEX

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