

An Ecological Analysis of Hope Amongst Asian Rainbow Young People in Aotearoa New Zealand

ABSTRACT

Rainbow research tends to prioritise gender and sexuality experiences over the racialised experiences of Asian rainbow young people. Informed by an intersectional lens, we employed a hope-based ecological framework to examine how multiple overlapping axes of oppression (e.g. cisgenderism, heterosexism and racism) shape the aspirations of these youth. We drew on the voices of Asian participants from the 2021 Aotearoa New Zealand Identify Survey, who had responded to an open-text question on their hopes for rainbow young people (n = 217; age range = 14 to 26). The content analysis identified seven prominent categories of hope across three ecological levels (macro exo and meso). These categories were societies: 1) break away from cisheterosexist expectations; 2) confront racism and intersection with cisheterosexism; 3) promote rainbow-inclusive education; 4) ban sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts; 5) improve access to culturally safe health care; 6) dismantle white-dominated rainbow spaces; and 7) provide more rainbow-inclusive family support. These hopes were constructed amidst the desire to challenge unacceptance and exclusion by the wider society for not adhering to white Cisheterosexist expectations. The study provides critical insights for community organisations, education settings, and government to consider in addressing the diverse needs of Asian rainbow young people.