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**PERSONALITY, PSYCHOSOCIAL VARIABLES, AND
LIFE SATISFACTION OF CHINESE GAY MEN
IN HONG KONG**

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ABSTRACT. This study explored associations of life satisfaction with personality traits, life events, and social support among 187 Chinese gay men in Hong Kong. In general, participants were modestly satisfied with various aspects of their lives. Findings from a hierarchical regression analysis indicated that a high level of life satisfaction of Chinese gay men was related to weak borderline personality traits, disclosure of homosexual sexual orientation, and gay peer support. Results also showed that there was no interaction effect between personality and psychosocial variables in affecting life satisfaction. Limitations and implications of this study were also discussed.

KEY WORDS: Chinese gay men, Chinese life satisfaction, borderline personality.

Recent studies have suggested that life satisfaction is reciprocally affected by personality traits and psychosocial variables of life events and social support (Headey and Wearing, 1989; Diener, 1996; Lu, 1999). According to this disposition-environment conceptual framework, personality traits predispose kinds of life events one encounters as well as influence one's coping resources and styles. In turn, significant life events and social support produce substantial and lasting impact on one's personality. Research on various components of this conceptual framework has yielded encouraging findings. For example, personality traits of extraversion and neuroticism (DeNeve and Cooper, 1998; Diener and Lucus, 1999) and attributional style (Furnham and Cheng, 2000; Cheng and Furnham, 2001) are found to associate with life satisfaction, happiness, or mental health. People who have greater social support tend to cope better with stress and demonstrate better psychological health (Diener, 1996; Lu et al., 1997; Myers, 1999). Compared to personality factors, types of life events are sometimes found to be better predictor of variations in life satisfaction across time (Headey and Wearing, 1989; Ormel and Schaufeli, 1991).

There is a paucity of studies on life satisfaction of the gay population, as previous research tends to focus on psychological distress in relation to homosexual sexual identity (Lock and Hans, 1999; Rosario et al., 2002). Sources of gay people's distress include

