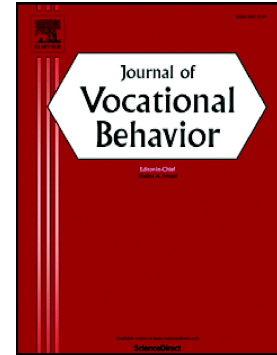


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Letting Him B: A Study on the Intersection of Gender and Sexual Orientation in the Workplace

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Letting Him *B*: A Study on the Intersection of Gender and Sexual Orientation in the Workplace

Bisexual individuals constitute the largest subgroup within the gay male, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) classification in the U.S. Forty percent of respondents to a 2013 Pew Research Center survey of GLBT Americans identify as bisexual, as compared to gay men (36%), lesbians (19%), and transgender individuals (5%). Further, a Williams Institute study estimates that of the Americans who identify as GLB, a slight majority identify as bisexual (Gates, 2011). Nevertheless, bisexual individuals remain the most invisible and under-researched among the GLBT classification. That is, scant scholarly work focuses solely on bisexual employees' experiences in the workplace; instead, most research lumps them together with GLT employees (e.g., Eliason, Dibble, & Robertson, 2011; Ragins, 2004; Smith & Ingram, 2004). The invisibility of bisexual individuals in the research is reflective of what they face in the workplace (e.g., Ragins, 2004), the media (e.g., Hackl, Boyer, & Galupo, 2012), gay and lesbian communities (e.g., Roberts, Horne, & Hoyt, 2015), and society (e.g., Ulrich, 2011), leading to a lack of justice and action when they experience disparate treatment.

In the current study, we assess the attitudes, behaviors, and experiences of bisexual employees and provide insight into the distinct ways they experience the workplace, relative to their gay male and lesbian counterparts.¹ Although previous studies have tended to clump these subgroups together, one exception is the recent study by Arena and Jones (2017), who found that bisexual employees a) are less likely than gay male and lesbian employees to disclose their sexual orientation at work, and that this is pronounced for bisexual men; b) face negative views from heterosexual, gay male, and lesbian individuals; and c) experience greater financial loss and perceptions of inappropriateness following workplace disclosure of their bisexual identity, as compared to disclosure of a gay identity. This is exciting, novel, and timely research, and we applaud Arena and Jones' (2017) pointed focus on GLB individuals. We repeat that focus here and extend it in three valuable ways. First, although Arena and Jones (2017) examined the attitudes held by GLB individuals toward bisexual individuals, we take a closer look to determine whether attitudes toward bisexual men differ from attitudes toward bisexual

women. Guided by social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), we do not make the assumption that bisexual men have the same or even similar sets of experiences to bisexual women. Second, although Arena and Jones (2017) explored differences in the sexual orientation disclosure rates of bisexual men and bisexual women, we take a more comprehensive approach to workplace outcomes by examining gender differences among GLB employees on several additional variables beyond disclosure. Finally, we conduct a moderated mediation analysis examining employee gender, psychological distress, and substance use, predicting that sexual orientation will moderate these relations, which will also be serially mediated by disclosure, perceived workplace discrimination, and minority stress.

In the sections that follow, we first discuss social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981) to generate support for our prediction that bisexual men will face greater bias than bisexual women. Next, we draw upon Arena and Jones' (2017) recent work to provide support for our expectation of decreased sexual orientation disclosure at work among bisexual men as compared to gay men, lesbians, and bisexual women. We then discuss recent literature and social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981) to substantiate our predictions that bisexual men will report increased perceptions of workplace discrimination, minority stress, psychological distress, and substance use as compared to gay men, lesbians, and bisexual women. Finally, we integrate these various outcomes into a comprehensive theoretical model.

Social Categorization and the Interaction Between Gender and Sexual Orientation

According to social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), humans are categorizers. Some of the first questions people ask are, "Is it a boy or a girl? Are you gay or are you straight?" Consequently, when people do not conform to social categories, it is befuddling. The current research is guided by the fact that an inability to categorize someone is perplexing. We believe that bisexual individuals incur a penalty because of an inability to clearly classify them into a traditional sexual orientation category. This discomfort is evident by research demonstrating perceptions that bisexual individuals are indecisive, inauthentic, and untrustworthy (e.g., Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Burke & LaFrance, 2016; Herek, 2002; Mohr and Rochlen, 1999; See & Hunt, 2011).

Additionally, we propose that it is more disconcerting for people to perceive men as bisexual than women. The reason for this expectation is that there is movement toward an understanding that there is more fluidity in women's sexuality than men's sexuality (see Diamond, 2012). So, although women are allowed to move freely along the sexual orientation spectrum throughout their lives, men are denied that freedom and are instead expected to be attracted exclusively to either women or men; there is no middle ground. The disbelief in a bisexual sexual orientation for men is demonstrated by research showing that bisexual men are perceived to be gay men who are still "closeted" (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013, p. 206). Past research further corroborates a potential gender bias within bisexual individuals, suggesting that attitudes toward bisexual men are more negative than attitudes toward bisexual women (Eliason, 1997). For example, in a recent, nationally representative study of attitudes toward bisexual people, Dodge and colleagues (2016) found that respondents held significantly more negative attitudes toward bisexual men than toward bisexual women. Specifically, bisexual men were perceived as more confused, promiscuous, and transitional than bisexual women. This finding mimics a pattern of research showing that non-heterosexual men, too, are regarded more negatively than non-heterosexual women (e.g., Herek, 2000, 2002; Monto & Supinski, 2014). Thus, men face an even greater pressure to conform to social categories related to sexual orientation due to rigid expectations regarding masculinity.

Importantly, biases against bisexual individuals are held not only by heterosexual individuals, but also by members of other minority sexual orientations (Arena & Jones, 2017; Burke & LaFrance, 2016; Dodge et al., 2016). The fact that heterosexual, gay male, and lesbian individuals also display negative treatment toward bisexual individuals reveals a "cultural homelessness" (p. 11), or a prejudice and isolation experienced when individuals feel rejected by both minority and majority groups (Vivero & Jenkins, 1999). Again, due to social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), we expect bisexual men (versus women) to experience this rejection more. Accordingly, we anticipate that:

Hypothesis 1. Gay male, lesbian, and bisexual individuals all will be more likely to hold negative attitudes toward bisexual men than bisexual women.

Identity Management Strategies

Disclosure. Recent research reveals that bisexual individuals are less than half as likely as gay men and lesbians to disclose their bisexual sexual orientation to the important people in their lives (Pew Research Center, 2013), and the Williams Institute reports that gay male and lesbian employees are six times more likely than bisexual employees to be “out” to all their co-workers (Gates, 2010). Recent research conducted by Arena and Jones (2017) provides additional support for these data by showing that compared to gay male and lesbian individuals, bisexual individuals are significantly less likely to disclose and be open about their sexual orientation at work. In particular, they found that disclosure of one’s bisexual sexual orientation during the hiring process is perceived as significantly less appropriate than disclosure of a gay sexual orientation.

This reduced rate of disclosure among bisexual employees has consequences at both the individual and organizational levels (DeJordy, 2008). That is, suppression of one’s identity at work comes at a high cost, including negative consequences such as psychological stress, role conflict, and attributional ambiguity (Ragins, 2008). Disclosing one’s stigma is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Law, Martinez, Ruggs, Hebl, & Akers, 2011), and acknowledging one’s stigmatized identity leads to reduced perceptions of interpersonal discrimination (Singletary & Hebl, 2009). In sum, when employees do not bring their authentic selves to the workplace, they sacrifice these potential benefits they would otherwise enjoy.

Additional Identity Management Strategies. Previous research not only documents the general difficulty that confronts individuals with minority sexual orientations when they choose to disclose that identity or are “outed” (see Griffith & Hebl, 2002), but research also identifies four strategies that individuals might use to manage such identities. They complement

binary, general disclosure (e.g., yes/no) by adding much-needed practical nuances (Griffin, 1992; see also Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005; King, Mohr, Peddie, Jones, & Kendra, 2017).

The first is **passing**, characterized by falsifying information to create the perception of a heterosexual sexual orientation. The second is **covering**, which is omitting information to create this same perception. The third is being **implicitly out**, involving sharing personal details about one's life so others at work may suspect (but not necessarily know with certainty) that the individual possesses a minority sexual orientation. The fourth is being **explicitly out**, or actively trying to make other people understand one's sexual orientation openly and clearly. Clair et al. (2005) assert that due to the concealability of the bisexual sexual orientation, bisexual individuals have a certain "freedom" in choosing different identities and types of openness.

King and colleagues (2017) assert that the likelihood that a member of a sexual minority group will disclose their sexual orientation is contingent upon the extent to which they have previously disclosed their sexual orientation. In this vein, Griffith and Hebl (2002) found that the best predictor of disclosure was previous positive experiences disclosing. Further research suggests there also may be a gender component to this decision. That is, bisexual men might disclose their sexual orientation to others (e.g., healthcare providers, employers) less often than bisexual women (Arena & Jones, 2017; Durso & Meyer, 2013). In line with this logic, we anticipate that:

Hypothesis 2. There will be an interaction such that bisexual men will be less likely than bisexual women to (a) disclose their sexual orientation during hiring (and (b) implicitly and (c) explicitly) at work. Further, bisexual men will be more likely than bisexual women to (d) pass and (e) cover at work. This gender difference will not emerge for members of other sexual orientations.

Workplace Discrimination

Workplace discrimination experienced by members of the GLB community as a whole (e.g., Pizer, Sears, Mallory, & Hunter, 2011) is well-documented in the literature. Less understood, however, is

the workplace discrimination that bisexual employees, in particular, experience. Nonetheless, a limited amount of work has been done in this domain. For example, Tweedy and Yescavage (2015) found that over half of bisexual employees (51.7%) reported having experienced employment discrimination at some time in their lives. Additionally, related to compounding discrimination, research has documented that bisexual individuals perceive largely the same amount of discrimination from heterosexual individuals, gay men, and lesbians (Roberts, Horne, & Hoyt, 2015). Based on these data and the expectation that bisexual men generally are perceived more negatively than bisexual women, as supported by social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981; H1), we posit that:

Hypothesis 3. There will be an interaction such that bisexual men will be more likely than bisexual women to perceive discrimination in the workplace, but this gender difference will not emerge for members of other sexual orientations.

Outcomes Related to Workplace Discrimination

The ramifications of workplace discrimination extend beyond the monetary value of court settlements. It comes at a high price to the targets of discrimination, as well. A plethora of research has classified discrimination as a stressor, or cause of physical, cognitive, or affective pressure, strain, or tension (e.g., Meyer, 2013; Trawalter, Richeson, & Shelton, 2009). A model set forth by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) indicates that stress is a consequence of the relationship between the person and the environment as appraised by the person. This appraisal is that the environment is taxing and endangers his or her well-being. Given this appraisal, it is no wonder that compromised psychological health and substance use are some of the most commonly-studied effects of discrimination. Indeed, two recent meta-analyses (Dhanani, Beus, & Joseph, 2018; Jones, Peddie, Gilrane, King, & Gray, 2016) substantiate that workplace discrimination is related to targets' reduced mental and physical health. Before discussing such health effects, we discuss the impact of stress.

Minority Stress. Minority stress has been described as a condition resulting from a socially-constructed inferior status (Brooks, 1981). Essentially, members of disadvantaged groups experience more stress than do members of advantaged groups. Lindquist and Hirabayashi (1979) analyze this phenomenon in greater detail, asserting that minority stress results from the dissonance between one's (marginal) minority status with an additional, higher status. Lindquist and Hirabayashi (1979) discuss this idea as it relates to gay people, who they maintain first assimilate to the dominant culture (high status) and then experience negative attitudes others hold toward them based upon their sexual orientation (low status). Similarly, according to minority stress theory (Meyer, 1995), gay people experience prolonged stress due to their stigmatization in a heterosexist society, specifically with regard to internalized homophobia, stigma, and experiences of discrimination. Recent research has applied this theory to bisexual individuals, specifically (e.g., Arena & Jones, 2017), and we extend this theory further to bisexual men. That is, bisexual men simultaneously occupy one of the highest status positions in society – man – and one of the lowest status positions in society – bisexual individual. Due to the dissonance between these two extremes, combined with social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), we posit that:

Hypothesis 4. There will be an interaction such that bisexual men will be more likely than bisexual women to experience minority stress at work, but this gender difference will not emerge for members of other sexual orientations.

Negative Health Outcomes. GLB individuals have particularly negative health outcomes as a result of both workplace and general discrimination (e.g., King et al., 2008; Meyer, 2013; Ragins, 2004). For instance, a study by Bauermeister et al. (2014) showed that 15% of their GLBT sample reported at least one work-related discriminatory event over the last year (even though many of these participants lived in cities that had adopted sexual orientation as a protected class in work discrimination statutes). Those who reported these experiences

also reported more negative health outcomes, a greater number of days that they experienced poor mental or physical health, and more limited functionality.

Psychological Distress. Even more relevant to the current study, previous research has shown that bisexual individuals have some of the worst mental and physical health outcomes *within the GLB community*. For example, in a study of associations between sexual behavior, identity, and attraction, sexual minority groups, and lifetime versus past-year mood and anxiety disorders, Bostwick, Boyd, Hughes, and McCabe (2010) found that bisexual behavior was associated with the highest odds of any mood or anxiety disorder occurring across men and women. Additional research has demonstrated the worsened mental health of bisexual individuals. For example, Jorm, Korten, Rodgers, Jacomb, and Christensen, (2002) found that bisexual individuals scored higher than heterosexual, gay male, and lesbian individuals on measures of depression, anxiety, and negative affect. Corroborating the gender and sexual orientation intersection we expect in our study based on social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), Warner and colleagues (2004) found that, compared to heterosexual men, bisexual men reported experiencing more frequent and severe bad moods, depression, worry, anxiety, panic attacks, compulsive behaviors, and obsessions. There were no significant differences on these outcomes, however, between bisexual and lesbian women.

Substance Use. These negative outcomes do not stop at psychological health; they extend to behaviors affecting physical health, as well. For example, Gonzalez, Przedworski, and Henning-Smith (2016) found that bisexual individuals are at a significantly higher risk of engaging in certain negative health behaviors, such as abusing alcohol and cigarettes, as compared to their gay male and lesbian counterparts. Again, in accordance with the gender and sexual orientation intersection supported by social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), the prevalence of both heavy drinking and heavy smoking was highest for men who were bisexual compared to those who were either heterosexual or gay; among women, only heavy drinking was highest for those who were bisexual compared to those who were heterosexual or lesbian

(heavy smoking was highest for those who were lesbian). Moreover, in a study by Udry and Chantala (2002), bisexual male respondents were more likely to smoke cigarettes, consume alcohol, and use illegal drugs, including marijuana, as compared to their heterosexual and gay male counterparts. This higher likelihood of substance use among men as compared to women is supported by a study conducted by the World Health Organization, which reported that men were more likely than women to have used alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana (Degenhardt, 2008). Considering these data, we expect that:

Hypothesis 5. There will be an interaction such that bisexual men will be more likely than bisexual women to (a) experience psychological distress and (b) use drugs and alcohol, but these gender differences will not emerge for members of other sexual orientations.

Although several studies have established a link between perceived discrimination and minority stress, mental health outcomes, and substance use in the GLB community (e.g., Bontempo & d'Augelli, 2002; Hatzenbuehler, McLaughlin, Keyes, & Hasin, 2010; Meyer, 2013), no studies, to our knowledge, have examined these links (a) among bisexual individuals (i.e., between bisexual men and bisexual women), (b) in the workplace, and (c) using moderated mediation analyses. We aim to fill this gap by showing that the relation between bisexual sexual orientation for men and negative outcomes related to psychological distress and substance use can be explained by outness, perceptions of workplace discrimination, and minority stress. Specifically, consistent with social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), we expect that sexual orientation will moderate the relation between gender and perceived workplace discrimination, such that among bisexual individuals, men will be more likely than women to perceive workplace discrimination. Additionally, we believe that this relation will be mediated by outness, such that men will be less likely to be out at work, and this decreased outness will be associated with a higher likelihood of perceiving workplace discrimination. Further, we expect the increased likelihood of perceived workplace discrimination for bisexual men to be associated with more psychological distress and substance use. We predict that this relation will be mediated by

minority stress, such that the increased likelihood of perceived workplace discrimination reported by bisexual men will be related to greater minority stress, and this greater minority stress will be associated with more psychological distress and substance use. Consequently, we anticipate that:

Hypothesis 6. (a) Sexual orientation will moderate the mediating role of outness from gender to perceived workplace discrimination, such that the indirect effect will exist for bisexual individuals, but not for gay male and lesbian individuals. Further, (b) minority stress will serially mediate the relation between perceived workplace discrimination and psychological distress and substance use.

Method

Participants

A sample of 219 GLB participants were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online platform in which individuals can participate in surveys and experimental research in exchange for monetary compensation. Of these participants, 19% ($n = 42$) self-identified as gay men, 21% ($n = 46$) as lesbian women, 26% ($n = 56$) as bisexual men, and 34% ($n = 75$) as bisexual women. Six participants identified as neither male nor female and were removed from analyses given that we were interested in examining differences between genders, and this was not a large enough sample size to include in the comparison. The sample was primarily White (78%), and 22% were minority group members (Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Other). Participant age ranged from 18 to 63 years old ($M = 32.06$, $SD = 8.73$). Approximately 39% were in a relationship with a same-sex partner, 27% were in a relationship with an opposite- or other-sex partner, and 22% were not in a relationship at the time of the study.

Procedure

Participants responded to an MTurk advertisement to complete our Qualtrics survey in exchange for \$1. After providing informed consent, participants responded to a series of questions regarding their current and previous workplace experiences as GLB employees and

their attitudes toward the bisexual sexual orientation. This survey took participants approximately 25 minutes to complete. Finally, participants completed demographic information regarding their race, gender, age, and relationship status before being debriefed.

Measures

Attitudes toward bisexual men and women. Attitudes toward bisexual men and women were assessed using the Bisexualities: Indiana Attitudes Survey (BIAS), developed by Friedman et al. (2014). Specifically, two separately gendered scales were utilized: BIAS-m, measuring attitudes toward bisexual men, and BIAS-f, measuring attitudes toward bisexual women. Thus, there were different items that assessed attitudes toward bisexual men versus bisexual women. The assessments of bias toward bisexual men and women were based on 26 and 27 Likert-type scale items, respectively, with responses ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). A sample item included “I think bisexual men/women are immoral.” Cronbach’s $\alpha = .90$ for both scales. Higher scores on these scales indicated greater bias toward bisexual men and women.

Pre-employment disclosure avoidance. Two items were used to measure identity management strategies individuals used prior to being employed (i.e., during the application and interview phase). Specifically, on a Likert-type scale anchored by *never* (1) and *always* (7), individuals responded to two items, such as “How often have you intentionally avoided putting anything on your résumé related to any activities or involvement you have had with the LGBTQ+ community to avoid potential discrimination?” (“LGBTQ+” refers to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, and others; Cronbach’s $\alpha = .92$). Higher scores signaled less disclosure of involvement with the LGBTQ+ community.

Workplace identity management. The extent to which employees conceal/disclose their sexual orientation at work was measured using an adapted version of the Workplace Sexual Identity Management Measure developed by Anderson, Croteau, Chung and DiStefano (2001) to assess four identity management strategies identified by Griffin (1992). The four

strategies are passing, covering, implicitly out, and explicitly out. Each of the four strategies was measured using two items on a Likert-type scale anchored by *strongly disagree* (1) and *strongly agree* (7). A sample item for passing included “At work, I tell people I am heterosexual if it comes up”; for covering, “I try to steer conversation with co-workers away from personal issues that might lead to me coming out or having to lie about my sexual orientation”; for implicitly out, “I am comfortable talking about LGBTQ+ issues with co-workers”; and for explicitly out, “I openly talk about my same-sex partner or same-sex dates with my co-workers.” Cronbach’s α , respectively, for passing, covering, implicitly out, and explicitly out = .77, .76, .69, and .69. Higher scores on these scales indicated a greater likelihood of using an identity management strategy.

Outness composite. In the mediation model, the pre-employment disclosure and four identity management constructs were collapsed into a single outness composite. This consists of an average of avoiding pre-employment disclosure (reverse coded), passing (reverse coded), covering (reverse coded), being implicitly out, and being explicitly out. Cronbach’s α = .71. Higher scores on this composite indicated that the participant was more out at work.

Perceived workplace discrimination. Nine items were used to assess the extent of discrimination that participants perceived at work. These items were adapted from previous research (see Griffith & Hebl, 2002). Items were assessed on a Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). A sample item included “My company unfairly discriminates against people with my sexual orientation in the distribution of job-related opportunities (e.g., salary, promotions, work assignments);” Cronbach’s α = .95. Higher scores on this scale indicated more perceived workplace discrimination.

Minority stress.² Stress associated with being a sexual minority at work was assessed using a four-item measure adapted from Lewis, Derlega, Berndt, Morris, and Rose (2002). Using a Likert-type scale anchored by *no stress at all* (1) and *a great deal of stress* (7), respondents indicated the degree to which they had experienced stress associated with (for

example) “a feeling that [they] must always prove [themselves];” Cronbach’s $\alpha = .95$. Higher scores on this scale indicated greater minority stress.

Psychological distress. Psychological distress was measured using an adapted version of Derogatis’ (2001) Brief Symptom Inventory 18 (BSI 18), used commonly as a psychiatric screening instrument in clinical settings and epidemiological research. Respondents indicated the extent to which they were troubled by 18 different complaints, including (for example) “feeling no interest in things.” Responses were assessed on a Likert-type scale anchored by *not at all* (1) and *a great deal* (7); Cronbach’s $\alpha = .98$. Higher scores on this measure signify greater psychological distress.

Substance use. Three items were used to measure substance use. On a Likert-type scale anchored by *never* (1) and *five times or more* (6), participants indicated the how frequently in the past 30 days they (for example) “had more than five drinks on one occasion” Cronbach’s $\alpha = .62$. Higher scores represented more frequent use of the three substances (alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana). Although the reliability estimate for this composite falls below the conventional accepted reliability ($>.70$), these items are used widely to assess population trends and evaluate health disparities, and our use of this measure is consistent with those of other studies (Fredriksen-Goldsen, Kim, Barkan, Balsam, & Mincer, 2010; Kulis, Marsiglia, Lingard, Nieri, & Nagoshi, 2008; White, Walton, & Walker, 2015). Moreover, Cronbach’s alpha may not be the best reliability estimate for this measure because, theoretically, these three items would not necessarily share common variance. For example, it is plausible that someone may consume alcohol frequently, but not smoke marijuana frequently. Additionally, although this measure is not commonly used in psychological research, it has practical utility. Medical research indicates that these three substances are risk factors for disease and injury (Rehm et al., 2009; World Health Organization, 2008; Volkow, Baler, Compton, & Weiss, 2014). Ultimately, we believe that these considerations justify the use of this measure of substance use.

A correlation table of all study constructs is presented in Table 1.

Results

Bias Toward Bisexual Individuals

To examine Hypothesis 1, we conducted a mixed 2 (participant gender) x 2 (participant sexual orientation) x 2 (bisexual bias by gender) repeated measures ANOVA. Participant gender and participant sexual orientation were between-subjects factors and bisexual bias by gender was the within-subjects factor. GLB participants demonstrated significantly greater bias toward bisexual men ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.08$) compared to bisexual women ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.06$), $F(1, 215) = 5.275$, $p = .023$, $\eta_p^2 = .024$. These results provide support for Hypothesis 1. Specifically, GL participants held greater bias ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.98$) toward bisexual individuals than did bisexual individuals ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 0.98$), $F(1, 215) = 4.005$, $p = .047$, $\eta_p^2 = .018$. Additionally, male participants held greater bias ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.99$) toward bisexual individuals than did female participants ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 0.98$), $F(1, 215) = 30.184$, $p < .001$,

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations Among Study Variables

	M (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Gender	1.55 (0.50)													
2. Sexual Orientation	0.60 (0.49)	.05												
3. Male Bisexual Bias	3.05 (1.08)	-.32**	-.14*											
4. Female Bisexual Bias	2.98 (1.06)	-.39**	-.15*	.93**										
5. Avoiding Disclosure	3.69 (2.16)	-.11	-.07	.29**	.28**									
6. Passing	2.92 (1.92)	-.23**	.27**	.42**	.42**	.36**								
7. Covering	3.05 (1.72)	-.20**	.12	.49**	.46**	.40**	.72**							
8. Implicitly Out	4.30 (1.83)	-.03	-.21**	.19**	.18**	.02	-.21**	-.20**						
9. Explicitly Out	4.73 (1.76)	.12	-.23**	.05	.04	-.07	-.36**	-.31**	.78**					
10. Outness Composite	4.68 (1.28)	.19**	-.21**	-.29**	-.28**	-.56**	-.78**	-.76**	.61**	.71**				
11. Perceived Discrimination	2.74 (1.51)	-.25**	-.02	.58**	.62**	.32**	.46**	.56**	.01	-.12	-.43**			
12. Minority Stress	2.42 (1.71)	-.26**	-.07	.60**	.63**	.33**	.44**	.55**	.14*	-.02	-.36**	.84**		
13. Psychological Distress	2.68 (1.67)	-.14*	.01	.42**	.43**	.25**	.44**	.47**	.12	-.01	-.31**	.56**	.61**	
14. Substance Use	2.31 (1.38)	-.24**	-.03	.35**	.31**	.12	.26**	.26**	.12	.04	-.14*	.32**	.34**	.35**

Sexual Orientation (0 = G/L, 1 = B), Gender (1 = male, 2 = female), all scales on 1-7 Likert-type

N = 219 *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

$\eta_p^2 = .123$. There was no interaction between participant sexual orientation and bisexual bias by gender, $F(1, 215) < 0.001$, $p = .991$, $\eta_p^2 < .001$, nor was there a three-way interaction between participant gender, participant sexual orientation, and bisexual bias by gender, $F(1, 215) = 0.186$, $p = .667$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$. There was, however, an interaction between participant gender and bisexual bias by gender, $F(1, 215) = 4.621$, $p = .033$, $\eta_p^2 = .021$, such that female participants held greater bias toward bisexual men than bisexual women, but there was no difference for male participants. These means can be found in Table 2.

Table 2

Bias Toward Bisexual Men and Women

Sexual Orientation	Gender	Bias toward bisexual M(SD)	Bias toward bisexual men M(SD)	Bias toward bisexual women M(SD)
Lesbian/Gay	Male	3.59 (0.97)	3.59 (1.04)	3.57 (0.97)
	Female	2.86 (0.95)	2.92 (1.02)	2.81 (1.09)
	Total	3.22 (0.94)	3.25 (1.03)	3.19 (0.94)
Bisexual	Male	3.34 (0.82)	3.33 (0.97)	3.34 (0.97)
	Female	2.56 (0.95)	2.63 (1.04)	2.50 (0.95)
	Total	2.95 (1.03)	2.98 (1.03)	2.92 (1.03)
Total	Male	3.45 (0.99)	3.46 (0.99)	3.46 (0.99)
	Female	2.71 (0.99)	2.77 (1.10)	2.65 (0.99)
	Total	3.09 (1.04)	3.12 (1.04)	3.05 (1.04)

Identity Management Strategies

To test Hypothesis 2, we conducted a MANOVA on the four identity management strategies and avoiding disclosing during the hiring process. This analysis resulted in the predicted interaction between participant sexual orientation and participant gender, $F(5, 211) = 2.77$, $p = .019$, $\eta_p^2 = .062$. All multivariate and univariate results can be found in Table 3, and

Figure 1 shows the relative identity management strategies by gender and sexual orientation. For avoiding disclosure (H2a), being explicitly out (H2c) passing (H2d), and covering (H2e), there was a gender difference such that men were less out than women for those participants who were bisexual, but not for those who were gay male and lesbian. However, there was no interaction for being implicitly out (H2b). Thus Hypothesis 2 was mostly, but not fully, supported.

Table 3

Identity Management Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance

Dependent Variable	Source of Variance	df	F	η_p^2
Multivariate	Participant Gender	5	3.47**	.08
	Participant Sexual Orientation	5	7.18***	.02
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	5	2.77*	.06
	Error	211		
Avoid Disclosure	Participant Gender	1	1.21	.01
	Participant Sexual Orientation	1	0.45	.00
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	1	7.26**	.03
Passing	Participant Gender	1	10.82**	.05
	Participant Sexual Orientation	1	21.94***	.09
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	1	7.64**	.03
Covering	Participant Gender	1	7.31**	.03
	Participant Sexual Orientation	1	4.60*	.02
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	1	4.39*	.02
Implicit Out	Participant Gender	1	0.15	.00
	Participant Sexual Orientation	1	9.74**	.04
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	1	0.64	.00
Explicit Out	Participant Gender	1	2.66	.01
	Participant Sexual Orientation	1	14.82***	.06
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	1	4.26*	.02
	Error	215		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

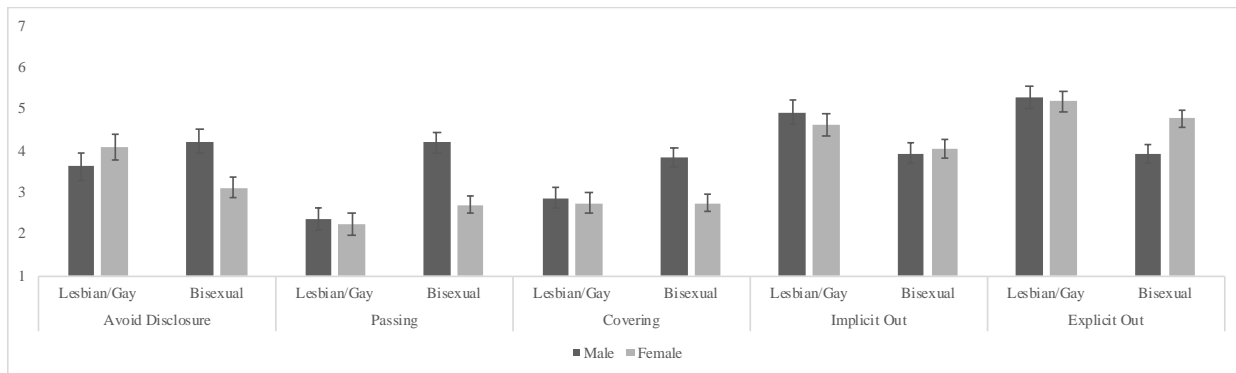


Figure 1. The interaction between gender and sexual orientation on identity management.

Perceived Workplace Discrimination

To assess Hypothesis 3, we conducted an ANOVA with participant sexual orientation and participant gender as the independent variables and perceived workplace discrimination as the dependent variable. The analysis resulted in the anticipated interaction of sexual orientation and gender, $F(1, 215) = 4.91, p = .028, \eta_p^2 = .022$. Tests of simple main effects revealed that bisexual male employees ($M = 3.37, SD = 1.68$) reported experiencing more sexual orientation-based discrimination at work than did bisexual female employees ($M = 2.24, SD = 1.30$), and that the gender effect did not exist among gay male ($M = 2.89, SD = 1.49$) and lesbian employees ($M = 2.66, SD = 1.49$). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Outcomes of Perceived Workplace Discrimination

We examined Hypothesis 4 using another ANOVA with participant sexual orientation and participant gender as the independent variables and minority stress as the dependent variable. The analysis revealed the expected interaction of sexual orientation and gender, $F(1, 215) = 5.63, p = .019, \eta_p^2 = .026$. Additionally, there was a main effect of gender, $F(1, 215) = 11.37, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .050$, but not sexual orientation, $F(1, 215) = 0.38, p = .538, \eta_p^2 = .002$. Bisexual male employees ($M = 3.07, SD = 1.65$) reported more minority stress than did bisexual female employees ($M = 1.77, SD = 1.65$), however there was not a difference between gay male

employees ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.62$) and lesbian employees ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 1.63$). These results provide support for Hypothesis 4.

To examine Hypothesis 5, we conducted a MANOVA with participant sexual orientation and participant gender as the independent variables and psychological distress and substance use as the dependent variables. The analysis revealed the expected interaction of sexual orientation and gender, $F(2, 214) = 3.50$, $p = .032$, $\eta_p^2 = .032$. Additionally, there was a main effect of gender, $F(2, 214) = 5.25$, $p = .006$, $\eta_p^2 = .047$, but not sexual orientation, $F(2, 214) = 0.13$, $p = .88$, $\eta_p^2 = .001$. Follow-up ANOVAs showed the hypothesized interaction for psychological distress, $F(1, 215) = 4.92$, $p = .028$, $\eta_p^2 = .022$ and substance use, $F(1, 215) = 4.33$, $p = .039$, $\eta_p^2 = .020$. All multivariate and univariate results can be found in Table 4. As seen in Figure 2, bisexual male employees reported more psychological distress than did bisexual female employees; however, there was not a difference between gay male employees and lesbian employees. Bisexual male employees also reported more substance use than did bisexual female employees; however, there was no difference between gay male employees and lesbian employees. In sum, Hypothesis 5 was supported by the data.

Table 4

Psychological Distress and Substance Use Multivariate and Univariate Analyses of Variance

Dependent Variable	Source of Variance	df	F	η_p^2
Multivariate	Participant Gender	2	5.25**	.05
	Participant Sexual Orientation	2	0.13	.00
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	2	3.50*	.03
	Error	214		
Psychological Distress	Participant Gender	1	2.89	.01
	Participant Sexual Orientation	1	0.19	.00
	Gender x Sexual Orientation	1	4.92*	.02
Substance Use	Participant Gender	1	10.00**	.04
	Participant Sexual Orientation	1	0.01	.00

Gender x Sexual Orientation	1	4.33*	.02
Error	215		

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

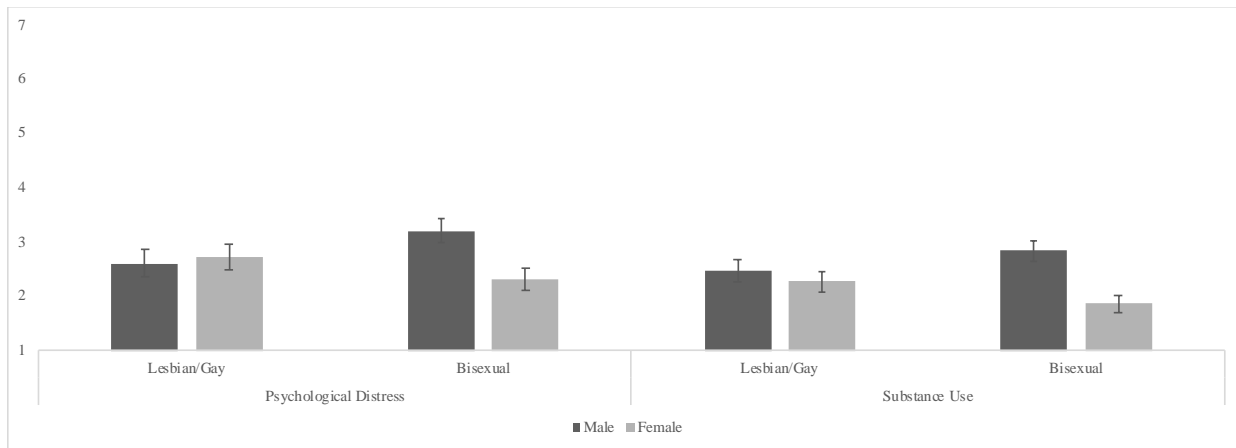


Figure 2. The interaction between gender and sexual orientation on psychological distress and substance use.

Finally, we tested our theoretical model with three SPSS PROCESS models (Hayes, 2013). Using PROCESS model 7, we tested the moderated mediation of employee gender to workplace discrimination mediated by outness and moderated by sexual orientation (H6a). Using PROCESS model 4, we tested two mediation models to assess the relation of workplace discrimination to psychological distress and substance use, respectively; controlling for gender and outness, mediated by minority stress (H6b). The full model can be found in Figure 3. As can be seen in Figure 3, regarding H6a, sexual orientation significantly moderated the relation between gender and outness. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, gender was significantly related to outness for bisexual participants ($b = 0.935$, 95% CI [0.52, 1.36]), but not gay male and lesbian participants ($b = -0.12$, 95% CI [-0.63, 0.39]), showing that bisexual men were less likely to be out than bisexual women. Additionally, outness was significantly and negatively related to perceived workplace discrimination ($b = -0.46$, 95% CI [-0.60, -0.32]). There was a significant and negative indirect relation between employee gender and workplace discrimination,

mediated by outness, for bisexual employees ($b = -0.43$, 95% CI [-0.70, -0.21]), but not gay male and lesbian employees ($b = 0.06$, 95% CI [-0.16, 0.30]). The index of moderated mediation was also significant (point estimate = -0.49, 95% CI [-0.88, -0.17]). Regarding H6b, there was a significant positive relation between perceived workplace discrimination and minority stress ($b = 0.93$, 95% CI [0.84, 1.03]). For psychological distress, there was a significant and positive effect of minority stress ($b = 0.42$, 95% CI [0.23, 0.61]), such that more minority stress was related to more psychological distress. Similarly, there was a significant and positive indirect effect of workplace discrimination through minority stress ($b = 0.43$, 95% CI [0.22, 0.63]) on psychological distress. For substance use, there was a positive, but not statistically significant, relation with minority stress ($b = 0.16$, 95% CI [-0.06, 0.33]). Similarly, there was not a significant indirect effect of workplace discrimination through minority stress ($b = 0.14$, 95% CI [-0.04, 0.34]) on substance use. Taken together, this analysis suggests that outness, workplace discrimination, and minority stress mediate the relation between employee gender and psychological distress (but not substance use) for bisexual employees, but not for gay male and lesbian employees. Thus, Hypothesis 6 was partially supported.

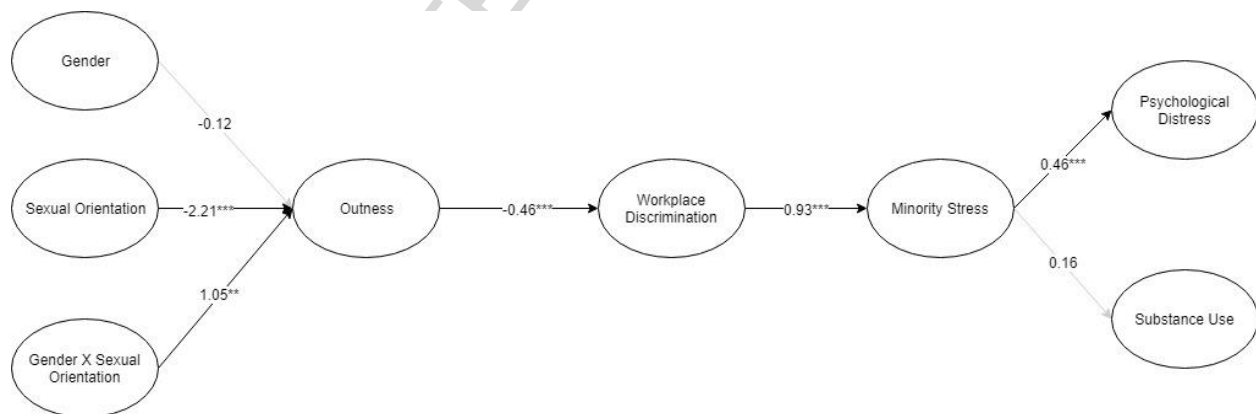


Figure 3. The direct pathways in the proposed model. The conditional effect of gender on outness for bisexual employees was ($b = 0.935$, 95% CI [0.52, 1.36]) and for gay/lesbian employees was ($b = -0.12$, 95% CI [-0.63, 0.39]). There was evidence of moderated mediation (point estimate = -0.49, 95% CI [-0.88, -0.17]). The indirect effect of gender on perceived

workplace discrimination through outness was ($b = -0.43$, 95% CI [-0.70, -0.21]) for bisexual employees and ($b = 0.06$, 95% CI [-0.16, 0.30]) for gay/lesbian employees. The indirect effect of perceived workplace discrimination through minority stress on psychological distress was ($b = 0.43$, 95% CI [0.22, 0.63]) and on substance use was ($b = 0.14$, 95% CI [-0.04, 0.34]).

Discussion

Our research goal was to isolate the ways in which bisexual employees' experiences are different from gay male and lesbian employees' experiences at work. Consistent with social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), one of our most important findings was the divergence in attitudes and outcomes experienced by bisexual men versus women. First, we discovered that GLB individuals reported more bias toward bisexual men than bisexual women, and that gay men and lesbians reported holding greater bias against bisexual individuals than bisexual individuals, themselves. This finding replicates previous research describing the bias that bisexual individuals face (from both gay male/lesbian and heterosexual individuals) and indicates that this bias is worse for bisexual men than for bisexual women (Roberts, Horne, & Hoyt, 2015).

Second, our data show that bisexual men (versus women) are less likely to disclose their sexual orientation at work, and that specifically, they are more likely to engage in passing and covering (identity management strategies). Although some research has been conducted on the "disclosure dilemma" at work, it focuses on gay men and lesbians (e.g., Griffith & Hebl, 2002) rather than bisexual individuals. Consequently, this study is one of the first to explore this dilemma among bisexual employees. Third and again consistent with social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981), bisexual men report more workplace discrimination than bisexual women and also more related negative outcomes – increased minority stress, worse psychological distress, and more substance use. Finally, we conducted a moderated mediation analysis examining the interaction between employee gender and sexual orientation on minority stress, psychological distress, and substance use, ultimately concluding that sexual orientation

moderates the relation between gender and perceived workplace discrimination. Further, workplace discrimination mediates the relation of this moderation and two of the three outcome variables (minority stress and psychological distress, but not substance use). That is, compared to bisexual women, bisexual men perceive more workplace discrimination, which is significantly related to increased minority stress and psychological distress. Although research has documented the link between discrimination and these outcomes (e.g., Hatzenbuehler et al., 2010), this is the first study to do so among bisexual employees in the workplace.

These results are indicative of the negotiation men and women continuously navigate between their gender and minority sexual orientation. Our results reflect and bolster past literature demonstrating the greater negativity faced by men (versus women) who challenge gender stereotypes (e.g., Herek, 2000, 2002; Monto & Supinski, 2014). Although we believe that bisexual women face challenges, as well, we believe these challenges may be different than those faced by bisexual men. The increased penalty bisexual men face for not fitting neatly into a socially-constructed category of sexual orientation (e.g., gay or heterosexual) is supported by social categorization theory (Tajfel, 1981). The ambiguity surrounding their sexual orientation status is associated with further negative stereotypes (e.g., indecisive, inauthentic) and negative interpersonal treatment.

Moreover, we imagine that we have only hit the tip of the iceberg regarding the workplace experiences of bisexual men. Although the current study explores several ways in which their workplace experiences are quite negative, especially compared to bisexual women (a finding that is supported by past research; e.g., Arena & Jones, 2017), we believe that there may be additional important downstream consequences of this negativity. For instance, the effects that greater minority stress, psychological distress, and substance use reported by bisexual men may have on their job turnover, career length, long-term health, and life expectancy may be substantial. Observations like these are particularly important when we consider that bisexual individuals make up the largest proportion of the GLBT community.

Future research should explore these more distal relationships to develop a better understanding of bisexual men's workplace and societal experiences.

In sum, this paper begins to address the invisibility of a substantial population—bisexual employees. It shines a light on their work-related experiences and outcomes, which both have direct implications for scholarship and organizations.

Implications

The results of the current study have implications for future research on bisexual individuals. Specifically, we believe bisexual employees should be studied separately from the broader non-heterosexual population, as our data highlight several nuanced aspects of the bisexual experience related to bias, disclosure, discrimination, and psychological and physical health outcomes. Treating bisexual individuals solely as part of the broader GLBTQ+ community in research does a disservice to this (large) sample of individuals, as it fails to take into account the uniqueness of the experiences of bisexual employees. Considering GLBTQ+ individuals as singular does a disservice to each “sub-type” (e.g., gay male, lesbian, transgender), as well. We advocate for—supported by the current study—a more focused examination of the various gender and sexual minorities within the larger GLBTQ+ community.

Additionally, the current study is one of the first to detail the intersection between gender and sexual orientation in the workplace. Although previous work has been done exploring the more negative consequences for men (versus women) for gender non-conformity (e.g., Herek, 2000, 2002; Monto & Supinski, 2014), our data is some of the first to suggest that this increased negativity is compounded for bisexual men and that this has a variety of adverse workplace and societal outcomes. Future research should explore other ways in which bisexual men may experience the world differently than bisexual women, particularly from the perspective that workplaces are agentic and reward stereotypically masculine behavior by their male employees.

Practically, our research suggests that employers should explicitly acknowledge and communicate support for bisexual employees—and that this could be particularly impactful for

men—in diversity initiatives related to sexual orientation. The utility of such a simple intervention is indicated in Köllen's (2013) research showing that overt inclusion of the bisexual sexual orientation in certain programs significantly enhances bisexual employees' perceptions of their workplace climate. Moreover, this is an improvement that likely benefits employers by way of more productive bisexual employees (when they feel supported by and included in their organization). Further, an organization that does not condone discrimination in any way, particularly against bisexual employees — and especially an organization that makes this stance clear — is likely one in which its employees will not condone it.

It is important to consider the treatment of bisexual employees by others in the organization. There may be targeted ways to curb or influence the negative treatment bisexual employees experience from others. Employers might consider specifically incorporating bisexual employees in their policies related to diversity and inclusion. For instance, See and Hunt (2011) suggest that harassment and discrimination policies should provide “examples of what antibisexual comments and behavior look like” (p. 297). Another potential way to curb intolerance of bisexual employees is for organizations to train all employees about discrimination against this group, with a focus on bisexual men (Chamberlain, 2009). For example, considerations about sexual orientation disclosure at work could be addressed, as well as attitudinal and behavioral reactions in response to learning that a colleague is bisexual.

Limitations and Future Directions

One limitation of the current study involves the manner in which the survey was administered (i.e., at one time-point, online). Inherent in this method is our utilization of cross-sectional data. This necessarily limits the causal claims we can attribute to the patterns we found in our results. A second limitation of the current study is that measurement invariance was not established, so there is a possibility that constructs were conceptualized or responded to differently by different groups (e.g., bisexual men and women). Third, our data was self-reported, a method that has a few important potential consequences. The first is that there is the

possibility of common-method variance among the different constructs that were presumed to be evaluated independently from one another. That is, we cannot rule out that responses were affected by consistency motif, social desirability, mood state, and common scale formats, among other potential sources of bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). The second potential consequence of our use of self-reported data is that we compared the experiences of employees based on whether they identified as “bisexual,” “gay,” and “lesbian.” This is restrictive, as this method potentially excludes individuals who are not “out,” focusing on individuals who feel strongly enough about their sexual orientation to declare a label for it. This risks overlooking the nuances of sexual fluidity within sexual orientation.

Conclusion

The current study empirically investigates the understudied population of bisexual employees, both from their own viewpoint and the viewpoint of sexual minority others. This study illuminates both individual and organizational characteristics that can impact the workplace experiences of bisexual employees and the distinctions between the experiences of male and female bisexual employees. We strongly advocate for future research that focuses on bisexual employees, as it will provide them, their colleagues, and their organizations with information and strategies that are effective at optimizing their workplace experiences.

Footnotes

¹Transgender issues involve gender identity and are removed from the conversation moving forward, given that our focus is on sexual orientation. We urge other research to focus specifically on the experiences of transgender employees.

²We initially included identity stigma as a parallel mediator alongside minority stress, expecting it to have similar associations with the other variables in our proposed model. In reality, after including minority stress, identity stigma added no significant, incremental relation to our outcome variables of psychological distress and substance use. Given the lack of any significant

finding related to identity stigma, as well as its theoretical similarity to minority stress [and high correlation (.64) between the two)], we excluded this construct from the study entirely.

ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

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Highlights

- More bias exists toward bisexual men than toward bisexual women.
- Bisexual male (vs. female) employees disclose their orientation less.
- Bisexual male (vs. female) employees perceive more workplace discrimination.
- Bisexual male (vs. female) employees experience greater minority stress.
- Bisexual male (vs. female) employees have worse psychological health/substance use.