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DUAL EARNER COUPLES: PREDICTING RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

AMONG WOMEN WITH FEMALE PARTNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study explored predictors of relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex dual-earner couples. As women take on a variety of roles, such as worker and partner, it is important to explore how factors related to those roles may be influential to satisfaction within other occupied roles. The focus of the current study is the implications of workplace and societal factors on personal relationships of women in same sex relationships who work full-time. Prior evidence suggests that social support and power are important factors with respect to relationship satisfaction for this population. Additionally, the role of internalized heterosexism and workplace factors (identity management in the workplace and workplace policies and practices) in predicting relationship satisfaction were of primary interest in this study.

Regression analysis was used to test models predicting relationship satisfaction with a sample of women in same-sex dual-earner couples. Bivariate correlations demonstrated relationships between multiple variables of interest and relationship satisfaction. Results of regression analysis supported prior findings that social support and power within the relationship were significantly related to relationship satisfaction. Additionally, preliminary evidence was found for the importance of partner match on identity management strategy within the workplace with respect to relationship satisfaction. Limitations of this study and implications for research and practice are discussed.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

While same-sex couples are utilizing therapy to explore difficulties in relationships, psychologists may not be equipped with empirical information relating to the unique concerns of such couples (Spitalnick & McNair, 2005). A burgeoning body of scholarly literature pertaining to the experience of women in same-sex relationships offers assertions about how to best work with same-sex couples, but little is actually known (e.g. Ossana, 2000; Spitalnick & McNair, 2005). Dyadic adjustment is a long-standing construct explaining the quality of relationships (Spanier, 1989), but until recently has been disproportionately utilized to explore the experiences of heterosexual married couples (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983). It seems clear that such literature does not adequately guide counseling practice with lesbian couples. Scholarly theory and empirical evidence suggest that while same-sex couples do experience relationships in similar ways to heterosexual couples, additional factors may uniquely influence the experience of same-sex couples (Kurdek, 1998; Savoy & Worthington, 2003). One predominant factor having some bearing on various life realms for individuals of same-sex sexual orientation, and likely having impact on same-sex relationships, is a societal context that pathologizes same-sex sexual orientation.

Women who identify as lesbian represent a minority population who face discrimination, although managing the disclosure of sexual orientation creates invisibility for some (Fassinger, 1991). Understanding the privilege of the heterosexual dominant position and providing an opportunity to explore this is theorized to be of utmost importance in same-sex couples counseling (Bernstein, 2000). Other concerns theorized

to be of importance in couples counseling with same-sex partners are similar to that of heterosexual couples' concerns, such as sexual issues, financial concerns, communication difficulties, and balancing career and family roles (Ossana, 2000).

The review of literature attending to committed relationships of partnered lesbians points to the possibility of challenges similar to those heterosexual couples experience, as well as fewer blocks to dissolving the relationship than are imposed for heterosexual couples (Kurdek, 1998). Kurdek posited that societal acknowledgements protecting heterosexual relationships, such as legal marriages, non-discrimination policies, and endorsement by religious affiliations, serve to protect and maintain the relationship. The necessity of reacting to discrimination and heterosexism can pose strain in same-sex relationships, as individuals must assess the safety of coming out in various life realms and manage identity disclosure accordingly. Visibility of lesbian sexual orientation is magnified by being in a same-sex relationship. It seems logical that hiding one's sexual orientation would necessitate hiding a committed relationship, which may have implications for relationship satisfaction.

Summary of Relevant Literature

According to Perrone and Worthington's social role model, factors of marital quality for those in dual-earner relationships can be separated into the categories of resources, relationship characteristics, and objective demands of the dual-earner lifestyle (2001). Although this model was not assessed for applicability to individuals other than heterosexual participants involved in dual-career marriages, factors uniquely influencing those in same-sex relationships may also fit this model. Factors of perceived social support and equity have been identified within the research literature as predictors of

relationship satisfaction for lesbian couples (Kurdek, 1998; Savoy & Worthington, 2003) and can be considered resources and relationship characteristics.

Social support. Participants in multiple studies reported that perceived social support, such as that gained from friends and co-workers, was related to higher relationship satisfaction (Jordan & Deluty, 2000; Savoy & Worthington, 2003). In the absence of legal marriage, garnering social support for the relationship may feel tremendously validating for same-sex couples. Unfortunately, the conditions of social support for same-sex relationships may be a complicated, as support shown for the relationship may depend on one or both individuals' disclosure of sexual orientation, while perceived social support is also likely to be used as an indicator of safety to disclose (Berger, 1990). Furthermore, cultural aspects may influence the significance of social support for lesbian couples, as traditions related to ethnicity may play a part in the importance of family and community support in particular (Ossana, 2000). Fukuyama and Ferguson (2000) highlight the implications for racial minority individuals who stand to lose support system around racial discrimination by identifying their same-sex sexual orientation openly to those who discriminate against LGB sexual orientations. Clearly, social support in a variety of life realms is desirable to individuals, while cultural and social characteristics create complexity around the implications of this construct in the lives of those who seek it.

Power. Equity theory accounts for fairness in interpersonal relationships, and the literature on perceived equity incorporates power with respect to shared roles, division of labor, and decision-making (Traupmann, Peterson, Utne, & Hatfield, 1981). The importance of equality within the relationship for lesbian partners has been demonstrated

in early empirical research (Caldwell & Peplau, 1984, Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Kurdek, 1998) and was confirmed more recently by Savoy and Worthington (2003). Feeling a sense of fairness regarding power, decision making, and role sharing within the relationship is important to relationship satisfaction, and has been shown to be largely present within lesbian relationships (Kurdek, 1998; Peplau , Cochran, Rook, & Padesky, 1978).

Additionally, factors related to the dual-earner lifestyle as well as factors unique to societal negativity regarding lesbian sexual orientation are theorized to contribute to relationship satisfaction. Fitting with Perrone and Worthington's (2001) social role model internalized heterosexism and workplace policies are factors both directly related to a dual-career lifestyle and resources available to the couple.

Internalized heterosexism. Internalized heterosexism, a prominent variable within the literature pertaining to lesbian individuals, has been linked in recent research to disclosure status at work (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002) as well as personal wellness factors and attitudes towards self (Szymanski, Chung, & Balsam, 2001). This construct is based upon the internalization of societal views that heterosexual orientation is the norm, as well as negative views of sexual orientations other than heterosexual. Heterosexism is a clear societal trend that serves to deplete lesbian couples of resources that would support and strengthen their relationships by invalidating the legitimacy and normalcy of these unions.

Workplace policies. Contesting heterosexism by validating same-sex sexual orientations, the presence of workplace non-discrimination policies are important for the identity management decisions of lesbian individuals (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002), and

may relate to relationship satisfaction in validation of same-sex couples. In the absence of legitimizing same-sex relationships through legally recognized marriages, same-sex couples are often denied resources available to heterosexual married couples. Domestic partner benefits offer tangible resources, while workplace nondiscrimination policies both offer safety in a potentially hostile environment. Day and Schoenrade (1997) found that the presence of workplace antidiscrimination policies and the presence of top management support for such nondiscrimination policies not only related significantly to job satisfaction (r=.21, r=.38 respectively, p<.001), but were also significantly related to lower conflict between work and home (r=-.19, r=-.35 respectively, p<.001). Workplace policies and benefits also relate to the dual-career lifestyle in that decisions must be made about managing the multiple facets of personal and work-life roles.

Identity management. One of the more challenging personal life aspects to for partnered lesbians to manage at work might be decision-making about to whom and when to disclose information about sexual orientation and same-sex relationship status. Jordan and Deluty (2000) found that the degree of openness regarding sexual orientation was positively correlated with ratings of relationship satisfaction for individual participants, and a match between partners on sexual orientation disclosure level was indicative of relationship satisfaction. Eldridge and Gilbert (1990) set the foundation for specifically exploring the link between match on disclosure level at work and relationship satisfaction. Additionally, disclosure of sexual orientation within the workplace has been significantly (r=-.30, p<.001) associated with lower levels of work-home conflict (Day & Schoenrade, 1997), which may translate to higher relationship satisfaction. Ossana (2000) contends that differences pertaining to lifestyle management issues, such as

coming out, may introduce a source of stress into the relationship, as partner's may interpret and internalize such differences as negative messages about identifying as lesbian. Depending on the work environment, the workplace may be a complex realm in which to decipher safety of disclosure, as it may be necessary to assess the affirmative stance of multiple people who have power and influence over one's career.

Rationale and Purpose of Study

As work and relationships are significant factors in the lives of many women, and an increasing number of women engage in dual-earner relationships it is important to assess what is important to maintain satisfaction with such relationships. Additionally, I am committed to improving the societal treatment of individuals of same-sex sexual orientation. As such, the aim of this study is to provide empirical information about the experiences of women in dual-earner same-sex relationships. I will investigate the experience of lesbians in relationships where both partners work full-time, as research suggests grounds for exploring the unique experiences of gay men, lesbians, and heterosexual men and women separately. First, women are socialized differently than men in the United States culture. To treat gay men and lesbians as having the same experiences in relationships or otherwise, is to ignore the gendered context of our culture (Brown, 1995). For example, research suggests that women are more likely to value social-emotional closeness and feel pulled to disclose sexual orientation than males (Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis, 1993). This may pose a greater strain for partnered lesbians than for partnered gay males. Second, a clear argument can be made for the different experience of couples of same-sex versus heterosexual sexual orientation with respect to support for and acknowledgement of the relationship. Perceived social

support has been identified as a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction for both heterosexual and lesbian women. Since those who have disclosed reported higher perception of social support it follows that disclosure of sexual orientation may be linked to relationship satisfaction. Additional differences have been found with respect to correlates of relationship satisfaction for women in heterosexual versus same-sex relationships (Savoy & Worthington, 2003). Third, research supports the tendency of same-sex couples to behave differently within relationships as compared to heterosexual couples (Kurdek, 1998). Kurdek found that same-sex couples tend to be more egalitarian and less interdependent than heterosexual couples. For example, Morgan and Brown (1991) suggest that each partner within lesbian couples will often maintain her own financial independence.

For the purposes of the current study, the term dual-earner will be utilized to describe couples in which both partners work full-time. Prior theoretical and research literature identified dual-career couples as a subtype of dual-earners, distinguished by working by choice rather than financial need (Becker & Moen, 1999; Jordan, Cobb, & McCully, 1989), and the term dual-career will be utilized in the current manuscript when referencing studies using this term. In its infancy, dual-career literature showed a bias toward married upper class couples pursuing careers by choice (Rapaport & Rapaport, 1969). The current study seeks to broaden the scope of what is known about the experience of all couples in which both partners work full-time, regardless of the purpose of work and spanning the spectrum of SES.

It seems important to enhance what is currently known about how lesbians experience relationships in an effort to make such information available to counseling

professionals working in a variety of contexts. The theoretical framework guiding this study is heavily based in an ecological model first introduced by Bronfenbrenner (1977) and later adapted by Cook et al (2002) as a foundation for career counseling. The model discusses the interface and impact of various levels of contextual factors influential to individuals' life experiences. This seems particularly relevant to the population of interest in this study, as dual-earner lesbian couples exist within a context of factors influential to each individual and interfacing as partners merge separate lives. In particular, I am interested in studying how work related factors and internalized heterosexism may contribute to relationship satisfaction for such couples. To this end, the current study gained a sample of self-identified lesbian couples in which both partners work full-time and assessed the degree to which work related factors and internalized heterosexism, in addition to previously identified predictors (social support and equity/power), contribute to predicting relationship satisfaction. This study is intended to add to the existing literature through a unique focus on assessing the possible contribution, to relationship satisfaction, offered by degree of partner match with respect to identity management strategy at work. While these constructs have been shown to be salient in the lives of lesbian individuals, data with regard to influence on relationship satisfaction adds to what is known about lesbian couples.

Utilizing the valuable information generated by the foundation studies in this area, the current study makes a contribution to enhance what is known about relationship satisfaction correlates by incorporating the well-substantiated personal variables (social support and equity), exploring workplace and societal variables that are ostensibly important (workplace policies, identity management in the workplace, and internalized

heterosexism), and by attending to some existing research limitations. Addressing the limitations of past studies, the current study intended to draw a more nationally representative participant sample, assess the match between partners' responses to more dependably explain the couple's experience, and utilize well-established measures of assessment to investigate the contribution work-place variables may make to the relationship satisfaction of dual-career lesbian couples. Sampling influences due to voluntary participation and self-report bias continued to be inherent in this study.

Exploring the possible contribution of work related variables and internalized heterosexism to relationship satisfaction adds to what is known about how lesbian couples experience relationships. This information is beneficial in driving couples counseling frameworks and interventions with dual-career lesbian couples.

Research Questions

The dependent variables under investigation in this study are (1) dyadic adjustment, globally and more narrowly (2) dyadic satisfaction. The predictor variables being utilized in the current study that were established in previous research are (1) perceived social support and (2) perceived power. The additional predictor variables under investigation in this study are (1) internalized heterosexism, (2) identity management in the workplace, (3) workplace policies, and (4) partner match on identity management in the workplace.

The research questions for the present study are as follows:

1. In addition to previously established predictors (perceived social support and power), do workplace factors and internalized heterosexism significantly contribute to predicting relationship satisfaction?

2. What is the relative contribution of partner match on identity management in the workplace to classifying individuals among levels of relationship satisfaction with respect to the contribution of the remaining independent variables (social support, power, identity management in the workplace, internalized heterosexism, and workplace policies)?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter addresses the factors identified in the professional literature related to the relationship satisfaction of lesbians in dual-earner partnerships. While research investigating the elements of satisfying relationships dates back to the 1920's (Blumstein & Schwartz, 1983), such research has predominantly been focused on explaining the heterosexual relationship experience. Aspects deemed crucial to satisfying relationships for heterosexual couples may not hold true for lesbian couples in light of the differing goals, achievements, and struggles inherent in making relationships succeed.

Comparisons have shown lesbian relationships to be more egalitarian and less financially interdependent than heterosexual relationships (Kurdek, 1998). Kurdek found that lesbian and gay couples were likely to be in dual-career relationships, and earned higher combined income than married heterosexual couples. Research indicates that lesbians are enjoying very satisfying committed relationships (Savoy & Worthington, 2003). In fact, in a comparison of heterosexual and same-sex relationships for women, Savoy and Worthington found that those with female partners reported higher relationship satisfaction than those with male partners. At the same time, societally held biases and lack of legal recognition of same-sex couples likely serve to invalidate and undermine the security and comfort of such relationships (Ossana, 2000). In addition to dealing with extreme oppression and adversity, same-sex couples also experience positive qualities and issues similarly to heterosexual couples (Kurdek, 1995; Ossana, 2000). Understanding both the constructive and damaging aspects of relationships for women with female partners will be useful in avoiding pathologizing behavior within the

field of psychology, as well as more universally in promotion of societal acceptance of lesbian relationships. It is necessary to expand our understanding of what comprises satisfying relationships for lesbians, so that we may hold a more accurate picture of lesbian relationships.

Recent research specifically targeting correlates of relationship satisfaction for women in lesbian relationships revealed that a variety of factors internal to the relationship and operating upon the relationship from the external environment are influential (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan & Deluty, 2000; Savoy & Worthington, 2003). Although the identification of such factors is a promising foundation for the understanding of lesbian experiences in committed relationships, a good deal remains unexplored and unexplained. In particular, factors holding significance for each individual may impact relationship satisfaction as partners merge separate lives. Due to the significant influence of work and relationships in people's lives, the focus of the proposed study brings two bodies of literature together to explore the interface of work and personal lives of women in lesbian relationships. A specific goal of the proposed study is to identify the contribution work related variables may have in predicting the relationship satisfaction of lesbians in dual-earner partnerships.

In order to investigate the correlates of relationship satisfaction for dual-earner lesbian couples, I will first outline what has been linked to relationship satisfaction within the existing literature. Based upon empirical investigation three variables have been significantly linked to relationship satisfaction for dual-earner lesbian partners: (1) perceived social support, (2) perceived equity, and (3) sexual orientation disclosure (Jordan & Deluty, 2000; Savoy & Worthington, 2003). Although existing research bares

some inconsistent results with respect to relationship satisfaction correlates for lesbian couples, there is consistent evidence for links between relationship satisfaction and (1) perceived social support and (2) perceived equity (Savoy & Worthington, 2003). Inconsistencies are present in the finding related to links between relationship satisfaction and sexual orientation disclosure, although the more recent research suggests a significant relationship between these factors (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan & Deluty, 2000). Although few studies have focused on workplace variables when investigating the experiences of dual-career lesbian couples, it seems necessary to explore how such factors may play a role in the lives of those managing work lives and personal relationships. Initial support for the influence of workplace variables has been demonstrated through the association of personal and work roles for individuals in dual-career partnerships (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan & Deluty, 2000; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002; Shachar and Gilbert, 1983).

It will also be important to discuss the empirical and theoretical evidence that suggests what factors might predict relationship satisfaction above and beyond what has been shown in the existing literature. Internalized heterosexism, a prominent variable within literature pertaining to lesbian individuals, has been linked in recent research to disclosure status at work (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002) as well as personal wellness factors and attitudes towards self (Szymanski, Chung, & Balsam, 2001). Contesting heterosexism by validating same-sex sexual orientations, the presence of workplace non-discrimination policies are important for the identity management decisions of lesbian individuals (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002), and may relate to relationship satisfaction in validation of same-sex couples. To meet the objective of adding to what is known about

the relationship satisfaction correlates of dual-career lesbian couples, the following

review addresses both substantiated factors and those that have been shown to influence

the lives of lesbian individuals, and thus are likely to be linked to relationship satisfaction

of partnered lesbians.

Relationship Satisfaction Correlates

Of the limited, although growing, body of literature pertaining to the experiences

of lesbian couples, a few articles focus specifically on correlates of relationship

satisfaction for this group. Included in this small group of studies are Eldridge and

Gilbert (1990), Jordan and Deluty (2000), and Savoy and Worthington (2003). Results of

these research studies show significant links between relationship satisfaction and greater

disclosure of sexual orientation, social support for the relationship, power within the

relationship, and minimal role conflict as perceived by individuals within relationships.

Additionally, when considering the combined experience of members of the couple,

differing levels of career commitment and disclosure of sexual orientation were

significantly indicative of lower relationship satisfaction (Eldridge & Gilbert; Jordan &

Deluty). The following section presents a review of these foundation studies.

In a study of the link between disclosure of sexual orientation and relationship

satisfaction, Jordan and Deluty (2000) surveyed 305 lesbian participants who reported

being in a relationship at the time of the study. Of these women, 152 participants

acknowledged being partnered with another respondent in the study, allowing for analysis

of matched data for 76 couples. The authors found that the degree of openness regarding

sexual orientation was positively correlated with ratings of relationship satisfaction for

individual participants ($R^2 = .03$, $p < .01$). The calculated difference between the two

partners' scores on self-disclosure represented the degree of match between partners with respect to the degree of openness. Upon analysis of this match, the authors found that discrepancy between partners' self-disclosure was inversely correlated with relationship satisfaction (R^2 = .03, p < .05). Greater difference between the partners' disclosure scores was related to lower satisfaction with the relationship for couples that participated in this study. These results seem logical in that similar values and behaviors related to the management of identity likely create a more cohesive and comfortable lifestyle, while differences may create confusion, frustration, and stress within the relationship. Social support was positively related to relationship satisfaction (r = .20, p < .001), indicating that those participants who perceived greater social support from friends, family, and co-workers were more satisfied with their relationships than those who experienced less social support. When partners were similar on disclosure level, being open about sexual orientation was related to higher relationship satisfaction (r = .45, p < .01). Although Jordan and Deluty's sample showed some participant diversity, it is important to note that the majority of the sample identified as Caucasian (85.6%), reported having some college education (95%), and were of high socioeconomic status. While limited in generalizability based upon these demographic variables, the results of this study showed that general level of sexual orientation disclosure, partner match on identity disclosure, and social support may be important to relationship satisfaction for lesbian couples.

As a product of a survey of relationship satisfaction among 275 lesbian couples, Eldridge and Gilbert (1990) found that 65% of participants had not disclosed their sexual orientation to employers and 37% of participants had not disclosed their sexual orientation to any co-workers. Participants who responded to the mailed surveys were

predominantly Caucasian and had a bachelor's degree education or higher. They ranged

from 20 to 59 years of age and had been a member of a couple for at least two years. The

participants were identified through friendship networks, newsletters, and lesbian

oriented periodicals. The study utilized correlational and regression analysis to examine

data collected from participants' responses to full and modified versions of previously

developed scales of relationship satisfaction. Conflicting with results of other studies

supporting that factors of disclosure of sexual orientation are positively correlated with

relationship satisfaction (Caron & Ulin, 1997; Jordan & Deluty, 2000) the authors did not

find a significant link between the degree of disclosure and perception of relationship

satisfaction for the participants in their study.   In discussion of the findings, the authors

posited that similarity of identity management strategy between partners is likely to be

influential to satisfaction with the relationship. While no causal statements can be made

based upon this data, the authors argued that questions for future inquiry about

relationship characteristics of lesbian couples arise from the results of this study. Power,

self-esteem, and life satisfaction were positively correlated with relationship satisfaction

(r=.40, r=.25, r=.48 respectively, p<.05) for the individuals of this sample.   Calculating

the differences between partners' scale scores showed a negative correlation between

self-esteem and relationship satisfaction (r = -.16, p <.01)) as well as life satisfaction and

relationship satisfaction (r = -.18, p <.01) indicating that common dispositions on such

variables are fundamental to a satisfactory relationship. Although generalizability of the

study findings is limited by a close participant match on education level, income level,

and age, as well as an overwhelming number (93%) of Caucasian participants, results of

this study indicate that resolving issues of identity management strategy for oneself may

become more complicated within a relationship. One must consider one's own

workplace variables in addition to garnering the effects of her partner's identity

management decisions.

In a study exploring relationship satisfaction correlates for 375 lesbian, bisexual,

and heterosexual women in dual-career couples, Savoy and Worthington (2003) found

that women with female partners reported higher relationship satisfaction than women

with male partners. Of the variables included in this study, a hierarchical regression

equation presented only perceived social support from others ($\beta = .37, p < .05$) and equity

within the relationship ($\beta = .18, p < .05$) as significant predictors of relationship

satisfaction for the 157 women with female partners ($R^2 = .20, p<.001$). Gender identity,

self acceptance, coping strategies, sexual orientation development, and combined income

were not significant predictors for these participants. The authors argued that future

research should explore additional correlates such as external factors that may have

impact on relationship satisfaction.

The aforementioned research studies offer evidence for links between relationship

satisfaction and the following variables: social support, equity, and identity management.

The following brief review summarizes the support for including these variables as

correlates of relationship satisfaction in the proposed study.

Social support. Participants in multiple studies reported that perceived social

support, such as that gained from friends and co-workers, was related to higher

relationship satisfaction (Jordan & Deluty, 2000; Savoy & Worthington, 2003).

Theoretical and research literature discuss the implications of such findings. In the

absence of legal marriage, garnering social support for the relationship may feel

tremendously validating for same-sex couples. Unfortunately, the conditions of social

support for same-sex relationships may be a complicated, as support shown for the

relationship may depend on one or both individuals' disclosure of sexual orientation,

while perceived social support is also likely to be used as an indicator of safety to

disclose (Berger, 1990). Furthermore, cultural aspects may influence the significance of

social support for lesbian couples, as traditions related to ethnicity may play a part in the

importance of family and community support in particular (Ossana, 2000). Fukuyama

and Ferguson (2000) highlight the implications for racial minority individuals who stand

to lose support system around racial discrimination by identifying their same-sex sexual

orientation openly to those who discriminate against LGB sexual orientations. Clearly,

social support in a variety of life realms is desirable to individuals, while cultural and

social characteristics create complexity around the implications of this construct in the

lives of those who seek it.

Social support has been defined and measured in various, although similar, ways.

Jordan and Deluty (2000) measured perceived social support by assessing support in

various life situations, such as when in crisis, as well as by indication of the number of

supportive individuals in one's life. Savoy and Worthington (2003) measured the same

construct utilizing The Social Support Appraisal Scale (SSA; Vaux, Phillips, Holley,

Thompson, Williams, & Stewart, 1986) which assesses the degree of support gained from

individuals in various life roles, such as that from co-workers, friends, and relatives. The

manner of assessment utilized by Savoy and Worthington seems to lend itself to greater

understanding of the meaning of social support from specific relationships in the lives of

participants. Of value to the proposed study, utilizing this assessment strategy allows for

an indication of the importance of co-worker support, in addition to the possibility of investigating cultural characteristics, such as race and ethnicity, as mitigating factors of the link between relationship satisfaction and social support.

Power. Equity theory accounts for fairness in interpersonal relationships, and literature on perceived equity incorporates shared roles, division of labor, power, decision-making (Traupmann, Peterson, Utne, & Hatfield, 1981). The importance of equity within the relationship for lesbian partners has been demonstrated in early empirical research (Caldwell & Peplau, 1984, Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Kurdek, 1998) and was confirmed more recently by Savoy and Worthington (2003). Feeling a sense of equality regarding decision making, role sharing, and power within the relationship is important to relationship satisfaction, and has been shown to be largely present within lesbian relationships (Kurdek, 1998; Peplau , Cochran, Rook, & Padesky, 1978). In an early study of relationship power structures, perceived power imbalance within the relationship was related to lower levels of relationship satisfaction for partnered lesbians (Caldwell & Peplau, 1984). Eldridge and Gilbert (1990) further substantiated the importance of power balance in dual-career lesbian partnerships, as power was a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction for participants in their study. Additionally, both partners in Eldridge and Gilbert's study, both partners in couples tended to report high levels of power indicating a sense of egalitarianism in those relationships. Kurdek posits that equity and power relate in predictable ways, such that perceptions of lesser power align with perception of inequity. Power and equity have been measured in several ways, such as by assessment of division of household labor (Kurdek, 1998) and more inclusive of multiple areas related to influence within intimate

relationships by Traupmann et al.'s Equity/Inequity Scale (Savoy & Worthington, 2003; Traupmann et al., 1981) and Eldridge and Gilbert's Influence in the Relationship scale (1990).

Identity management. Jordan and Deluty (2000) that the degree of openness regarding sexual orientation was positively correlated with ratings of relationship satisfaction for individual participants, and a match between partners on sexual orientation disclosure level was indicative of relationship satisfaction. Eldridge and Gilbert (1990) set the foundation for specifically exploring the link between match on disclosure level at work and relationship satisfaction. Additionally, disclosure of sexual orientation within the workplace has been significantly associated with lower levels of work-home conflict (r=-.30, p<.001, Day & Schoenrade, 1997), which may translate to higher relationship satisfaction. Ossana (2000) contends that differences pertaining to lifestyle management issues, such as coming out, may introduce a source of stress into the relationship, as partner's may interpret and internalize such differences as negative messages about identifying as lesbian. Identity management will also be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter with specific focus on sexual orientation disclosure in the workplace.

Identity management, equity, and social support have been directly linked to relationship satisfaction for lesbian couples. Additionally, when investigating what compromises a satisfying relationship for dual-career partnered lesbians it seems important to investigate factors related to the environments in which such women exist. The collective findings of studies particular to relationship satisfaction, and others reviewed in the current paper, suggest that in addition to what we know about the

components of relationship satisfaction, internalized heterosexism and factors related to the work lives of partnered lesbians may play a role.

Internalized Heterosexism

Attitudes and behaviors that maintain heterosexual orientation as the only acceptable sexual orientation is known as *heterosexism* (Herek, 1996; Herek & Glunt,1995). This bias pervades society and forms social stigma in a variety of ways including: lack of legal sanction of same-sex couples, belief of superiority of heterosexuality as compared to homosexuality or bisexuality, assumptions of heterosexuality without knowledge of one's sexual orientation, and anti-lesbian discrimination or harassment (Szymanski, 2005). Specific heterosexist events experienced by LGB individuals, described within a measure entitled the Schedule of Heterosexist Events (SHE) adapted by Selvidge (2000) from the Schedule of Sexist Events (Klonoff and Landrine, 1995), include but are not limited to: unfair treatment by teachers, employers, coworkers, fellow students, strangers, counselors and/or neighbors; being denied a promotion or raise; and being called a derogatory name, hearing jokes, or being made fun of related to same-sex sexual orientation. Such societal heterosexism leads many LGB individuals to monitor their behaviors to avoid being identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual and to pass as heterosexual (Herek, 1996).

Individuals targeted by societal negativity endure extraordinary personal development challenges due to internal manifestations of routine messages that same-sex sexual orientation is deviant and improper (DiPlacido,1998; Fassinger, 1996). Multiple life realms are entrenched in this system, and the internalization of experiencing such vast societal negativity is well researched. The term *internalized homophobia,* defined as

negative attitudes held about oneself due to the identification with societal negative

beliefs about homosexuality, has been targeted as an important variable of study, as

researchers rank it as significant factor in the lives of lesbians and gay men (Shidlo, 1994;

Szymanski, Chung, & Balsam, 2001). Szymanski and Chung (2001) argued that while

most clinicians and researchers have utilized the term *internalized homophobia* or

internalized homonegativism, the term *internalized heterosexism* is more representative

of the experience of LGB individuals. The authors posit that heterosexism refers to the

oppressive social structure maintaining the denial of any way of being other than

heterosexual behavior. As such, internalized heterosexism more correctly encompasses

the adoption of a belief system that degrades the feelings and identity LGB individuals

experience within themselves, rather than referencing an irrational fear as with the use of

"phobia." Additionally, the authors put forward that inclusion of the phrase "sexism"

correctly denotes the role of gender in the oppression of sexual minorities. Szymanski

and Chung referred to the construct as internalized heterosexism when reviewing past

research on internalized homophobia and noted that the Lesbian Internalized

Homophobia Scale (Szymanski &Chung, 2001) was developed to appropriately assess

internalized heterosexism. Szymanski further clarified that she adapted her writing from

using the term internalized homophobia to utilizing internalized heterosexism in her later

writings as the latter term became the preferred manner of referencing the construct

(D.M. Szymanski, personal communication, June 28, 2005). Thus, in reviewing the

empirical support for this construct, the term internalized heterosexism will be utilized

when referencing past research as well as when referencing the focus of the current study,

keeping in mind that within the professional literature both terms are thought to represent the same construct.

Research on identity development suggests that all LGB individuals experience internalization of societal heterosexism to some degree (Shidlo, 1994). Early research evidenced the link between psychological distress, lower levels of self-esteem, and lower degree of community integration, social support, and internalized heterosexism for gay men (Herek & Glunt, 1995; Shidlo, 1994). Correlates of internalized heterosexism may be different for lesbians and gay men (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). Recently, research has begun to focus on the experience of lesbians separately (Szymanski, 2005; Szymanski & Chung, 2001; Szymanksi, Chung, & Balsam, 2001). Empirical support for the relationship of internalized heterosexism to adverse life factors has shown connections between internalized heterosexism in lesbian individuals and depression, passing as heterosexual, lack of social support, and dissatisfaction with social support (Syzmanski, Chung, & Balsam, 2001).

As identity development involves the growth of one's self-concept during the integration of a positive lesbian identity, societal and internalized heterosexism play significant roles in how this process unfolds for lesbians. Greater acceptance of one's sexual orientation clearly relates to a more positive internal self-concept. Additionally, one's experience in forming and maintaining a same-sex relationship is likely to be linked to the internalization of beliefs about same-sex relationships in general. It seems likely that an individual's level of respect for herself and for her partner, based upon beliefs about lesbian sexual orientation, may influence her perception of satisfaction with that relationship.

Fassinger (1995) discussed the difficulty associated with the interface of identity development and career development for lesbians, suggesting that energy necessary for exploration of identity and development of relationships competes with the need to focus on career concerns. Arguably, these systems are entrenched for individuals as each is a significant life feature, and internalized heterosexism can affect one's self-concept in all life realms. Studies have addressed the link between societal and internalized heterosexism and functioning in life roles occupied through careers and relationships (House, 2004a; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002). Rostosky and Riggle found internalized heterosexism to be significantly related to hiding sexual orientation within the workplace for lesbian and gay male workers. Lesbian participants in House's qualitative study reported that the negative social stigma in the workplace surrounding lesbian sexual orientation necessitated their creation of heterosexual images to hide their true identities. Participants described the resulting development of negative self-perceptions based on such false personas and negativity toward their true selves, and lack of ability to have authentic interactions with co-workers. Greater detail regarding these two keystone studies will be provided later in this chapter.

LGB individuals who are more visible may face homophobic and heterosexist events such as anti-gay violence and discrimination, or loss of a job as a result of their sexual orientation (Croteau et al., 2000; Diplacido, 1998). Internalization of the negative reactions and hostility toward their relationships and lifestyles is likely to have implications for the developing relationships, as well as the individuals involved. Experiencing such stigma against same-sex sexual orientations, at work or otherwise, makes lesbian couples needlessly vulnerable. A review of the literature addressing the

unique aspects of career development for lesbians further bolsters the connection between career and personal relationship factors.

Lesbian Career Development

While individuals' work lives can provide great fulfillment and enjoyment, Gottfredson (1986) argued that there are multiple challenges to career development for special populations. Whereas women are considered to be a special population within career psychology literature, women who also identify as members of other minority groups based on race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation face additional difficulties. Internal struggles with dual identities, possibly based on differing cultural characteristics and exacerbated by societal negativity, can create difficulty in navigating acceptable life and career options (Cook et al., 2002). Women who identify as lesbians are members of at least two minority groups as perceived by career psychology. They face bias and difficulty based on both sexual orientation and gender, possibly in addition to stereotypical responses to other characteristics such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.   The professional literature describes discriminatory and harassing acts in the workplace, feared disclosure or exposure of sexual orientation, lower combined income, and hiring discrimination as some of the career development related difficulties experienced by lesbians (Croteau et al., 2000).

Individuals internalize the values of the cultural contexts within which they operate.   Such values contain messages designating appropriate life roles, responsibilities, and options (Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2002). The social stigma of identifying as a lesbian provides the basis for discriminatory practices and occurrences that affect the personal and work lives of lesbians. A report documenting over 130 cases

of workplace discrimination provides an introduction to the vast number of individuals who have experienced such negative impact of sexual orientation stigma (Human Rights Campaign, 2001). Incidents of harassment, job loss, violence, and career advancement restriction upon the identification of same-sex sexual orientation are justification for fearing such identity disclosure at work. The Human Rights Campaign report addressed the many ways in which sexual orientation may be exposed, including through one's identification as a member of a lesbian couple, such as naming a same-sex partner as a life insurance beneficiary or claiming insurance reimbursement for medical attention for a same sex-partner. Partnered lesbians face unique difficulties within life roles, stemming from the negative view of same-sex sexual orientation.

Cook (1993) made a distinction between the career development of men and women based on socio-cultural gender expectations and norms. Specifically, Cook described the development of gender specific occupational achievement and interpersonal relationship orientation, as well as work environment assumptions based on socio-cultural influence as the two main concepts related to differential career planning of men and women. Cook described the difference as "the gendered context of lives" (p. 230). External pressure to adhere to typical roles of the male provider and the female nurturer prescribe fundamental life role expectations that affect career planning, choice, and outcome. The author urged that functional models of career development for women must address the interface between career and relationship life domains.

Due to the realities of societally imposed gender differences, career development of lesbians may be quite different from that of heterosexual women and gay men (Fassinger, 1995). In an investigation of 118 partnered lesbian and gay male disclosure

status at work, female participants reported significantly less household income than male participants; χ^2 (5, n=231) = 14.12, p<0.05 (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002). Of the couples who participated in the study, there were no other significant gender differences found with respect to demographic variables, such as age, race, and years together .

Conflicting evidence regarding comparison of salaries among heterosexual, gay, and lesbian couples may indicate the changing nature of contemporary dual-earner couples. While reports indicate that on average women are earning lower salaries than men (Black, Gates, Sanders, &Taylor, 2000; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002), females in same-sex relationships seem to be earning significantly higher salaries than females in heterosexual relationships (Kurdek, 2005). Within an analysis of demographic information about the lesbian and gay population in the United States, Black et al. found that while the mean income for partnered lesbian women was higher than both heterosexually partnered and single women, the mean income for all women regardless of partnership status or sexual orientation was less than the mean reported income for men. The authors found that earnings for partnered gay men tended to be less than for heterosexual men but remained higher than that of partnered lesbian women. Although Kurdek (2004) reported increasing salaries for lesbian women, the lack of family protected benefits serves to lower income as the purchase of multiple individual benefit plans often costs more than purchasing family coverage. The absence of protections for lesbian headed families, such as legalized marriages and the associated benefits, poses a different future perspective for lesbians than heterosexual women. Individuals who identify as lesbian may assume greater independence and circumscribe to certain higher paying occupations as they may not expect financial support from a significant other to

be an option (Fassinger, 1995). Further difficulty arises when entrance to career options is blocked based on sexual orientation disclosure.

Reason to fear exposure of a lesbian sexual orientation within the workplace was reinforced in a study of hiring practices by Weichselbaumer (2003). The researcher fabricated job application letters to gather data intended to identify instances of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender. Twelve hundred and twenty two application letters were sent to 613 job postings. The applications were identical on all measures except indication of sexual orientation and gender identity. The applicants described in the letters matched on demographic characteristics of education level and experience with differences only in gender identity and sexual orientation. The author reported that gender identity was indicated through gender specific hobbies, and sexual orientation was inferred on applications through description of past work experience as a manager of a gay alliance. To control for work experience, letters from heterosexual applicants included work for a comparable not-for-profit organization that was not oriented to sexual identity. These inferences were tested prior to collecting data for this study. Although results showed no significant differences based on gender identity, the letters indicating work with the gay alliance elicited significantly fewer invitations for interviews than those that did not make reference to sexual orientation ($z=3.39$, $p<.01$).

The workplace has been identified as a realm of gender and sexual orientation discrimination posing difficulties for the career development of women, and additional complexity for lesbian individuals (Bieschke & Toepfer-Hendey, in press; Croteau, 1996; Croteau et al., 2000; Fassinger, 1991, 1995). Such discrimination highlights the interface of personal characteristics and one's work-life, and gives lesbian individuals reason to

fear exposing sexual orientation and same-sex relationship status at work (Croteau, 1996; Human Rights Campaign, 2001). As an increasing number of women are incorporating greater work roles into their identities (Gilbert, 1994), and being in a relationship with a woman serves to make one's lesbian sexual orientation more observable, it is important to explore the relationship between the roles of partner and worker for lesbians in dual-earner partnerships.

Dual Earner Relationships

Because the dual-earner couple is becoming more of a normative lifestyle than American culture has experienced in the past, it is important to explore how this faction experiences the interface of work and relationships. Research investigating the career development of individuals, as well as the lives of couples has influenced tremendous progress in understanding the course and extent of partners' combined competing role demands and ideologies (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1984). Unfortunately, such research has primarily focused on the experiences of heterosexual couples (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1984; Ossana, 2000; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976). Ossana reported that of the marriage and family therapy literature published between 1975 and 1995 only .006% of articles pertained to LGB relationships. To date, a few articles addressing both heterosexual and same-sex dual-earner couples have found differences with respect to correlates of relationship satisfaction (Kurdek, 1995; Savoy & Worthington, 2003). Savoy and Worthington found perceived social support and equity to be significantly linked to relationship satisfaction for women with female partners, as well as for those with male partners. Additionally, for women with male partners, relationship satisfaction was predicted by gender self-acceptance, coping by modifying roles and standards, and

coping by procuring support. The few empirical investigations dedicated to the unique experiences of dual-earner partnered lesbians have identified correlates accounting for up to 20% of the variance of relationship satisfaction (Savoy & Worthington, 2003), indicating that there is much we do not know about how these lesbian couples experience relationships. The societal implications associated with identifying as a same-sex couple, along with previous research indicating differences between heterosexual and lesbian couples, provide justification for further exploration of the unique experience of lesbian couples. To this end, the proposed study is intended to have a particular focus on the link between workplace factors and relationship satisfaction for lesbian couples.

While limited empirical research has focused specifically on the complex issues faced by partnered lesbians, results of empirical studies addressing the differences for heterosexual and same-sex couples (Kurdek, 1998; Savoy & Worthington, 2003) validate the need for further inquiry into the unique experiences of lesbian couples. Furthermore, existing empirical and theoretical literature addressing the experiences of lesbians within various life roles, such as vocational issues for lesbians, identifies factors that need empirical attention for lesbians in the context of dual-career relationships (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Rotsosky & Riggle, 2002).

Although dual-career and multiple role issues for lesbian women are areas of limited empirical coverage, existing literature informs possible direction for future research (Croteau et al. 2000). Based on a comprehensive review of the relevant literature, Croteau et al. reported that in addition to issues discussed within the career development literature for women, topics of research discussed for lesbian couples include sexual identity management differences, greater equality in family maintenance

issues, and external pressures such as wage and benefits discriminatory practices. Some issues, such as sexual identity management differences between partners, are constructed within the context of a relationship. Other concerns, such as wage discrimination, arise for the individual regardless of relationship status, but are influential to and often intensified within a relationship.

For lesbian couples, the contextual factors of each partner combine to affect the lifestyle and experiences of both individuals. In a review of the literature on career interventions for gay and lesbian clients Pope (1995) identified six articles that recommended working with both partners when attending to issues for dual-earner couples. The articles, all theoretically based and published between the years 1987 and 1993, identified a need for dual-earner couples to have role models who are out at work. While it seems particularly beneficial to have role models to help navigate being out at work, clearly discrimination concerns previously discussed in the present review identify the potential risk involved in disclosing sexual orientation in the workplace. Pope also indicated that articles identified socioeconomic status differences and geographic relocation of one's partner as issues that arise for dual-earner gay and lesbian couples. Pope called for research on the inclusion of both partners in career counseling involving dual-career issues, as both partner's issues potentially impact the relationship. Clearly both partners' contextual factors, independently and as a couple, are influential to the central issues. The research studies discussed next illustrate this phenomenon for partnered lesbians.

Within Croteau et al.'s (2000) review, conclusions from two empirical studies for partnered lesbians were highlighted. Driscoll, Kelley, and Fassinger (1996) investigated

lesbian identity disclosure within the workplace. The authors found that the length of relationship for the 123 partnered lesbians in their study was significantly positively correlated to workplace disclosure of sexual orientation (.26, *p* = .004) and significantly negatively correlated to workplace stress (-.22, *p* = .02). Longer relationships typified more disclosure within the workplace and less perceived work related stress. Although disclosure at work was not significantly related to work stress for the participants in the Driscoll et al. study, a more recent study by Griffith and Hebl (2002) found disclosure at work to be related to higher job satisfaction and lower job stress for the 159 lesbian and 220 gay male participants. Shachar and Gilbert (1983) explored role conflicts and coping strategies of lesbian workers and found that integrating the roles of worker and lover created the most role conflict, as compared to other life roles, for partnered lesbians.

Findings from prior studies specifically depict consequences of the interface among occupied life roles and mitigating contextual elements for participants of the study. Role conflict between personal life and work life, safety issues surrounding disclosure of sexual orientation at work, and factors associated with partners having two different occupations (geographic location and SES differences) were identified as factors influencing lesbian dual-earner couples. A specific goal of the current study is identification of the contribution work related variables may have in predicting the relationship satisfaction of lesbians in dual-earner partnerships. To this end the aforementioned research is fundamental in suggesting a significant link between personal relationships and work experiences for partnered lesbians.

A predominant factor identified in both research and theoretical literature is sexual orientation disclosure in the workplace (Boatwright et al., 1996; Day &

Schoenrade, 1997; House, 2004a, 2004b; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002). In a comprehensive review of the empirical literature related to workplace experiences of LGB individuals, Croteau (1996) stated that between 22-66% of LGB study participants experienced discrimination based upon sexual orientation at work, even though these studies drew participants from many states that have policies prohibiting such discrimination (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). The rates of discrimination are arguably higher for those who work in an environment not under the protection of non-discrimination policies. Research has substantiated the connection between discrimination and identity management strategies at work, highlighting the risks of coming out in the workplace (Griffith & Hebl, 2002). The following literature review outlines the existing research relevant to management of sexual orientation identity and related experiences for lesbians.

Identity Management

Discrimination based upon sexual orientation may limit career opportunities, making it difficult for individuals who openly identify as lesbian to secure satisfying and safe work environments (Waldo, 1999). Taking into consideration the chance of encountering discrimination, lesbian individuals make decisions about disclosure of sexual orientation at work as well as in other life realms that may influence participation in the work world.

The concept of identity management, often used interchangeably with disclosure status or "outness" may be complicated for lesbian individuals attempting to balance the interaction between two or more life roles. Disclosure status at work is often determined by work environment and workplace policies (Day & Schoenrade, 2000; Rotsosky & Riggle, 2002), while outness in one's personal life may rely more heavily on identity

development level, social support, and personal choice. Individuals typically have more control over the people with whom they spend leisure time than those with whom they must share workspace. The bulk of available empirical investigation addressing lesbian career issues focuses on identity management and disclosure. Several qualitative studies address lesbian or lesbian and gay identity management in the workplace (Boatwright, Gilbert, Forrest, & Ketzenberger, 1996; Hall, 1986; House, 2004a) but do not specifically address the implications for partnered lesbians. More recently, empirical investigations into workplace disclosure and identity management exposed the significance of such concerns for individuals of same-sex couples (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002). The following review of these studies suggests the importance of exploring how lesbian couples experience identity management within the workplace.

Within a qualitative study of the impact of identity development upon career development, Boatwright et al. (1996) identified several personal and job related implications for identity management in the workplace. Ten women identifying as lesbian answered 20 pre-set interview questions aimed at eliciting information pertaining to coming out, adolescence, career exploration and development, homophobia and internalized homophobia, and connection to the lesbian community. While the study findings are not highly generalizable, as they represent the experiences of 10 individuals, the emerging themes both support existing literature and pave a path for future research. A significant theme materializing from this study is the fear of being discovered by co-workers. Participants reported various identity management issues, such as constant self-monitoring and purposeful isolation from co-workers. Participants reported that fears of disclosing sexual orientation within the workplace include losing their jobs, loss of

respect of co-workers and supervisors, unspecified repercussions, and being exposed as the target of homophobic jokes. The authors detailed effects of maintaining a false identity at work including self-hate due to dishonesty, self-monitoring causing alternate interaction patterns (such as being indirect with others), and feeling badly about oneself for lacking the courage to be open.

Another qualitative study of 10 lesbian participants sought to integrate participants' responses to questions of career barriers into a lifespan model of career development (House, 2004a). House found that 6 of the 10 participants took measures to hide their sexual orientation in the workplace due to non-acceptance of same-sex sexual orientation. Participants explained that creating a heterosexual image felt restricting and fake. The themes elicited from these studies implicate negative social stigma as an instigator of discriminatory and cruel practices that cause individuals to be guarded about sexual orientation.   Such self-monitoring was shown to affect the individual's self-perception as well as her ability to have authentic interactions with others. While the effects of the identified personal themes upon home lives and romantic relationships are not addressed within the scope of these particular studies, it is most notable that workplace identity management was a confirmed struggle for lesbian participants.   The identification of this struggle for individuals would seemingly be intensified for partnered lesbians, as factors for each individual become part of the other individual's experience. As such, the systems acting upon one's own lifestyle become augmented, affecting the individual, her partner, and the relationship.   Relevant research has begun to identify and explore such concerns for the individuals within relationships.

In light of considerable heterosexist and discriminatory acts, lesbians continue to hide their sexual orientation from co-workers and employers. As a product of a survey of relationship satisfaction among 275 lesbian couples, Eldridge and Gilbert (1990) found that 65% of participants had not disclosed their sexual orientation to employers and 37% of participants had not disclosed their sexual orientation to any co-workers. Although the vast majority of this study did not examine career related variables, resulting data suggests that identity management within the workplace may be an important factor within lesbian relationships.

In an empirical investigation of the relationship of disclosure in the workplace to work attitudes for 259 lesbian, 485 gay male, and 263 heterosexual respondents, Day and Schoenrade (1997) found that ten percent of the variance for conflict between work and home was accounted for by disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace (R^2=.10, p=.000), accounting for the most variance of any of the studied variables. Significant relationships were found between lesbian employees' disclosure of sexual orientation at work and increased loyalty to the workplace based on congruent values with the organization (r=.16, p<.001), decreased work to home conflict (r=-.30, p<.001), the presence of workplace non-discrimination policies (r=.28, p<.001), and top management support for non-discrimination (r=.50, p<.001). The authors also found that the presence of workplace antidiscrimination policies and the presence of top management support for such nondiscrimination policies were related to higher job satisfaction (r=.21, r=.38 respectively, p<.001) and loyalty (r=.23, r=.40 respectively, p<.001), and lower conflict between work and home (r=-.19, r=-.35 respectively, p<.001). Although no causality can be inferred from this correlational study, the authors proposed that less work to home

conflict is experienced for those working in an affirmative environment due to one's ability to be honest about his or her partner. The authors also posited that work environment may be irrelevant, and suggested that personal confidence, such as confidence in sexual identity and life situation, may influence disclosure at work. This implicates sexual identity development and personality variables as factors influencing identity disclosure at work. The authors further suggested that organizations that post antidiscrimination policies are typically concerned with the welfare of employees in general, and might possess other positive qualities such as partner-covered benefits.

In a pioneering cross sectional study of 118 gay and lesbian couples, Rostosky and Riggle (2002) further explored the relationships among workplace non-discrimination policies, personal confidence (internalized heterosexism), and sexual orientation disclosure. The authors found workplace nondiscrimination policies to be positively associated with the degree to which individuals disclosed sexual orientation at work (r=.375, p<.01). Furthermore, a positive relationship was found between the extent of the individual's outness at work and his or her partner's workplace nondiscrimination policy [t(160) = 2.72, p<.001].   A significant negative relationship was found between internalized heterosexism and disclosure of sexual orientation at work (r=-.498, p<.01), such that greater disclosure of sexual orientation at work was related to lower levels of internalized heterosexism. The authors concluded that disclosure of sexual identity at work is related to factors at employer, individual, and relationship levels. Disclosure of sexual orientation at work was not only related to individual identity development and internalized homophobia level, but was also related to the presence of non-discrimination policies at one's own workplace [*t* (160) = 4.45, *p*<.001] and at one's partner's workplace

[$t(160) = 2.72$, $p<.001$]. When such influential factors work to support both partners in the relationship, positive growth can occur individually and on the relationship level.

Based on aforementioned data indicative of workplace identity management issues for an individual, noteworthy personal and relationship strains may occur when one partner's workplace characteristics, goals and values conflict with that of her significant other. For example, a lesbian whose partner differs in degree of outness, or approach to identity management, may be susceptible to significant stress surrounding this issue within the management of her own life roles as well as the relationship. It may be significantly more difficult for the relationship when one partner discloses sexual orientation within the workplace the other partner fears exposure within her own work environment. The interplay between varying identity management strategies is likely a significant issue for partnered lesbians. Bieschke and Toepfer-Hendey (in press) posit that realistic systemic issues present concerns for lesbians when making decisions regarding disclosure status at work, although within a relationship partners may take disclosure as an indication of commitment to the relationship. Thus, a mismatch on disclosure status between partners had clear potential to cause conflict in the relationship. For example, studies of domestic violence revealed that an imbalance of power exists when one partner may threaten sexual orientation disclosure as a form of control in the relationship (Matthews, Tartaro, & Hughes, 2003). Research identifying identity management concerns suggests that disclosure status of each individual and match on disclosure status between partners of a couple are factors influential to relationship satisfaction (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Jordan & Deluty, 2000).

The effect of disclosure of sexual orientation on the relationship satisfaction of lesbians has been investigated in a few studies to date (Caron & Ulin, 1997; Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990). While Eldridge and Gilbert did not find a significant relationship between sexual orientation disclosure and relationship satisfaction for their sample, Caron and Ulin (1997) found that lesbians who disclosed their sexual orientation and had partners who disclosed their sexual orientation reported higher relationship satisfaction than those who did not widely disclose. It is clear that more exploration of this phenomenon is necessary in light of inconsistent findings.   Results suggest that dissatisfaction with one's relationship is associated with the complexity of hiding lesbian sexual orientation while in a committed relationship.   In a discussion of couple's therapy issues, Greene and Mitchell (2002) suggested that frustration, stress, and arguments related to high degrees of self-monitoring and pre-occupation with identity disclosure may penetrate the solidarity of couples.

Limitations of the Existing Research

Due in part to the difficulty of exploring the experiences of people who identify as lesbian, as potential participants remain uncertain about disclosing information about their identities, a great deal of the existing research is limited by design concerns (Browne, 2005).   Such limitations must be identified, keeping in mind that any information derived is helpful in explaining a phenomenon, and some limitations may be resolved within future research (Gelso, 1979). Convenience or snowball sampling, such as garnering participants through a friendship circle or a gay rights advocate group, has been a common manner of securing participants, but has limited the generalizability of findings (Browne, 2005; Day & Schoenrade, 1997). An additional limitation to the

generalizability of findings includes a lack of nationally representative samples. Most empirical studies have samples comprised of mainly White, middle-class participants. The use of measures lacking reliability and validity data for use with lesbian participants, as well as self report bias inherent in most instruments utilized in these studies provide further limitations.

Conclusion

Research and theory clearly suggest identity management to be a significant concern in the lives of lesbian individuals, and is made more complex as a member of a same-sex couple. Due to discrimination based upon sexual orientation, and the growing importance of work in the lives of women, lesbians in dual-earner relationships may experience their relationships differently as a result of varying workplace factors. Additionally, societal norms surrounding sexual orientation have influenced lesbian individuals to hold negative views of themselves due to lesbian identity, known in the literature as internalized heterosexism (Szymanski & Chung, 2001). Such negative feelings toward lesbian identity in general are likely to also relate to relationship satisfaction as a partnered lesbian. Based on a review of the literature the following variables are thought to contribute significantly to relationship satisfaction for women in committed dual-earner same-sex relationships: internalized heterosexism, perceived social support, equity, and identity management strategy, as well as the presence of workplace nondiscrimination policies and domestic partner benefits. Additionally, match between partners on identity management strategy will be analyzed as a relationship variable.

Chapter 3

Method

This chapter presents the method for exploring the hypotheses of the proposed study. A description of the participants, inclusion criteria, manner of recruiting participants, procedures of data collection, instruments, and method of data analysis will also be described.

Participants

Participants in the study included women who identified themselves as being in dual-earner same-sex relationships. For this research dual-earner denotes a couple in which both partners are working full-time. Although the term dual-earner may be taken more broadly to encompass couples in which both partners work outside the home for any amount of time, an attempt has been made in this study to diminish the degree of confounding variables by more narrowly defining respondents' participation in the work-world. All participants were over 18 years of age.

Demographic profile of the respondents. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the demographic profile of the 236 respondents who met inclusion criteria for analysis. Study participants (N = 236) were 20 to 62 years of age (*m* = 37.9, *sd* = 9.2). Approximately ninety-nine percent of participants identified as "female," while one participant's self described gender was "butch." With respect to sexual orientation, participants self-identified in the following manner: 85.2 % "Lesbian", 7.6% "Bisexual", 0.8% "Gay", 3% "Queer", 1.3% "Exploring Lesbian Identity, 1.7% "Other", and 0.4% did not identify sexual orientation. The sample was predominantly Caucasian (83.1%),

but demonstrated some racial/ethnic diversity, including African American/Black (7.6%),

Asian American/Asian (1.7 %), Latino American/Hispanic (3%), Native American

(0.8%), and Multiracial or Biracial (3%) individuals and 0.8% did not indicate their

race/ethnicity.   With respect to highest level of education completed, 5.9% of

participants earned a high school diploma/GED, 11% have an associate's degree, 27.5%

have a bachelor's degree, 32.6% have a master's degree, and 17.8% have a professional

degree. Participant's annual income ranged from under $15,000 (3.4%) to over $100,000

(8.9%). Approximately 70% of the sample reported earning an annual income between

$25,001 and 75,000. This sample was comprised of predominantly Caucasian, educated,

women earning salaries in the moderate range. The sample showed great diversity with

respect to length of relationship. With respect to their current relationships, participants

reported being in committed relationships for 2.5 months to approximately 31 years, with

a mean relationship length of approximately five and a half years. The majority of

participants reported living with their partner (85.6%) and that they did not have children

living in the home (77.5%).

    Employment profile of the respondents. Tables 3 and 4 summarize the

employment profile of the 236 respondents who met inclusion criteria for analysis.

Participants were fairly evenly distributed with respect to the size of organization for

which they worked and showed diversity with respect to field of employment. While

every field of employment was represented in this sample, the highest percentage of

participants worked in Education (29.7%) and Health-care/Mental health-care (22%).

Over 16% of participants endorsed "other," meaning that their field of employment was

 not represented on the list of choices taken from the U.S. census. Participants reported

having worked full-time for less than one year to 41 years.

Recruitment. Participants in this study were recruited using a sampling method

well-documented for use with research attending to the lesbian population. Gaining the

participation of lesbian individuals has been challenging as societal negativity associated

with same-sex sexual orientation often causes individuals to hide their identities to

varying degrees. Use of the internet to recruit and survey participants poses a promising

alternative to requiring participants to give up anonymity to research team members and

possibly others in order to contribute to the research process (Mustanski, 2001). Past

studies have disseminated advertisements to lesbian individuals through LGBT

associated printed publications, internet listservs, and events (House, 2004b; Savoy,

2003; Weber, 2005) These methods hold promise of national representation of

participants, but are limited in that participants have most likely had to access to some

sort of LGBT organization to find out about the study. While such recruiting methods

pose limitations to the research results, the research nonetheless contributes greatly to the

existing body of knowledge and is preferable to neglecting to explore issues for

marginalized and hidden populations (Koch & Emrey, 2001).

Mustanski (2001) cited newsgroups, listservs, and web-pages as viable tools for

recruitment of LGB participants. Use of the internet allows for a great degree of

anonymity in research exploring the experiences of members of marginalized and hidden

populations such as the LGBT population (Koch & Emrey, 2001). A request to advertise

this study was submitted to listserv administrators for those listservs employing an

administrator. Other listservs requested that messages be posted directly. Upon

receiving approval where necessary, a recruitment email describing the study and asking for participation was posted to listservs (Appendix A). Recruitment of participants who represent diversity in terms of race/ethnicity, education level, income, age, and geographical region was pursued through the posting and recruiting on both racially/ethnically specific and non-LGB specific listservs, as well as posting advertisements for the study in print form to reach those who do not regularly utilize the internet. The advertisement suggested possible internet access points for public use (such as community libraries) to allow those who do not have internet access means of completing the surveys.

Inclusion criteria. For the present study, advertisements requesting the participation of women, 18 years of age or older, who are in committed same-sex relationships were circulated via print and electronic formats. In addition, it was required that both partners be engaged in full-time employment during the past year of the relationship. Participants were informed that while the study explored the experience of lesbian couples, analysis of data comprised individual variables as well as the match between partners. Therefore, while the researcher was eager to recruit the participation of both members of each couple, the information from one member of a couple offers a valuable contribution if the participation of both members was not possible. In order to maintain confidentiality, partners participating in this study did not have access to each other's data. As an incentive for participation, a $100 donation was made to the Human Rights Campaign by the principle investigator (Appendix B).

Data Collection

    Procedure. Data was collected using an anonymous online survey accessible via Psychdata.net (www.psychdata.net), a web-based company dedicated to hosting social science related research. Participants were asked to complete the survey at their convenience. All had access to the initial web-page, which provided the requirements for participation in the study, a basic description of the research, and a voluntary informed consent statement (Appendix C). Only those who completed the informed consent requirement had access to the survey web-pages. After participants acknowledged that they read and understood the information presented and agreed to participate in the study, they were presented with a question asking whether they were the first or second member of a couple to respond to the study. Participants identifying themselves as the initial respondent were directed to the survey, and upon completion of the survey were given instructions to provide their unique respondent number to their partners which were utilized in analysis to match members of each couple. Participants were informed that their data was still useful, even if their partner decided not to participate. Participants who identified as the second partner to respond to the study were asked to enter the code given to them by their partners and were then directed to the survey web-pages.

    Prior to sending out recruitment e-mails or posting advertisements, I asked five people review the website to assess clarity of instructions. Additionally, this pilot aided in obtaining accurate information for advertisements with regard to the length of time participants should expect to spend completing the survey. Preliminary study participants reported that completion of the survey took about 20 minutes. Participants also reported ease of utilization of the webpage and clarity of the instructions.

Security of responses and protection of participants. Participants were informed that the couple code could only be utilized for analysis purposes, to allow the researcher to match the surveys of members of each couple, and did not allow individuals to access and view their partners' survey answers. Security and anonymity within the online system was maintained by the individual respondent numbers, as well as encryption using SSL (secure server layer) technology.

Approval to conduct research involving human subjects was acquired from the Institutional Review Board of The Pennsylvania State University prior to conducting the study. Participation in this study was voluntary and confidential. Participants could stop participating in the survey at any time and had the option of not responding to every question.

Instruments

Seven measures including a demographic questionnaire were utilized to assess the relationship between the independent variables (internalized heterosexism, self-disclosure of sexual orientation, workplace policies, social support, and relationship equity/power) and the dependant variables (dyadic adjustment and relationship satisfaction). Each measure is described below, including rationale for use. The total survey was comprised of 168 items and took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Five volunteers completed the survey and offered feedback prior to recruitment of participants for the sample to be analyzed. Pilot study volunteers reported that they completed the survey in about 20 minutes, used the website with ease, and had no concerns about the length of the survey.

Demographic questionnaire. A researcher constructed demographic questionnaire (Appendix D) was developed to obtain the following information about

participants: age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity/race, education level, length of relationship with current partner, if living together with current partner, field of occupation, length of time at current job, income, if children are living with participant. Information regarding geographic region of residence and method of learning about the study were obtained to assess the extent to which a nationally representative sample was obtained as well as well as for effectiveness of various recruitment methods.

Workplace policies and practices. The existence of supportive workplace policies and practices was assessed by six items utilized in Ragins and Cornwell's (2001) study of antecedents and consequences of workplace discrimination against gay and lesbian employees (Appendix E). The items explore the presence of nondiscrimination policies including sexual orientation, diversity awareness and training including sexual orientation, same-sex domestic partner benefits, as well as the extent of welcoming of same-sex partners at company social events. "Yes," "no," or "don't know" responses are coded as 1, 0, or missing data respectively, and items are summed to obtain total scale score of policies and practices ranging from 0 to 6 with lower values indicative of lower levels of supportive policies and procedures (Ragins & Cornwell). The authors reported that in their sample, a .82 coefficient alpha was obtained. A regression analysis showed that these items had a significant negative relationship with workplace discrimination, and significant positive relationships with supportive workplace policies and practice and the presence of gay co-workers (Ragins & Cornwell). Although the authors put forward that the items are based upon existing literature, validity data was not reported. The alpha coefficient for this measure in the current study was .79.

The high percentage of participants who answered "don't know" to multiple items on this measure resulted in a large amount of missing data for the current sample. Table 5 summarizes the responses of participants for each item on the policies and practices measure. The percentage of participants who answered "don't know" ranged from 13.7 to 19.2 for five of the six items, while only 5.5 percent of participants answered "don't know" to the question "does your organization offer same-sex domestic partner benefits?" To the end of preserving the integrity of the data while maintaining the largest possible sample for initial statistical analyses "don't know" responses were assigned a score of zero, treating these responses as qualitatively similar to "no" responses. As it can be argued that "don't know" and "no" responses may be qualitatively distinct., the principle investigator of this study ran post-hoc analyses utilizing only the item, "Does your organization offer same-sex domestic partner benefits?"

Internalized heterosexism. The Lesbian Internalized Homophobia Scale (LIHS; Szymanski & Chung, 2001) measured internalized heterosexism (Appendix F). The LIHS is a 52-item scale with five subscales. The five subscales are: (1) Connection with the Lesbian Community (CLC), (2) Public Identification as a Lesbian (PIL), (3) Personal Feelings About Being a Lesbian (PFL), (4) Moral and Religious Attitudes Toward Lesbianism (MRATL), and (5) Attitudes Toward Other Lesbians (ATOL). The scale is comprised of Likert-type items on a 7-point continuum (1 = strongly agree to 7= strongly disagree). The average total and subscale scores indicate the degree of internalized heterosexism, with a higher degree of internalized heterosexism indicated by a high average score. The LIHS was shown to be reliable and valid as an assessment of internalized heterosexism with lesbian participants. Inter-subscale correlations, ranging

from .37 to .57, demonstrated that the five LIHS subscales are distinct but correlated

dimensions as they are internally consistent and correlate moderately with each other

(Szymanski & Chung, 2001). Additionally, significant correlations between the total

scale LIHS and established criterion measures for self-esteem (r = -.255, $p < .01$) and

loneliness (r = .406, $p < .01$) demonstrated good construct validity of the LIHS

(Szymanski & Chung). The LIHS demonstrated strong internal reliability, with

coefficient alpha scores ranging from .74 to .92 for each of the subscales (Szymanski &

Chung, 2001). Szymanzki and Chung reported an alpha coefficient of .94 for the total

scale for their participants, as well as correlations ranging from .60 to .87 between the

total scale score and subscale scores. In a study assessing psychosocial correlates of

internalized heterosexism for lesbians, Szymanski, Chung, and Balsam (2001) reported

an alpha for the total scale score of .93, and alphas for subscales of .93, .82, .92, .78, .63,

and .74 (CLC, PIL, PFL, MRATL, ATOL respectively). For this study the total scale

score was used in the analysis, as together the aforementioned subscales both capture

qualities that relate to the individual as a lesbian and conceivably relate to attitudes

toward a relationship with a lesbian. The alpha coefficient for this measure in the current

study was .92.

Self- disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace. A 7-item measure

comprised of six published items developed by Day and Schoenrade (1997) and one

published item developed by Ragins and Cornwell (2001) was used to assess self-

disclosure in the workplace (Appendix G). These seven items, which tender a specific

and global appraisal of identity management within the workplace, were used in House's

(2004) study of predictors of self disclosure in the workplace.   One item, originally

developed by Ragins and Cornwell, "At work, have you disclosed your sexual orientation to: (please check one): (1) no one, (2) some people, (3) most people, (4) everyone?" offers a global appraisal of the amount of people to which individuals disclose sexual orientation. This item serves as a general indication of the degree of self-disclosure in the workplace not addressed in Day and Schoenrade's six-item measure. House argued that the six items developed by Day and Schoenrade offer an important specification of self-disclosure with respect to various rank of employees in the work-place, such as supervisor or subordinate, and maintain a multi-item measure without requiring details regarding particular identity management behaviors. The question, "How hard do you try to keep your sexual orientation a secret from the people at work?" serves as a base for these six items in which respondents were asked to answer with respect to each of six levels of employees in the workplace: co-workers, immediate supervisors, other supervisors, subordinates, middle management, and top management. The following choices were offered, in a Likert-type response scale, to the questions: (1) I try very hard to keep it a secret, (2) I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret, (3) I don't try to keep it a secret, (4) I actively talk about it to others. The scale score was derived by summing responses from each of the seven items, with higher scores signifying greater self-disclosure of sexual orientation and a lower score signifying a lower degree of self-disclosure of sexual orientation.

The six items developed and utilized by Day and Schoenrade (1997) in a study of identity management at work for gay men and lesbians demonstrated good construct validity through significant correlations between the measure and the proportion of coworkers told about participants' sexual orientation ($r = .4$, $p < .001$, n = 522). The

reported alpha coefficient for the measure was .97 (Day & Schoenrade). No validity or reliability data were reported for the item utilized by Ragins and Cornwell (2001). A recent dissertation study exploring lesbians' experiences of being out in the workplace found the set of seven questions together to be a reliable assessment of self-disclosure with lesbian participants, reporting a Cronbach alpha of .97 for the sample (House, 2004). The alpha coefficient for this measure in the current study was .95.

  Social support. The Social Support Appraisal Scale (SSA; Vaux, Phillips, Holley, Thompson, Williams, & Stewart, 1986) assessed participants' subjective appraisal of support from family, friends, and others (Appendix H). The 23-item scale consists of three subscales that measure the extent to which respondents feel they are cared about by and involved with (1) friends, (2) family, and (3) others. The items use a Likert-type response scale with a range of 1 (strongly agree) to 4 (strongly disagree). The total scale score was derived by summing the scores of all item responses, with stronger perceived social support reflected by lower total scale scores. Items 3, 10, 13, 21, and 22 were reverse scored prior to summing.

  Vaux et al. (1986) demonstrated high levels of construct validity of the SSA with multiple samples of community individuals and university students. The SSA showed significant correlations with previously validated social support appraisal measures including the Provision of Social Relations [PSR (r =.73, p < .001)] and the Revised Kaplan Scale [RKS (r = .66, p < .001)] which share a common theoretical base with the SSA. Internal consistency across samples was demonstrated for the SSA total scale. Mean reliability coefficient scores for the three subscales: family, friends, and others were .90, .81, and .84 respectively from five studies utilizing samples of community

participants. A recent dissertation study (Savoy, 2003) confirmed the SSA as a reliable measure of social support for use with lesbian participants. Savoy reported that the alpha coefficient for women with female partners in her study was .91 for the total scale and .89 (social support from family), .88 (social support from friends), and .88 (social support from others) for the subscales. The alpha coefficient for this measure in the current study was .92. The alpha coefficient for subscales of this measure in the current study were .92 (Family) .89 (Friends), and .85 (Others).

Power in the relationship. The Influence in Relationships Scale was utilized to assess power in the relationship and was developed by Eldridge and Gilbert (1990) for a study of relationship satisfaction correlates (Appendix I). The scale was scored using a 7-point Likert type response scale for each of the 8 items ranging from 1 (very little) to 7 (a great deal). The scale score was obtained by summing the item responses, with higher scores indicating a greater sense of influence in the relationship. Eldridge and Gilbert reported that Chronbach's alpha on their sample (*n* = 545) was .83 (1991). No validity information is available. The alpha coefficient for this measure in the current study was .87.

Relationship satisfaction. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS; Spanier, 1976; 1989) was utilized to measure the dependent variables. The total scale score was utilized to assess adjustment within the relationship, and a subscale of the measure was utilized to assess relationship satisfaction more narrowly (Appendix J). The DAS is a 32-item scale with four subscales that uses a Likert-type response scale. Items have various response option ranges of 2, 4, 5 or 6 possible choices, depending on the item. Interpretation of individual subscale scores was dependent upon the sum of item responses within each

subscale. High subscale scores are indicative of absence of any problem, while low subscale scores are indicative of having a problem in the realm assessed by the respective subscale. The four subscales of the DAS are: Dyadic Consensus (extent of agreement between partners on important matters in the relationship), Dyadic Satisfaction (amount of tension in the relationship), Affectional Expression (satisfaction with the expression of affection in the relationship), and Dyadic Cohesion (extent of common interests and activities in the relationship). The total adjustment score, obtained by summing the score of the four subscales, indicates the degree of adjustment. Total scores range from 0 to 151 with better adjustment indicated by a higher total adjustment score.

The DAS has been shown to be valid and reliable as an assessment of relationship satisfaction for multiple samples. The measure demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's coefficient alpha estimates ranging from .58 to .94 for each of the subscales and from .84 to .96 for the total scale (Spanier, 1989). Kurdek and Schmitt (1986) demonstrated the viability of utilizing the DAS with gay and lesbian couples showing no significant differences in responses among gay, lesbian, and heterosexual couples. Recent studies demonstrated alpha coefficients of .88 for the total scale (Savoy, 2004) and from .63 to .85 for the subscales (Jordan & Deluty, 2000) for women with female partners. Test-retest reliability was demonstrated for the total scale with estimates of .96 for a period spanning 11 weeks (Stein, Girdod, & Dotzenroth, 1982). As the goal of this study is to assess relationship satisfaction of lesbian partners, the dyadic satisfaction subscale was utilized in this specific analysis. Additionally, the total scale score was used to assess dyadic adjustment more globally. The alpha coefficient for this measure in the current study was .86. The alpha coefficient for the dyadic satisfaction

subscale of this measure in the current study was .69, which is lower than the coefficient

alpha of .85 demonstrated in a previous study of lesbian partners (Jordan & Deluty,

2000).

Table 1

Personal Demographics Description of Sample

	n	% of sample
Gender Identity		
Female	231	99.6
Other	1	0.4
Sexual Orientation Identity		
Lesbian	198	85.3
Bisexual	18	7.8
Gay	2	0.9
Queer	7	3.0
Exploring Lesbian Identity	3	1.3
Other	4	1.7
Missing	0	0
Race/Ethnicity		
African-American/Black	18	7.8
Asian-American/Asian	4	1.7
Caucasian	193	83.2
Latino-American/Hispanic	7	3.0
Native American	2	0.9
Multi- or Bi-Racial	7	3.0
Other	1	0.4
Missing	0	0
Education Level		
Some High School	0	0
High School Diploma/GED	14	6.0
Associate's Degree	26	11.2
Bachelor's Degree	64	27.6
Master's Degree	76	32.8
Doctoral/Professional Degree	42	18.1
Other	9	3.9
Missing	1	0.4
Annual Income		
Under $15,000	8	3.4
$15,001-25,000	23	9.9
$25,001-50,000	99	42.7
$50,001-75,000	63	27.2
$75,001-100,000	16	6.9
Above $100,000	21	9.1
Missing	2	0.9

Table 1 Continued
Personal Demographics Description of Sample

	n	% of sample
Children Living in the Home		
Yes	52	22.4
No	180	77.6
Missing	0	0
Living with Partner		
Yes	200	86.2
No	32	13.8
Missing	0	0
Home Area		
Fewer than 50,000 people	58	25.0
50,000 - 1 million people	104	44.8
More than 1 million people	69	29.7
Missing	1	0.4

Note. n = number

Table 2
Profile of Age and Length of Relationship of Sample

	m	*sd*	mode	high value	low value
Length of relationship in months	69.6	67.2	24	374	2.5
Age in years	37.8	9.2	27, 44	62	20

Note. m = mean, *sd* = standard deviation

Table 3
Employment Profile of Respondents

	n	% of sample
Field of Employment		
Computer Software Engineering	7	3.0
Communications	5	2.2
Financial/Insurance Services	16	6.9
Travel and Transportation	6	2.5
Healthcare/Mental-healthcare	51	22.0
Entertainment	4	1.7
Government Agency	11	4.7
Retail	7	3.0
Advertising/Publishing	6	2.6
Design/Fashion	2	0.9
Education	69	29.7
Service	5	2.2
Other	39	16.8
Missing	4	1.7
Number of Employees in Organization		
More than 10,000	50	21.6
1,000 - 10,000	86	37.1
100 - 999	46	19.8
Fewer than 100	49	21.2
Missing	1	0.4

Table 4
Employment Demographics of the Sample

	m	*sd*	mode	maximum	minimum
Years of Full-time Employment	13.8	9.9	5.0	41.0	0.0
Months at Current Job	63.3	107.0	9.0	1200.0	1.0

Note. m = mean, *sd* = standard deviation

Table 5

Workplace Policies and Practices Measure Percentage of Participant Responses

Does your organization…	Yes	No	I Don't Know	Missing Response
Have a written nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation?	51.1	16.9	13.7	18.2
Include sexual orientation in the definition of diversity?	51.1	16.6	13.7	18.6
Include awareness of gay-lesbian-bisexual issues in diversity training	33.6	29.0	19.2	18.2
Offer same-sex domestic partner benefits?	35.8	40.4	5.5	18.2
Offer gay-lesbian-bisexual resource support groups?	19.5	45.3	16.6	18.6
Welcome same-sex partners at company social events?	57.3	8.8	15.6	18.2

Chapter 4

Results

This chapter includes the analysis of data collected through the online survey. The study results presented in Chapter 4 are summarized around the following two research questions:

1. In addition to previously established predictors (perceived social support and power), do workplace factors and internalized heterosexism significantly contribute to predicting relationship satisfaction?

> Hypothesis 1: The independent variables account for a significant portion of the variance of relationship satisfaction for participants.

2. What is the relative contribution of partner match on identity management in the workplace to classifying individuals among levels of relationship satisfaction with respect to the contribution of the remaining independent variables (social support, power, identity management in the workplace, internalized heterosexism, and workplace policies)?

> Hypothesis 2: The independent variable partner match on identity management in the workplace significantly contributes to classification of individuals among levels of relationship satisfaction.

Prior to addressing the two research study questions, a description of the study participants and a variety of preliminary analyses will be presented. Then the regression analyses related to primary research questions will be introduced.

Pre-analysis

First, the survey data were downloaded from the www.psychdata.com website. It was then necessary to determine if the number of participants recruited was sufficient to obtain a medium level effect size ($\alpha = .05$, $\beta = .20$). To this end, Tabachnick and Fiddell (2001) suggested the following calculation: $N \geq 50+8(m)$, where m equals the number of predictor variables. With respect to research question one, there are 11 predictor variables included in the present study. Therefore, it was necessary to gain participation from at least 138 individuals for regression analyses to detect a medium effect size. Relative to matched partners for couple comparisons in research question two, the planned analysis utilized 11 predictor variables and thus 138 matched couples (276 participants) were needed for the analysis. A total of 310 individuals began to participate in the study; however, there were a number of individuals who did not meet the inclusion criteria imposed for this study. To this end, data were visually inspected to eliminate surveys belonging to such participants whose demographic characteristics did not meet study criteria. This process led to the removal of two surveys completed by men, three surveys that were excluded because the participants identified as transgender, four surveys completed by individuals living outside of the United States, and 13 surveys that were excluded because the participants reported that they did not work full-time. Three additional surveys were excluded because their scores represented outliers relative to the rest of the sample. Examining the normality of variables by using box and whisker plots generated from the explore program in SPSS identified two cases as extreme outliers on the variable LIHS and one case as an extreme outlier on both DAS total scale and DAS subscale II. Removal of these cases resulted in lowering of skewness values to an

acceptable range for the affected variables. An additional 47 surveys were not able to be

used as 35 respondents entered the survey website but did not complete any items, and 12

respondents completed the demographic questionnaire but failed to complete any other

measure items. Of the remaining 236 participants who met inclusion criteria, four

participants failed to answer one of four demographic variables entered into the

hierarchical regression equation and were removed by the SPSS program during analysis.

A total of 232 respondents met criteria for inclusion in the analysis of research question

one. Out of the 232 individuals who met criteria for inclusion, there were 57 identifiable

matched pairs (n=114) who provided data for analysis in research question two. Two of

those participants were removed from the analysis by SPSS as they did not provide data

for the variable living with partner. The final analysis for research question two was run

with 112 participants.

Replacement of missing data. In this study there was an issue with missing data

that was identified as missing completely at random. The researcher did not include

cases where no demographic information was provided. Per the guidelines of Carpenter

and Kenward (www.missing data.org.uk), Lindner, Murphy and Briers (2001) and Afif,

Clark and May (2004) the researcher used linear trend at point replacement in SPSS. This

procedure replaces missing values with the linear trend for that point. The missing value

is regressed on an index of variables based on individuals in the data set who have

provided information for those variables and missing values are replaced with their

predicted values. After the missing values were replaced with the predicted values the

researcher examined whether this replacement procedure resulted in any substantive

changes in the overall values of the variables by comparing the "new" variable summary

statistics with the variable summary statistics based on only those cases that had originally provided complete information.

Summary Statistics of Scales

The means, standard deviations, and maximum and minimum scores for scores of all measures are presented in Table 6. The means suggest that respondents included in this sample report having an average degree of relationship satisfaction and an average level of relationship adjustment, while low and high reported values indicate that a broad range of levels of relationship satisfaction and adjustment are represented. Sample means also suggest that respondents of this survey had low levels of internalized heterosexism. Specifically, participants in this study indicated that they disagreed on some level to statements that determined whether they experience internalized heterosexism ($m = 1.71$, or "moderately disagree"; High Value Reported = 3.69, or "neutral"). Sample means indicate that on average study participants feel supported by family, friends, and others, and perceive that they have an above average level of power in their relationships. In terms of identity management strategy, sample means suggest that most participants in this study sample do not attempt to keep their sexual orientation a secret at work. Sample means also suggest that participants' workplaces have an average level of supportive workplace policies of which participants are aware.

An investigation of the correlations between variables resulted in a number of significant findings but few strong correlations. Correlations between demographic variables and scales of interest are presented in Table 7. Significant correlations were found between the demographic variable living with partner and the dependent variables, dyadic adjustment ($r = -.14$) and dyadic satisfaction ($r = -.13$) indicating that participants

who live with their partners reported a higher degree of relationship adjustment and satisfaction. Although these correlations are significant little variance is accounted for, indicating that the contribution that living with a partner makes to predicting relationship satisfaction is minimal relative to other predictive factors. Other demographic variables were not found to be significantly correlated with the criterion variables. Predictor variables significantly correlated with the criterion variable relationship satisfaction were as follows: internalized heterosexism ($r = -.15$), social support from family ($r = -.16$), social support from friends ($r = -.26$), social support from others ($r = -.17$), and power ($r = .32$), revealing that participants who reported higher satisfaction in their relationships also reported significantly lower internalized heterosexism, more power, and more social support from family, friends, and others. The criterion variable dyadic adjustment was significantly correlated with the three levels of social support and power in the same direction. Significant correlations were found between the demographic variable income and predictor variables social support from family ($r = -.15$), social support from friends ($r = -.15$), social support from others ($r = -.17$), and power ($r = .19$) revealing that participants with higher incomes felt more social support from family, friends, and others, as well as more power within their relationships with partners. Again, although these correlations were significant the variables account for relatively little of the variance. Age was also found to be significantly correlated with social support from friends ($r = -.19$) and with power ($r = .15$) indicating that older participants reported more social support from friends and power within their relationships with partners. Multiple scales of interest were found to be significantly correlated with each other. Internalized heterosexism was significantly correlated with social support from friends ($r = .28$),

social support from others (r = .31), power (r = -.20), identity management (r = -.53), and policies (r = -.18) signifying that participants who reported higher levels of internalized heterosexism also reported feeling less social support from friends and others, less power within their relationship with partners, a more closeted identity management strategy at work, and being less aware of supportive policies in their workplaces. In addition to a significant relationship with internalized heterosexism, identity management was significantly correlated with workplace policies (r = .31), social support from friends (r = -.13), and social support from others (r = -.18) indicating that participants who more openly disclosed their sexual orientation reported lower levels of internalized heterosexism, had more awareness of supportive policies in their workplaces, and experienced more social support from friends and others.

Results for Research Question One

In addition to previously established predictors (perceived social support and power) do workplace factors and internalized heterosexism predict relationship satisfaction? Sequential multiple regression was used to answer research question one. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), sequential multiple regression allows the researcher to enter variables into the equation in a specific order to assess the amount of variance each variable predicts above and beyond the previously entered variables. Sequential multiple regression was used in the present study to determine the contribution of demographic variables, internalized heterosexism, previously established predictor variables (social support and power), and workplace variables (policies and identity management) in predicting relationship satisfaction.

SPSS linear regression analysis was used to develop two separate equations, one equation for each of the criterion variables dyadic adjustment and dyadic satisfaction. For each equation the same predictor variables (demographics, internalized heterosexism, social support, power, identity management, and policies) were entered in four steps. Demographic variables (age, length of relationship, living with partner, and children in the home) were entered in the first step. Internalized heterosexism was entered in the second step as this is an intrapersonal quality that may arguably precede or exist independent of a relationship. Social support, entered in three subscales (family, friends, and others), and power were entered in the third step as prior studies have identified a significant relationship between these variables and relationship satisfaction. Workplace factors (identity management and policies) were entered in the fourth step of the equation in order to determine their unique contribution beyond that of variables entered in steps one and two.

Tables 8 and 9 summarize the results from the multiple regression equations predicting dyadic adjustment and dyadic satisfaction respectively. The results from the sequential multiple regression equation predicting dyadic adjustment will be discussed first. Then, a discussion of the results of the equation predicting dyadic satisfaction more narrowly will be presented.

The first step in the regression equation, demographic variables, failed to account for a significant amount of the variance of dyadic adjustment ($R^2 = .027$, $F (4, 227) = 1.587$, $p = .179$), although the variable living with partner was significant ($\beta = -4.450$, $p < .05$). In the second step, the addition of internalized heterosexism also failed to account for a significant amount of the variance of dyadic adjustment ($R^2 = .034$, $\Delta R^2 = .007$, ΔF

(1, 226) = 1.545, p = .215). In the third step, the addition of social support and power

significantly contributed to the variance of dyadic adjustment (R^2 = .146, ΔR^2 = .112, ΔF

(4, 222) = 7.308, p <.001). Specifically, social support from friends (β = -.728, p < .05)

and power (β = -.396, p < .001) were found to be significant. The addition of workplace

variables, identity management and policies, in the final step failed to account for a

significant change in contribution to the variance of dyadic adjustment (R^2 = .208, ΔR^2 =

.018, ΔF (2, 220) = 2.377, p = .095). The model explained approximately 12 % of the

variance in dyadic adjustment for women in dual-earner relationships with female

partners (total adjusted R^2 = .122, F (11, 220) = 3.932, p<.001).

The first step in the regression equation, demographic variables, failed to account

for a significant amount of the variance of dyadic satisfaction (R^2 = .034, F (4, 227) =

2.019, p = .093), although the variable live with partner (β = -1.627, p < .05) was

significant. In the second step, the addition of internalized heterosexism accounted for a

significant amount of change in the variance of dyadic satisfaction (R^2 = .053, ΔR^2 = .019,

ΔF (1, 226) = 4.573, p < .05). In the third step, the addition of social support and power

significantly contributed to the variance of dyadic satisfaction (R^2 = .195, ΔR^2 = .162, ΔF

(4, 222) = 9.726, p <.001). Specifically, social support from friends (β = -.343, p < .01)

and power (β = .146, p < .001) were found to be significant. In this step the variable

children in the home became significant (β = 1.174, p < .05) and internalized

heterosexism was no longer significant (β = -.305, p = .520). Using the indicators of size

of beta value in relation to zero order it was deemed that social support from friends acted

as a suppressor variable with respect to internalized heterosexism (Cohen, Cohen, West

& Aiken, 2003). The addition of workplace variables, identity management and policies,

in the final step failed to account for a significant change in contribution to the variance

of dyadic satisfaction (R^2 = .208, ΔR^2 = .014, ΔF (2, 220) = 1.888, p = .154)**.** The model

explained approximately 17% of the variance in dyadic satisfaction for women in dual-

earner relationships with female partners (total adjusted R^2 = .169, F (11, 220) = 5.259,

p<.001).

Post-hoc analysis was conducting utilizing all criterion variables, including a

revision to the workplace policies and practices measure. Sequential multiple regression

analysis was conducted entering all variables in the same order as in the initial regression

equations, but only data for the item "Does your organization offer same-sex domestic

partner benefits?" was entered for the policies and practices variable. Results showed no

significant changes with respect to the impact of variables in predicting dyadic

adjustment and dyadic satisfaction.

Results for Research Question Two

What is the relative contribution of partner match on identity management in the

workplace to dyadic satisfaction and dyadic adjustment with respect to the contribution of

the remaining independent variables (social support, power, identity management in the

workplace, internalized heterosexism, and workplace policies)? To obtain the primary

variable of interest (match on identity management) the absolute value of the difference

between the scores of partner A and partner B on identity management was calculated for

each couple. In effect, each respondent in this subgroup analysis had a matched score

with a second respondent (her partner). While the resulting scores allowed for analysis of

the possible affect of members of a couple differing on identity management strategy,

matched data points violate the assumption of independent cases necessary for linear

regression analysis. Logistic regression analysis was used to analyze research question

two as it is not bound by the assumption of independent cases. Logistic regression yields

the following information about the data: How well does the model explain group

membership across levels of the dependent variable? To what extent does each predictor

variable contribute to the probability of a case being classified in one of the groups of the

dependent variable? What is the probability of a case being in one group versus the

reference group of the dependent variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001)? Only those

variables that were significant in the analysis of research question one were entered into

the logistic regression equation for research question two (E. Yoder, personal

communication, June 27, 2006).

As multinomial logistic regression requires prediction to categories of the

dependent variables, each dependent variable was divided into three categories. To this

end the mean and standard deviation was calculated for this subsample on dyadic

adjustment and dyadic satisfaction. Group 0 (Below Average) was comprised of cases

which fell one standard deviation below the mean or greater. Group 1 (Average) was

comprised of cases which fell between one standard deviation below and above the mean.

Group 2 (Above Average) was comprised of cases which fell one standard deviation

above the mean or greater. The labels for these categories were derived from language

utilized by the DAS manual in interpretation of scores on this measure (Spanier, 1989).

Dyadic adjustment. The chi-square of the model presented in table 10 is equal to

31.13 with 10 *df;* p<.05. This result indicates that the null model was improved by the

addition of the predictor variables (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). With respect to the

current data, the addition of the five predictor variables significantly improves ability of

the model to classify individuals in a category of dyadic adjustment. As logistic

regression analysis does not produce a goodness of fit statistic R^2, as does linear

regression, the Nagelkerke Pseudo R-square (R_n^2) statistic was utilized to indicate the

degree of variance accounted for by this model (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). For the

model used to classify independent variables in dyadic adjustment groups for this sample

$R_n^2 = .291$ proportion. In other words, 29% of the variance of dyadic adjustment is

accounted for by the five variable model (living with partner, internalized heterosexism,

social support friends, power, and identity management match). An investigation of

correct classification by group revealed that 17.6% of cases observed to be in the Below

Average group (n=17) were correctly classified (n=3), 94.4% of cases classified in the

Average group (n = 72) were classified correctly (n=68), and 17.4% of those in the

Above Average group (n=23) were classified correctly (n=4).

The logistic regression coefficient b_k indicates the expected odds ratio for being

classified in one of three categories of the dependent variable per 1 unit change in the

predictor variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). When the value of b_k is positive the

factor by which the odds change will be greater than zero, indicating that the variable

increases the odds of the event being classified. When the value of b_k is negative the

factor by which the odds change is less than zero, indicating that the variable decreases

the odds of the event being classified. When the value of $b_k = 0.00$ the variable has no

effect on the odds of the event being classified and is unrelated to the dependent variable

(Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999). Table 10 summarizes the contribution of each predictor

variable to the probability of a case being in one group versus the reference group of the

dependent variable dyadic adjustment. An increase of score on an independent variable is indicative of a higher degree of the variable unless otherwise noted.

Logistic regression analysis revealed that for every 1 unit increase in power, the odds of being classified in the Average dyadic adjustment group is 1.08 times more likely than being classified in the Below Average group ($b_k = .08$, $p<.05$). Thus, one is 8% more likely to be classified in the Average group as compared to the Below Average group with every 1 unit increase in power. More of the independent variables were able to significantly predict the odds ratios of being classified in the Above Average dyadic adjustment group than the Below Average dyadic adjustment group. As living with partner is coded -1= no and 1=yes, the results indicate that living with one's partner increases the odds of being classified in the Above Average group versus the below Average group ($b_k = 1.44$, $p<.05$). When one is living with her partner, the odds of being classified in the Above Average group is 4.22 times more likely than being classified in the Below Average group. Also, for every 1 unit increase in score for social support from friends, the odds of being classified in the Above Average group is .66 times less likely than the Below Average group ($b_k = -.42$, $p<.05$). Since social support is a reverse scored variable, such that lower scores on social support indicate higher perceived social support, the results indicate that a decrease in perceived social support corresponds with being .66 times less likely to be classified in the Above Average versus the Below Average group. For every 1 unit increase in power the odds of being classified in the Above Average dyadic adjustment group is 1.13 more likely than the Below Average group. Therefore, one is 13% more likely to be classified in the Above Average dyadic adjustment group with every 1 unit increase in power. Identity management match was

also significant with respect to classification of individuals in the Above Average dyadic adjustment group as compared to the Below Average group. For every 1 unit increase in identity management match one is .72 times less likely to be classified in the Average dyadic adjustment group rather than the Below Average group (b_k = -.33, *p*<.05). An increase on identity management match score reflects greater difference between the partners, thus as there is a 1 unit increase in the difference between partners on identity management one is .72 times less likely to be classified in the Average dyadic adjustment group versus the Below Average group. The other predictor variables did not contribute to significantly to the ability of the model to classify cases into a category of dyadic adjustment.

Dyadic satisfaction. For the dependent variable dyadic satisfaction the chi-square of the model, presented in table 11, is equal to 29.99 with 12 *df*; p<.05. This result indicates that the addition of the five predictor variables significantly improves ability of the model to classify cases to a category of dyadic satisfaction. For the model predicting to dyadic satisfaction for this sample R_n^2 = .30 proportion. In other words, 30% of the variance of dyadic satisfaction is accounted for by the five variable model (living with partner, internalized heterosexism, social support friends, power, and identity management match).

For the dependent variable dyadic satisfaction 75.9% of the cases were correctly classified. An investigation of correct classification by group revealed that 38.5% of cases observed to be in the Below Average group (n=13) were correctly classified (n=5), 98.8% of cases classified in the Average group (n = 81) were classified correctly (n=80), and 0% of those in the Above Average group (n=18) were classified correctly (n=0).

Table 11 summarizes the contribution of each predictor variable to the probability of a case being in one group versus the reference group of the dependent variable dyadic satisfaction. An increase of score on an independent variable is indicative of a higher degree of the variable unless otherwise noted. For the dependent variable dyadic satisfaction logistic regression analysis yielded the following significant results: For every 1 unit increase in perceived power, the odds of being classified in the Average dyadic satisfaction group is 1.14 times more likely than being classified in the Below Average group ($b_k = .13$, $p<.05$). Thus, one is 14% more likely to be classified in the Average group as compared to the Below Average group with every 1 unit increase in perceived power. Similarly, for every 1 unit increase in perceived power, the odds of one being classified in the Above Average group is 1.20 times more likely than being classified in the Below Average group ($b_k = .18$, $p<.05$). Thus, one is 20% more likely to be classified in the Above Average group as compared to the Below Average group for every 1 unit increase in perceived power. No other predictor variables contributed to significantly predicting the odds ratio of one being classified into a category of dyadic satisfaction.

Table 6

Summary Statistics for Dependent and Independent Scales

	m	sd	Low Value Reported	High Value Reported	Lowest Value Possible	Highest Value Possible
DAS - Total Scale	116.65	10.28	72.00	139.00	0	151.00
DAS – Dyadic Satisfaction	39.08	3.75	19.00	47.00	0	50.00
LIHS	1.71	.50	1.01	3.69	1.00	7.00
SSA - Family	13.04	4.99	8.00	32.00	8.00	32.00
SSA - Friends	9.54	2.91	7.00	20.00	7.00	28.00
SSA - Other	11.87	3.42	8.00	25.00	7.00	28.00
Power	45.71	6.84	19.00	56.00	8.00	56.00
ID Management	22.24	4.63	7.00	28.00	7.00	28.00
Workplace Policies	3.06	1.97	.00	6.00	.00	6.00

Note. m = mean, *sd* = standard deviation

Table 7

Correlations between Demographic Variables and Scales of Interest

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. DAS, Dyadic Adjustment	--												
2. DAS, Dyadic Satisfaction	.78**	--											
3. LIHS, Internalized Heterosexism	-.09	-.15*	--										
4. SSA, Social Support Family	-.13*	-.16*	.12	--									
5. SSA, Social Support Friends	-.21**	-.26**	.28**	.31**	--								
6. SSA, Social Support Others	-.14*	-.17**	.31**	.52**	.65**	--							
7. Power	.30**	.32**	-.20**	-.20**	-.29**	-.37**	--						
8. Identity Management	-.05	-.03	-.53**	-.05	-.13*	-.18**	.09	--					
9. Workplace Policies	-.05	.00	-.18**	-.04	-.11	<.01	.11	.31**	--				
10. Age	.03	.01	-.03	-.06	-.19**	-.11	.15*	.03	.10	--			
11. Length of relationship	-.01	-.02	-.02	-.03	-.04	-.06	.10	.03	.08	.59**	--		
12. Children in the Home	<.01	.10	.03	.06	.09	.05	.01	-.10	.03	-.09	-.05	--	
13. Living with Partner	-.14*	-.13*	.07	.09	-.09	-.05	.01	-.04	.02	-.13*	-.22**	.09	--
14. Income	.07	.06	.01	-.15*	-.15*	-.17**	.19**	<.01	.07	.34**	.24**	-.03	-.08

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
Social support is scored such that higher scores reflect lower perceived social support.

Table 8

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Dyadic Adjustment (n = 232)

Variable	Step 1 b	Beta	p	Step 2 b	Beta	p	Step 3 b	Beta	p	Step 4 b	Beta	p
Age	.107	.096	.240	.105	.094	.247	.019	.017	.830	.028	.026	.746
Relationship Length	-.015	-.099	.232	-.015	-.099	.232	-.013	-.088	.268	-.012	-.082	.295
Living with Partner	-4.450	-.151	.026*	-4.300	-.146	.032*	-4.966	-.168	.010*	-4.776	-.162	.013*
Children in the home	.582	.024	.718	.631	.026	.695	.849	.035	.580	.850	.035	.580
Internalized Heterosexism				-1.640	-.082	.215	.094	.005	.944	-1.006	-.050	.514
Social Support												
Family							-.158	-.077	.291	-.175	-.085	.241
Friends							-.728	-.208	.014*	-.780	-.223	.009**
Others							.314	.105	.266	.383	.128	.180
Power							.396	.268	.000**	.408	.276	.000**
Workplace Factors												
Identity Management										-.138	-.063	.412
Policies										-.591	-.114	.090
Model F and (p)	1.587 (.179)			1.582 (.166)			4.225 (<.001**)			3.932 (<.001**)		
Total R^2	.027			.034			.146			.164		
Adjusted R^2	.010			.012			.112			.122		
R^2 Change	.027			.007			.112			.018		

Notes. *$p \leq .05$. ** $p < .01$. Higher scores on social support reflect lower perceived social support. Living with partner and children in the home are scored 1=yes, 2=no. Higher scores on identity management indicate more disclosure.

Table 9
Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Dyadic Satisfaction (n = 232)

Variable	Step 1 b	Beta	p	Step 2 b	Beta	p	Step 3 b	Beta	p	Step 4 b	Beta	p
Age	.029	.072	.376	.028	.069	.392	-.008	-.020	.791	-.006	-.015	.850
Relationship Length	-.005	-.087	.294	-.005	-.086	.292	-.004	-.070	.364	-.004	-.066	.392
Living with Partner	-1.627	-.151	.026*	-1.533	-.142	.034*	-1.806	-.167	.009*	-1.755	-.163	.011*
Children in the home	1.023	.115	.082	1.054	.118	.071	1.174	.132	.032*	1.137	.127	.039*
Internalized Heterosexism				-1.021	-.139	.034*	-.305	-.041	.520	-.755	-.103	.170
Social Support												
Family							-.082	-.109	.124	-.085	-.113	.112
Friends							-.343	-.269	.001*	-.353	-.276	.001*
Others							.150	.138	.135	.164	.150	.107
Power							.146	.271	.000**	.149	.275	.000**
Workplace Factors												
Identity Management										-.071	-.089	.235
Policies										-.140	-.074	.259
Model F and (p)	2.019 (.093)			2.555 (.028*)			5.961 (<.001**)			5.259 (<.001**)		
Total R²	.034			.053			.195			.208		
Adjusted R²	.017			.033			.162			.169		
R² Change	.034			.019			.141			.014		

Note. *p ≤ .05. ** p < .01. Higher scores on social support reflect lower perceived social support. Living with partner and children in the home are scored 1=yes, 2=no. Higher scores on identity management indicate more disclosure.

Table 10

Parameter Estimates for Logistic Regression Dyadic Adjustment with Predictor Variables

Average	B	SE	Wald	Odds Ratio
Live with Partner (-1=no, +1=yes)	.46	.37	1.55	1.58
Internalized Heterosexism (higher values = higher internalized heterosexism)	.55	.59	.86	1.72
Social Support Friends (lower values = higher perceived support)	-.12	.10	1.31	.89
Power (higher values = higher perceived power)	.08*	.04	4.36	1.08
Identity Management Match (lower values = greater match)	-.09	.07	1.75	.92

Above Average	B	SE	Wald	Odds Ratio
Live with Partner (-1=no, +1=yes)	1.44*	.66	4.75	4.22
Internalized Heterosexism (higher values = higher internalized heterosexism)	1.27	.82	2.37	3.54
Social Support Friends (lower values = higher perceived support)	-.42*	.16	6.72	.66
Power (higher values = higher perceived power)	.12*	.06	4.35	1.13
Identity Management Match (lower values = greater match)	-.33*	.13	7.02	.72

Notes. *$p \leq .05$. The reference category is Below Average.

Table 11

Parameter Estimates for Logistic Regression Dyadic Satisfaction with Predictor Variables

Average	B	SE	Wald	Odds Ratio
Live with Partner (-1=no, +1=yes)	.64	.41	2.47	1.90
Internalized Heterosexism (higher values = higher internalized heterosexism)	-.62	.62	1.01	.54
Social Support Friends (lower values = higher perceived support)	.01	.13	.01	1.01
Power (higher values = higher perceived power)	.13*	.05	7.52	1.14
Identity Management Match (lower values = greater match)	-.13	.08	2.28	.88

Above Average	B	SE	Wald	Odds Ratio
Live with Partner (-1=no, +1=yes)	1.31	.67	3.79	3.69
Internalized Heterosexism (higher values = higher internalized heterosexism)	-.04	.86	.02	.96
Social Support Friends (lower values = higher perceived support)	-.30	.19	2.54	.74
Power (higher values = higher perceived power)	.18*	.07	6.74	1.20
Identity Management Match (lower values = greater match)	-.14	.11	1.60	.87

Notes. *$p \leq .05$. The reference category is Below Average.

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter includes a summary of the results presented in Chapter 4. Limitations of the study are discussed, as well as implications for practice and future research.

Research Question One

This research question sought to identify the contribution of internalized heterosexism and workplace variables (policies and identity management) to predicting relationship satisfaction. It was hypothesized that in addition to previously identified predictors (social support and power) internalized heterosexism and workplace variables (policies and identity management) would significantly contribute to predicting relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex dual-earner relationships. Sequential regression analysis was used to examine the contribution of demographic variables, internalized heterosexism, social support, power, and workplace variables (policies and identity management) in predicting relationship satisfaction. Two dependent variables, dyadic adjustment total scale score and dyadic satisfaction subscale score, were utilized to assess relationship satisfaction for this sample. Dyadic adjustment pertains broadly to one's satisfaction with facets of the quality of a committed relationship, including expression of sexual intimacy and affection, agreement on matters of importance, common interests, and commitment to the relationship enduring. The latter facet comprises the subscale of dyadic adjustment termed dyadic satisfaction. Dyadic satisfaction more specifically relates to contentment with the present state of the relationship and commitment to the relationship enduring. Perceived social support from

friends and perceived power were found to be significant predictors in the final model of the regression equation for dyadic adjustment. Perceived social support from friends and perceived power were also found to be significant predictors in the final model of the regression equation for dyadic satisfaction. Additionally, the demographic variable living with partner was a significant predictor for both dyadic adjustment and dyadic satisfaction. Although the hypothesis that internalized heterosexism and workplace factors are significant predictors of relationship satisfaction was rejected, the results obtained have significant implications for the literature in this area.

Demographic variables. Information was collected from respondents related to four demographic variables (age, relationship length, living with partner, children at home) that were theoretically suspected to influence relationship satisfaction. Of these factors, only the variable living with partner significantly predicted dyadic adjustment and dyadic satisfaction at $p < .05$. While this variable accounted for a relatively small amount of the variance ($R^2 = .03$, in both equations), results showed that for this sample of women in same-sex dual-earner relationships, those who are living together with their partners are more satisfied with their relationships than those who are not living with their partners. One theory to explain the link between living with one's partner and increased relationship satisfaction might be the symbolic nature of living together as a sign of commitment for those who are denied institutional bond of legal marriage. Furthermore, individuals may feel forced to choose to live separately from their partners due to fear of discrimination should they acknowledge their commitment in this way. Such boundaries are likely to prompt frustration and decreased satisfaction with the relationship. Although the principle investigator of this study is not aware of other

research that reports evidence to support or contradict this finding, prior research investigating relationship satisfaction correlates found that most participants lived with their partners and did not have children living in the home (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990).

Internalized heterosexism. Internalized heterosexism was predicted to relate to relationship satisfaction in a negative direction. It was hypothesized that higher levels of internalized heterosexism are related to lower levels of relationship satisfaction. Internalized heterosexism significantly correlated with dyadic satisfaction (r=-.15, p<.05) in a negative direction indicating a relationship between internalized heterosexism and relationship satisfaction, although it did not account for a significant amount of the variance in the sequential regression equation. This indicates that while level of internalized heterosexism was related to relationship satisfaction for this sample, other factors contribute to predicting relationship satisfaction to a much greater degree. Of note is that internalized heterosexism appeared as a significant predictor of dyadic satisfaction when entered into the regression equation and then was not significant when the variable social support was entered. The researcher believes that the variable social support from friends may be having a suppressor effect in the regression analysis. A suppressor variable frequently masks the influence of another variable by dominating the shared variance of the suppressed variable with the dependant variable (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In other words, due to the relationship between the variables internalized heterosexism and social support of friends (r=.28, p<.01 for this sample), the presence of the variable social support of friends causes internalized heterosexism to behave differently in the equation. The construct of internalized heterosexism is based upon the internalization of negative societal views of

same-sex sexual orientations (Szymanski & Chung, 2001). Social support seems

important to mitigating the influence of negative societal views. Empirical support has

been found for the relationship of higher levels of internalized heterosexism with a lack

of social support and dissatisfaction with social support for women who identify as

lesbian (Szymanski, Chung, & Balsam, 2001). The possible mediating effect of social

support on internalized heterosexism was not explored in this research, and is

recommended for future analysis (Kenny, 2006).

     Social support and power. The most significant findings in the current study lend

support to previous research (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan & Deluty, 2000; Savoy &

Worthington, 2003) which established that social support and power significantly

contribute to relationship satisfaction for a sample of women in same-sex dual-earner

relationships. The third step in the regression equation, in which social support and

power were entered together, revealed the largest increase in explained variance. For

dyadic adjustment, these two variables accounted for 11% of the explained variance ($R^2 =$

.146, $\Delta R^2 = .112$, $\Delta F (4, 222) = 7.308$, $p < .001$). The addition of social support and

power accounted for 16% increase in the explained variance of dyadic satisfaction ($R^2 =$

.195, $\Delta R^2 = .162$, $\Delta F (4, 222) = 9.726$, $p < .001$).

     In the current study, perceived social support from friends, but not from family

members or others, was found to significantly predict both dyadic adjustment, and dyadic

satisfaction more narrowly. While Savoy and Worthington found social support to be

important to relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex relationships, social support

from others, but not from friends or family members was found to be a significant

predictor for participants in their sample. The others category encompasses general

feelings about esteem without targeting a specific relational category, such as "I am respected by other people" and "people admire me"(Vaux, Phillips, Holley, Thompson, Williams, & Stewart, 1986). Fittingly, this subscale (social support others) seems to closely relate to self-esteem with respect to social group acceptance, and was significantly correlated with internalized heterosexism (r=.31, p<.01) for the current sample. As a higher scale score for social support of others is indicative of lower perceived support, the correlation showed that as social support from others decreased internalized heterosexism increased. Jordan and Deluty (2000) found that women in same-sex relationships who received more support from friends, relatives, and co-workers were more satisfied with their relationships. While this is seemingly inconsistent with the findings of both the current study and the findings of Savoy and Worthington, Jordan and Deluty did not report results of subscales related to categories of relationships. Examination of subscales of the social support measure utilized in the current study illuminated the importance of supportive friendships, possibly families of creation for individuals of same-sex sexual orientation (Matthews & Lease, 2000), while Savoy and Worthington found others to be a significant social support category utilizing the same measure. Another important distinction lies within the difference in population studied. While Jordan and Deluty explored relationship satisfaction predictors for women in same-sex relationships, the current study and the one by Savoy and Worthington focused more narrowly on women in same-sex relationships where both partners work full-time.

Noteworthy of findings for the variable social support is the absence of evidence for the significance of social support from family members when subcategories are explored. One interpretation might be related to the concept of family of creation, a

process by which individuals develop a sense of family through deep relationships with friends and significant others (Matthews & Lease, 2000). Greene (2000) similarly theorized the importance of social support of those outside of the family of origin, challenging that coming out to and attempting to gain the support of biological family members may lead to rejection. Greene proposed that the importance of social support from family is a heterosexist assumption frequently not available to LGB individuals and couples. Due to discovered or feared rejection, women in same-sex dual-earner relationships may rely on friends more than family of origin for support, and therefore are more influenced by the availability of support from those outside of the family of origin. Further exploration should be done to account for the disparity between the findings of Savoy and Worthington (2003) and the current study.

The current study utilized a measure of perceived power in the relationship to assess the construct of influence in the relationship, also termed equity, egalitarianism, and shared decision-making in past literature (Kurdek, 1998; Savoy & Worthington, 2003). In the current study, power was a significant predictor of both dyadic adjustment and dyadic satisfaction at $p<.05$. This further supports past research in which perceived power was identified as a vital element to relationship satisfaction for individuals in dual-earner relationships, and more specifically for women in same-sex dual earner relationships (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Savoy & Worthington, 2003). Research exploring heterosexual relationship characteristics found evidence for the perception that partners had equal power with respect to balance of work and family roles, even when actual differences were present (Steil & Weitman, 1991). As such, one's perception of power may be more a more salient aspect of relationship satisfaction than actual equality

within the relationship. Early research indicated that greater levels of shared decision-making and perceived power were typical of lesbian couples (Falbo & Peplau, 1980; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1986). Correspondingly, individuals in this sample perceived their relationships to be fairly egalitarian, as evidenced by the majority of participants reporting an above average level of power. As the construct of perceived power in the relationship has been measured in a variety of ways, and is consistently identified as a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction, the research clearly demonstrates that a perception of equitable involvement and influence in relationships is important to satisfaction.

Work variables. It was hypothesized that identity management at work and supportive workplace policies would contribute to predicting relationship satisfaction above and beyond the contribution of demographic variable, internalized heterosexism, social support, and power. The results of sequential regression analysis found neither workplace variable to be a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction for the current sample.

Prior studies have found conflicting evidence with respect to the importance of identity management to predicting relationship satisfaction (Caron & Ulin, 1997; Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan & Deluty, 2000). Research focused more directly on work attitudes has shown that the decision to come out at work can often be a stressful decision process for lesbian workers (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001) and has been influential to personal life roles. Specifically, the extent of disclosure of sexual orientation at work accounted for a significant amount of the variance of work-to-home conflict in a study of disclosure of sexual orientation at work (Day & Schoenrade, 1997). A prior study,

however, failed to establish a significant link between the degree of disclosure of sexual orientation and perception of relationship satisfaction (Eldridge& Gilbert, 1990). More recent studies revealed identity management as a positive correlate of relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex relationships (Caron & Ulin, 1997; Jordan & Deluty, 2003). The current study did not find support for the significance of identity management specific to the workplace with respect to relationship satisfaction for women in dual-career same-sex couples. The majority of Eldridge and Gilbert's sample (65%) indicated that they had not disclosed their sexual orientation to employers. The majority of respondents (73%) in the current study reported that they either did not hide or actively talked about their sexual orientation at work. For 57.6% of the current sample, scores on identity management at work indicated that across type of colleagues, respondents did not try to keep their sexual orientation a secret, while 15.3% actively talked about their sexual orientation. While Greene and Mitchell (2002) suggested that frustration, stress, and arguments related to high degrees of self monitoring may penetrate the solidarity of couples, the current study found that identity management particular to the workplace was not significant to the adjustment of relationships for this sample of women in same sex dual-earner relationships. Further exploration of the sample with respect to workplace factors showed that the mean identity management strategy was "I don't try to keep it a secret" for all levels of size of organization, education, and yearly income. This was also true for all categories of field of employment, except for travel and transportation in which the average level of disclosure was "I try somewhat hard to keep it a secret" and entertainment in which the majority identity management strategy was "I actively talk about it," lending some evidence to suggest that one's field of employment may influence

decisions about identity management strategy. The majority of this sample was predominantly not keeping their sexual orientation a secret, but also not explicitly talking about it at work.

In the current research it was also found that one's knowledge of the presence supportive policies in the workplace was not significantly related to dyadic adjustment or dyadic satisfaction. Noteworthy of this sample is the great number of respondents who were not aware of their workplace policies. Of the 310 individuals who began the survey, each of the six questions was left unanswered by either 56 or 57 respondents. Additionally, the number of participants who answered "I don't know" to questions pertaining to the presence of nondiscrimination policies, including sexual orientation in the definition of diversity, offering diversity training, offering resource support groups, and one's partner being welcome at a company event ranged from n=43 to n=61. Fewer people answered "I don't know" to the item asking if domestic partner benefits were offered at their offices (n=17). It remains unclear whether this is an indication of the relative lack of influence workplace policies or minimal expectations of support, but for whatever reason the majority of respondents in this sample were not fully aware of their rights at work. The measure does not allow an indication of whether those who failed to answer or answered "I don't know" have considered their organizational climate in workplace or other life-role decision-making.

Conclusions. Overall, the regression equation accounted for very little of the variance of dyadic adjustment and dyadic satisfaction. Only 12% of the variance for dyadic adjustment and 17% of the variance for dyadic satisfaction (total adjusted $R^2 =$ .169, F (11, 220) = 5.259, *p*<.001) was able to be explained by the variables living with

partner, social support of friends, and power.   Workplace variables (identity management and supportive policies) are seemingly not influential to relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex dual-earner couples. Internalized heterosexism is to some extent important to relationship satisfaction but other factors play a far more significant role in explaining relationship satisfaction of women in same-sex dual-earner couples.

Research Question Two

This research question sought to identify the contribution of partner match on identity management in the workplace, beyond previously established correlates, to predicting relationship satisfaction. It was hypothesized that in addition to the predictors utilized in research question one (social support, power, internalized heterosexism, workplace policies and identity management) the degree of partner match within couples on identity management in the workplace would significantly contribute to predicting relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex dual-earner relationships. Four of the aforementioned factors utilized in the sequential regression analysis for individual participants relative to the first research question were shown to be important to the variance of the dependent variables (social support of friends, power, living with partner [in the final model], and internalized heterosexism in [one step of the model]). As such, the non-significant predictors were not utilized in analysis of research question two (E. Yoder, personal communication, June 27, 2006). Logistic regression analysis was used to examine the ability of variables living with partner, internalized heterosexism, social support of friends, power, and partner match on identity management in the workplace in classifying individuals according to level of relationship satisfaction. Specific information gleaned from logistic regression results included the extent to which the

predictor variables were able to significantly improve classification of one's level of

relationship satisfaction and how much contribution the variables together make in

deciphering level of relationship satisfaction.

    Dyadic adjustment. It was hypothesized that together the significant predictors

from research question one (living with partner, internalized heterosexism, social support

friends, and power) and partner match on identity management at work would make a

significant contribution to predicting one's levels of dyadic adjustment (below average,

average, or above average). The results of multinomial logistic regression analysis

showed that the model including the five variables significantly improved the

classification of individuals over the null model (having no predictor information) at

$p<.05$. The addition of the five factors accounted for 29% of the variance of change in

dyadic adjustment. In other words, together the five factors make a 29% contribution to

the classification of dyadic adjustment to below average, average, and above average

groups.

    For dyadic adjustment the model most accurately predicted to the average group,

classifying these individuals correctly 94.4% of the time. The utilization of information

about living with partner, social support from friends, internalized heterosexism level,

power, and identity management match was less accurate when predicting that

individuals would classify in the above average group (17.6% accuracy) when the below

average group was used as a reference.

    Using multinomial logistic regression, power was the only independent variable

that held a similar influence across the groups of dyadic adjustment. When both above

average or average dyadic adjustment groups were compared to the below average dyadic

adjustment group higher power values were associated with not being a member of the below average group.   Power in this research is a reflection of self-perceived power in the relationship, and the more self-perceived power in the relationship the less likely one will be classified in the below average dyadic adjustment group. This result is supported by prior research indicating the significance of power with respect to relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex relationships (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990) and more specifically for those in dual-career relationships (Savoy & Worthington, 2003).

The other predictor variables of interest were only significant when classifying above average versus below average dyadic adjustment. When examining the above average group with the below average group, in addition to power three other variables were significant (live with partner, social support friends, and identity management match). When living with one's partner an individual has a greater chance of being classified in the above average dyadic adjustment group than the below average group. This supports the finding in research question one that living with one's partner significantly contributes to higher relationship satisfaction. Experiencing a higher level of social support from friends is associated with being classified in the above average dyadic adjustment group when compared to the below average adjustment group. These results are consistent with prior evidence showing the importance of social support in general (Jordan & Deluty, 2000) and findings of research question one of the current study, which more specifically link increased relationship satisfaction to social support from friends.   Identity management match was also significant with respect to classification of individuals in the above average group versus the below average dyadic adjustment group. In this study identity management match was measured using the

difference between partners on the variable identity management, thus a greater score reflects a greater difference from one's partner. It was hypothesized that higher levels of relationship satisfaction would correspond with a better identity management match between partners, or lower levels of difference on this variable. This hypothesis was supported for classification of above average dyadic adjustment group, but with respect to the people with average and below average scores on dyadic adjustment a significant distinction cannot be made by examining identity management match. Evidence for the importance of a better match between partners on identity management in the workplace to the relationship satisfaction of women in same-sex dual-earner couples extends what was known about the influence of identity management. Specifically, the current findings support and extend prior research that found match on identity management to be important to the relationship satisfaction of women in same-sex couples (Jordan & Deluty, 2000) by more narrowly exploring disclosure in the workplace for dual-earner couples.

Dyadic satisfaction. It was hypothesized that together the significant predictors from research question one (living with partner, internalized heterosexism, social support friends, and power) and partner match on identity management at work would make a significant contribution to predicting one's levels of dyadic adjustment (below average, average, or above average). The results of multinomial logistic regression analysis showed that the model including the five variables together significantly improved classification over the null model (having no predictor information) at $p<.05$. The addition of the five factors accounted for 30% of the variance in dyadic satisfaction. In

other words, together the five factors make a 30% contribution to the classification of dyadic satisfaction to below average, average, and above average groups.

The only predictor variable that significantly contributed to correctly classifying individuals among groups of dyadic satisfaction was perceived power. Results indicate that power behaved similarly when comparing above average or average to below average dyadic satisfaction, in that higher perceived power contributed to classification in higher levels of dyadic satisfaction. For dyadic satisfaction the model was better able to correctly classify individuals to the average group, with a 98.8% hit rate for this group. The model failed to classify any cases correctly to the above average group, indicating that the model including five predictor variables more accurately predict average relationship satisfaction than above average relationship satisfaction when the reference group was below average satisfaction. The implication may be that while the aforementioned variables contribute to correct classification in average relationship satisfaction, including additional variables is necessary to make the distinction between above average and below average relationship satisfaction. With respect to the variables of interest, a match on identity management was able to significantly classify individuals to groups of dyadic adjustment but not for dyadic satisfaction. One hypothesis to explain these results is that dyadic adjustment incorporates facets of consensus and cohesion with respect to the functioning of the dyad, while dyadic satisfaction focuses more narrowly on the amount of tension versus satisfaction and commitment to continuing the relationship. While it seems counterintuitive that identity management differences do not influence perceived tension in the relationship, the degree of identity management match may be more central to consensus, which measures the extent of agreement on important

relationship matters, and cohesion which accounts for common interests and activities. Furthermore, due to heterosexism and homophobia identity management has become a central issue in the lives of individuals in same-sex couples, and may be an expected rather than divisive difficulty. According to this premise, identity management concerns are likely to be influential to dyadic adjustment, but less important to dyadic satisfaction as such issues create conflict but are ultimately not detrimental to one's commitment to the permanence of the relationship.

Limitations

Limitations to this study should be discussed. First, random sampling was not used to identify participants. While the methods of gaining participation through word of mouth, internet advertisements, and print advertisement allows the researcher to reach individuals who may otherwise be hidden, nonrandomized sampling methods limit the generalizability of the findings to the larger lesbian population. Utilization of the internet to gather data aided in gaining a nationally representative sample, but is limited in partiality towards those who have access to and knowledge of the internet. While print advertisements were circulated indicating public access points for use of the internet, the majority of respondents indicated that they found out about the study from a friend, email, or listserv notice. Studies gathering data solely on the internet limit the opportunity to recruit individuals of lower SES as they are less likely to have regular access to and knowledge of the internet. Individuals who reported earning salaries in the lowest SES bracket, those who earned lower than $15,000 annually, represented the smallest percentage of participants in the current sample.

Second, sample bias is also seen in the under-representation of ethnic and racial

minority lesbian individuals in this study. In an attempt to garner a racially diverse

sample the study was advertised on listservs such as GayCharlotteBlack and

Blacklesbianprofessionals. In effect, 17% of the current sample identified as something

other than Caucasian. Although far from ideal, this turnout is indicative that efforts may

be improving the diversity of samples. Prior studies make reference to samples

comprised of 93% and 86% Caucasian respondents (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan &

Deluty, 2000 respectively).

Third, response and scoring system bias may be of concern.   A measure used to

assess workplace policies resulted in a great deal of missing data and therefore restricted

the researcher's confidence in the results gleaned with respect to this variable of interest.

The measure allowed participants the option to answer "I don't know" and it was

proposed by the author that those responses should be scored as missing data. While

offering an alternative option to yes or no benefits the participant, this scoring system

substantially decreased the usable data that was gained. To this end the principle

investigator of this study initially made the decision to recode all "I don't know"

responses as a "no" response, considering that both responses are indicative of one's

relative awareness of lack of support by means of workplace policies.   It may be argued

that not knowing the policies exist and not having the policies may result in similar lack

of support at work. While coding the data in a means not in keeping with the

recommendations of the author of the measure is not ideal, this practice allowed for lower

attrition rate of cases. Feedback was offered to the principle investigator if the current

study that a "no" and "don't know" response may represent qualitatively different

participant experiences. It may be that a high "don't know" response rate for an individual item reflected a relative lack of interest or concern about that policy or practice. A secondary analysis was conducted analyzing participant response rates for each item on this measure.   One item stood out as having a low rate of "don't know responses" indicating that participants were aware of whether or not their organizations offered same-sex domestic partner benefits. Regression equations conducted using only this item for the policies variable resulted in no changes in the significance of predictor variables. Also of concern with respect to scoring was the artificial separation of each of the continuous dependent variables, dyadic adjustment and dyadic satisfaction, into three categories for logistic regression analysis in research question two. Distinction of individuals among groups was useful to the type of analysis run, but may pose error with respect to how meaningful are the distinction points between categories actually are.

Fourth, the current study attempted to gain data from dyads in order to begin to address the deficit in the literature with respect to the influence of similarities and differences within couples. A greater response of matched pairs would have allowed the researcher to utilize similar analysis in both research question one and research question two, yielding added valuable information. The requirement that both partners work full time may have limited the number of participants able to complete the study and provided an artificial view of the characteristics of the modern dual-earner couple. For example, the majority of participants indicated that they live with their partners and have no children in the home. This seems to indicate that female dual-earner same-sex partners are not raising children, but in fact might indicate that female same-sex couples who are

raising children have work structures that do not fit the definition of two 35 to 40 hour jobs.

Conclusions and Implications for Research and Practice

The current study builds upon prior research exploring satisfaction in same-sex relationships and the small facet of literature pertaining to dual-earner couples in particular. The specific goal of this study was to provide further insight in to the interface of work and personal life roles of women in same-sex dual-earner relationships. Although the findings of this study extend and enhance the knowledge gained from prior research in the area of same-sex couples who work, there is still much to discover about this population. The variables of interest in the current study accounted for 12% of the variance of dyadic adjustment and 17% of the variance for dyadic satisfaction using linear regression models of analysis. As the specified analysis limits the number of predictor variables able to be utilized, and as this study was meant to explore the possible contribution of career and identity variables for a narrowly defined population, multiple factors that have been shown to be important to any relationship were not included. Inclusion of variables ostensibly important to relationship functioning in general, such as communication and sexual satisfaction, would likely account for a greater faction of the variance of relationship satisfaction. The following are the conclusions of this research and some implications for the future direction of research and practice with respect to the population of women in same-sex dual-earner relationships.

Conclusions of the current research. The information gleaned from the current study is beneficial in driving individual, couples and career counseling frameworks and interventions with dual-career lesbian couples. The theoretical framework guiding this

study is based in an ecological model which focuses on the interface and impact of various levels of contextual factors in the lives of individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Cook et al, 2002). This type of contextual model seems particularly relevant when discussing the joining of two individuals' life experiences in committed relationships. According to the model one's reality consists of the dynamic nature of developing within the interface of various factors of multiple levels of one's context (Bronfenbrenner, 1977). Dual-earner lesbian couples exist within a context of work and personal life factors influential to each individual and interfacing as partners merge separate lives. Investigating the impact of the interface of the roles occupied within the various settings of a person's life is increasingly relevant as the person takes on multiple roles. The current study investigated the roles of an individual as a worker and partner in particular and also explores the importance of the workplace setting, relationship specific variables, and support from friends, family members, and others. According to the ecological model it is essential to explore the impact of societal structures that may restrict or determine the experience of people occupying the aforementioned roles and environments. One such societal ideology under investigation in the current study is heterosexism. Theoretically, individuals make decisions about how to manage their lives based upon multiple factors within various levels of contextual experience. A primary decision for individuals in same-sex relationships is identity management, which has been linked to one's experience of heterosexism and discrimination.

To summarize, the findings of the present study are consistent with prior research demonstrating the predictive ability of social support and power with respect to relationship satisfaction (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan & Deluty, 2000; 1990; Savoy

& Worthington, 2003). In the current research the significance of social support was found only for the sub-category of social support from friends, and not for the other sub-categories social support from family and from others. The current results, together with Savoy and Worthington's (2003) research, extend what was known about the importance of social support from prior studies that investigated this variable more broadly (Jordan & Deluty, 2000). Power, measured in a range of ways (Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Kurdek, 1988; Savoy & Worthington, 2003) has consistently been shown to be important to the relationship satisfaction of women in same-sex relationships. The current study further supports this finding for the specific group of women in same-sex relationships where both partners work full-time. Additionally, this study hypothesized that workplace variables may be important to the relationship satisfaction of women in same-sex dual earner relationships as the interface of work and personal life roles may be particularly salient for this group. A review of prior research indicated that supportive workplace policies and identity management may be two important variables to study. An investigation of the possible contribution of these workplace variables elicited limited significant results.

Prior research indicated that a match between partners on level of general sexual orientation disclosure was a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex relationships (Jordan & Deluty, 2000). The current study sought to explore the extension of these findings to identity management particular to the workplace for dual-earner couples. Some evidence was found in support of this hypothesis, as match on identity management in the workplace significantly contributed to classifying individuals between above and below average dyadic adjustment groups.

Results from the sequential regression analysis revealed that living with partner, internalized heterosexism, social support of friends, and power accounted for only 12% of the variance for change in dyadic adjustment and 17% of the variance for dyadic satisfaction. Further analysis using logistic regression elicited that the addition of living with partner, internalized heterosexism, social support of friends, power, and identity management match make a 29% contribution to the classification of dyadic adjustment to below average, average, and above average groups and account for 30% of the variance in classifying to those same three levels of dyadic satisfaction. Taken together, it is apparent that while the variables explored in this study do not account for all that contributes to relationship satisfaction for female same-sex dual-earner couples, evidence has been found for the importance of both personal and work related factors.

Research implications. First, some evidence was found that there was a relationship between social support of friends and internalized heterosexism in this study. It is recommended that future research on this data set examine the interaction between the variables social support of friends and internalized heterosexism, and any moderating or mediating effects these variables have on the dependent variable (dyadic satisfaction).

Second, the need for continued development of valid instruments reliable for use with the LGB population is highlighted in the outcome of this study. While workplace factors were not shown to be significant with respect to relationship satisfaction for this sample, problems associated with the measure utilized to assess workplace policies limited the researcher's ability to demonstrate conclusive evidence for the importance of workplace policies. Future studies should consider development or investigation of improved instrumentation with respect to exploring workplace variables. Specifically,

developing instruments that do not allow for an extensive degree of missing data regarding the existence of workplace variables is essential. A qualitative investigation of what workplace policies and practices are important to lesbian individuals may help to develop a measure that would effectively gather data for use in studies investigating the impact of this variable with respect to other variables. It is also possible that perceived workplace support or perceived workplace discrimination are constructs that more directly characterize the influence of workplace variables with respect to relationship satisfaction. As such, variables of interest for future research may be individuals' experience of discrimination and support at work. Additionally, the presence of same-sex dual-earner relationship role models may be of interest as an ecological factor influential on multiple levels of the contextual system. The experience of having role models within a direct context, such as viewing same-sex couples at work, as well as the indirect influence of the media communicating and normalizing same-sex couples may have significant benefits for those who are attempting to navigate identity management, a relationship, and a career. Additionally, the exploration of other factors external to the relationship that are ostensibly important would provide rich information about the interface of work and personal life roles. Further analysis of the importance of degree of partner match on individual variables has been supported by the significant relationship between identity management match and classification of individuals in groups of dyadic adjustment.

Third, the current study also attempted to gain data from dyads in order to begin to address the deficit in the literature with respect to the influence of similarities and differences within couples. While this research gained the participation of 57 couples,

increased recruitment of couples would be beneficial in future research to enhance the understanding of the nuances associated with contemporary same-sex dual earner lifestyles.

Fourth, with respect to the inclusion criteria, feedback was offered to the principle investigator via e-mail from prospective respondents that full-time graduate students with assistantship positions may be qualitatively similar to full-time workers. To this end, future research should include full-time graduate students as they may experience work-relationship role strain similarly to couples in which both partners work full-time. Also, multiple individuals inquired about their ability to participate if they work less than 35 hours per week. As the initial inclusion criteria called for those who worked more than 35 hours per week the decision was made not to accept participation from those who worked less than 35 hours per week. As the aforementioned feedback may be evidence of a changing lesbian workforce, future research should take into account the dynamic nature of dual-earner families. It is possible that the requirement of both partners working full-time may not capture the nature of contemporary committed same-sex dual-earner relationships. Broadening the definition of dual-earner couples would benefit future research by both gaining the participation of a greater number of matched partners and exploring the prominent attributes of such dual-earner relationships.

This sample may not have been representative of the larger population of females in same-sex dual-earner relationships in ways other than the number of hours worked. In particular, the majority of individuals in this sample were: not raising children, Caucasian with Caucasian partners, not keeping their sexual orientation a secret at work, and felt an above average level of power in the relationship. More needs to be known about the

variables that capture the lifestyle of the average female same-sex dual earner couple. While it is challenging to identify and gain the participation of individuals who are more secretive about their same-sex sexual orientation at work, the participation of such individuals would have provided particularly rich data to this research. A slightly higher degree of disclosure of sexual orientation at work was reported for those in the entertainment industry (n=4) and a slightly more protective identity management strategy was reported for those in the field of travel and transportation (n=6). As more than half (51.7%) of the current sample reported working in the fields of healthcare/mental healthcare (n=52) and Education (n=70), while the data suggests that identity management may be to some extent field specific, additional exploration garnering participants with a greater variance of occupations may be warranted. Similarly, better representation of women in same-sex relationships who are raising children and have more diversity with respect to perceived power may aid in the exploration of the effects of imposed role strain, when power in the relationship varies.

Practical implications. It seems important to continue to explore the role work related factors may play in the lives of those managing work lives and personal relationships. Initial support for the influence of workplace variables has been demonstrated through the association of personal and work roles for individuals in dual-career partnerships (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Eldridge & Gilbert, 1990; Jordan & Deluty, 2003; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002; Shachar & Gilbert, 1983). Considering the limitations of the current research, and the large amount of the variance of relationship satisfaction that was not accounted for, the researcher is not sure that the question pertaining to the influence of workplace variables was adequately answered. Workplace

variables may still be revealed as important to relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex dual-earner relationships with more refined investigation. The following are implications for practice with respect to the preliminary nature of the findings.

One of the major implications of this study is evidence for the benefit of social support, particularly by friends. Additionally, perceived social support may be related in predictable ways to multiple other variables important to relationship satisfaction. Specific to findings from this study, it may be that internalized heterosexism is an important factor with respect to relationship satisfaction for women in same-sex couples who do not have a strong support network. Accordingly, garnering social support seems to be an essential focus when beginning counseling work with women same-sex dual-earner couples as it may be directly and indirectly influential to the progress. To this end, exploration of a client's support network and meaning making with respect to one's social circle seems important, as friends may be taking on a variety of roles as seen in the development of family of choice. It seems necessary to identify where support is available and how that support influences the well-being of both partners and the relationship. It may be important to explore the interface of both partners' social networks to identify where support can be enhanced or where friends, family members, or others are damaging the solidarity of the relationship. A primary target of investigation is the support and meaning of family, as biological family or primary caregivers who are not supportive of the relationship may be estranged and alternate supports may or may not be in place. Supportive family members, friends and co-workers seem to be greatly influential to the relationship satisfaction of women in same-sex relationships who are working full-time indicating that acknowledgment of such

support and intervention targeting a lack of support should be a focus of work with this population.

Perceived power has been supported throughout the literature as an important factor with respect to relationship satisfaction. Increased strain on multiple and shared roles and responsibilities typical of female dual-earner relationships makes perception of power within the relationship particularly relevant for practitioners to address. As relatively high levels of perceived power in their relationships have been reported, it seems that egalitarian relationships tend to be both important to, and a strength of women in same-sex couples. Morrow (2000) urged practitioners to avoid viewing LGB individuals in terms defined by the heterosexual norm, and consequently demeaning LGB individuals who differ from that arbitrary norm. It is important to acknowledge that qualities unique to same-sex couples are not deviant, and to recognize the ways in which such couples display strengths amidst challenges to their solidarity. The display of egalitarianism in same-sex couples may benefit these couples in feeling a shared sense of contribution to the relationship. For practitioners working with women in dual-earner same-sex couples who are experiencing difficulty in their relationships, it seems important to exploration of the power dynamics within the relationship. It may be that an egalitarian relationship is a necessary source of safety for women in same-sex relationships as they are likely to experience a lack of power and direct discrimination in other roles, such as worker or member of society. It may be important to investigate the ways in which a power differential within a relationship influences one or both partners. An example of this may be that one partner may use outing their relationship in venues seeming unsafe to the other partner as a form of control in the relationship. Such threats

may instigate fear of losing one's job if one is not out in the workplace, which could lead to other difficulties such as a loss of career identity and a sense of financial dependence on one's partner.

According to Ossana (2000), conflicts may arise between partners with respect to differing strategies of outness with family, at work, and in the community. The current study found some evidence to support the importance of partners having similar identity management strategies specific to the workplace. Practitioners and educators should be aware of the potential impact upon one individual as her life experiences are influenced by the decisions of her partner. Career counselors in particular may benefit clients by attending to the potential impact of identity management strategies when helping clients to explore options with respect to work environments. Also pertaining to work environment, the great potential for workers to fail to recognize their rights was highlighted in the current findings. Potential risks associated with being unaware of one's rights and available support at work may be explored in counseling. Such risks may have significance to an individual's career decision-making process and identity management behaviors. Career counselors and other practitioners may help their clients identify their personal needs with respect to work environment based upon personal comfort with disclosure of sexual orientation and other life factors. Investigation of the policies of organizations and the experience of current employees may help job seekers to prevent uncomfortable and discriminating experiences. Counseling may also include exploration of options and support for the often difficult experience of navigating safety of disclosure within the workplace and the impact of such decisions on one's career-path. It has been shown that one's partner's work environment and identity management decisions are

influential within a same-sex dual-earner relationship and should be explored as a possibly significant factor for both members of the couple. This speaks to the multiple layers of influence within one's context. Practitioners can help clients to tease out the impact of these factors both by normalizing the experience for members of same-sex couples in our society and attending to the unique ways this may be influencing each particular couple.

Implications of the current findings suggest that it is critical for practitioners and educators to acknowledge the limitations of current assessment tools and research in addressing concerns of women in contemporary same-sex dual-earner relationships. As the nature of working families changes with the transformation of the modern workforce, the picture of lesbian dual-earner relationships is certainly changing. It seems important to think beyond full-time workers who are not raising children, and continue to acknowledge the characteristics of relationships that may influence and mediate relationships satisfaction. As these factors are identified through recognition of positive role models, clinical work and research, a better understanding of same-sex dual-earner relationships will undoubtedly unfold.

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Appendix A
Recruitment Notice

PARTICIPATE IN AN ONLINE RELATIONSHIP SURVEY

I am an LGB-affirmative researcher seeking participants to complete a survey about relationships. The purpose of the study is to gather information about what contributes to relationship satisfaction for women in committed same-sex dual-earner relationships.

- Are you a woman in a same-sex committed relationship with a woman?

- Do both you and your partner work full-time?

- Are you at least 18 years old?

If you answered yes to the questions above, then you and your partner are eligible to participate in this study. While it would be most helpful for both members of the couple to complete the survey, participation by one partner will offer a great contribution.

For every 100 women who complete this on-line survey, $50 will be donated to The Human Rights Campaign (HRC; the largest LGBT equal rights organization). With your help, hundreds of dollars can be donated to HRC. All you need to do is go to **www.psychdata.com** and enter this survey **#11171**. The survey will take approximately 20-25 minutes. Survey answers are anonymous and data will be encrypted when transmitted. Anonymity will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties. Data is encrypted as soon at is sent and stored on a secure server. The survey does not ask for any information that would identify who the responses belong to (i.e., e-mail address, IP address).

This study was reviewed and approved by the Social Science Institutional Review Board at the Pennsylvania State University (IRB#22601, phone 814-865-1775). This study is voluntary for research purposes. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me, Jodi Boita, at Penn State University through e-mail at jodiboita@yahoo.com (704-687-2103), or my advisor Kathy Bieschke at kbieschke@psu.edu (814-865-3296).

Appendix B

Dear Jodi,

On behalf of the Human Rights Campaign's staff, board and volunteers, thank you for donating to HRC today!

Your generosity reflects your outstanding commitment to equality and investment in efforts to end discrimination. We rely on members like you to fund our important work.

====== CONFIRMATION (Thank you for your support!) =====

Payment Information:
================================
Transaction ID: 15505239
Date: July 21, 2006
Time: 3:00pm (ET)
Payment Amount: $100.00
Campaign: Donate to HRC Today
Name: Jodi Boita

Appendix C

Requirements and Informed Voluntary Consent Statement
Exploring predictors of relationship satisfaction for women in dual-earner same-sex
relationships

Principal Investigator:	**Advisor:**
Jodi A. Boita, M.A.	Kathleen J. Bieschke, Ph.D.
Counseling Center,158 Atkins	306 CEDAR Building
9201 University City Blvd	The Pennsylvania State University
Charlotte, NC28223	University Park, PA 16801
Phone: (704) 687-2103	Phone: 814.865.3296
jaboita@yahoo.com	kbieschke@psu.edu

Purpose: The purpose of the present study is to predictors of relationship satisfaction for
women in same-sex dual-earner couples. In order to participate, you must be at least 18
years of age, lesbian or exploring a lesbian identity, working full-time and currently be in
a committed relationship with a partner who also works full time. It would be most
helpful for both partners of each couple to complete the survey. If it is not possible for
your partner to participate in this study, information gleaned from individuals whose
partners do not choose to complete the survey will be utilized in analyses. For every 100
surveys submitted, the principle investigator will personally donate $50 to The Human
Rights Campaign. This study is part of a doctoral dissertation at the Pennsylvania State
University.

Procedures To Be Followed: You will be asked to complete an online survey. Your
participation and responses are confidential. Please answer the questions as openly and
honestly as possible. You may skip questions, but skipping too many could affect your
inclusion in the study. If your demographic data shows that you do not meet the
aforementioned requirements, your responses will not be included in the study.

Discomforts and Risks: Due to the personal nature of some of the questions, you may
experience some discomfort in completing the survey. If this occurs, you may want to
seek support from a counselor or another helping professional.

Benefits: The benefits to you may include an increased awareness of characteristics of
relationship quality. The benefits to society include an increased awareness and
understanding of the impact of anti-gay attitudes and discrimination on the lives of
people who identify with, or are exploring, same gender or bisexual sexual orientations.

Duration/Time: This online survey will take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete.
There is no required participation beyond this time.

Statement of Confidentiality: Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent permitted
by the technology used. In particular, since the Internet is being utilized, protection from
third party access cannot be guaranteed. The data is encrypted, however, as soon as it is

sent and is immediately stored on a secure server. Additional information with regard to security is available on the Psychdata website. The survey will not ask for any information that would identify who the responses belong to (i.e., name, email address). Jodi Boita and her advisor will have access to the final records. The Pennsylvania State University's Office for Research Protections and the Social Science Institutional Review Board may review records related to this project.

Right to Ask Questions: You can ask questions about this research. The researcher for this study is Jodi Boita, a Ph.D. candidate at Penn State University. She can be contacted via email at jaboita@yahoo.com. Her advisor is Dr. Kathleen Bieschke, and she can be reached at kbieschke@psu.edu. You can also contact The Office for Research Protections directly at (814) 865-1775 with any questions. If you are interested in the final results of this study, please email Jodi Boita. The final results may be published in a professional journal over the next few years.

Voluntary Participation: Your decision to be in this study is voluntary. Please note that you can choose to withdraw your responses at any time before you submit your answers.

If you agree to take part in this research study and the information outlined above, please click on the "Continue" button below, which indicates your consent to participate in this study. It is recommended that you print this statement for your records, or record the address for this site and keep it for reference.

This informed consent form was reviewed and approved by the Social Science Institutional Review Board (IRB# 22601) at The Pennsylvania State University on February 21, 2006. It will expire on February 14, 2007.

Appendix D

Demographic Questionnaire

1. What is your age? ____
2. What is your gender identity?
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Transgender MtF
   d. Transgender FtM
3. How would you describe your sexual identity?
   a. lesbian
   b. bisexual
   c. gay
   d. queer
   e. currently exploring a lesbian identity
   f. currently exploring a bisexual identity
   g. currently exploring gay identity
   h. other _____
4. How long have you been with your current partner? (number of years/months)____
5. Do you and your partner live together?____
6. How long have you been in full-time employment? (number of years/months)____
7. How many months have you worked at your current job? ____
8. How large is the organization you work for?
   a. Over 10,000 employees worldwide
   b. 1,000-10,000 employees
   c. 100-999 employees
   d. Less than 100 employees
9. What category best describes your field of employment?
   a. Manufacturing
   b. Computer and software engineering
   c. Communications
   d. Financial/insurance services
   e. Travel and transportation
   f. Healthcare, Mental Health care
   g. Entertainment
   h. Government agency
   i. Retail
   j. Advertising/publishing
   k. Design/fashion
   l. Education
   m. Service (greens keeper, cleaner)
   n. Other
10. What is your yearly income (just you, not your household)?
    a. Under 15,000

        b. 15,000-25,000

        c. 25,001-50,000

        d. 50,001-75,000

        e. 75,001-100,000

        f. Over 100,000

11. Do you have children at home?

        a. Yes

        b. No

12. What is your race/ethnicity?

        a. Caucasian or Euro American

        b. African or African American

        c. Asian or Asian American or Pacific Islander

        d. Native American/American Indian

        e. Latino/Latina/Chicano or Latino/Latina/Chicano American

        f. Biracial or Multiracial: please indicate

_____

        g. Other: _____

13. What is your partner's race/ethnicity?

        a. Caucasian or Euro American

        b. African or African American

        c. Asian or Asian American or Pacific Islander

        d. Native American/American Indian

        e. Latino/Latina/Chicano or Latino/Latina/Chicano American

        f. Biracial or Multiracial: please indicate

_____

        g. Other: _____

14. What is the highest education level you have completed?

        a. Some high school

        b. High school degree

        c. Associate's degree

        d. Bachelor's degree

        e. Master's degree

        f. Professional degree

15. What state do you live in?

        a. Non U.S.

        b. Alabama

        c. Alaska

        d. Arizona

        e. Arkansas

        f. California

        g. Colorado

        h. Connecticut

        i. Delaware

        j. Florida

        k. Georgia

        l. Hawaii

m. Idaho
n. Illinois
o. Indiana
p. Iowa
q. Kansas
r. Kentucky
s. Louisiana
t. Maine
u. Maryland
v. Massachusetts
w. Michigan
x. Minnesota
y. Mississippi
z. Missouri
aa. Montana
bb. Nebraska
cc. Nevada
dd. New Hampshire
ee. New Jersey
ff. New Mexico
gg. New York
hh. North Carolina
ii. North Dakota
jj. Ohio
kk. Oklahoma
ll. Oregon
mm. Pennsylvania
nn. Rhode Island
oo. South Carolina
pp. South Dakota
qq. Tennessee
rr. Texas
ss. Utah
tt. Vermont
uu. Virginia
vv. Washington
xx. West Virginia
yy. Wisconsin
zz. Wyoming

16. What would best describe your home area? (definitions obtained from U.S. Census)
   a. Nonmetropolitan – less than 50,000 people
   b. Metropolitan – city, town with population of 50,000 – 1 million
   c. Consolidated Metropolitan – area with more than 1 million people

16. How many hours do you work in a week?
   a. Full-time – 35 or more hours per week

b. Part-time – less than 35 hours per week
17. How did you hear about this study?
        a. E-mail from list-serv
        b. From friend
        c. From my partner
        c. Advertisement or link on Web
        d. Advertisement in magazine
        e. Other

Appendix E

Workplace Policies and Practices
(Ragins and Cornwell, 2001)

Does your organization:

1. Have a written nondiscrimination policy that includes sexual orientation?

2. Include sexual orientation in the definition of diversity?

3. Include awareness of gay-lesbian-bisexual issues in diversity training?

4. Offer same-sex domestic partners benefits?

5. Offer gay-lesbian-bisexual resource or support groups?

6. Welcome same-sex partners at company social events?

Response:

1. Yes

2. I Don't Know

3. No

Appendix F

Lesbian Internalized Homophobia Scale (LIHS)
(Szymanski & Chung, 2001)

Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements by writing in the appropriate number from the scale below. There are no right or wrong answers; however, for the data to be meaningful, you must answer each statement given below as honestly as possible. Your responses are completely anonymous. Please do not leave any statement unmarked. Some statements may depict situations that you have not experienced; please imagine yourself in those situations when answering those statements.

Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

_____ 1. Many of my friends are lesbians.

_____ 2. I try not to give signs that I am a lesbian. I am careful about the way I dress, the jewelry I wear, the places, people and events I talk about.

_____ 3. Just as in other species, female homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in human women.

_____ 4. I can't stand lesbians who are too "butch". They make lesbians as a group look bad.

_____ 5. Attending lesbian events and organizations is important to me.

_____ 6. I hate myself for being attracted to other women.

_____ 7. I believe female homosexuality is a sin.

_____ 8. I am comfortable being an "out" lesbian. I want others to know and see me as a lesbian.

_____ 9. I feel comfortable with the diversity of women who make up the lesbian community.

_____ 10. I have respect and admiration for other lesbians.

_____ 11. I feel isolated and separate from other lesbians.

_____ 12. I wouldn't mind if my boss knew that I was a lesbian.

_____ 13. If some lesbians would change and be more acceptable to the larger society, lesbians as a group would not have to deal with so much negativity and discrimination.

_____ 14. I am proud to be a lesbian.

_____ 15. I am not worried about anyone finding out that I am a lesbian.

_____ 16. When interacting with members of the lesbian community, I often feel different and
alone, like I don't fit in.

_____ 17. Female homosexuality is an acceptable lifestyle.

_____ 18. I feel bad for acting on my lesbian desires.

_____ 19. I feel comfortable talking to my heterosexual friends about my everyday home life with
my lesbian partner/lover or my everyday activities with my lesbian friends.

20. Having lesbian friends is important to me.

_____ 21. I am familiar with lesbian books and/or magazines.

_____ 22 Being a part of the lesbian community is important to me.

_____ 23. As a lesbian, I am loveable and deserving of respect.

_____ 24. It is important for me to conceal the fact that I am a lesbian from my family.

_____ 25. I feel comfortable talking about homosexuality in public.

_____ 26. I live in fear that someone will find out I am a lesbian.

_____ 27. If I could change my sexual orientation and become heterosexual, I would.

_____ 28. I do not feel the need to be on guard, lie, or hide my lesbianism to others.

_____ 29. I feel comfortable joining a lesbian social group, lesbian sports team, or lesbian
organization.

_____ 30. When speaking of my lesbian lover/partner to a straight person I change pronouns so
that others will think I'm involved with a man rather than a woman.

_____ 31. Being a lesbian makes my future look bleak and hopeless.

_____ 32. Children should be taught that being gay is a normal and healthy way for people to be.

_____ 33. My feelings toward other lesbians are often negative.

_____ 34. If my peers knew of my lesbianism, I am afraid that many would not want to be friends with me.

_____ 35. I feel comfortable being a lesbian.

_____ 36. Social situations with other lesbians make me feel uncomfortable.

_____ 37. I wish some lesbians wouldn't "flaunt" their lesbianism. They only do it for shock value and it doesn't accomplish anything positive.

_____ 38. I don't feel disappointment in myself for being a lesbian.

_____ 39. I am familiar with lesbian movies and/or music.

_____ 40. I am aware of the history concerning the development of lesbian communities and/or the lesbian/gay rights movement.

_____ 41. I act as if my lesbian lovers are merely friends.

_____ 42. Lesbian lifestyles are a viable and legitimate way of life for women.

_____ 43. I feel comfortable discussing my lesbianism with my family.

_____ 44. I don't like to be seen in public with lesbians who look "too butch" or are "too out" because others will then think I am a lesbian.

_____ 45. I could **not** confront a straight friend or acquaintance if she or he made a homophobic or heterosexist statement to me.

_____ 46. I am familiar with lesbian music festivals and conferences.

_____ 47. When speaking of my lesbian lover/partner to a straight person, I often use neutral pronouns so the sex of the person is vague.

_____ 48. Lesbian couples should be allowed to adopt children the same as heterosexual couples.

_____ 49. Lesbians are too aggressive.

_____ 50. I frequently make negative comments about other lesbians.

_____ 51. Growing up in a lesbian family is detrimental for children.

_____ 52. I am familiar with community resources for lesbians (i.e., bookstores, support groups, bars, etc.).

Appendix G

Self-Disclosure of Sexual Orientation in the Workplace
(Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001)

Answer using:
1 = I try very hard to keep it secret
2 = I try somewhat hard to keep it secret
3 = I don't try to keep it secret
4 = I actively talk about it to others

How hard do you try to keep your sexual orientation secret from these people at work?

1. Co-workers?
      1   2   3   4
2. Immediate supervisors?
      1   2   3   4
3. Other supervisors?
      1   2   3   4
4. Subordinates?
      1   2   3   4
5. Middle management?
      1   2   3   4
6. Top Management?
      1   2   3   4

7. At work, have you disclosed your sexual orientation to:
a. no one
b. some people
c. most people
d. everyone

Appendix H

Social Support Appraisal Scale
(SSA; Vaux, Phillips, Holley, Thompson, Williams, & Stewart, 1986)

Directions: Below is a list of statements about your relationships with family and friends. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement being true.

Strongly Agree 1	Agree 2	Disagree 3	Strongly Disagree 4

1. My friends respect me
2. My family cares for me very much
3. I am not important to others
4. My family holds me in high esteem
5. I am well liked
6. I can rely on my friends
7. I am really admired by my family
8. I am respected by other people
9. I am loved dearly by my family
10. My friends don't care about my welfare
11. Members of my family rely on me
12. I am held in high esteem
13. I can't rely on my family for support
14. People admire me
15. I feel a strong bond among my friends
16. My friends look out for me
17. I feel valued by other people
18. My family really respects me
19. My friends and I are really important to each other
20. I feel like I belong
21. If I died tomorrow very few people would miss me
22. I don't feel close to members of my family
23. My friends and I have done a lot for one another

Appendix I

Influence in the Relationship Scale

(Eldridge & Gilbert, 1991)

The next few questions ask about aspects of your relationship. Please report from your actual experience in your current relationship.

1. How much influence do you feel you have in your relationship?

| very | | | | | | | a great |
| little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | deal |

2. How much say do you feel you have about what you and your partner do together?

| very | | | | | | | a great |
| little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | deal |

3. How much say do you feel you have about how much time you and your partner spend together?

| very | | | | | | | a great |
| little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | deal |

4. How much say do you feel you have about how much time you and your partner spend as a couple with other people?

| very | | | | | | | a great |
| little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | deal |

5. How much say do you feel you have about important decisions affecting your relationship?

| very | | | | | | | a great |
| little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | deal |

6. How much power do you feel you have in your relationship?

| very | | | | | | | a great |
| little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | deal |

7. How much have you altered your habits and ways of doing things to please your partner?

| very | | | | | | | a great |
| little | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | deal |

8. Do you feel you have as much influence in the relationship as your partner does?

| not at | | | | | | | very |
| all so | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | much so |

Appendix J

Dyadic Adjustment Scale
(Spanier, 1989)
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Directions: Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.

1. Handling family finances

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

2. Matters of recreation

Always Agree	Almost Always Agree	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disagree	Almost Always Disagree	Always Disagree
5	4	3	2	1	0

3. Religious matters

Always Ag	Almost Al	Occasionally Disagree	Frequently Disag	Almost Always Di	Always Di

ree 5	ways Agree 4	3	ree 2	sag ree 1	s a g r e e 0

4. Demonstrations of affection

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

5. Friends

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

6. Sex relations

Always Agr r	Almost Alw w	Occasionally Disa gree	Frequently Di sag ree	Almost Always Di sag	Always Di s

ee e 5	ays Agree 4	3	2	1	ree a g r e e 0

7. Conventionality (Correct or proper behavior)

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

8. Philosophy of life

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

9. Ways of dealing with parents or in-laws

Always Agr r	Almost Al w	Occasionally Disa gree	Frequently Di sag ree	Almost Always Di sag	Always Di s

ee 5	ays Agree 4	3	2	ree 1	agree 0

10. Aims, goals, and things believed to be important

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

11. Amount of time spent together

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

12. Making major decisions

Always Agre	Almost Alwa	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disag ree	Almost Always Disag ree	Always Disa
e	a				a

			2	1	
e 5	y s A g r e e 4				g r e e 0

13. Household tasks

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

14. Leisure time interests and activities

Always Agree 5	Almost Always Agree 4	Occasionally Disagree 3	Frequently Disagree 2	Almost Always Disagree 1	Always Disagree 0

15. Career decisions

Always A	Almost A	Occasionally Disa	Frequently Di	Almost Always	Always D

gree 5	lways Agree 4	gree 3	sag ree 2	Di sag ree 1	i s a g r e e 0

16. How often do you discuss or have you considered divorce, separation, or termination of your relationship?

All The T i m e 5	Most of T h e T i m e 4	More Often Than Not 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

17. How often do you or your mate leave the house after a fight?

All The T i m e 5	Most of T h e T i m e 4	More Often Than Not 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

18. In general how often do you think that things between you and your partner are going well?

All The T i m e 5	Most of T h e T i m e 4	More Often Than Not 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

19. Do you confide in your mate?

All The Time 5	Most of The Time 4	More Often Than Not 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

20. Do you ever regret that you lived together or married?

All The Time 5	Most of The Time 4	More Often Than Not 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

21. How often do you and you partner quarrel?

All The Time 5	Most of The Time 4	More Often Than Not 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

22. How often do you and your mate get on each others' nerves?

All The Time 5	Most of The Time	More Often Than Not 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

	4				

23. Do you kiss your mate?

Every Day 4	Almost Every Day 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

24. Do you and you mate engage in outside interests together?

Every Day 4	Almost Every Day 3	Occasionally 2	Rarely 1	Never 0

How often do the following occur between you and your mate?

25. Having a stimulating exchange of ideas

Never 0	Less Than Once A Month 1	Once Or Twice A Month 2	Once Or Twice A Week 3	Once A Day 4	More Often 5

26. Laugh together

Never 0	Less Than Once A Month 1	Once Or Twice A Month 2	Once Or Twice A Week 3	Once A Day 4	More Often 5

27. calmly discuss something

Never 0	Less Than Once A Month 1	Once Or Twice A Month 2	Once Or Twice A Week 3	Once A Day	More Often

				4	5

28. work together on a project

Never	Less Than Once A Month	Once Or Twice A Month	Once Or Twice A Week	Once A Day	More Often
0	1	2	3	4	5

29. Being too tired for sex

Yes	No
0	1

30. Not showing love

Yes	No
0	1

31. The points on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Circle the phrase which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

Extremely Unhappy	Fairly Unhappy	A Little Unhappy	Happy	Very Happy	Extremely Happy	Perfect
0	1	2	3	4	5	6

32. Which of the following statements best describes how you feel about the future of your relationship? Circle the letter of one statement.

A. I want desperately for my relationship to succeed, and would go to almost any length to see that it does.
B. I want very much for my relationship to succeed, and will do all I can to see that it does.
C. It would be nice if my relationship succeeded, but I can't do much more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
D. It would be nice if it succeeded, but I refuse to do any more than I am doing now to keep the relationship going.
E. My relationship can never succeed, and there is no more that I can do to keep the relationship going.

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PUBLICATIONS

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