OUT AND ABOUT: PREDICTORS OF LESBIANS’ OUTNESS IN THE
WORKPLACE

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by
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SELF-DISCLOSURE OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN THE WORKPLACE FOR LESBIAN WOMEN

ABSTRACT

Self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace for lesbian women is a complicated issue because of the lack of national legal protection against sexual orientation-based discrimination in the workplace. However, employees who have higher levels of self-disclosure of a lesbian or gay sexual orientation also have higher levels of job commitment and job satisfaction (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Waldo, 1999). Exploratory studies have looked at what factors are related to disclosing a gay or lesbian sexual orientation in the workplace. The field is now moving toward hypothesis-testing of different variables as predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation.

This study is based on theory by Super (1990) that a person and her or his work environment will play important roles for implementation of the self at work. Structural equation modeling was used to test a model predicting self-disclosure of sexual identity in the workplace with a sample of 398 lesbian women. Results suggested that a structural model including organizational tolerance of heterosexism, direct and indirect heterosexist experiences, and internalized homophobia as predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace for lesbian women fit the data adequately. As operationalized, the sexual identity development variables violated the multicollinearity assumption of SEM. In a post-hoc sequential multiple regression analysis, the internal variables internalized homophobia and sexual identity development accounted for a small amount of variance after workplace and demographic variables were entered. Limitations of this study and implications for research and practice are discussed.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Focus on sexual orientation as an identity and as an oppressed status has received greater attention in psychological research since the late 1980s. After homosexuality was removed from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) as a mental disorder in 1973 (Gonsiorek & Wienrich, 1991), ideology shifted from sexual orientation as a deficit to sexual orientation as a cultural variable or identity (e.g., Arredondo, Toporek, Pack Brown, Jones, Locke, & Sanchez, 1996). Given the growing diverse population in the United States, there are increasing efforts to affirm diversity in businesses, communities, schools, religious organizations, and other groups (Richard, 2000; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998).

Unlike skin tone, one's sexual orientation is not a characteristic visible to others; therefore gay and lesbian people are sometimes referred to as an “invisible minority” (Fassinger, 1991; Morgan & Brown, 1991). Additionally, all people are assumed to be heterosexual, thus making the lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) population even less visible. If one is not heterosexual and would like others to know this, one has to decide where, when, and how to be open about sexual orientation.

In the face of negative stereotypes and varying degrees of legal protection against sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace, self-disclosure of an LGB identity is complicated. Croteau (1996) found in a review of literature on LGB vocational issues that 25-66% of participants reported experiencing discrimination based on sexual orientation. In fact, participants who were more out reported more discrimination than those who were more secretive about their sexual orientation. Discrimination or heterosexism in the workplace can involve job loss, lack of promotion and advancement, harassment, lack of partner benefits, and
social isolation (Fassinger, 1995; House, 2004). Heterosexism can influence work environments, work policies, and interpersonal relationships at work (Croteau, 1996; Waldo, 1999). Thirteen states and the District of Columbia have state laws that protect LGB persons from employment discrimination (Human Rights Campaign, February 23, 2004). A growing number of companies and organizations also have policies stating that they do not allow discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Companies that have anti-discrimination policies have fewer gay and lesbian employees reporting discrimination than companies without those policies (Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Gay and lesbian employees who report experiencing or observing less discrimination are also more likely to self-disclose their sexual orientation (Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). The more gay or lesbian employees are able to openly share their sexual orientation, the greater the likelihood of positive work attitudes (Button, 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 1997, 2000; Waldo, 1999). Policies supportive of gay and lesbian employees also have a direct effect on turnover intentions, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and career commitment of LGB employees (Button, 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 2000; Driscoll, Kelley, & Fassinger, 1996; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Waldo, 1999). Thus, companies and organizations have a vested interest in minimizing the extent to which LGB employees experience discrimination in the workplace and determining how safe it is for LGB persons to be open about sexual orientation.

Summary of Relevant Literature

Researchers have spent almost the last two decades investigating LGB workplace issues (e.g., Ellis & Riggle, 1995; Fassinger, 1995; Hall, 1986; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Schneider, 1986) and self-disclosure of an LGB sexual orientation is a major focus of that research. Croteau,
Anderson, DiStefano, and Kampa-Kokesch (2000) recommended that future research specifically related to LGB self-disclosure in the workplace focus on hypothesis testing rather than exploration of the construct. A few studies have begun to utilize hypothesis testing with regards to consequences of self-disclosure in the workplace (e.g., Day & Schoenrade 1997, 2000; Driscoll et al., 1996; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Additionally, a few have utilized hypothesis testing to look at antecedents of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace (e.g., Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Schneider, 1986; Waldo, 1999). There are also other studies that have explored antecedents of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in life settings beyond the workplace (e.g., Franke & Leary, 1991; Jordan & Deluty, 1998; Morris, Waldo, & Rothblum, 2001; Wells & Kline, 1987) that are important to consider when investigating this topic.

Two internal variables that have emerged in qualitative and quantitative research as correlates of level of disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace among lesbian women are sexual identity development at the group level and internalized homophobia (Boatwright, Gilbert, Forrest, & Ketzenberger, 1996; Button, 2001; House, 2004). When defining sexual identity development and internalized homophobia, both are theoretically tied to level of disclosure about sexual orientation. For instance, McCarn and Fassinger's (1996) model of lesbian sexual identity development describes lesbian women in the internalization/synthesis phase of group identity as maintaining a lesbian identity across contexts and having disclosed this identity to some people. In addition, Szymanski and Chung's (2001) measure of internalized homophobia for lesbian women has a subscale titled "Public Identification as Lesbian."

Two external variables that researchers have empirically identified as significant antecedents or correlates of disclosure of sexual orientation for lesbian women in the workplace
are organizational climate and previous experiences with discrimination (Button, 2001; Griffin, 1992; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Schneider, 1986; Waldo, 1999). These variables are theoretically tied to minority stress models – minorities experience discrimination in society that results in psychological distress (Waldo, 1999). Few gay and lesbian people are able to avoid stress associated with working in a heterosexist environment, but they make decisions to minimize their stress, which might mean changing jobs or workplaces, or keeping an LGB sexual orientation a secret (Kitzinger, 1991). As Kitzinger notes, coming out is a decision-making process, “weighing up the risks and possible repercussions of each and every situation” (p. 231).

Lesbians and gay men also think about previous experiences with coming out in the workplace and the past consequences (Griffin, 1992; Schneider, 1986; Waldo, 1999). The variable in Schneider’s (1986) study that most influenced self-disclosure of a lesbian sexual orientation in the workplace was previous job loss due to coming out at work. Griffin (1992) used focus groups to empirically identify four identity management strategies in the workplace that exist on a continuum of increasing risk from passing as a heterosexual to being explicitly out. Waldo (1999) found a significant relationship between previous experiences of heterosexism and level of disclosure about sexual orientation.

Rationale and Purpose of Study

Antecedents such as internalized homophobia, organizational climate, and previous discrimination can predict LGB persons’ self-disclosure about sexual orientation in the workplace (Schneider, 1986; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002; Waldo, 1999). Antecedents are either external or internal. Research has shown that LGB persons who are more open about their sexual orientation at work have more positive work attitudes such as job satisfaction and

Person-environment approaches to career development presume that there needs to be a fit between the individual and his or her environment, or the worker and the workplace climate (Super, 1990). Applying this perspective, I asked what internal and external variables predicted lesbians’ disclosure of sexual orientation at work. I only investigated lesbian women in this study because research has previously concluded that there are reasons to study gay men, bisexual men, and bisexual women separately from lesbian women. For example, sexual identity development can be differentially influenced by one’s gender (Wishik, 1996). Further, lesbians, bisexual persons, and gay men may have disparate difficulty in passing as heterosexual, which may influence identity management (Fassinger, 1995; Rust, 1993). There may also be differing levels of discrimination directed toward lesbians as opposed to gay men or bisexual persons (Croteau, 1996). Dynamics such as social support, relationships, and societal attitudes may influence sexual identity development and coming out differently among lesbians, gay men, and bisexual persons (McCarn & Fassinger, 1996). Thus, the overarching research question is whether lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace can be predicted by workplace climate, previous experiences with discrimination, sexual identity development, and internalized homophobia.

The first part of the overarching research question is whether the antecedents of lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace that were previously studied separately (i.e., internalized homophobia, organizational climate, heterosexist experiences, and sexual identity development at the group level; Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002; Waldo, 1999) can predict self-disclosure in combination. The second part of the
over-arching research question is to add sexual identity development at the individual level as an additional predictor. The relationship between sexual identity development at the individual level and self-disclosure of sexual orientation at work has not been studied, although the two are linked in qualitative research (Boatwright et al., 1996; House, 2004) and theory (McCarn & Fassinger, 1996).

Methodological Concerns

When studying lesbian women and sexual identity development, there are certain methodological concerns to consider. Participants along the continuum of sexual identity development should be represented in the sample to maximize statistical power. Studies that recruit lesbian women mostly draw self-identified lesbian women (Morgan & Brown, 1991). A woman who is questioning her sexual identity may not be drawn to participate in studies recruiting women who identify as lesbian. By conducting an on-line survey, I attracted a sample from a range of phases in sexual identity development because the Internet is often a resource for people looking for information on sexual orientation. Mustanski (2001) reported that individuals often come out on-line before they do in real life.

Internet surveys are a way to reach marginalized and hard to identify samples (Koch & Emrey, 2001). The demographic gap between Internet users and non-Internet users is rapidly approaching zero with the gap tightening every month (Mustanski, 2001). Koch and Emrey (2001) reported that their Internet sample of lesbian women and gay men is almost indistinguishable demographically from lesbian women and gay men on the Internet who chose not to take their survey. The Internet also allows the researchers to ensure participant’s anonymity. Internet-based research surveys are found to be cost-effective, with less paper use, automated data-entry, and no postage expenses (Mustanski, 2001). Currently, most studies in this

Research Questions

The criterion variable for this study is lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace. The predictor variables are divided into external variables and internal variables. The external variables are (a) organizational tolerance of heterosexism and (b) previous experiences with discrimination in the workplace. The internal variables are (a) internalized homophobia, (b) sexual identity development at the individual level, and (c) sexual identity development at the group level.

My research questions were as follows:

1. Do the external variables (organizational tolerance of heterosexism and previous experiences of discrimination), and the internal variables (internalized homophobia and sexual identity development at the individual and group levels) predict lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace? Will the proposed model predicting lesbians’ self-disclosure in the workplace (see Figure 1, p. 46) fit the data gathered from my sample?

2. Does internalized homophobia have an indirect effect on self-disclosure of sexual orientation via sexual identity development at the individual and group level?
Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter addresses four topics related to lesbians’ level of disclosure in the workplace addressed in the literature on lesbian women and vocational psychology. Lesbian sexual identity development, heterosexism, discrimination, and internalized homophobia are topics researchers have found to be related to lesbians’ outness in the workplace.

Identity management in the workplace is an issue of great importance in lesbians’ lives (Boatwright et al., 1996; House, 2004; Morgan & Brown, 1993; Schneider, 1986). Identity management decisions, from passing as a heterosexual to explicitly disclosing a nontraditional sexual orientation, are found to relate to a number of variables such as sexual identity development, anti-discrimination policies, and self-esteem (Button, 2001; Jordan & Deluty, 1998; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). There is a descriptive base in the literature that investigates factors related to identity management in the workplace, but further hypothesis-testing and theory building inquiries are needed (Croteau et al., 2000). Additionally, little is known about factors that predict types of identity management in the workplace (Croteau et al., 2000).

Croteau (1996) reviewed seven studies (Croteau & Lark, 1995; Croteau & von Destinon, 1994; Griffin, 1992; Hall, 1986; Levine & Leonard, 1984; Schneider, 1986; Woods & Harbeck, 1992) investigating lesbians’ degree of openness about sexual identity in the workplace and found that there was great variability in the findings. These studies provided evidence that disclosing a gay or lesbian sexual orientation could mean facing pervasive direct or indirect discrimination, potentially ending in job loss. Conversely, Griffin (1992) concluded from her qualitative study of 13 gay and lesbian teachers that individuals who were more out felt more integrity and less fear of discrimination than closeted individuals. Three studies indicated that
sociability or hostility in the workplace contributed to lesbians’ degree of outness (Driscoll et al., 1996; Schneider, 1986; Waldo, 1999). The factors investigated thus far are inconclusive because, often, different variables are studied once in a non-representative sample and not replicated in other studies.

Although this study will focus on lesbian women, I will review articles that have lesbian women and gay men in the sample as such research findings have potential utility for the current study. Where studies of gay men and lesbian women have reported any gender differences I will note these.

Sexual Identity Development

Lesbian identity development refers to the process through which lesbians come to know and value more fully who they are (Reynolds & Hanjorgiris, 2000). Eliason (1996a) describes lesbian sexual identity formation as “complex, interactive, and evolving” (p. 18). Lesbian identity development is thought to be like that of racial/ethnic identity development - an emergent, life-long process (Garnets & Kimmel, 1993), although a clear difference exists because parents rarely help socialize LGB children in this identity development. Sexual identity development was the most frequently discussed topic in a review of published scholarly journal articles on lesbian, gay, and bisexual vocational psychology from 1980 to 1996 (Croteau et al., 2000). Moreover, sexual identity development has an empirically demonstrated relationship with barriers to career development, crystallizing career choice, and increased or decreased job satisfaction (Boatwright et al., 1996; Ellis & Riggle, 1995; Etringer, Hillerbrand, & Hetherington, 1990; House, 2004).
In the United States, homophobic and heterosexist attitudes can make it difficult for lesbian women to develop a positive sexual identity (Reynolds & Hanjorgiris, 2000). Internalization of devaluing beliefs may result. Fassinger (1991) stated the following:

The acquisition of a positive gay sexual identity and its relevant developmental tasks, referred to as “coming out” (of the closet), is generally thought to be a rather lengthy, often difficult process for gay people, with considerable variation depending on gender, race, ethnicity, social class, age, religion, geographic location, and other factors. In this process one must confront negative societal attitudes as well as one’s own internalized oppression, repeating the process over and over in each new situation in which one’s gayness is not known. (p. 167)

Researchers have attempted to operationalize sexual identity development since the 1970s by identifying categories of lesbian identity and trajectories of identity development (for a review, see Eliason, 1996b). Most lesbian identity theories are based in a developmental or symbolic interactionism perspective (Eliason, 1996b; Esterberg, 1997). Identity formation, as perceived by developmentalists, is thought to be mostly an intrapsychic process of moving through stages with specific tasks; thus, there are sexual identity development models. Yet, it is recognized that development does occur in the context of a social environment. Social interactionists see identity as the interaction between the individual and the society (Esterberg, 1997). The interactions are based in a process of naming and labeling attributes of the self that then lead to labels and categories.

There are three main concerns about the identity theories born out of the developmental or symbolic interaction perspectives. First, becoming lesbian or gay through taking on a label that was given meaning by society lacks empirical support (Esterberg, 1997). Voices of
postmodernists and queer theorists argue that categories of identities and labels are disruptive because they view identity as defining who is and who is not, rather than seeing the multiple identities that make people unique. In addition, identities are not fixed, but can be fluid with flexibility throughout life.

Second, there are critics of the limited focus of sexual identity development models. Eliason (1996a) criticized sexual identity development models such as Sophie’s (1985/1986) and Cass’ (1979) as being apolitical and ahistorical perspectives of sexual identity development. Sexual identity development models do not consider how race, ethnicity, gender, class, age, religion, and other personal characteristics may intersect with sexual identity development. Fukuyama and Ferguson (2000) further noted that sexual identity theories do not attend to two important processes for lesbian, gay, or bisexual persons of color: visibility or invisibility of sexual or racial identity, and saliency of sexual or racial identity. Indeed, “psychological identity theories that do not acknowledge concurrent multiple identities obscure the complexity of integrating multiple social identities and coping with multiple forms of oppression” (Fukuyama & Ferguson, 2000, p. 86).

Third, there are critics of the premises on which sexual identity development models are based. Rust (1993) challenged linear stage models with her empirical research, highlighting the fluidity of women’s sexual orientation, and faulted stage models of lesbian and gay identity because they do not include the existence of bisexual identity. Further, Kitzinger (1987) stated that stage models are based in the researcher’s values, goals, and biases, rather than research participants’ experiences. Kitzinger also criticized some models of sexual identity development because they do not allow for social system change. If one is directed to think that further stages of sexual identity development place lesbian identity as a small, integrated part of one’s whole
identity, then one may be less likely to consider a lesbian identity as a political statement or engage in a great deal of political work.

In addition to the perspectives above, there are social constructionist and essentialist ideological perspectives on sexual identity development (Broido, 2000; Esterberg, 1997). Social constructionists believe that sexualities are constructed depending on the society and historical period. Choices are based on choices available. The idea that words such as “homosexual,” “straight,” “gay,” “lesbian,” and “heterosexual” are socially constructed has led many theorists to analyze societies’ identities of the present and past. Along this line of thinking, Reynolds and Hanjorgiris (2000) state that lesbian sexual identity is a culture-bound psychological construct because sexuality and gender are viewed differently across cultures and historical time periods.

Essentialists point out that gay, lesbian, and heterosexual persons have existed in other times and places no matter what the societal labeling system (Esterberg, 1997). Some essentialists support the idea of a biological basis of sexual orientation, meaning that sexual orientation is a part of a person regardless of cultural influences. Few scholars actually take the essentialist perspective and those who do usually incorporate social constructionist thinking as well (Esterberg, 1997).

Neither social constructionist nor essentialist perspectives account for the multiple identities that people have (racial, ethnic, religious, occupational, or other group memberships) or intrapersonal variation in identity across time. Postculturalists state that there is not one history of gay and lesbian identity, but many, and not one gay or lesbian identity, but many fluid and dynamic identities (Eliason, 1996b). Postculturalists emphasize difference and deconstruction, and not similarity.
Sexual Identity Development Models. Philosophical considerations aside, many gay and lesbian sexual identity development models focus on dealing with the effects of internalized homophobia and are mostly based on clinical observations and theory (Reynolds & Hanjorgiris, 2000). There are many sexual identity development models (for a review see Eliason, 1996b) and there are five models of sexual identity development specifically for lesbians. The first model of lesbian sexual identity development was proposed by Ponse (1978) and explored how women develop a lesbian identity from a social constructionist perspective (lesbian identity is a result of inversion of rigid sex, gender, and sexual identity roles). Chapman and Brannock (1987) proposed a stage model of achieving lesbian identity from an essentialist viewpoint (the lesbian identity exists in women prior to the discovery). Neither of these models was empirically validated. In this section I will review theoretically derived and empirically tested models by Cass (1979) and Sophie (1985/1986), and review a recent empirically tested model by McCarn and Fassinger (1996), which includes group identity development. Cass’s model is not specifically for lesbian women (it is also inclusive of gay men), but it is often cited in reviews of lesbian identity development models because it was the pioneering model of sexual identity development.

Cass’ (1979) six stages of gay and lesbian sexual identity development each have cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions that one considers. For each stage, one may choose not to proceed any further in developing a lesbian or gay identity. This is called identity foreclosure. The six stages, in order of expected progression, are: identity confusion, identity comparison, identity tolerance, identity acceptance, identity pride, and identity synthesis. Identity confusion refers to awareness that being lesbian or gay has relevance to the self and thus interrupts the notion of the self as heterosexual or others’ notions that one is heterosexual.
Identity comparison means that one has accepted the possibility that one might be lesbian or gay, and is involved in making comparisons of the self against the heterosexual norm. Identity tolerance is characterized by increased commitment to being gay or lesbian and results in thinking that the self probably is lesbian or gay. Making contact with other lesbian and gay persons is an important aspect of this stage and by the end of this stage one can say she/he is lesbian or gay. Identity acceptance refers to increased contact with other lesbian and gay persons and acceptance of a lesbian or gay self-image. Identity pride includes awareness that the acceptable self-image and society’s views of lesbian and gay persons are opposed. Anger and pride are combined, resulting in activism. Finally, identity synthesis signals that one sees being gay or lesbian as one aspect of the self among other aspects. Private and public sexual identities are synthesized into one identity. Anger and pride are still present, but not as intense. One sees similarities and differences to both heterosexuals and other gay and lesbian persons (Cass, 1979).

Cass (1984) used questionnaire data from a sample of 109 males and 69 females to validate her six-stage coming out model. Cass tested participants on cognitive, affective, and behavioral factors that she believed were relevant to the identity development process such as commitment, disclosure, personal satisfaction, and group identification. This assessment distinguished six groups of people, but the first two and the last two were very similar (Cass, 1984). The results signaled that a four-stage model rather than a six-stage model might be more appropriate because of the blurring of scores for Stages One and Two, and Stages Five and Six (Cass, 1984). No formal revisions to the model were made.

Cass’s (1979) model forged the road for sexual identity development models; however, her model does not allow for what researchers now know as fluidity of sexual orientation (Rust, 1993) in which a person may move in and out of gay, bisexual, or heterosexual identities over
the life-span. Another critique of Cass’s model is that one must be an activist to reach the identity pride stage. Not all gay and lesbian persons choose to be activists. To be in the identity synthesis stage, Cass says anger and pride cannot be too intense, which limits emotions that may be present even when identity is synthesized. Finally, the model is laid out as if everyone naturally follows a unidirectional path through the stages, however, some people go through the stages out of order or repeat stages at different times in life (Sophie 1985/1986).

Sophie (1985/1986) reviewed six models of gay and lesbian identity development for internal consistency and thus defined four stages of sexual identity development: first awareness, testing and exploration, identity acceptance, and identity integration. First awareness refers to noticing same-sex feelings and their relevance. Testing and exploration involves testing the same-sex feelings, but not yet identifying as lesbian. Identity acceptance is similar to tolerating a lesbian identity or beginning to identify as lesbian. Identity integration is having a positive identity as a lesbian woman and integrating the lesbian identity with other aspects of overall identity.

Sophie (1985/1986) interviewed 14 women (ages 18-40) who were currently experiencing changes in their sexual orientation to validate her model. Participants were college students or college graduates, and all but one were Caucasian. Two to three interviews occurred with each participant at least three months apart. Five participants completed follow-up questionnaires one year after the final interview. Sophie found that the data supported the framework of her stage model “to a large degree, especially at early stages of development, but marked discrepancies were also found” (Sophie, 1985/1986, p. 39); 11 women’s trajectories of sexual identity development fit into the general stage model, although three did not. For example, timing and order of events such as awareness, alienation, testing, disclosure, social
interaction with other lesbian persons, and identity stability varied. Identity development was also very sensitive to social/historical context (Sophie, 1985/1986).

More recently, McCarn and Fassinger (1996) constructed a model of lesbian sexual identity development that looked at both individual sexual identity and group membership identity. The model was developed after evaluating models of sexual, gender, and racial identity development. Their work borrowed from the dual self and group identity notion found in racial and gender identity models; dual self and group identity refers to two sides of identity development – seeing oneself as an individual member and as a group member. McCarn and Fassinger’s model unties the confound present in other earlier models that describe self-identity in early stages and group identity (political activism and universal disclosure) in later stages by acknowledging that self and group identities are inclusive and present throughout identity development. Individual identity and group identity are presented as parallel to each other although they do not have to be experienced at parallel points in time. This model allows women to validate their diverse identities when thinking of disclosure and to embrace their complexity as whole people (Reynolds & Hanjorgiris, 2000). McCarn and Fassinger’s model is described in terms of phases rather than stages to imply greater flexibility and continuing process. McCarn and Fassinger also wrote self-statements to help describe their model. In general, the process moves from becoming aware of feeling pulled towards women to integrating love for women with one’s overall identity.

Phase one of McCarn and Fassinger’s (1996) model is awareness and signifies a feeling of being different from the heterosexual norm for the self and knowledge of the existence of different sexual orientations among people. Examples of self-statements from the model are, “I feel pulled toward women in ways I don’t understand” for self-identity and, “I had no idea there
were lesbian/gay people out there” for group identity. Self-labeling of same-sex thoughts and feelings is not implied in this phase (McCarn & Fassinger, 1996, p. 521-523).

Phase two of the model is exploration and is characterized by exploration of strong/erotic feelings for women or a particular woman for the self, and exploration of one’s position regarding lesbian/gays as a group. Examples of self-statements from the model are, “The way I feel makes me think I’d like to be sexual with a woman” for self-identity and, “Getting to know lesbian/gay people is scary but exciting” for group identity. Exploration of sexual behaviors is not necessarily involved in this phase (McCarn & Fassinger, 1996, p. 521-523).

Phase three of the model is deepening/commitment to self-knowledge, self-fulfillment, and crystallization of choices about sexuality. There is also greater focus on personal involvement in a reference group, with awareness of oppression and consequences of choices. Examples of self-statements from the model include, “I clearly feel more intimate sexually and emotionally with women than with men” for self-identity and, “Sometimes I have been mistreated because of my lesbianism” for group identity. The emerging lesbian has a commitment to the self as a sexual being and recognizes her desire for other women is from within (McCarn & Fassinger, 1996, p. 521-523).

Phase four is internalization/synthesis of love for women, sexual choices, overall identity, and identity as a member of a minority group across contexts. Examples of self-statements from the model are, “I am deeply fulfilled in my relationships with women” for self-identity and, “I feel comfortable with my lesbianism no matter where I am or who I am with” for group identity. Women at this phase have likely explored the sexual and emotional self for many years and have made difficult resolutions. They identify as a member of a minority group and are aware of their
own oppression. Disclosure of sexual identity is not a requirement of this phase, but addressing the issue of disclosure is an important piece (McCarn & Fassinger, 1996, p. 521-523).

McCarn and Fassinger’s (1996) model addresses many of the criticisms levied against other models of sexual identity development by using non-linear phases rather than stages, specifically addressing lesbian women, addressing individual and group identities separately, and encompassing multiple pathways of sexual identity development. Critics might question how the model accounts for fluidity of sexual orientation. The model does not address how women sometimes move back and forth from identities as heterosexual to bisexual to lesbian.

To deepen the discussion of lesbian sexual identity development, in the next section, I will address coming out and lesbians’ identity management strategies because these issues are important to understanding lesbian sexual identity in a heterosexist environment. Identity management as well as sexual identity development are unique aspects of lesbians’ life experiences that vocational counselors must be familiar with in order to provide competent and ethical vocational counseling (Morgan & Brown, 1991).

**Coming Out and Lesbian Identity Management**

The coming out process is unique to the lesbian, gay, and bisexual population and is fraught with oppression, trepidation, and stress because of the heterosexist society in the United States (Waldo, 1999). Ellis (1996) says, “…no other process is more compelling and psychologically involving than the ‘coming out’ process” (p. 6). The coming out process is considered an additional developmental process for gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons, an umbrella process that includes sexual identity development and self-disclosure occurring on top of other psychological and developmental processes such as adolescent development and career development (Diamant, 1993). Researchers and clinicians do not agree on the definition of
coming out (Cohen & Savin-Williams, 1996). Coming out is often defined as disclosure of a minority sexual orientation to others, although coming out also encompasses disclosure of a minority sexual orientation to oneself (Cohen & Savin-Williams, 1996; Reynolds & Hanjorgiris, 2000). For this study, coming out will be defined as disclosure of a minority sexual orientation to oneself and others.

It is important to understand the difference between sexual identity development and coming out. Fassinger (1991) makes the important distinction that coming out refers to the developmental mile markers associated with sexual identity development, such as disclosure to others or socializing in the lesbian community. Sexual identity development has a wider perspective that addresses how one feels about oneself, deals with heterosexist beliefs, and moves from nonawareness of a minority sexual orientation toward integration of a lesbian, gay, or bisexual orientation in all aspects of one’s life (Croteau et al., 2000; McCarn & Fassinger, 1996).

Because lesbians are a “hidden” minority (being lesbian is an invisible trait not shared with family members nor readily observable to others) there must be an announcement of being lesbian (Fassinger, 1991; Morris, 1997). The trajectorics of coming out tasks vary (Cohen & Savin-Williams, 1996; Golden, 1996). Coming out is not a single event or a process ever completed because there are always new situations and new people with whom one has to decide how to manage one’s identity (Kitzinger, 1991; Schneider, 1986). Morris (1997) offered a theoretical discussion of coming out for lesbian women as a multidimensional process involving sexual identity formation, disclosure of sexual orientation to others, sexual expression or behavior, and lesbian consciousness. Morris described disclosures of sexual orientation as the most significant experiences of a lesbian’s life and a life-long process of deciding whether or not
and how to disclose each time she meets someone new. Lesbian women must choose to self-disclose in a number of contexts including family, friends, social activities, religious communities, school, and the workplace.

Coming Out Research. Available empirical investigations of the factors associated with coming out mostly investigate different relational variables across studies. Jordan and Deluty (1998) administered a questionnaire about self-disclosure, sources of social support, forms of socializing, self-description of sexual orientation, and length of identification as a lesbian. Their sample included 499 women, obtained through word-of-mouth and advertising. These women were: currently or previously in a romantic, sexual, or intimate relationship with women; women who were interested in this type of relationship; or women who identified as lesbian. The sample was 83% Caucasian, lived in a suburban or urban setting, had a mean age of 32.5 (range = 19 – 76), and was well educated. Women who reported that they disclosed their sexual orientation to a larger percentage of persons and to a greater number of “target” persons were less anxious ($r = -.17, p<.001$), expressed greater positive affectivity ($r = .13, p<.01$), and reported greater self-esteem ($r = .23, p<.001$) than those who disclosed their sexual orientation to a lower percentage of persons and to fewer “target” persons. Degree of disclosure was also related to social support ($R^2 = .07, p<.001$), which was a slight relationship, yet significant (Jordan & Deluty, 1998).

One positive aspect of this study is that the authors did a good job advertising their study to encompass a wide range of women along the continuum of lesbian sexual identity development. The biggest problem with interpreting Jordan and Deluty’s (1998) results is that although the results are statistically significant, they have little practical significance given that they account for only a small portion of the variation in responses.
Franke and Leary (1991) found that the greatest predictor of willingness to disclose one’s sexual orientation to others was gay men and lesbian women’s perceptions of how others viewed being gay (labeled by the authors as *sexual orientation social-esteem*). The sample consisted of 110 gay men and 74 lesbian women ranging in age from 17 to 77 and recruited through mailing lists. The racial make-up of the sample was not reported. The authors used various questionnaires, including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965) and other single and multiple item questions designed by the authors to measure openness, participation in gay activities, sexual orientation self-esteem (how respondents viewed lesbian and gay sexual orientations), sexual orientation social-esteem (how respondents viewed others’ feelings about lesbian and gay sexual orientations), homonegativity, stereotypes about lesbian women and gay men, ideal-real discrepancies in sexual orientation, religiosity, and ethical conservativism. Alpha coefficients for the measures ranged from .48 to .85. Results of a stepwise multiple regression analysis indicated that sexual orientation social-esteem accounted for 44% of the variance in openness. There were three other significant predictors of openness that together accounted for an additional 5% of the variance: how the respondents viewed their sexual orientation (labeled sexual orientation self-esteem), self-esteem, and conservativism (Franke & Leary, 1991).

One problem with Franke and Leary’s (1991) study is the construction of their measures. Alpha coefficients ranged from mediocre to fair, giving rise to concerns about the measures’ internal consistency. Another concern lies in the inability to determine the racial make-up of the sample from the description provided by the authors. Finally, since the sample is made up of lesbian women and gay men, it would be helpful to know whether there were differences in the two groups, however, all analyses reported contained the combined group.
Wells and Kline (1987) approached the question of openness differently from most other researchers by using an open-ended questionnaire assessing how, when, where, why, and to whom respondents disclosed their sexual orientation. Twenty-three gay men and 17 lesbian women, ranging in age from 19 to 46, were recruited through a gay-lesbian outreach organization at a midwestern state university. Most respondents were not students and the racial make-up of the sample was not reported. Disclosures of sexual orientation by women depended upon perceptions of a recipient responding positively (47% of women in sample) or a high level of trust in the recipient (86% of women in sample). Recipient or receiver is the person being spoken to in this study. Lesbian women in this study tended to check out the receiver, prepare the receiver, and consider the context of the disclosure. Lesbian women’s responses also indicated that they differentiated based on sexual orientation, often disclosing to other lesbians, but only to heterosexuals in the context of high trust or a close relationship. Chi square analyses revealed that there were significant differences between lesbian women and gay men in how, why, and to whom they disclosed their sexual orientation (Wells & Kline, 1987).

Wells and Kline’s (1987) study used a creative strategy to assess variables related to openness. The researchers’ finding that 47% of the lesbian women in the sample relied on perceptions of the recipient responding positively concurs with Franke and Leary’s (1991) finding that sexual orientation social-esteem explained 44% of the variance in disclosure behaviors. Two problems with the Wells and Kline study are that there were only 17 lesbian women in the sample and the complete racial make-up of the sample was not reported. This study may be better used for theory development and not for generalization, and it is difficult to determine how race might interact with the research questions.
A qualitative study by Whitman, Cormier, and Boyd (2000) investigated the intersection of Cass’ sexual identity development stages and lesbian identity management strategies in daily life. The sample, obtained by using snowballing techniques and advertising, included 25 women from the eastern United States. Twenty-one of the participants were Caucasian, three were African-American, and one was Asian American. It was not stated whether the participants had to self-identify as lesbian. The sample ranged in age from 19 to 47 (mean = 32.9), was well educated, and primarily was either students or working professionals. The qualitative measures included (a) a semi-structured interview, (b) participant journals kept for one month on coming out to others and/or staying hidden, (c) coding of data from interviews and journals, (d) the researchers’ journal, and (e) interview summaries verified by participants. Using Cass’ (1984) Stage Allocation Measure, participants classified themselves in one of Cass’ (1979) six sexual identity development stages; one woman chose Stage One (Identity Confusion), two women chose Stage Two (Identity Comparison), two women chose Stage Three (Identity Tolerance), eight women chose Stage Four (Identity Acceptance), five women chose Stage Five (Identity Pride), and seven women chose Stage Six (Identity Synthesis; Whitman, et al., 2000).

Whitman et al. (2000) found that identity management strategies overlapped and differed across stages of sexual identity development. Four categories of identity management strategies were identified: direct active out, indirect active out, passive out, and hiding techniques. All participants came out directly and indirectly to others. All participants hid their sexual orientation in some way. Yet, the frequency of type of identity management strategy differed by stages. Active hiding strategies were most common in Stages Two, Three, and Four of Cass’ (1979) model of sexual identity development. When disclosing was done in Stage One or Two, it was an active process, but as the stages progressed, more women chose to use indirect active
disclosure strategies. Decisions to be out for persons in Stages Five or Six were mostly made by participants in order to feel congruent internally. Unique to Stage Five participants was a desire to come out because of pride in being lesbian and intolerance with silence. Unique to Stage Six participants was a need to control who knows and how to confront homophobic remarks and educate others (Whitman et al., 2000).

Whitman et al. (2000) did a commendable job of investigating the intersection of sexual identity development and lesbian identity management. Yet, it might also be interesting to define sexual identity development with a model that was designed for lesbian women specifically. Cass’ model is decades old and other models are now less politically biased, incorporate group attitudes at each phase, and allow for development without a prescribed order of tasks. Though the racial make-up of the sample was stated, the question still remains, how does race intersect with the research questions? When and how was identity management influenced by racial culture or racial environment? Are certain racial values such as harmony at play when one decides to be indirectly or directly out? How does congruence work for one who is oppressed by multiple identities? A final concern with this study is that the terminology used to explain the results is somewhat confusing (i.e., indirect active out, direct active out). It should also be noted when considering the results that the study did not focus on workplace specific disclosure issues.

To summarize the above research, it appears that to varying degrees anxiety, positive affectivity, self-esteem, social support, sexual orientation social-esteem, sexual orientation self-esteem, conservativism, perceptions of the receiver, sexual orientation of the receiver, trust, and sexual identity development relate to lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in empirical studies. Limitations of studies include small sample sizes, mediocre internal consistency for
some measures, questionable choice of identity development models, and lack of racial diversity in samples. Limitations notwithstanding, sexual orientation social-esteem, perceptions of the receiver, and trust seem to have the strongest relation to disclosure behaviors. Sexual identity formation, self-disclosure to others, sexual behaviors and expressions, and lesbian consciousness are theorized to be part of the coming out process. This section has looked at self-disclosure of sexual orientation in life. The next section describes research on self-disclosure of sexual orientation specifically in the workplace.

**Coming Out in the Workplace.** Lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons in the workplace face unique struggles compared to visible minority group members because disclosure of sexual orientation is a choice. Indirect or direct disclosure of sexual orientation is one way of managing sexual identity in the workplace; one might also pass as a heterosexual, avoid questions, or fabricate a heterosexual life. It is a choice not taken lightly because it is encountered upon meeting every new person. Disclosing one’s sexual identity at work is different from talking about the everyday events because coming out to co-workers is an action that involves risk and revealing intimate aspects of oneself (Schneider, 1986). Kitzinger (1991) wrote that deciding to come out to one’s co-workers is a never-ending reality that involves daily decisions of whether to say anything, whether to interrupt the heterosexual assumption, and whether to risk the repercussions. Repercussions of coming out in the workplace including being passed over for promotion or being fired can make the decision to disclose a lesbian sexual orientation difficult.

Schneider (1986) used data from a sample of 228 self-identified lesbians recruited through a snowballing technique to identify predictors of outness in the workplace. Participants were mailed a 316-item questionnaire that was used for a larger study investigating “incidence and consequences of sexualization of the workplace for heterosexual and lesbian women
workers” (Schneider, 1986, p. 469). The questionnaire included questions to be answered either via multiple choice or with a Likert scale for the following variables: disclosure, sociability, hours, tenure, working class job, work friends, job site size, department size, human service occupation, percentage of females in workplace, income, working with children, supervisory responsibilities, previous job loss, age, minority status, close friends, children, and partner. The sample was 90% Caucasian; the other 10% of the sample was not described. The sample ranged in age from 21 to 58 (mean = 29.6), was well educated, and reported salaries of slightly over $10,000. Schneider’s (1986) results were given in terms of unstandardized regression coefficients, which tell how much an independent variable can predict a dependent variable, given a structural model. If this study was privy to the computer programs now available for structural equation modeling and multivariate regression, then the results might be easier to interpret. In the following explanation, the unstandardized regression coefficient is reported first and the standard error coefficient in parentheses.

Schneider’s (1986) study indicated that the following variables had a significant effect on lesbians’ disclosure in the workplace: previous job loss due to coming out at work \( [b = -.480 (.167), p \leq .05] \), working in smaller, relatively nonbureaucratized settings \( [b = -.130 (.051), p \leq .05] \), working in female dominated settings \( [b = .149 (.064), p \leq .05] \), working with children \( [b = .355 (.171), p \leq .05] \), and working in human service professions \( [b = .469 (.167), p \leq .05] \). Another interesting result was that as income increased \( [b = -.0003 (.00001), p \leq .05] \), self-disclosure of sexual orientation decreased; this coefficient was minimal, yet statistically significant. The strongest effect above was from a particular type of heterosexism - previous job loss due to coming out at work (Schneider, 1986).
The study by Schneider (1986) was the largest and most complete study of its time investigating lesbians’ disclosure in the workplace. There are a few problems with the study. First, a replication of this study is warranted since her data was collected in 1980. Second, the measure of disclosure included only a single item – “How open are you about your lesbianism at your present job?” The question was answered with a four-point ordinal scale from “not open at all” to “totally open.” Third, the racial make-up of the sample was not fully described. Fourth, the results of the study were fairly difficult to understand because of incomplete explanations of the statistical analyses.

Qualitative research by Griffin (1992) has produced the most systematic model of “openness” versus “concealment.” Her results are also consistent with those of previous studies (Croteau, 1996). Over a period of 15 months, Griffin conducted individual and group interviews and group meetings with 15 educators (six gay men, seven lesbian women) ranging in age from 36 to 45. There were 14 Caucasian participants and one African-American participant. Using inductive analysis, one of Griffin’s co-researchers worked with field notes to define and confirm themes in the data (Griffin, 1992). Next, a second co-researcher confirmed the grounding of the themes in the data. Last, the themes were presented to the participants of the study and their reactions were incorporated into the model. The analysis identified four identity management strategies that exist on a continuum of increasing risk from passing as a heterosexual to being explicitly out (Griffin, 1992).

Griffin’s (1992) continuum of self-disclosure clusters identity management strategies into four categories. The first category is passing, which describes a person who lies about his or her sexual identity, wants to be seen as a heterosexual, and assumes that other people do not know that she or he is lesbian or gay. Passing may involve changing pronouns, making up stories
about a romantic partner, or letting the heterosexual assumption operate because one has children
or was previously married. The second category is covering, which describes a person who
censors information that could lead others to think she or he is lesbian or gay, does not want to
be seen as lesbian or gay, and assumes that others do not know he or she is lesbian or gay.
Covering may involve omitting gendered pronouns or carefully monitoring clothes selection or
mannerisms. The third category is implicitly out, which describes a person who tells the truth
without using lesbian or gay labels, is comfortable with others seeing her or him as lesbian or
gay if they want to, and assumes that others know he or she is gay or lesbian, but is not sure.
Being implicitly out may involve using gendered pronouns, sharing stories about a partner, or
wearing symbols of being gay or lesbian, but never actually using the label gay or lesbian. The
fourth category is explicitly out, which describes a person who affirms his or her gay or lesbian
identity and wants others to see her or him as a lesbian or gay person. It is known that others
know one’s gay or lesbian sexual orientation. Being explicitly out may involve directly
disclosing a lesbian or gay identity or being publicly out. This category involves the most risk
because one cannot go back to covering or passing. Griffin’s model of self-disclosure, based on
interview and group discussion data, posits that as openness increases, fear decreases and self-
integrity increases. Griffin also notes that participants reported using different identity
management strategies with different people in the workplace, demanding a tremendous amount
of energy.

Griffin’s (1992) qualitative study was remarkable for the rich results that it gave. The
validation checking with participants helped to ensure that the model developed of self-
disclosure in the workplace accurately reflected participants’ experiences. This study more
clearly defined self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace highlighting the subtle
differences between the four types of identity management. It is unfortunate that the study was only done with educators because its generalizability to other professions is an important question.

Ellis and Riggle (1995) conducted an analysis of data from 164 persons (91 lesbian women and 73 gay men) from San Francisco and Indianapolis investigating degree of openness about one’s sexual orientation and job satisfaction. Openness was measured with several questions about degree of openness with different types of people in the workplace. The researchers performed a MANOVA with scores from the Job Descriptive Index (satisfaction with the job, co-workers, and supervisors) as the dependent variable and found a significant main effect for Openness, $F(5,131) = 2.92, p<.02$. Univariate analysis indicated the main effect was due to satisfaction with co-workers, $F(1,135) = 5.51, p<.02$ and satisfaction with pay, $F(1, 135) = 3.70, p<.05$. These results indicated that persons who were more open were more satisfied with their co-workers than those who were less open and those who were less “open” were more satisfied with their pay (Ellis & Riggle, 1995).

There are three drawbacks to the Ellis and Riggle (1995) study, which also had very interesting results. First, lesbian women and gay men were combined without regard to gender or sexual orientation differences. Second, the complete racial make-up of the sample was not specified. Third, the measure of openness designed by the authors was not assessed for psychometric properties.

Driscoll et al. (1996) did a descriptive study examining disclosure of sexual orientation, workplace climate, occupational stress and coping, and job satisfaction. The participants were 123 lesbian women ranging in age from 23 – 68 (mean = 38.37). They were 85% Caucasian, 8.1% African-American, and 6.4% Asian, Latina, Native American or unspecified. The mean
number of years of education was 16.62. Participants were recruited through snowballing and advertisements in newspapers. Packets were distributed with measures of disclosure, workplace climate, stress and coping, and job satisfaction. The participant response rate was 69%. Though other Cronbach alpha coefficients were good, the alpha for the disclosure measure was .52. The researchers conducted a path analysis of a pre-determined path model. The path between disclosure and satisfaction was nonsignificant, as was the path between disclosure and stress and coping. The correlation, and not the path, between disclosure and workplace climate, however, was significant \( r = .41, p = .02 \). The paths between workplace climate and satisfaction \( (b = .58, p < .00001) \) and workplace climate and stress \( (b = -.42, p < .00001) \) were also significant. One demographic variable had a significant relationship with disclosure, which was duration of lesbian relationship \( r = .26, p = .004 \). In all, climate significantly influenced stress, coping, and satisfaction, whereas disclosure did not. But, disclosure was significantly correlated with climate and length of lesbian relationship (Driscoll et al., 1996).

The major limitation of the Driscoll et al. (1996) study is that the authors designed items or revised items from other measures and the psychometrics of their measures are not given the priority they deserve. Further, the Cronbach alpha for the measure of disclosure was questionable. The results of this study are contrary to more recent, larger studies done with better assessment tools (e.g., Button, 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 2000; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).

Day and Schoenrade (1997) compared lesbian and gay workers with heterosexual workers. Their sample consisted of 900 lesbian, gay, and heterosexual workers. They found that there were slight differences in that more closeted workers had more conflict between work and home and lower job satisfaction than more open workers. More closeted workers versus more open gay and lesbian workers did not differ in amount of job stress. More open workers versus
closeted workers had higher levels of affective commitment, higher job satisfaction, higher perceived top management support, lower role ambiguity, lower role conflict, and lower conflict between work and home. Gender and type of organization were not associated with any dependent variables. Interestingly, more closeted workers had higher job commitment than both open gay workers and heterosexual workers (Day & Schoenrade, 1997). In a subsequent analysis, Day and Schoenrade (2000) found in a sub-sample of 744 gay and lesbian workers that anti-discrimination policies and perceived top management support were positively related to job satisfaction.

Day and Schoenrade’s (1997, 2000) studies give information that is useful to the area of research on disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace, however, a few limitations exist. First, most of the study’s participants were recruited from a group advocating for gay rights, which limits the range of participants, and hence the generalizability of the results. Second, the design of the study does not allow the researchers to test for causality so we cannot interpret the results beyond correlations. Third, the racial make-up of the participants was not reported.

Coming out encompasses disclosure of a minority sexual orientation to self and others. In the workplace, disclosing a lesbian identity has unique challenges. Though there are a very limited number of studies in this area, the empirical literature reviewed indicates that the following factors are related to being more out in the workplace: working in a human service organization, not working with children, working in a female dominated setting, have greater income, working in a smaller setting, and workplace climate. Satisfaction with co-workers/job satisfaction was significant in two studies and not in another. Anti-discrimination policies and more equitable treatment of LGB workers also contributed to higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. A critical aspect of asking what variables are related to being more
open in the workplace is how one measures self-disclosure of sexual orientation. For instance studies ask what percentage of co-workers one is out to, how hard one tries to keep their sexual orientation a secret, or how many people one is out to at work. The lack of uniformity across studies and few tests of validity are concerns.

In summary, I have reviewed the literature on lesbian and gay sexual identity development, coming out, and identity management as it pertained to lesbian women. The review presents a foundation of knowledge and areas where research is not conclusive. One reason the intersection of sexual identity development and identity management in the workplace demands further exploration is a lack of strong assessment instrumentation. More research needs to be conducted with stronger assessment tools and broader racial representation to better understand variables connected to identity management in the workplace.

*Heterosexism and Discrimination*

One unique work-related concern of the LGB population is heterosexism. Heterosexism refers to hostility and prejudice against persons who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual (Herek, 1996). Heterosexism can influence work environments, work policies, and interpersonal relationships at work (Croteau, 1996; Waldo, 1999). Waldo (1999) defines heterosexism as "the normalizing and privileging of heterosexuality and calls attention to the prejudice and stigma, both institutional and interpersonal, faced by LGB people" (p. 218). Heterosexism is "the ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any nonheterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community" (Herek, 1995, p. 321). Neisen (1993) states that heterosexism is a form of oppression against LGB people that promotes heterosexuality while subordinating homosexuality and bisexuality. Heterosexist ideology considers heterosexuality the only normal and acceptable sexual orientation.
Herek (1996) makes a distinction between cultural and individual heterosexism. Cultural heterosexism operates through institutions. In workplaces, heterosexism would include the lack of federal legislation protecting LGB workers from discriminatory work practices, lack of domestic partner benefits, lack of work-family benefits packages for same-sex couples, military policies banning openly gay and lesbian employees, and religious organizations that will not ordain gay clergy (Fassinger, 1991; Herek, 1996). Another important example of cultural heterosexism is the ban on legal recognition of same-sex marriage, which further inhibits companies from giving benefits to a same-sex spouse.

Individual or interpersonal heterosexism includes stereotyping careers by whether gay men or lesbian women are in them, talking about gay people only in the context of AIDS and HIV, making anti-gay jokes, speaking in a derogatory way about LGB people, assuming that people get married, assuming that people have opposite sex partners, making assumptions that people in non-gender conforming careers are gay, and having negative attitudes toward gay people (Herek, 1990). Stereotypes portray LGB people as hypersexual, flamboyant, conspiratorial, and not conforming to gender-roles (Herek, 1995).

A further distinction made about heterosexism is that it can be direct or indirect (Waldo, 1999). Indirect heterosexism reflects non-inclusivity of LGB people, for example assuming that everyone is heterosexual, asking why someone is not married, and keeping personal or professional distance. Direct heterosexism is more blunt, including anti-gay jokes, sexual harassment, or physical assault because someone is gay or lesbian.

In a theoretical paper, Kitzinger (1991) writes that heterosexual sexual orientation is often overtly displayed in some workplaces without risk of repercussion. For example, engagement and wedding rings are visible as are photos of opposite sex spouses and children.
There are casual conversations about weekend activities with a spouse or new boyfriend or girlfriend. Co-workers can easily discuss upcoming weddings and flirtations between colleagues, ask about the well-being of husbands and wives, or help each other through a divorce, remarriage, or death in the family. Kitzinger also cites the less acceptable forms of heterosexual displays, which include bragging about heterosexual conquests, opposite sex sexual harassment, anti-gay and anti-lesbian jokes, and men’s pornographic displays of women. Kitzinger’s paper is not based on empirical research and there are workplaces that have done a lot to make the environment equally accepting of all sexual orientations, including diversity training, offering partner benefits, and acting on complaints of discrimination (Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998).

Correlates of heterosexist attitudes. Herek (1995, 1996) reviewed the literature on correlates of this prejudice and stated that people with negative attitudes toward gay persons are (a) less likely to have had personal contact with gay men or lesbians; (b) more likely to be strongly religious and to subscribe to a conservative religious ideology; (c) more likely to support traditional gender roles; (d) more likely to believe that sexual orientation is not a matter of choice; (e) more likely to be older and less well-educated; (f) more likely to have resided in geographic areas where negative attitudes represent the norm (e.g., rural areas or the Midwestern or southern United States); (g) less likely to report having engaged in same-sex behavior or identify as gay or lesbian; (h) more likely to perceive peers as having negative attitudes. Also, heterosexual males tend to have more negative attitudes toward gay people, especially gay men, than heterosexual women. This is in part because heterosexual females have more personal contact with openly gay people (Herek, 1996).
Effects of heterosexism. How does the ideology of heterosexism in this culture affect persons who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual? Neisen (1993) writes that heterosexism contributes to feelings of shame among members of this oppressed community. Neisen (1993) and Herek (1996) agree that LGB people learn at an early age, maybe before they realize their own sexual attractions, that gay orientations are devalued while heterosexuality is the sexual orientation of the majority of people and that it is superior to any other sexual orientation. Neisen parallels this type of shame with that felt by victims of other types of victimization such as physical or sexual abuse. Neisen extends this parallel, offering four possible effects of heterosexism: blaming the self as deserving to be victimized, shame/negative self-concept, anger directed at self, and victim mentality such as feeling powerless. Herek states that as a result of heterosexism, some LGB people hide their sexual orientation or pass as a heterosexual. Neisen suggests that recovery from heterosexism involves breaking the silence, establishing perpetrator responsibility, and reclaiming personal power. The catch is that once someone is known to be gay, lesbian, or bisexual, he or she may face greater risk of rejection, violence, and discrimination (Herek, 1996). Thus, to combat shame one might disclose a gay, lesbian, or bisexual orientation, but coming out may increase the potential for experiencing direct heterosexism, circularly contributing to shame.

In the workplace, a growing number of organizations have enacted policies and practices that are designed to make sexual diversity visible and help workers see sexual diversity in a positive light (Button, 2001). Policies and practices that are intended to reduce heterosexism often include a formal statement of nondiscrimination based on sexual orientation. There is also the possibility of inclusion of sexual diversity issues in diversity workshops, lesbian or gay support or interest groups, and domestic partner benefits for same-sex partners (Button, 2001). With little empirical evidence, the effect of the policies and practices on organizations and their
LGB employees is not known, though they are intended to reduce heterosexism and discrimination in the workplace.

**Empirical investigations of heterosexism in the workplace.** Waldo (1999) investigated the relationship between heterosexist organizational climate and work-related variables of gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons using a proposed model of minority stress in the workplace. His sample contained 287 participants recruited from the Northeast at a community event and a small Midwestern city through a mailing list. The sample had 168 men and 119 women, with 91.9% Caucasian (racial background of the complete sample was not given). Waldo’s structural equation model suggests that outness in the workplace is positively related to experiences of direct heterosexism \( (b = .21 (.07)) \) for gay, lesbian, and bisexual workers and negatively related to indirect experiences of heterosexism \( (b = .17 (.06)) \). The explanation given for this finding is that a person who is out is more likely to be the target of direct heterosexism and a person who is less out is likely to be affected by indirect heterosexism. In turn, higher levels of heterosexist experiences were associated with higher levels of psychological distress \( (b = .33 (.08)) \) and health related problems \( (b = .13 (.06)) \) and decreased levels of job satisfaction \( (b = -.43 (.07)) \). “\( b \)” is the standardized path coefficient and the number in parentheses is the standard error for the path (Waldo, 1999).

Organizational climate in this study was defined as the perception of the organization’s willingness to tolerate heterosexism (Waldo, 1999). Organizational climate had a standardized path coefficient of \( .54 \) (error = .07) to heterosexism. In an alternative model, Waldo found there was a negative relationship between anti-gay discrimination policies and experiences of heterosexism \( (b = -.36 (.08)) \) when policies and resources were given a path to organizational climate. All results were as predicted except that policies and resources did not have a significant
path to heterosexism alone, only through organizational climate. Organizational climate also had a path coefficient of -.46 (.07) to outness in the workplace. Waldo also found that the presence of more males in the workplace was related to more direct heterosexism but not related to indirect heterosexism.

Waldo’s (1999) study is a sophisticated investigation into how organizational climate, outness, and heterosexism are related to each other and the implications for job satisfaction, health conditions, and psychological distress. The most convincing aspect of this study may be the evidence showing that workers’ perceptions of organizational tolerance of heterosexism predict outness, heterosexism, and other outcomes such as job satisfaction, health conditions, and psychological distress.

Button (2001) investigated connections between organizational efforts to affirm sexual diversity, identity management strategies, and sexual orientation discrimination at work. Button surveyed 537 gay (66%) and lesbian (34%) employees who represented 31 states and the District of Columbia. The average age was 38.2. The sample was 90% Caucasian, 4% Hispanic, 2% African American, 1% Native American, and 1% Asian (the other 2% was unknown). Participants were recruited through a contact person in their organization. Contact persons were identified through a list maintained by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute. Participants were also asked to invite others to take part in the study (Button, 2001).

First, Button (2001) ran a series of hierarchical multiple regression analyses and found that, in contrast to Waldo (1999), affirming organizational policies were negatively associated with discrimination on the job with a beta of -.78 ($p < .01$). Organizational policies explain a large part ($R^2 = .60$) of the variation in discrimination experienced by sexual minorities. Thus,
the more prevalent sexual diversity policies and practices are, the smaller the chance of discrimination experienced by gay and lesbian employees (Button, 2001).

Second, Button (2001) investigated the relationships among types of identity management strategies used by gay and lesbian employees and discrimination in the workplace. Button investigated workplace identity management strategies by using the model proposed by Woods (1993), which was based on research with gay male workers. Woods identified three types of identity management: counterfeiting, avoidance, and integration. Counterfeiting is constructing a false heterosexual identity. Avoiding is revealing nothing about sexual identity, but also not fabricating anything. Integration is revealing true sexual identity either directly or indirectly. Button (1996) developed a multi-item measure to assess identity management strategies. Each sub-scale contained between 6 –10 items and the subscale alphas were between .80 and .90. As predicted, discrimination was significantly positively related to counterfeiting ($b = .15$, $p < .01$), positively associated with avoiding ($b = .14$, $p < .01$), and negatively related to integrating ($b = -.18$, $p < .01$; Button, 2001). So, the more discrimination, the less likely one is to self-disclose a gay or lesbian sexual orientation.

Button (2001) also ran a second step in the regression equations to find that use of identity management strategy was not only related to discrimination at work, but also to lesbian and gay male group identity attitudes. Group attitudes were measured using three scales titled pre-encounter, immersion-emersion, and internalization, which are based on Walters and Simoni’s (1993) group identity model for lesbian and gay people. Button (1996) adapted the model for the three-scale measure of group identity attitudes. In this study the scales had coefficient alphas of .65, .66, and .66, respectively. Individuals with more negative group identity attitudes were more likely to use counterfeiting and avoiding. Individuals with more
positive group identity attitudes were more likely to use integrating strategies. Thus, use of identity management strategy was explained in part by discrimination and in part by group identity attitudes (Button, 2001). This study makes the link that policies and practices that affirm sexual diversity are negatively related to discrimination on the job. Discrimination was also negatively related to openness about sexual identity. In other words, the more policies and practices affirmed sexual diversity, the lower the level of discrimination on the job, and the greater the level of outness among gay and lesbian workers. Identity management strategies were in part explained by both personal and contextual variables. Further, this study also showed that policies and practices affirming of sexual diversity were positively related to two frequently measured work attitudes, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Button’s (2001) study makes a worthy contribution to the field using a large sample, strong measures, and appropriate statistics. The results regarding antecedents and consequences of discrimination are telling. Unfortunately, the sample did not have very many racial minorities (10%) and also did not address if there were any gender differences in the results.

Ragins and Cornwell (2001) also studied the antecedents and consequences of workplace discrimination against gay and lesbian employees. The authors collected quantitative data through mailed surveys to analyze correlations and structural equation models among policies and practices affirming of sexual diversity, perceived discrimination, sexual orientation of co-workers and supervisor, and protective legislation. A sample of 534 participants was gathered using mailing lists of members of national gay rights organizations, a national Latino-Latina gay organization, and a national African-American gay organization. The sample had 168 women and 363 men (three participants did not report gender). The sample was 92.9% gay or lesbian and 7.1% bisexual. The sample was 67.6% Caucasian, 15.2% Black, 12.2% Latino or Hispanic,
.7% Asian, 1.1% multiracial, 1.1% “other,” and 2.1% did not report their race. The sample represented a wide range of job classifications, industries, and organizations (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).

Using bivariate correlations, perceived workplace discrimination was significantly and negatively related to LGB workers who had a gay supervisor ($r = -.16, p < .001$) and gay co-workers ($r = -.27, p < .001$) (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). The more supportive policies and practices in an organization, the fewer perceptions of workplace discrimination ($r = -.28, p < .001$). Of the supportive policies and practices measured, welcoming same-sex partners at company social events had the strongest negative relationship to perceived discrimination ($r = - .60, p < .001$; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).

In a structural equation model, pathways (which measure direct effect) to perceived workplace discrimination were statistically significant at $\alpha = .05$ as follows: protective legislation (-.096), organizational policies and practices (-.260), and co-workers’ orientation (-.197; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Particularly interesting for the scope of this paper is that perceived workplace discrimination had a path coefficient of -.145 to disclosure of sexual orientation. Thus less perceived workplace discrimination had the effect of greater self-disclosure of gay or lesbian sexual orientation. The antecedents of perceived discrimination were identical to the antecedents of disclosure of sexual orientation. The most significant pathway to disclosure was supportive organizational policies and practices (.326), followed by co-workers’ orientation (.180) and protective legislation (.100). The supervisor’s orientation pathway to perceived workplace discrimination and to disclosure turned out to be statistically insignificant (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).
Ragins and Cornwell (2001) did an excellent study addressing antecedents and consequences of discrimination in the workplace. The sample was large and diverse and they were able to report that race and gender did not have an affect on the results of the study. Using structural equation modeling allowed for results that went beyond what was already reported in the literature. Ragins and Cornwell also were unique in being able to gather information about protective legislation in the participants’ home areas.

To review heterosexism and the workplace, heterosexism refers to hostility and prejudice against persons who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual (Herek, 1996). Heterosexism in the workplace includes the lack of federal legislation protecting LGB workers from discriminatory work practices, lack of domestic partner benefits, lack of work-family benefits packages for same-sex couples, military policies banning openly gay and lesbian employees, and religious organizations that will not ordain gay clergy (Fassinger, 1991; Herek, 1996). A growing number of organizations and workplaces are implementing policies and practices that are intended to reduce heterosexism and often include a formal statement of nondiscrimination based on sexual orientation (Button, 2001). According to Button, the more these types of policies are present, there will be lower discrimination, and lesbian and gay workers will be more open about their sexual orientation. Ragins and Cornwell (2001) also found that discrimination in the workplace was negatively related to disclosure of lesbian or gay sexual orientation in the workplace. But, the most significant pathway to disclosure was supportive organizational policies and practices. Affirming policies and practices also have a positive effect on positive work attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Button, 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 1997, 2000; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Discrimination and heterosexism have a negative effect on positive work attitudes (Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Waldo, 1999).
Workplace climate has an effect on stress, coping, work satisfaction, and disclosure of a lesbian or gay sexual orientation (Driscoll et al., 1996). Waldo (1999) makes the relationship between heterosexism and disclosure of sexual orientation more complex by highlighting that when openness is high there is likely to be more direct heterosexism and when openness is low there is likely to be more indirect heterosexism.

**Internalized Homophobia**

Recognizing and accepting a lesbian sexual orientation is often a challenge because of the widespread beliefs in United States society that homosexuality is sinful, wrong, and not as normal as heterosexuality (Sophie, 1987). Internalized homophobia is a reaction to society’s negative attitudes toward sexual orientations that are not heterosexual (Kahn, 1991). Sophie writes that internalized homophobia is the internalization of society’s negative attitudes and assumptions about homosexual people. Internalizing society’s heterosexist beliefs can cause psychological distress among lesbians and gay men (Shidlo, 1994). Internalized homophobia is a central construct when addressing issues that arise as a result of dissatisfaction with being gay (Ross & Rosser, 1996) and is reported to be experienced in varying degrees by all lesbians and gay men (Shidlo, 1994). When internalized homophobia is reduced, a woman is more able to accept herself as a lesbian and fully embrace her identity (Sophie, 1987).

There is general agreement in the psychological literature about the theoretical importance of internalized homophobia, but there are few attempts to operationalize the construct (Ross & Rosser, 1996). Recent growth is evidenced by the fact that in the year 2001 a search of the psychology database “PsycInfo” revealed that among articles, books, and dissertations there were nine dissertations that used internalized homophobia as one of the variables. Prior to 2001 there are few articles or dissertations looking at internalized
homophobia. Only recently are there good measures of internalized homophobia available to researchers (i.e., Szymanski & Chung, 2001; Wright, Dye, Jiles, & Marcello, 1999). Thus, the research available on the subject is narrow in scope.

In a qualitative study by Boatwright et al. (1996), 10 lesbian women were interviewed about their lesbian identity development and its effect on their career trajectory. The women were between the ages of 30-45 and were known through a network of the first author’s friends. This sampling technique is called snowballing and is often used in LGB research because of the difficulty recruiting LGB participants (Croteau, 1996). Nine women were Caucasian and one woman was African-American. Educational levels were skewed toward higher education and they all lived in a moderate-sized Mid-western town. Internalized homophobia was one of the topics covered in the interviews (Boatwright et al., 1996).

Boatwright et al. (1996) derived two themes from the participants’ transcripts. The first theme was the negative effect on self-esteem and self-confidence that the women experienced. Participants described subtle ways that self-esteem was affected, resulting in decreased professional self-confidence. One woman felt the need to be very careful to whom she disclosed her identity and this made her more timid than she otherwise was. Another woman noted that she was less likely to compete with others for positions due to internalized homophobia. The second theme was increased isolation. One woman took one year to tell her best friend that she was lesbian and she withdrew from her Ph.D. social work program because she felt others would not respect her. She additionally reported leaving her program due to her feelings of shame and fear. Another woman noted that she only felt safe at work while isolating herself because she did not know how to fit in with her lesbian identity (Boatwright et al., 1996).
Boatwright et al. (1996) make a unique contribution to the field with their qualitative study. The interview questions were well laid out and the results were interesting and informative. It was unfortunate that the participants were all recruited through a friendship network, because though this is an accepted method of recruitment it is usually not the only method of recruitment. A sample of ten people might easily have been recruited with other methods as well.

Rostosky and Riggle (2002) investigated whether internalized homophobia and workplace nondiscrimination policies predict workplace disclosure status. With a sample of 118 gay and lesbian couples they were also able to look at partner influences. Participants filled out a Web-based survey as part of a larger study looking at love, work, and health. Utilizing regression analyses, results indicated that less internalized homophobia and employers with nondiscrimination policies were positively associated with increased disclosure of sexual orientation. Internalized homophobia significantly predicted 23.5% of the variance in disclosure and nondiscrimination policies accounted for an additional significant 10.7% of the variance in disclosure. A woman’s partner’s internalized homophobia and workplace’s nondiscrimination policy also slightly significantly influenced disclosure (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002).

Rostosky and Riggle (2002) add an interesting piece to the literature by looking at partner influences and internalized homophobia. This study uniquely used a quantitative measure of internalized homophobia. The study also backed up a growing consensus in the literature that nondiscrimination policies are positively linked with increased disclosure of sexual orientation.

Internalized homophobia is being looked at more recently in the study of identity management in the workplace, and rightly so according to Boatwright et al. (1996) and Rostosky and Riggle (2002). With both qualitative and quantitative analysis supporting the importance of
this variable, it is shown that internalized homophobia has a significant contribution to the
decision of identity management in the workplace.

Conclusion

Based on this literature review, I am proposing to test a model (see Figure 1) that predicts
lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace. Internalized homophobia,
discrimination in the workplace, organizational tolerance of heterosexism, and sexual identity
development at the group level are variables that other studies have found predict self-disclosure
of sexual orientation in the workplace (Button, 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 1997, 2000; Ragins &
Cornwell, 2001; Rostosky & Riggle, 2002; Schneider, 1986; Waldo, 1999). I will add in the
predictor sexual identity development at the individual level based on theoretical work by
McCarn and Fassinger (1996) and qualitative research by Boatwright et al. (1996) and House
(2004).

Two arms of the model predict self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace.
The upper arm of the model includes the external predictor variables organizational tolerance of
heterosexism and workplace discrimination. External predictor variables refer to variables that
represent constructs in one’s environment. The lower arm of the model includes the internal
predictor variables sexual identity development at the group and individual levels and
internalized homophobia. Internal predictor variables refer to constructs that represent part of
the self. Internalized homophobia has a relationship to self-disclosure via sexual identity
development at the individual and group levels. Organizational tolerance for heterosexism has a
relationship to self-disclosure via discrimination.

I am also proposing to test an alternative model that is similar to Figure 1, but does not
have sexual identity development as a mediator of internalized homophobia (see Figure 2). By
testing both models, we can address the presence of a mediator relationship between sexual identity development and internalized homophobia. It is customary in structural equation models for squares to represent observed variables and circles to represent latent variables.
Figure 1. Structural model of predictors of lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace. OTH = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism, InD = Indirect heterosexism, Dir = Direct heterosexism, IA = Individual awareness, IE = Individual exploration, ID = Individual deepening, II = Individual internalization, GA = Group awareness, GE = Group exploration, GD = Group deepening, GI = Group internalization, IH = Internalized homophobia.
Figure 2. Alternative model of predictors of lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace. OTH = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism, InD = Indirect heterosexism, Dir = Direct heterosexism, IA = Individual awareness, IE = Individual exploration, ID = Individual deepening, II = Individual internalization, GA = Group awareness, GE = Group exploration, GD = Group deepening, GI = Group internalization, IH = Internalized homophobia.
Chapter 3

Method

This chapter will describe the participants for this study, how they were recruited, and the procedure for the study. Tables 1 and 2 display the sample’s demographic characteristics. The proposed measurement model for the study is given. Each of the measures involved in this study will also be described.

Participants

A total of 475 people answered the survey. Sixteen percent \(n = 77\) of respondents were dropped from the total sample; 16 respondents (3%) were dropped due to living outside the United States and 61 respondents (13%) were dropped due to leaving more than 12 questions blank (only including scales, not demographics). Thus, the sample contains 398 women who self-identify as “lesbian or considering a lesbian identity,” live in the United States, and completed at least 87% of the survey instruments measuring the independent and dependent variables in the study. The sample’s demographic results are presented below in Tables 1 and 2. Not all categories total 398 because participants sometimes left demographic questions blank.

Participants’ ages ranged from 18 to 63 (mean = 34.6, sd = 10.29; two participants did not indicate their age). The sample was 80.4% Caucasian \(n = 320\); 9% was African/African-American \(n = 36\); 3.8% was Latina/Latina-American \(n = 15\); 2.5% was biracial or multiracial \(n = 10\); 1.7% was Asian/Asian-American \(n = 7\); and 1% was Native American \(n = 4\). Six people did not indicate ethnicity (1.5%). Percentages do not total 100 due to rounding and some people did not answer this question. Participants were from 41 states and the District of Columbia. Fifty-one percent of the sample lived in towns or cities of 50,000 to 1 million people \(n = 202\); 29% of the sample lived in non-metropolitan areas of less than 50,000 people \(n =
116); and 18% lived in metropolitan areas with more than 1 million people ($n = 71$). Eleven participants did not answer this demographic question.

The majority of the sample earned less than $50,000 per year. Yearly incomes of the participants were: 14% under $15,000 ($n = 57$); 17% at $15,000-25,000 ($n = 69$); 43% at $26,000-50,000 ($n = 170$); 17% at $51,000-75,000 ($n = 67$); 4% at $76,000-100,000 ($n = 15$); and 4% at over $100,000 ($n = 15$). Five people did not indicate their yearly income.

The sample was mostly highly educated. Three tenths of a percent of the sample had not finished high school ($n = 1$); 18% had a high school degree ($n = 72$); 12% had an associate’s degree ($n = 48$); 37% had a bachelor’s degree ($n = 149$); 23% had a master’s degree ($n = 93$); and 8% had a doctoral degree ($n = 32$). Three participants did not answer this demographic question.

Nine and a half percent of participants said they were in a committed relationship of 10 years or longer ($n = 38$). Twelve and a half percent of participants were in a relationship of 5-9 years ($n = 50$). Twenty-five percent of participants said they were in a relationship of 2-4.5 years ($n = 100$). Twelve percent of the sample said they were in a committed relationship of between six months and a year and a half ($n = 47$). The average length of all relationships was 5.3 years (sd = 5.8). Forty percent of the sample said they were not in a long-term committed relationship ($n = 161$). A majority of the sample did not have children at home (78%, $n = 310$) and 20% did have children at home ($n = 80$). Not all participants responded to this demographic question. Participants were not asked to indicate how many children they had at home.

Eighty percent of participants worked more than 35 hours per week ($n = 319$). Nineteen percent of the sample indicated working less than 35 hours per week ($n = 75$). The average number of years participants worked in their current organization was 4.7 (sd = 5.5). Participants worked in organizations varying in size: 33% with less than 100 employees ($n = 133$), 26% with
<table>
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<th></th>
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<th>% of sample</th>
<th>m</th>
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*Note. n = number, m = mean, sd = standard deviation.*
100 to 999 employees \((n = 102)\), 23% with 1,000 to 10,000 employees \((n = 92)\), and 17% with 10,000 or more employees \((n = 69)\). Not all participants answered this question. The balance of men and women in the workplace was mixed. Nine percent of participants worked with almost all men \((n = 36)\), 13% worked with more men than women \((n = 52)\), 36% worked with equal numbers of men and women \((n = 144)\), 28% worked with more women than men \((n = 112)\), and 13% worked with almost all women \((n = 50)\). Four participants did not answer this demographic question.

Participants worked in a range of work settings. Twenty-five percent of the sample worked in education \((n = 98)\), 22% worked in healthcare or mental health care \((n = 88)\), 9% worked for a government agency \((n = 34)\), 8% worked in a service area (greenskeeper, cleaner; \(n = 33)\), 8% were other (legal, consulting, environment; \(n = 31)\), 6% worked in computer and

<table>
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<td><strong>Number of Years with Organization</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Work Hours per Week</strong></td>
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*Note. \(n\) = number, \(m\) = mean, \(sd\) = standard deviation.
software engineering \((n = 24)\), 6\% worked in retail \((n = 23)\), 5.5\% worked in financial and insurance services \((n = 22)\), 3.5\% were in advertising and publishing \((n = 14)\), 3\% worked in manufacturing \((n = 11)\), 2\% worked in entertainment \((n = 9)\), 1.5\% worked in communications \((n = 6)\), 0.8\% worked in travel and transportation \((n = 3)\), and no one identified working in design or fashion. Two people did not answer this question.

Participants heard about the study through different methods. Fifty-two percent heard about the study through e-mail from a list-serv \((n = 207)\), 30\% heard through e-mail from a friend \((n = 119)\), 14\% heard through an advertisement on the Internet (i.e., message board, classified ad; \(n = 54\)), and 3.5\% heard through an advertisement in a magazine \((n = 14)\). Four people did not answer this question.

*Recruitment*

Recruitment of a lesbian sample is often done through different purposive techniques (Croteau, 1996; Morgan & Brown, 1991). Amassing a lesbian sample through probability sampling is difficult when women have to self-identify as lesbian (Croteau, 1996; Koch & Emrey, 2001). Small samples are sometimes gathered from events such as a pride rally or LGB community groups, but these opportunity samples typically reduce the ability to generalize from the sample to the population (Lonborg & Phillips, 1996). A perusal of the literature will show that lesbian samples are often gathered through friendship networks where friends of the researcher refer their friends to the research project and hope that recipients also refer their friends to the research project. This is referred to as “snowballing” (Schneider, 1986). Sometimes, packets of research questionnaires are left for anyone interested at LGB bookstores or LGB community centers (Morgan & Brown, 1991). Advertisements are also placed in LGB newspapers.
There are various limitations when sampling the lesbian population such as reduced ability to generalize from a sample that self-identifies as lesbian. Koch and Emrey (2001) write that studying lesbians even with a reduced ability to generalize is better than not obtaining information from this and other groups (e.g., laid-off workers, alcoholics) that require special purposive techniques.

Recruitment on the Internet for minorities, including lesbians, is said to be easier than the “real world” because many of these individuals have formed “virtual communities” that communicate through chat rooms, discussion groups, list-servs, newsgroups, and message boards (Mustanski, 2001). No single list-serv or newsgroup would be representative of a target population, but recruiting across several platforms may be more representative (Mustanski, 2001).

I first recruited participants through e-mail advertisements on lesbian list-servs. There are hundreds of lists with contact information through www.lesbian.org, www.queernet.org, and www.groups.yahoo.com. Most lists were for members only, so I contacted the list administrator and asked if she/he would post my recruitment notice (see Appendices A and B). I also placed my recruitment notice on message boards for lesbian women and in classified advertising sections of LGB websites. Special emphasis was made to reach diverse sections of the lesbian community to increase generalizability. I sent announcements of the study to list-servs for LGB people of color including the LGB people of color discussion list-serv; Sistanel – an African-American lesbian, bisexual, transgender list-serv; Khush – an LGB people of South Asian descent list-serv; and APANET – a list-serv for queer Asian Pacific Americans. I also placed ads in the magazines The Advocate, Girlfriends, Blacklines (African-American LGB) and En La Vida (Latino and Latina LGB). The complete list of the places I advertised through media and
on the web can be found in Appendix J. In addition to these purposive sampling techniques, I used a friendship network by distributing an e-mail advertisement to my colleagues and friends who could pass on the e-mail advertisement to their friends and colleagues and so on.

Requirements for voluntary participation in this study included being female, identifying as lesbian or considering a lesbian identity, being 18 years of age or older, and having work experience. As an incentive, $50 was donated to the Human Rights Campaign for every 100 completed surveys, totaling $200. About 430 people made good faith efforts to complete the survey. A receipt of donation can be seen in Appendix L. The Human Rights Campaign, the largest gay and lesbian organization, lobbies and educates to end sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace and works on other issues such as lesbian health, hate crimes, and gay families.

*Procedure*

Internet surveys are a way to reach marginalized and hard to identify samples (Koch & Emrey, 2001). Some evidence suggests that Internet based surveys with the gay and lesbian population are filled out by a sample almost demographically identical to those who complete paper and pencil surveys (Koch & Emrey, 2001). Another study with only gay men indicated that when comparing an Internet sample versus an office recruited sample, the Internet sample was from smaller towns, was less educated, was younger, and had less sexual experience. In their review of empirical research on lesbians, Lonborg and Phillips (1996) found that traditional samples of lesbian women were skewed toward higher education. Internet-based research surveys are cost-effective as well, with less waste of paper, ease of data entry into a database, no postage expenses, and automatic coding and reverse scoring (Mustanski, 2001). An Internet
sample can be more diverse, yet have results similar to that of laboratory based paper and pencil studies (Krantz & Dalal, 2000; Mustanski, 2001).

With www.psychdata.net, I coordinated a web site for participants to complete five measures and a demographic questionnaire. The web site started with the requirements for the study and a voluntary informed consent statement (See Appendix C). To participate, participants agreed that they met the requirements and accepted the informed consent statement by clicking a designated on-screen button. On the Internet, collecting a signature is not practical. Further, without name identification, the anonymity of this often-stigmatized population was protected. After this, the website went to the six measures involved in the study. The order of the measures was the same for all participants. At the end of the survey, a screen message thanked them for their participation.

The website questionnaires were piloted with a five-person team to check the length of time it took to complete the on-line survey and to check clarity of the design of the on-line survey. Some changes were made based on feedback from pilot participants. The survey took between 14 and 30 minutes. Participants had feedback about the wording of the question about current long-term relationship (changed to “relationship/partnership”), the sexual identity development measure (addressed below), not being able to see the scale anchors once scrolling down the survey page (which I fixed by adding the anchors at the top and bottom of survey pages), and a problem answering questions that referred to multiple relationships with women if she only ever dated one woman.

The recruitment notice was also changed to include a more complete explanation of the limits of technology and more contact information. This occurred after the study was launched due to feedback from someone who saw the recruitment notice on a list-serv. As of October 15,
2003 the Institutional Review Board approved the revised recruitment notice and it was used henceforth (approximately two weeks after the study was launched).

Issues of security and anonymity were very important to this study and to the makers of www.psychdata.net. The web site never asked participants for their names. Data submitted was encrypted using SSL (secure server layer) technology. When completing the survey, there was a small locked icon at the bottom of the window, which indicated that the contents of the window and any data entered were encrypted for secure transmission. In addition, pages of the survey did not have a "Back" button, meaning that a third party could not view any data that had already been entered. When a survey was completed, the window closed automatically, thus ensuring that a third party could never view previously entered data. This also meant that after completing each page of the survey, a participant could not change her answers.

Data collected via surveys are the property of myself as a member of PsychData.net. Unique computer addresses (IP addresses) were collected from participants when they used this site, but were not linked to the data participants gave. PsychData.net only uses these IP addresses to identify someone who is abusing the site and in aggregate form to look at usage of the site. Once submitted, data was password protected and could only be downloaded by myself as the account owner, using my email address and password. PsychData.net has deleted my surveys and data in accordance with my termination of services.

Measures

Multiple items were proposed to measure each latent construct in this study (see Figure 3). It is customary for squares in models to represent observed variables and circles to represent latent variables. Each construct is described below following the demographic questionnaire.
Figure 3. Measurement Model. OTH = Organizational Tolerance of Heterosexism, InD = Indirect heterosexism, Dir = Direct heterosexism, IA = Individual awareness, IE = Individual exploration, ID = Individual deepening, II = Individual internalization, GA = Group awareness, GE = Group exploration, GD = Group deepening, GI = Group internalization, IH = Internalized homophobia, □ = items contributing to latent variables.
Demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire assessed full-time or part-time employment, number of years in current position and with current organization, size of organization, area of work, income level, job classification, gender balance at work, relationship status, children in the home, age, ethnicity, education level, community size, and method of learning about the study (see Appendix D).

Some of the questions in the demographic questionnaire were designed to determine the demographic diversity of the sample along different characteristics (e.g., age, community size, race, education level, income level, part-time or full-time employment, area of work, job classification, tenure in organization, size of organization). Race, partner status, children in the home, income level, size of organization, and gender balance of the workplace were also collected to measure how they related to self-disclosure of a lesbian identity, as suggested by previous research (Driscoll et al., 1996; Ellis & Riggle, 1995; Schneider, 1986).

Sexual identity development: Individual and group. Fassinger designed the Lesbian Identity Questionnaire Revised (LIQ-R; Fassinger, 2001), based on McCarn and Fassinger’s (1996) model of lesbian sexual identity development. Ruth Fassinger granted permission me to use the LIQ-R (personal communication, July 23, 2002). The LIQ-R has eight subscales that correspond to the four phases of individual and group identity development from the McCarn and Fassinger model: awareness, exploration, deepening/commitment, and internalization/synthesis. There are ten questions for each phase, totaling 40 questions. Each question is answered with a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1) disagree strongly to (7) agree strongly. Some questions on the LIQ-R are “I am just noticing for the first time that I feel nervous and emotional around women,” “I have reached the point where I feel deeply fulfilled in my relationships with women,” and “I am beginning to realize from my choices that I am
expressing a clear preference for women, rather than men as partners/lovers.” Scoring involves summing the 10 questions for each phase and then dividing by ten to get an average score for each phase. Scores can range from 1 to 7 for each phase. The phase with the highest score indicates current phase of lesbian sexual identity development. In this study, participants’ scores for each phase of development were used. Using participants’ scores on all phases gives a more complete picture of identity development. The LIQ-R can be found in Appendix E.

In this study, the LIQ-R had Cronbach alphas between .619 and .928 as follows: Individual Awareness = .917, Individual Exploration = .928, Individual Deepening = .840, Individual Internalization = .873, Group Awareness = .815, Group Exploration = .801, Group Deepening = .712, and Group Internalization = .619.

The McCarn and Fassinger (1996) model that the LIQ is based on has numerous strengths. It allows for recycling or repeating phases and for women to go through the phases in any order. Phases are not tied to coming out or political activity, which can be biased behavioral indicators of sexual identity development (Kitzinger, 1987). Most importantly, the model and measure address individual identity development as well as group identity development. The model and the measure also focus on lesbian identity development versus gay male identity development.

Some initial data on the earlier version of the LIQ are available from dissertation research by Tozer (2000). Tozer used Fassinger’s LIQ with a sample of 53 lesbians. Forty-eight were Caucasian; two were Latina; one was African-American; one was biracial; and one was multiracial. Tozer reported the following Cronbach alphas for the LIQ’s eight sub-scales: Lesbian Individual Identity, Awareness = .75, Exploration = .76, Deepening = .78, Internalization = .94; Lesbian Group Identity, Awareness = .62, Exploration = .74, Deepening =
.77, Internalization = .77. The measure’s overall score also significantly correlated with other variables in expected directions. First, current phase of lesbian individual identity development was significantly negatively correlated with a propensity to seek conversion therapy (r = -.81, p < .001). Propensity to seek conversion therapy was also significantly negatively correlated with current phase of lesbian group identity development (r = -.52, p < .001). Second, current phase of lesbian individual identity development was significantly negatively correlated with internalized homonegativity, as measured by the Internalized Homonegativity Scale (Mohr & Fassinger, 1999) (r = -.77, p < .001). Internalized homonegativity was also significantly negatively correlated with current phase of lesbian group identity development (r = -.56, p < .001; Tozer, 2000). The Cronbach alphas lend psychometric support for the LIQ’s reliability, and the correlations lend psychometric support for the LIQ’s construct validity because the correlations are moderate to strong and in the expected direction.

In addition, Fassinger (personal communication, August 13, 2002) reports that three other studies found similar levels of internal consistency for the LIQ. Further, the LIQ has been revised to reflect greater clarity in the questions, and is now called the LIQ-R. The revisions help participants to understand that they are endorsing items that reflect beliefs and feelings about their sexual identity at the current time. Each item contains words like “recently” or “now.”

My pilot study revealed that some people had doubts about whether they were filling out the survey correctly due to not completely understanding the directions. The directions originally read: “The following items are intended to identify the beliefs and feelings that you have about your identity as a lesbian or bisexual woman now. Some of the items may not have ever applied to you, and some may have applied to you in the past, but not the present. Please
respond to all items and endorse most strongly the items that capture your feelings about yourself as a lesbian or bisexual woman at the current time.” I contacted Fassinger and, based on her feedback and the pilot group’s feedback, revised the directions to: “The following items are intended to identify the beliefs and feelings that you have about your identity as a lesbian or bisexual woman NOW. Some of the items may not have ever applied to you, or some may have applied to you in the past, but NOT the present. Please respond to all items and endorse MOST STRONGLY the items that capture your feelings about yourself at the CURRENT time.”

In addition, the following statement was added: “For instance, if the question asks if you have RECENTLY noticed being attracted to women, it is assessing whether this is happening to you FOR THE FIRST TIME; but if you first noticed this in yourself many years ago, then you would assign the item a lower score (even if you still notice being attracted to women today) because you are far beyond when this happened to you for the first time.” The pilot group indicated these directions were clearer. Nonetheless, the survey sample had 24 people who either commented the measure was difficult to answer or indicated they were unsure they had filled out the measure correctly. From their descriptions of how they approached the items, it seemed they had filled it out correctly, so their responses were included in analyses.

*Self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace.* I assessed self-disclosure using published items that Day and Schoenrade (1997) and Ragins and Cornwell (2001) developed (see Appendix F). Day and Schoenrade used the stem question, “How hard do you try to keep your sexual orientation secret from these people at work?” and applied it to six levels of people in the work environment: co-workers, immediate supervisors, other supervisors, subordinates, middle management, and top management. The questions were answered with a 1 to 4 Likert scale with the following definitions: (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, and (4) I actively talk about it to others. The scale score is calculated by summing the respondent’s answers. Higher scores indicate a greater degree of self-disclosure of sexual orientation and lower scores indicate a lesser degree of self-disclosure of sexual orientation. The scale’s coefficient alpha was reported as .97 (Day & Schoenrade, 1997). This measure has the strength of specifying the levels of people one might disclose sexual orientation to in the workplace and thereby being multi-item, but it does not ask specifically about symbols one displays, guests at parties, style of dress, or reactions to anti-gay jokes.

Ragins and Cornwell (2001) used one question that was adapted from other studies such as Schneider (1986). The question is “At work, have you disclosed your sexual orientation to: (please check one): (1) no one, (2) some people, (3) most people, (4) everyone?” The item performed in the expected direction in a regression analysis with variables such as workplace discrimination (negatively), supportive policies and practices (positively), and presence of gay co-workers (positively; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). The range of scores using all seven questions (six from Day & Schoenrade, 1997; and one from Ragins & Cornwell, 2001) addressing self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace is from 7 to 28. High scores indicate greater self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace and low scores indicate less self-disclosure. In this study, the Cronbach alpha for all 7 questions was .97.

Workplace discrimination. Waldo (1999) developed a measure called the Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ; see Appendix G) that assesses participants’ experiences of harassment and discrimination in the workplace due to sexual orientation. Permission to use this measure was granted by Louise Fitzgerald (personal communication, March 21, 2003) who was Waldo’s advisor when he designed this measure, as attempts to
contact Waldo were unsuccessful. The items were developed through literature reviews and interviews with LGB workers. The items are written in behavioral terms and are designed to assess incidence of discrimination and harassment in a time-limited period (2 years). The scale contains 22 items that measure direct and indirect heterosexism. Items are answered with a Likert scale from (0) never to (4) most of the time. Items are preceded by the stem, “During the past 24 months in your workplace, have you ever been in a situation where any of your coworkers or supervisors….” Examples of items are “set you up on a date with a member of the other sex when you did not want it,” and “called you ‘dyke,’ ‘faggot,’ ‘fence-sitter,’ or some other slur?” Answers are added to give a scale score, with higher numbers indicating greater experiences of heterosexism in the workplace. A confirmatory factor analysis supported two factors – direct and indirect heterosexism. The scale alpha was .93. The range of scores on this scale is from zero to 88. A low score indicates fewer experiences of heterosexism at work and higher scores indicate more experiences of heterosexism at work (Waldo, 1999). The Cronbach alpha for the WHEQ in this study was .935. The Cronbach alpha for the subscale on direct heterosexism was .909 and the alpha for the subscale on indirect heterosexism was .908.

Organizational tolerance of heterosexism. Waldo also developed the Organizational Tolerance for Heterosexism Inventory (OTHI; Appendix H) to measure organizational tolerance of heterosexism. Permission to use this measure was granted by Louise Fitzgerald (personal communication, March 21, 2003) who was Waldo’s advisor when he designed this measure and an author of the scale upon which the OTHI is based. The OTHI is a 12-item measure based on the Organizational Tolerance for Sexual Harassment Inventory (Hulin, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1996). The OTHI has four vignettes that are each followed by three questions that ask employees to rate the believed outcomes if the employee complained about a similar incident in
their workplace. Adding the answers gives the scale score. The range of scores is from 12 to 60. Higher scale scores indicate greater organizational tolerance for heterosexism. The alpha coefficient for the scale is reported as .97. The measure correlated in expected directions with outness about sexual orientation (negatively), poor health conditions (positively), stress (positively), and job satisfaction (negatively; Waldo, 1999). The OTHI in this study had a Cronbach alpha of .96.

Internalized Homophobia Scale. The Internalized Homophobia Scale (IHS) was initially developed for an LGB youth group to assess the identity-related distress youth felt about their sexual orientation (Wright et al., 1999). The initial scale was comprised of nine items. After looking at factor loadings, the final scale consists of seven items (see Appendix I). Items are answered with a five-point Likert scale from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree. Using these seven items, a total internalized homophobia score was computed by summing the individual items after reverse coding several items so that high scores indicated greater distress about being LGB. Higher scores indicate greater internalized homophobia. The seven-item scale has a scale score range from 7 to 35 and a Cronbach alpha of .83. In this study, the Cronbach alpha was .844 (Wright et al., 1999). A detailed analysis of the items suggests that the scale is unidimensional and exhibits strong criterion validity.

Wright (personal communication, June 18, 2003) reported that a series of correlational analyses were used to establish its relationship with other constructs that have been suggested or shown to be related to internalized homophobia, including self-esteem, mental health status, time and comfort in being "out," salience of identity as an LGB person, and percent of people within their network who know about the youth's sexual identity. Wright et al. (1999) also examined constructs that they expected internalized homophobia to be unrelated with, including work
status, income, whether or not/frequency of running away, and family size. In each case without exception, the relationships (or lack of association) were as predicted. The scale in paper and pencil form was also used by Rostosky and Riggle (2002) with their sample of 261 lesbian and gay adults. With this sample, the scale had a Cronbach alpha of .81. The scale performed in the expected direction with outness in the workplace (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002).
Chapter 4

Results

Before proceeding with structural equation modeling and multiple regression, a variety of preliminary analyses were conducted. These analyses (descriptive and univariate statistics, and bivariate correlations) are presented below, followed by a test of the measurement model and two structural models. A sequential multiple regression analysis is also presented.

Pre-analysis

First, data was downloaded from the www.psychdata.net website. A total of 475 people started the survey. There was a natural break in the data of participants who left more than 20 questions blank and people who left 12 and fewer questions blank (only 4 people left 13-19 questions blank). In order to get an accurate representation of how each participant rated each subscale I decided to include people who left 12 and fewer questions blank. Sixty-one people did not complete the survey sufficiently; participants who left more than 12 out of 88 questions (only including the scales, not the demographics) blank were not included in the sample. A visual inspection of the data revealed that with this sample there was a reasonable perception of participants’ scores on each subscale. Sixteen people were living outside the United States and were dropped from the sample as well, leaving a total usable sample of 398 participants (84% of total).

The first step in screening data for accuracy of input was to inspect out-of-range values, plausible means and standard deviations, correlations among variables, and univariate outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). One of the benefits of using a website to collect data was the lack of room for human error by the researcher in entering raw data. Nonetheless, I inspected the data for any out of range data and did not find any. Second, I estimated the means and standard
deviations of each subscale and the demographics and found them all to be within range. Third, I ran the bivariate correlations for the variables’ subscales and found them all to be within an expected range. Finally, I looked for univariate outliers by examining box plots of each subscale. There were a few points that looked like outliers, particularly on the WHEQ and some subscales of the LIQ-R. A visual inspection of the data suggested participants had given a reasonable set of answers (e.g., there was no one who answered with all high numbers or all low numbers). Quintana and Maxwell (1999) recommend inclusion of outliers unless they are inaccurate or errors in coding. I chose to include the outliers in analyses because all outliers were within range and plausible; however, with the inclusion of some outliers, correlations may be deflated (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001).

Next I examined missing data among the scale answers (not including demographics). Following the procedure outlined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), I first analyzed the pattern of the missing data. For 398 participants, along 13 subscales totaling 35,024 items (# of items x # of participants), there were 193 (0.6%) instances of missing data for all items. The missing data appeared to have no pattern. The scales with the highest percentage of missing data were from the LIQ-R: individual awareness, individual exploration, and group awareness; each had 1% missing data. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) state that there are no firm guidelines about how to handle missing data. They state that if there is a large data set with few missing data points, one can proceed with traditional methods of dealing with missing data. As prescribed by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), scale means were calculated from complete cases and then were inserted for missing data points. This procedure is commonly followed and thought to be conservative in that it does not change the means of scales. Newer software also offers more complex statistical
methods of dealing with missing data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). These methods are recommended if missing data have a pattern or make up a large portion of the data.

Missing data points from the demographic scale were not changed, and missing data points were not included in analyses. For example, if a participant did not indicate her racial background, it did not make sense to estimate it, and she was not included when looking at racial differences among the sample.

Next I checked plots for nonlinearity and heteroscedasticity. Some variables were distributed normally (i.e., Individual Deepening, Group Exploration, Group Deepening, Disclosure, and the OTHI). Histograms for each subscale can be found in Appendix J. With the presence of moderate to extreme skewness and kurtosis for some variables (i.e., WHEQ direct, WHEQ indirect, IHS, and multiple subscales of the LIQ-R), I attempted transformations. Transformations did not help substantially change the distributions. Some statisticians caution against using transformations because it changes the interpretation of data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In addition, the levels of non-normality and kurtosis were not high enough to violate the assumptions of structural equation modeling (this is explained in more detail below). Thus, none of the variables were transformed.

Measures and Bivariate Correlations

Scale means, standard deviations, range, alpha coefficients, and bivariate correlations for summed scale scores of all measures are presented in Table 3. Scale means suggest that the sample mostly experienced low levels of direct heterosexism and slightly higher levels of indirect heterosexism. The sample mostly identified with the internalization/synthesis phase of sexual identity development. The sample had an intermediate level of self-disclosure of their
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<tr>
<td><strong>OTHI</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.38</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.56</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.26</strong></td>
<td><em>0.11</em>*</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td><strong>0.12</strong></td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td><em>0.10</em>*</td>
<td><strong>0.15</strong></td>
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<td>7-35</td>
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<td>5-35</td>
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<td><strong>Scale m</strong></td>
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<td>1.38</td>
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<td>-0.75</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
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<td><strong>Kurtosis</strong></td>
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<td>2.05</td>
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<td>-0.34</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
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</table>

**Note.** WHEQ Dir = Workplace heterosexist experiences questionnaire direct, WHEQ InD = Workplace heterosexist experiences questionnaire indirect, IHS = Internalized homophobia scale, IA = Individual awareness, IE = Individual exploration, ID = Individual deepening, II = Individual internalization, GA = Group awareness, GE = Group exploration, GD = Group deepening, GI = Group internalization, Disclo. = Self-Disclosure, OTHI = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism inventory, Poss. = possible, Part. = participant, m = mean, sd = standard deviation, ** = p<.01, *p<.05.
sexual orientation to people at work. The sample expressed somewhat low levels of internalized homophobia and experienced intermediate levels of organizational tolerance of heterosexism. Several scales in this study are significantly correlated. The subscales measuring sexual identity development were highly correlated with other subscales of the same measure and had low correlations with other constructs. The high correlations \((r > .70)\) between the subscales of the LIQ-R suggest that they are measuring the same construct. The LIQ-R subscales and disclosure had correlation coefficients between .118 and .234. Internalized homophobia had significant correlations with the subscales of sexual identity development, but they were low \((r = - .14, p < .01\) for individual internalization, and \(r = - .16, p < .01\) for group internalization).

Disclosure, the criterion variable in this study, had the highest correlations with WHEQ indirect \((r = - .47, p < .01)\), IHS \((r = - .42, p < .01)\), and OTHI \((r = - .48, p < .01)\). Other high correlations for this study included the WHEQ direct and WHEQ indirect \((r = .67, p < .01)\), and WHEQ indirect and OTHI \((r = .56, p < .01)\).

One interesting trend for the sexual identity development subscales was that the correlation coefficients were negative for the first three phases of sexual identity development and disclosure. This indicates that higher scores on the first three phases of individual and group sexual identity development are correlated with lower levels of disclosure. Scores in the final phase of individual and group sexual identity development were positively correlated with levels of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace \((r = .21, p < .01; r = .23, p < .01)\), indicating that higher scores in the internalization phase are associated with higher levels of self-disclosure of sexual orientation. Subscales of the LIQ-R had surprisingly low correlations with internalized homophobia \((r < .2)\).
As discussed earlier, scale sums were analyzed according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) for skewness and kurtosis (see Table 4). Analysis of the range of scale responses suggests that WHEQ direct and some subscales of sexual identity development were not normally distributed. WHEQ direct and indirect, IHS, individual awareness, individual exploration, and group awareness were positively skewed at greater than 1. Individual internalization was negatively skewed at greater than 1. WHEQ direct had the highest level of kurtosis (9.29). IHS and Group Awareness had kurtosis levels greater than 2.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skewness and Kurtosis of Subscales</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
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<tr>
<td>WHEQ Direct</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>9.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHEQ Indirect</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalized Homophobia Scale</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Awareness</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.91</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Exploration</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Deepening</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Internalization</td>
<td>-1.23</td>
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<td>Group Awareness</td>
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<td>Group Deepening</td>
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<td>Group Internalization</td>
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<td>Disclosure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHI</td>
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<td>-0.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. WHEQ = Workplace heterosexist experiences questionnaire, OTHI = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism inventory

Table 5 presents bivariate correlations between a number of the demographic variables (ethnicity, children at home, income, age, education, length of relationship, and size of home area) and scales of interest. Many of these correlations were expected, but some were more
Table 5

Bivariate Correlations and Univariate Statistics for Subscales and Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dir</th>
<th>InD</th>
<th>IHS</th>
<th>Disclo</th>
<th>OTHI</th>
<th>Years Org</th>
<th>Size Org</th>
<th>Fe. CoWk</th>
<th>Rel. Igth</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Kids Home</th>
<th>Educ</th>
<th>Home Size</th>
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<tr>
<td>InD</td>
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<td>IHS</td>
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<td>Size Org</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. CoWk</td>
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<td>-0.09</td>
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<td>**-.18</td>
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<td>Rel. Igth</td>
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<td>0.06</td>
<td>**-.15</td>
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<td>-0.02</td>
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Note. Dir = direct heterosexism, InD = indirect heterosexism, IHS = Internalized homophobia scale, Disclo. = Self-Disclosure, OTHI = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism inventory, Org. = organization, F. CoWk = female co-workers, Rel. Igth. = relationship length, Race: 1 Caucasian, 2 minority, Home Size = Size of home area/community, Educ. = education, ** = p<.01.
interesting. For instance, I examined whether some of the demographic variables had a
significant correlation with disclosure. There were no demographic variables that significantly
correlated with disclosure at the $p<.01$ level.

A greater presence of female coworkers was correlated with lower levels of direct
heterosexism ($r = -.13, p<.01$). Age was negatively correlated with indirect heterosexism
indicating that as age increases, experiences of indirect heterosexism decrease ($r = - .14, p<.01$).

Internalized homophobia was not significantly correlated with any demographic variables.
Organizational tolerance of heterosexism only had one significant correlation with a
demographic variable, which was age. As age increased, organizational tolerance of
heterosexism decreased ($r = - .14, p<.01$).

By looking at Table 5, one can also see that a number of demographic variables had
significant correlations with other demographic variables. For instance, income was positively
correlated with number of years in an organization ($r = .30, p<.01$), size of organization ($r = .26,
$p<.01$), length of relationship ($r = .23, p<.01$), and age ($r = .44, p<.01$). Income was negatively
correlated with female co-workers ($r = -.15, p<.01$). Home area size was positively correlated
with income ($r = .18, p<.01$) and presence of minorities ($r = .16, p<.01$).

When looking at disclosure by area of work in Table 6, the highest level of disclosure
was found for women who worked in advertising and publishing ($m = 21.6$), followed closely by
women in retail ($m = 21.3$). The lowest levels of disclosure were found for women who worked
in communications ($m = 14.3$) and financial and insurance services ($m = 15.7$), though both had
small sample sizes ($n = 6$ and 22, respectively). The range for disclosure was from 7-28. I did
not investigate if the group differences were statistically significant.
Structural Equation Modeling

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is basically an extension of the general linear model including multiple regression, canonical correlation, discriminant function, factor analysis, and multivariate analysis (Quintana & Maxwell, 1999). SEM was used in this study to assess the predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace. SEM allows one to evaluate the relationships in a proposed model against the actual relationships in observed data (Quintana & Maxwell, 1999). SEM can show the adequacy of a model, the strength of relationships among variables, the amount of variance accounted for by the independent variables when predicting the dependent variable, and the reliability of all measured variables (Ullman, 2001). In this way, SEM is a confirmatory statistical technique rather than an analysis employed in exploratory designs (Ullman, 2001). SEM is most often used to test a theory or theoretical model (Ullman,
2001). SEM does not determine causality, but rather how much one variable “drives” another (Ullman, 2001). Relationships between variables that are estimated by SEM do not have measurement error because the error is estimated and removed (Ullman, 2001). This study tested a hypothesized model and alternative models of predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation for lesbian women in the workplace.

Assumptions of SEM involve linearity, multicollinearity and singularity, and covariance (Ullman, 2001). SEM measures only linear relationships. Linearity was addressed by looking at scatterplot relationships between variables and the dependent variable disclosure. All variables related in a linear fashion to disclosure. Multicollinearity occurs when variables are very highly correlated (.90 or above). Singularity occurs when variables are redundant. Both issues inflate the size of error terms (Ullman, 2001). Singularity and multicollinearity for this study are discussed below.

Theoretically, it is expected that parallel phases of individual and group sexual identity development would be highly correlated. One problem in this study was that subscales of the LIQ-R, particularly the parallel and adjacent individual and group sexual identity development subscales, were sometimes highly correlated (.7-.9). The data in question were consistent with the theory of sexual identity development. Nonetheless, some subscales of the LIQ-R appeared to have multicollinearity. WHEQ direct and WHEQ indirect also had a bivariate correlation of .67. This is close to the threshold signaling multicollinearity. SEM is stronger when variables do not have a bivariate correlation of higher than .70 (Ullman, 2001). Structural models with multicollinearity may have a harder time achieving a good fit. The multicollinearity assumption was not met for the structural models I had wanted to test. I had to revise the models to reduce multicollinearity.
The covariance assumption is met when the correlation matrix confirms that variables thought to relate to each other and variables thought to be independent of each other perform as expected (Ullman, 2001). The covariance assumption was met for this study.

Design considerations for SEM include having a full range of scores on measures, having a sample size appropriate to the number of parameters in the model (about 10-50 per parameter), and multivariate normality (Ullman, 2001). A full range of scores was represented for each scale. The number of parameters in the models for the sample size posed a serious threat to the assumptions of SEM. The sample of 398 participants was not an adequate sample size for the number of parameters in the proposed measurement model or proposed structural models. In the design of this study, I misunderstood parameters to mean constructs when in fact parameter refers to every estimated path in a model (Bollen, 1989). Revisions were made to the measurement model, but the proposed structural models violate the assumption of sample size appropriate to number of parameters. Revisions were made to the proposed structural models so there was at least a near adequate sample size for the number of parameters.

Concern should be raised when using SEM if kurtosis is greater than 7 and skewness is greater than 2 (West, Finch, & Curran, 1995). When only one variable is cause for concern, then SEM will still perform adequately (West et al., 1995). In this study, the only variable with cause for concern was WHEQ direct (see Table 4). By viewing scatterplots of each variable against the dependent variable disclosure, I found that the variables in this study met the assumption of multivariate normality fairly well. Multivariate outliers can be identified by looking at the Mahanolobis distance of cases from the centroid of the data set, and comparing that number to the $\chi^2$ value with 30 degrees of freedom ($30 = \text{number of variables in the structural model}$) at
There were two cases of multivariate outliers. They were included in the data because they were within range, plausible, and part of the sample.

**Research Question 1**

Do the external variables of organizational tolerance of heterosexism and previous experiences of indirect and direct discrimination and the internal variables of internalized homophobia and sexual identity development at the individual and group levels predict lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace? Will the proposed model predicting lesbians’ self-disclosure in the workplace (see Figure 1 in Chapter 2) fit the data gathered from my sample?

**Measurement Model.** A measurement model specifies the indicators for each latent construct and assesses the reliability of the scores of the measured variables in estimating the causal relationships (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995). The full model with all 88 items contributing to latent variables (Figure 3 in Chapter 3) plus error terms for each item or variable represents the proposed measurement model for this study. The data file and model were submitted to the computer program AMOS 4.01 (Arbuckle, 1999). Unfortunately, the measurement model as designed had at least 210 parameters and would not run the set of structural equations because there were too many parameters. As noted earlier, in the design of this study, I misinterpreted that a parameter referred to a construct, but in fact it refers to every estimated path in a model (Bollen, 1989). I had to change some latent variables into observed variables by using their subscale totals in order to reduce the number of parameters. Disclosure, given that it is the criterion variable, stayed a latent variable and otherwise I changed a number of latent variables into observed variables while still achieving a good fit for the measurement model. By changing sexual identity development (40 items), direct heterosexism (12 items),
organizational tolerance of heterosexism (12 items), and indirect heterosexism (7 items) into observed variables I greatly reduced the number of estimated parameters. Internalized homophobia had the fewest number of items as a separate construct; it was possible to keep internalized homophobia a latent variable and achieve a good fit for the measurement model.

The resulting measurement model included only two latent variables, disclosure and internalized homophobia, and their indicator items (see Figure 4). The Goodness of Fit Index for this model was .94 indicating that the measurement model adequately captured the latent constructs disclosure and internalized homophobia. Sexual identity development, direct heterosexism, indirect heterosexism, and organizational tolerance were observed variables measured by subscale totals.

![Figure 4. Revised measurement model. IH = Internalized homophobia, □ = items contributing to latent variables.](image)

**Proposed Models.** The structural models as proposed in Chapter 2 were not tested because they violated two important assumptions of SEM. First, the models had too many parameters for the sample size. For instance, the first proposed structural model had 61 parameters, which requires at least 610 participants and is too large for the sample size. Second,
the models violated the assumption of multicollinearity because subscales of the LIQ-R were correlated between .7 and .9.

Revised models based on the proposed models can explore whether alternative versions of the models may predict self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace while not violating the assumptions of SEM. The revised structural equation models will include fewer parameters and reduce multicollinearity in order to meet the assumptions of SEM. Structural Models 1 and 2 to follow adequately meet the assumptions of SEM.

According to the bivariate correlations, disclosure of sexual orientation had significant correlations with indirect and direct heterosexism, organizational tolerance of heterosexism, internalized homophobia, and sexual identity development phases (all of the predictors in the study). The correlations, though significant, were low for sexual identity development. However, the highest sexual identity development subscale correlations were for the individual and group internalization phases. Also, another trend in the sexual identity development phases was that within individual and group development, the first three phases had negative correlations with disclosure, while the internalization phases had positive correlations with disclosure.

**Structural Model 1.** In order to reduce the multicollinearity of sexual identity development, I looked for a slightly different way to operationalize the construct. Looking at the correlation table, the fourth phases of individual and group sexual identity development had higher correlations than the other three phases with self-disclosure. Theoretically, people who score higher in internalization would be more likely to securely identify as lesbian, be out to some people, and then make a choice about self-disclosure in the workplace. Structural Model 1 only uses the internalization subscales of individual and group sexual identity development. By
using only two subscales of sexual identity development instead of eight, I was able to reduce the number of parameters in the model. This design is still somewhat problematic because individual internalization and group internalization are correlated .75, which violates the assumption of multicollinearity. I also cannot make the two subscales indicators of a latent variable, because latent variables need at least 3 indicators (Ullman, 2001). The model is displayed below in Figure 5.

The Maximum Likelihood (ML) estimation procedure and AMOS were used to test this model and the following models. The ML estimation procedure is recommended for moderate to large sample sizes, and it is also recommended because it performs well across situations relative to other estimation procedures (Quintana & Maxwell, 1999).

It is customary for squares in models to represent observed variables and circles to represent latent variables. This model contains 42 parameters, which is a few too many parameters for the sample size. Since indirect heterosexism and direct heterosexism are from the same scale (WHEQ), their residuals are highly correlated. Thus, the error terms for indirect heterosexism and direct heterosexism were correlated for this model and the next model because they represent similar sources of error variance (Quintana & Maxwell, 1999). The internalization subscales of group and individual sexual identity development have low path coefficients to self-disclosure ($\beta = .02$, nonsignificant, and $\beta = .11, p<.01$).
Figure 5. Structural Model 1 with standardized path coefficients. OTH = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism, InD = Indirect heterosexism, R InD = Residual indirect heterosexism, Dir = Direct heterosexism, R Dir = Residual direct heterosexism, II = Individual internalization, GI = Group internalization, IH = Internalized homophobia, □ = items contributing to latent variables. ** = significant at $p<.01$, * = significant at $p<.05$.

Table 7 displays the fit indices of Structural Models 1 and 2. To interpret the fit indices consult the following guidelines: Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) >.90 = good fit (Ullman, 2001); Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of 0 =
exact fit, <.05 = a close fit, .05 to .08 = fair fit, .08 to .1 = mediocre fit, and >.10 = poor fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). The CFI and GFI for Structural Model 1 were .88 and .83, respectively.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goodness of Fit Indices</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Structural Model 1</td>
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<td>Structural Model 2</td>
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Note. CFI = Comparative fit index, GFI = Goodness of fit index, DF = degrees of freedom, RMSEA = Root mean squared error of approximation

Structural Model 2. I speculated that the structural model might fit better without sexual identity development because the bivariate correlations between sexual identity development and disclosure were low. In addition, the $B$ coefficients in Structural Model 1 were low between sexual identity development and self-disclosure. In Structural Model 2 (Figure 6) I removed the sexual identity development variables from the model completely. Organizational tolerance of heterosexism is still mediated by direct and indirect heterosexism, the residuals for indirect and direct heterosexism are correlated, internalized homophobia has its own path to self-disclosure, and sexual identity development is deleted. This model has 38 estimated parameters.

All standardized path coefficients in Structural Model 2 are significant at the $p<.01$ level. Organizational tolerance of heterosexism predicted self-disclosure with a coefficient of $\beta = -.29$ suggesting that as organizational tolerance increases, self-disclosure decreases. Organizational tolerance of heterosexism also had path coefficients to indirect heterosexism ($\beta = .56$) and direct heterosexism ($\beta = .38$), indicating that as organizational tolerance of heterosexism increases so do experiences of direct and indirect heterosexism. Indirect heterosexism had a coefficient of $\beta = -.49$ to disclosure and direct heterosexism had a path coefficient of $\beta = .35$ to self-disclosure.
signaling that as experiences of indirect heterosexism increase disclosure decreases, and as experiences of direct heterosexism increase disclosure increases. The interesting relationship between direct heterosexism and disclosure will be discussed in the next chapter. Internalized homophobia had a path coefficient of $\beta = -0.26$ to self-disclosure indicating that as internalized homophobia increases self-disclosure decreases. Structural Model 2 was the only model to have adequate fit indices, indicating that this model adequately fit the observed data (see Table 7). The CFI and GFI for Structural Model 2 were 0.94 and 0.87, respectively.

Figure 6. Structural Model 2 with standardized path coefficients. OTH = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism, InD = Indirect heterosexism, R InD = Residual indirect heterosexism, Dir = Direct heterosexism, R Dir = Residual direct heterosexism, IH = Internalized homophobia, \( \Box \) = items contributing to latent variables. ** = significant at $p<0.01$. 
Structural Model 2 helps to clarify the answer to Research Question 1. The external variables organizational tolerance of heterosexism, and direct and indirect heterosexist experiences, and the internal variable internalized homophobia are adequately-fitting predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace for lesbian women. This model adequately predicts self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace.

An additional question posed was whether racial background would change the fit of the data. I was not able to identify whether racial background would change the way the data fits the structural models because of insufficient sample size. I would need greater than 300 racial minorities to analyze that question using structural equation modeling. Racial background is a variable that most studies have not been able to look at because of small sample size. By using multiple regression, I could look at the influence of demographic variables which was not possible here with structural equation modeling due to inadequate sample size. Multiple regression also allowed further testing of sexual identity development.

Post-hoc Analyses

The overall fit of a model can be improved through a process of model trimming and model building, which means adding and deleting paths in the model. Typical tests include the LaGrange Multiplier Test for model building and the Wald Test for model trimming. The recommendations of the LaGrange and Wald Tests are based solely on statistical considerations and may not be theoretically sound. Quintana and Maxwell (1999) caution against using SEM for exploratory purposes. They explain briefly that revising models based on the data is bound to cause better fit and higher correlations at some point in the process. For this study, only one model was tested with changes that were not proposed. Changes were made to Structural Model 1 based on bivariate correlations and its lack of fit resulting in Structural Model 2.
Sequential multiple regression. A post-hoc multiple regression equation will allow me to examine the contribution of predictors of self-disclosure. In the multiple regression equation I can also add in certain demographic variables to see if they are significant predictors of self-disclosure. I cannot look at demographic variables such as racial background in the structural equation model due to inadequate sample size.

Multiple regression assesses the relationship between a dependent variable (in this case self-disclosure) and multiple independent variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). I will be using sequential multiple regression in order to enter variables in blocks. Blocks of variables are entered in an order determined by the researcher so that each block is evaluated for what it adds to the prediction of the dependent variable beyond the preceding blocks.

In a regression equation, the dependent variable is on one side of the equation and the independent variables are on the other side of the equation. In the equation, $B$ is a coefficient for each independent variable. $B$ represents the change in the dependent variable associated with a one-unit change in an independent variable if all other independent variables are held constant (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). $R^2$ is a squared multiple correlation representing the amount of variance accounted for in the dependent variable by an independent variable.

Sequential multiple regression was used to determine the contribution of demographic variables, workplace variables, and personal variables in predicting self-disclosure of sexual orientation at work. Using SPSS regression analysis, I entered three blocks of variables as indicators of self-disclosure of sexual orientation. The blocks of variables are entered sequentially, but the variables within a given block are entered simultaneously. The first block contained three demographic variables: age, race, and income. Race was coded as $1 = $Caucasian and $2 = $minority or multiracial. The second block contained three external variables: indirect
heterosexism, direct heterosexism, and organizational tolerance of heterosexism. The third block contained three internal variables: individual sexual identity development, group sexual identity development, and internalized homophobia. Sexual identity development was operationalized by using participants’ scores on the individual internalization subscale and the group internalization subscale. This way, participants were evaluated on how they scored on the final phase of sexual identity development. There were five items in each subscale, each with a range from 5-35.

Table 8 displays the $R^2$ values for each block in the sequential multiple regression equation. The incremental F values were all significant meaning that each block of the equation contributed significantly to the prediction of self-disclosure beyond the contribution of any previous blocks. The first block (demographics) accounted for 3% of the variance explained in self-disclosure of sexual orientation. Demographics explained little of the variation in self-disclosure of sexual orientation. Adding the second block (external variables) to the regression equation increased the amount of variance accounted for to 37%. The external block explained the most variance in this regression equation. Adding the third block (internal variables) increased the variance accounted for to 45%. After the demographic variables and the external variables, internal factors were able to contribute an additional 8% of the variance explained. The internal variables contribute a small amount to the variance explained. However, this 8% is above and beyond the variance already accounted for by the demographic and workplace variables. Each block in the equation contributed significantly to the dependent variable self-disclosure at $p<.006$ or $p<.000$. 
Table 8 also displays the standardized betas for each variable in the equation and their significance level. Race was a significant predictor of self-disclosure of sexual orientation at $p < .05$. The external variables indirect heterosexism, direct heterosexism, and organizational tolerance were the strongest significant predictors of self-disclosure at $p < .000$. The only significant internal variable to predict self-disclosure was internalized homophobia ($p < .000$).

Internalized homophobia then is the variable to predict self-disclosure above and beyond the variance already accounted for by demographic and the work environment variables. Individual and group sexual identity development were not significant predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation.

**Further research on sexual identity development.** Sexual identity development seemed to be a low strength predictor of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace as evidenced by low bivariate correlations, low predictor strength in structural equation modeling, and nonsignificant standardized beta coefficients in multiple regression. To explore the relationship between sexual identity development and self-disclosure of sexual orientation further, I classified

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block 1 - demographics</th>
<th>$F(3,385) = 4.18$</th>
<th>0.006</th>
<th>0.03</th>
<th>0.02</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td></td>
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| Block 2 - external     | $F(6,382) = 37.26$ | 0.000 | 0.37 | 0.36 |
| Dir WHEQ               | 0.000            | 0.30  |
| InD WHEQ               | 0.000            | -0.43 |
| OTHI                   | 0.000            | -0.28 |

| Block 3 - internal     | $F(9, 379) = 34.45$ | 0.000 | 0.45 | 0.43 |
| IHS                    | 0.000            | -0.25 |
| Individual Internalization | NS           | 0.10  |
| Group Internalization  | NS               | 0.04  |

**Note.** Dir WHEQ = Direct heterosexism, InD WHEQ = Indirect heterosexism, OTHI = Organizational tolerance of heterosexism inventory, IHS = Internalized homophobia scale, NS = nonsignificant.
each person based on her high scores on the LIQ-R in one individual and one group phase. Participants who had a tie between two high scores within individual or group were dropped to simplify this analysis ($n = 22$ for Individual, and $n = 9$ for Group). I classified participants based on their high score in (1) Awareness, (2) Exploration, (3) Deepening, and (4) Internalization for individual and group. Most participants were in the internalization phase for both individual and group ($n = 285$). An examination of mean scores for self-disclosure by group does not reveal a distinguishable pattern (see Figure 7). Sample sizes are as follows and some are small:

- Individual Awareness, $n = 9$
- Individual Exploration, $n = 8$
- Individual Deepening, $n = 42$
- Individual Internalization, $n = 317$
- Group Awareness, $n = 7$
- Group Exploration, $n = 27$
- Group Deepening, $n = 35$
- Group Internalization, $n = 320$

For example, Group Awareness has a sample size of 7 and its mean for disclosure is as high as Group Internalization (20.6). The small sample sizes may contribute to the unreliability of the mean estimates and to the lack of a visible pattern. In Figure 7 an overall pattern is difficult to distinguish visually. Further analysis will need to be done to see if the differences between groups may be significant. Thus far, it seems that sexual identity development is not a good predictor of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace for lesbian women.

Next, I looked at the level of disclosure of sexual orientation among women who were in both the individual and group internalization phases of sexual identity development (Figure 8). The figure below describes the level of self-disclosure only among women who were most comfortable with their lesbian identity. Only a slight trend is evident in that women in internalization were more likely to score in the upper third of the self-disclosure measure, but there is certainly a representation of internalized women who scored in the lower two-thirds of the self-disclosure measure.
Figure 7. Mean and Standard Deviation of Disclosure by Sexual Identity Development Phase. 1 = Awareness, 2 = Exploration, 3 = Deepening, 4 = Internalization. Means are indicated at the top of each column. Vertical bars display one standard deviation above and below the mean.

Figure 8. Distribution of scores on self-disclosure for women who were classified in individual and group internalization phases of sexual identity development.
Taking the structural equation modeling, the multiple regression, and the further analysis of sexual identity development together, a more clear picture of the predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation at work is obtained. The external factors seem to contribute the most to explaining variance and predicting self-disclosure of sexual orientation. There is one internal variable that is also a good predictor of self-disclosure – internalized homophobia. Internalized homophobia was a significant predictor in structural equation modeling and multiple regression. Demographic variables and sexual identity development seem to play a very small role in explaining variance and predicting self-disclosure of sexual orientation at work.

Research Question 2

In this question I wanted to address a mediator relationship. Specifically, does internalized homophobia have an indirect effect on self-disclosure of sexual orientation via sexual identity development at the individual and group level?

Based on the literature review, I hypothesized that internalized homophobia would be mediated by sexual identity development. To test the strength of the mediation relationship I needed to measure and compare the direct and indirect (mediated) effects of internalized homophobia on self-disclosure (Judd & Kenny, 1981). Under better circumstances I would be able to compare the first proposed structural model that has the indirect effects and the second proposed structural model, which does not have indirect effects. Like the first proposed structural model, the second proposed structural model also violated the assumptions of SEM by having too many parameters for the sample and multicollinearity among the LIQ-R subscales. Without being able to run these analyses, I was unable to test whether sexual identity development serves to mediate internalized homophobia.
Chapter 5

Discussion

This study sought to identify internal and external factors that predict lesbians’ self-disclosure of their sexual orientation at work. A model of internal and external predictors was hypothesized to predict lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was chosen for this study because it is a reliable confirmatory statistical analysis that also measures prediction of influence (Ullman, 2001). Multiple regression analysis also helped to analyze the predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation at work. The person-environment fit theory (Super, 1990) was the basis for the hypothesis of internal and external predictors and was supported by the results of this study. However, sexual identity development was not found to be a significant predictor of self-disclosure.

The sample recruited via the Internet was somewhat more diverse than previous studies. Typically, there are about 10–12 % minorities in studies of lesbian women or lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. This study had 18% minorities including African-American, Latina-American, Asian-American, Native American, and multiracial or bi-racial participants. This sample may have had a slightly higher participation from minorities because I was able to recruit participants from minority specific magazines, websites, and list-servs. This study showed that race had a somewhat weak, yet significant negative relationship with self-disclosure of sexual orientation.

The sample also had a good representation of levels of income. Thirty-one percent of the sample made less than $25,000 per year. Income was not a significant predictor of self-disclosure. Unfortunately, the sample’s education level was fairly negatively skewed with most
people having a bachelor’s degree or higher. The Internet may have also helped to reach out to women in smaller communities since 29% of participants lived in towns of 50,000 or less.

Structural Models

Structural equation modeling is a confirmatory statistical technique (Ullman, 2001). It is used to confirm a specified model of independent and dependent variables. SEM produces path coefficients describing the strength of relationships among variables and the variance accounted for in predicting an independent variable. SEM does not show causality so any path coefficients are interpreted as the strength of relationship and the ability to predict another variable (Ullman, 2001). The structural models here used the Maximum Likelihood estimation procedure because it is recommended for moderate to large sample sizes and performs well across situations (Quintana & Maxwell, 1999).

Revisions had to be made to the measurement model, which included all 88 items in the survey as indicators of 13 latent variables. This model had too many parameters to estimate and would not run. In order to get the measurement model to run, I had to change some of the latent variables to observed variables using the subscale totals instead of each item as a separate indicator. Disclosure and internalized homophobia remained latent variables with individual items as indicators. This greatly reduced the number of parameters to measure and the measurement model was able to achieve a good fit to the data.

Research Question 1

Overview. Research Question 1 sought to identify whether the external variables of previous experiences of direct and indirect heterosexism and organizational tolerance of heterosexism, and the internal variables of individual and group sexual identity development phase and internalized homophobia could predict self-disclosure of sexual orientation for lesbian
women in the workplace. Structural Model 1 including all of the above variables did not produce an adequate fit to the data. Looking at the path coefficients, one could see that the coefficients from the sexual identity development variables to self-disclosure were surprisingly low. In addition, the bivariate correlations between the sexual identity development subscales and self-disclosure were low. Third, a regression equation also showed that sexual identity development was not a significant predictor of self-disclosure. It appeared that the external variables were having a much stronger influence on self-disclosure. Thus, I hypothesized that a model of predictors not including sexual identity development might have a stronger fit to the data. Structural Model 2 helped clarify that if the sexual identity development variables are removed, then organizational tolerance of heterosexism, direct and indirect heterosexism, and internalized homophobia are adequate-fitting predictors of self-disclosure in the workplace for lesbian women and those considering a lesbian identity.

*Structural Model 1.* Structural Model 1 included the mediated relationship between organizational tolerance of heterosexism and indirect and direct heterosexism, and the variables individual internalization, group internalization, and internalized homophobia as predictors of self-disclosure. This model also had correlated residuals for direct and indirect heterosexism because the subscales (and error) are part of the same measure. I had to reduce the number of parameters by not using all eight subscales of sexual identity development. I theorized that because the last phase of individual and group sexual identity is when identity is truly solidified this should be the strongest predictor of self-disclosure among the phases. One problem with this design may be that 75% of the sample scored high on the internalization phases of individual and group sexual identity development. This nonnormal distribution may deflate the correlations and path coefficients.
Structural Model 2. Due to the weak coefficients from sexual identity development to self-disclosure, it seemed that further analysis of sexual identity development was warranted and that it may not be a predictor of sexual identity development. Structural Model 2 tested a structural model not including sexual identity development. Organizational tolerance was mediated by indirect and direct heterosexism to predict self-disclosure. Internalized homophobia had a direct path to disclosure. The residuals for indirect and direct heterosexism were correlated. All paths in Structural Model 2 were significant at the $p<.01$ level. This model was an adequate fit to the observed data. Organizational tolerance of heterosexism, indirect heterosexism, direct heterosexism, and internalized homophobia were predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace for lesbian women. Organizational tolerance of heterosexism, indirect heterosexism, and internalized homophobia were negatively related to self-disclosure. This means that as each of these variables increases, self-disclosure decreases. Direct heterosexism had a positive relationship with self-disclosure indicating that as direct heterosexism increases so does self-disclosure of sexual orientation (this concept is explained later). Organizational tolerance of heterosexism was positively correlated with both indirect and direct heterosexism. This means as organizational tolerance of heterosexism increases, so do experiences of direct and indirect heterosexism.

The person-environment fit theory (Super, 1990) was supported by the results of this study. The external variables organizational tolerance of heterosexism, and indirect and direct heterosexism significantly predicted lesbians’ self-disclosure of sexual orientation, as did the internal variable internalized homophobia. The variables combined to make an adequately fitting model in Structural Model 2 of external and internal variables that predict self-disclosure of sexual orientation for lesbian women.
**Research Question 2**

Research Question 2 sought to examine the mediated relationship between internalized homophobia and sexual identity development. Judd and Kenny (1981) describe estimating the indirect effects by comparing the strength of the relationship when the mediator is present and when it is not. This question could not be answered because the correlations between the subscales of sexual identity development were highly correlated signaling multicollinearity. Multicollinearity violates an assumption of SEM and inflates the error terms in a model so analyses could not be run.

**Discussion of Results of Interest**

*Sexual identity development.* An unanticipated result of this study was that sexual identity development had weak path coefficients to self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the first structural equation model tested and seemed to contribute to an ill-fitting model. Structural Model 2 without sexual identity development adequately fit the data. The LIQ-R’s subscales had significant bivariate correlations to disclosure, but they were low. In the multiple regression equation, individual and group sexual identity development were not significant predictors of self-disclosure. This could result from three different issues. The first issue with the weak path coefficients between sexual identity development and self-disclosure may have to do with inadequate operationalization of sexual identity development for the purpose of structural equation modeling. The LIQ-R is currently the best measurement tool of lesbian sexual identity development there is with very little competition from other measures. Nonetheless, it had some low Cronbach alphas and participants were sometimes confused about how to answer the questions. Even with attempts to make the directions more clear, participants still doubted their
answers. The LIQ-R is also a fairly long measure and when given with other measures the researcher has to be very careful about total length of a survey.

A statistical and conceptual issue with the LIQ-R is that the measure gives eight subscale scores, which gives the researcher a lot of data, but it might be more useful if the scores were along one continuum (versus eight). Using all eight subscales makes many statistical designs far more complicated than using one or two variables. For instance in this study, I had to only use the internalization phases in order to decrease the parameters. This is not to mention that the subscales are highly correlated so appear to be redundant. If one is going to gather data on all the subscales it would be richer to be able to use the data, or it would be better to have a shortened form of the measure that gives a score on one continuum. One other way to handle the LIQ-R data differently in the future would be to classify women into an individual and group phase and use that number as their score in the structural equation model. The problem is that this would result in a very restricted range in scores.

The second issue with the variable sexual identity development is that the final stage of sexual identity development, which seems to fit so many people, is possibly too broad to capture the differences that may be present in this group. Maybe there are more characteristics that would distinguish this large group into smaller groups. In other words, maybe there is a phase of sexual identity development beyond internalization/synthesis. Maybe a phase beyond internalization would capture differences in outness in settings such as the workplace.

The third issue is that sexual identity development phase is not a good predictor of disclosure in the workplace. Possibly, the decision to self-disclose one’s lesbian sexual orientation is much more complicated than identifying which stage of sexual identity development one is in. There was a lot of variability in decisions to self-disclose a lesbian sexual
orientation at work among people in the last phase of sexual identity development. Again, perhaps this phase is too crude, thus capturing a large percentage of women and not distinguishing enough. However, environmental factors in the workplace seem to play a stronger role in self-disclosure decisions. No matter where one is in sexual identity development, workplace factors such as discrimination and tolerance of sexual diversity may trump the decision to self-disclose a minority sexual orientation.

_Heterosexism._ Another interesting result of this study, in agreement with Waldo (1999), is that as direct heterosexism increases so does self-disclosure of sexual orientation. The path coefficient from indirect heterosexism to self-disclosure was negative, meaning that as indirect heterosexism decreases, self-disclosure increases as one might expect. Waldo (1999) explained this result noting that people who are more “out” are possibly more likely to experience direct heterosexism because their sexual orientation is known. This is in contrast to people who do not self-disclose their sexual orientation and are more likely to experience indirect heterosexism. It seems reasonable that the observed link between heterosexism and self-disclosure is based on the fact that people must know someone’s sexual orientation in order to deliver direct heterosexism. This link is not causal; direct heterosexism simply predicts greater self-disclosure of sexual orientation.

_Demographics._ It was not possible in this study to look at how demographics would potentially change the fit of a structural model due to inadequate sample size. However, I was able to look at a few demographic variables’ influence on self-disclosure through multiple regression analysis. According to the bivariate correlations, disclosure did not have a significant correlation with any of the demographic variables. In the regression analysis, three demographic variables (age, race, and income) were entered together in one block. The block contributed to
predicting a very small amount of the variance in self-disclosure. Specifically, race was a
significant predictor of self-disclosure though the strength of the relationship was weak.
Caucasian women were more likely to be out at work than non-Caucasians. Income and age
were not significant predictors of self-disclosure.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that even with a sample of 398 lesbian women, it is
difficult to generalize to the entire lesbian population in the absence of random sampling. Future
studies that continue to investigate predictors of self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the
workplace will be better able to support or refute the results gathered from this sample. The
group internalization subscale from the LIQ-R had a Cronbach alpha in the .6 range which is the
minimum level for research. A further limitation of the design of this study is that all variables
are represented by self-report data.

Seventy-five percent of the people in the study were in the last phase of sexual identity
development resulting in a restricted variability of scores for individual and group sexual identity
development. Potential reasons for this lack of representation across phases may be the result of
the sampling methods used for this study. Even though this study utilized the Internet and web
advertising where those earlier in sexual identity development may be exploring information
related to sexual orientation, the vast majority of participants heard about the study through an e-
mail or a list-serv. List-servs targeted for the study were for lesbian women who are likely to be
in later stages of identity development. If a woman does not yet identify as a lesbian she would
be less likely to be on one of these list-servs. Another way the sampling may be restricted is that
the study recruitment notice asked for lesbian women or those exploring a lesbian relationship.
A more random and general sampling procedure, targeting all women for example, may gather a sample with more women who are earlier in sexual identity development.

Another limitation of the study was the specification of the measurement model. The measurement model had to be changed to include fewer latent variables to lessen the parameters to be estimated. Phases of sexual identity development, organizational tolerance of heterosexism, direct heterosexism, and indirect heterosexism all were measured variables that used subscale totals instead of items as indicators to a latent variable. The limitation is that these measured variables are now assumed to be well represented by subscale totals.

Implications for Future Research

Further research can hopefully help expand upon the person-environment fit theory (Super, 1990) to explain the external and internal antecedents, the risks, and the consequences of self-disclosure of sexual orientation at work. The minority-stress theory used by Waldo (1999) is one possibility of a theory that is flexible enough to deal with all these competing factors. Further research can also clarify whether the significant predictors of self-disclosure found in this study differ between gay men, bisexual men and women, and lesbian women. There is also the question of whether the predictors of self-disclosure found to be significant in this study have different correlations for lesbian women who are also racial minorities. Addressing this question will require recruitment of about 300 lesbian racial minorities in order to run a structural equation modeling study similar to this one.

A very important idea gained from this study is that the workplace factors such as organizational tolerance of heterosexism and previous experiences of discrimination at work had a stronger influence on self-disclosure at work than internal factors. Future research may want to explore this idea further and experiment with helping the workplace environment to be more
accepting of sexual diversity. An intervention of this sort may result in higher levels of self-disclosure, which may then correlate with increased job satisfaction, career commitment, and organizational commitment as other research has previously shown.

Previous work by Button (2001) found that group level sexual identity development was a significant predictor of self-disclosure of sexual orientation for lesbians and gay men. In this study the correlations were low. Future research should further explore how individual and group sexual identity development and self-disclosure of sexual orientation at work relate to each other. One might especially explore the diversity of choices for identity management and the dynamic process of choosing between risks and consequences. In addition, how do multiple identities such as race, disability status, and religious orientation affect disclosure of sexual orientation? For this question, an exploratory qualitative study may be appropriate.

One piece of feedback I received from a study participant warrants discussion. This participant noted that because I recruited lesbians or those considering a lesbian identity and assumed they were female, it appears there is a gender-bias in this study. In fact, the participant said this study does not account for transgender individuals who may or may not identify as female but identify as lesbian and have relationships with women. If the transgender participant were seen in the workplace as a male who has a relationship with a female, this would complicate any questions about discrimination and organizational tolerance of heterosexism. Another participant also stated that though she was lesbian, her transgender partner who was a biological female was seen in the world as male. This would complicate any questions about bringing your same-sex partner to work-social events or other questions regarding someone’s partner who is assumed to be the same-sex. Future research may want to consider ways to be
inclusive of the transgender community who identify as lesbian or have a lesbian partner. Future research could also be more explicit about gender expectations in the recruitment phase.

This study used a quickly growing medium for psychological research – the Internet. The Internet made data collection quick with immediate access to a national sample. The Internet also made data collection efficient since respondents’ answers were recorded in a database and very little coding was necessary. The website www.psychdata.net was very helpful in providing a website, webpage design, secure data transmission, and secure storage of data. Previous research has shown that Internet samples are very similar to paper and pencil survey samples (Koch & Emrey, 2001; Krantz & Dalal, 2000; Mustanski, 2001).

Another study came out recently that compared a very large Internet sample \( n = 361,703 \) to 510 traditional samples from studies published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology in 2002 (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004). This comparison study found that Internet studies are relatively diverse, and sometimes more diverse with respect to age, gender, socioeconomic status, geographic region, and age. Race was difficult to account for in the study because the journal studies often did not report racial make-up of their samples. This study also found that Internet findings are similar to traditional samples and do not seem adversely affected by repeat or nonserious responders. Researchers pursuing future studies may want to consider the ease and efficiency of using the Internet for data collection. In addition, sampling the lesbian, gay, bisexual population can have certain advantages with the Internet. Internet surveys are a way to reach marginalized and hard to identify samples (Koch & Emrey, 2001). Internet surveys that are anonymous offer protection to a stigmatized population such as lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. Internet surveys also seem to do better than convenience samples gathered at rallies or community centers at reaching lesbian and gay people who live in
smaller towns (Koch & Emrey, 2001). As noted earlier, 29% of participants in this study lived in towns of 50,000 or less.

Implications for the Workplace, Practice, and Education

The information presented in this study can be helpful to companies and organizations, psychologists and counselors, and in educational settings. This study has the potential to affect people at the individual, group, and organizational level. Because the external variables seem to be a strong part of the decision process to be open about sexual orientation, there is room for workplaces and organizations to ensure that they are doing everything they can to support self-disclosure, which, in turn, supports positive work attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Specifically, based on the results of this study, workplaces should address decreasing organizational tolerance of heterosexism and direct and indirect discrimination based on sexual orientation if self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace is a goal. It is important to understand that these workplace variables are easy to address if workplaces are willing. Policies such as anti-discrimination based on sexual orientation, partner benefits, and recognition of a partner and a partner’s biological children as family for family leave policies are shown to be linked to higher levels of disclosure (Button, 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 2000). Practices such as diversity training, welcoming same-sex partners at work-social functions, inquiring about the well-being of partners, and having upper management be visibly supportive of sexual diversity are also ways to increase acceptance of LGB people in work environments.

Decreasing internalized homophobia seems to be another way to increase self-disclosure if self-disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace is a goal. Decreasing internalized homophobia is probably a task that has to be taken on by society. Our society would need to
address decreasing prejudicial attitudes that contribute to stigma and shame for lesbian, gay, and bisexual people. By decreasing societal prejudice and stigma, workplaces may be more willing to address their policies and practices related to sexual orientation. Psychologists can also work with clients in therapy to address issues of shame and internalized homophobia.

This study may help psychologists when working with lesbian clients who are struggling with issues of outness in the workplace. Information about self-disclosure of sexual orientation is important for career and mental health counselors to further understand outness and the complicated dynamics involved in managing a nontraditional sexual identity within the workplace (Morgan & Brown, 1993). Psychologists are also sometimes in the position of evaluating and advising organizations on workplace climate and policy issues that may be relevant to the topic of outness in the workplace for lesbian and gay workers. From this study, it is important for psychologists to explore issues of organizational tolerance of heterosexism, experiences of heterosexism, and internalized homophobia. Do clients see experiences of heterosexism in the workplace? How do clients interpret experiences of heterosexism? Do organizations have policies in place to prevent tolerance of heterosexism? As other studies have shown, anti-discrimination policies including sexual orientation are correlated with decreased discrimination and heterosexism (Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Additionally, this study and Button’s study (2001) have shown that decreased discrimination is associated with increased self-disclosure of sexual orientation.

In educational settings, such as classes training career counselors and psychologists, it will be important to teach students about the complicated dynamics involved in the decision-process that never ends regarding whether to self-disclose sexual orientation. As Kitzinger (1991) wrote, the decision to self-disclose one’s sexual orientation has different risks and
repercussions in each new situation. This study suggested that even if one is fairly advanced in sexual identity development there is a lot of diversity in the amount one is “out” to others at work. Perhaps this is because many companies and organizations do not have anti-discrimination policies or protection against being fired based on sexual orientation. Or maybe people hold different beliefs about how much personal information is shared in their professional settings. Regardless, areas that do seem to be related to decisions to self-disclose sexual orientation at work are the external variables of organizational tolerance of heterosexism and direct and indirect heterosexist discrimination, and the internal variable internalized homophobia.
References


Appendix A

Recruitment Notice

Are you lesbian or exploring a lesbian identity? Please take some time to give your perspective to my study looking at identity issues in the workplace. You must be 18 or over and have job experience. 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.net and enter this survey number - 361. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes. Survey answers are anonymous and data will be encrypted when transmitted. Yet, anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

This study is a project of Pennsylvania State University. This study is voluntary for research purposes. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me, Chloe House, at Penn State University through e-mail at cjc190@psu.edu.
Appendix B

Revised Recruitment Notice

Are you lesbian or exploring a lesbian identity? Please take some time to give your perspective to my study looking at identity issues in the workplace. You must be 18 or over and have job experience. 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.net and enter this survey number - 361. The survey will take approximately 20-30 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 (#16235, phone 814-865-1775). This study is voluntary for research purposes. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me, Chloe House, at Penn State University through e-mail at cjc190@psu.edu (814-235-0423), or my advisors Connie Matthews at cxm206@psu.edu (814-863-6153) or Kathy Bieschke at kbieschke@psu.edu (814-865-3296). Please do not hit "reply" because that may reply to a list-serv.
Appendix C

Requirements and Informed Voluntary Consent Statement
Identity Issues in the Workplace (IRB# 16235)

This study seeks to further understand sexual identity issues in the workplace. For this questionnaire, you must be female, 18 years of age or older, be lesbian or exploring a lesbian identity, and have had work experience. Your answers are anonymous. The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes. Please answer each question to the best of your ability. You are allowed to skip questions, but if you skip too many, I will not be able to use your responses. For every 100 completed questionnaires, $50 will be donated to the Human Rights Campaign (the largest organization for LGBT equal rights).

If you indicate that you do not meet the age requirement, your data will be dropped from the study. Questions in this survey may cause some degree of emotional discomfort because they are personal in nature and address potentially sensitive topics. If you experience emotional discomfort, you may want to seek out emotional support or counseling.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, can contact the Office for Research Protection about IRB# 16235 at 814-865-1775. Chloe House, a Ph.D. student at Penn State, is conducting this research for her dissertation and can be reached at cjc190@psu.edu. Her co-advisors are Connie Matthews at cxm206@psu.edu, and Kathleen Bieschke at kbieschke@psu.edu. You may decide to withdraw your participation at any time prior to the submission of your answers. If you decide to withdraw, do not submit your answers. You can request the results of the study by e-mailing Chloe House at cjc190@psu.edu. The results in aggregate may be published in a professional psychology journal.

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 as is sent and stored on a secure server. The survey does not ask for any information that would identify who the responses belong to. Therefore, your responses are recorded anonymously. If this research is published, no information that would identify you will be written since your name is in no way linked to your responses.

By filling out this questionnaire and submitting your responses, you are implying that you have read the information in this form and you are implying your voluntary consent to participate in this workplace identity survey.

We recommend that you either copy and paste this paragraph or bookmark this site and keep it for your own records.

This informed consent form was reviewed and approved by the Social Science Institutional Review Board at The Pennsylvania State University on August 27, 2003. It will expire on August 26, 2004.
Appendix D

Demographic Questionnaire

1. How many years have you been with your current organization? ____
2. How many years have you been in your current position? ____
3. 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
4. What area of business are you in?
   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
5. What is your yearly income (just you, not your household)?
   a. Under 15,000
   b. 15,000-25,000
   c. 26,000-50,000
   d. 51,000-75,000
   e. 76,000-100,000
   f. Over 100,000
6. What is your job classification?
   a. Professional-technical
   b. Managerial
   c. Clerical or Sales
   d. Service
   e. Craft or Operative
   f. Agriculture, Fishery, or Forestry
   g. Other
7. The people you work with during a normal workday are:
   a. Almost all men
   b. More men than women
   c. About equal numbers of men and women
   d. More women than men
e. Almost all women
8. Are you in a long-term/committed relationship?
   a. Yes
   b. No
9. If so, for how long? _________
10. What is your age? _________
11. Do you have children at home?
   a. Yes
   b. No
12. What is your 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 or Latino/Latina American
   f. Biracial or Multiracial: please indicate ____________________________
   g. Other: _______________________
13. 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. Doctorate
14. 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. Delware
   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

15. 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. E-mail from friend
c. Advertisement or link on Web
d. Advertisement or link in magazine
Appendix E

Lesbian Identity Questionnaire Revised
(Fassinger, 2001)

Directions: The following items are intended to identify the beliefs and feelings that you have about your identity as a lesbian or bisexual woman NOW. Some of the items may not have ever applied to you, or some may have applied to you in the past, but NOT the present. Please respond to all items and endorse MOST STRONGLY the items that capture your feelings about yourself at the CURRENT time.

For instance, if the question asks if you have RECENTLY noticed being attracted to women, it is assessing whether this is happening to you FOR THE FIRST TIME; but if you first noticed this in yourself many years ago, then you would assign the item a lower score (even if you still notice being attracted to women today) because you are far beyond when this happened to you for the first time.

1. I am getting to know lesbian/gay people for the first time, and it is scary but exciting.
2. My lesbianism is now an integrated part of my social and public life.
3. I am just realizing that I may be interested in dating women.
4. I am beginning to realize from my choices that I am expressing a clear preference for women, rather than men as partners/lovers.
5. Lately, I am constantly aware lately that I have been mistreated because of my lesbianism.
6. I am just noticing that there are lesbians/gays everywhere, and I can often sense who they are.
7. Recently, I have reached the point where I clearly feel more intimate sexually and emotionally with women than men.
8. I am just realizing that heterosexuality is not all there is.
9. I am just now recognizing that the way I feel about women may mean something.
10. I believe there are many heterosexuals who are accepting of lesbians/gays.
11. I am just beginning to think the way I am feeling means that I am in love with a woman.
12. I have recently been undergoing a liberation and getting involved in lesbian culture.
13. I can now, as a lesbian, relate comfortably to both lesbians/gays and nongays.
14. For the first time, it has become very important for me to find and meet lesbian and gay people.
15. I am just realizing for the first time that I feel different from other women.
16. I have just realized recently, that I have been conditioned to view lesbians/gays negatively.
17. I am beginning to notice for the first time that I have a strong desire to touch another woman’s body.
18. Lately, I have become very aware that many heterosexuals don’t even know that lesbians and gays exist.
19. I now recognize clearly that I am a person who has intimate romantic relationships with women.
20. Lately, I find myself withdrawing from the heterosexual world.
21. I am just realizing for the first time that I might be willing to live with a woman lover.
22. I get angry a lot lately at the way heterosexuals talk about and treat lesbians and gays.
23. Now that I am consistently doing what I want to do in terms of love and sex, I feel more integrated as a person.
24. I am just realizing that I feel pulled toward women in ways I don’t understand.
25. I am finally at a point where I feel comfortable with my lesbianism no matter where I am or who I am with.
26. Recently, I have discovered that there may be people out there like me who aren’t trying to live as heterosexuals.
27. I have just become aware for the first time that I have a strong desire to kiss another woman.
28. Lately, I have realized that I probably would not consider men as intimate partners.
29. I can’t even imagine what a roomful of lesbians and gays would be like.
30. I have reached the point where I feel a deep contentment about my love of other women.
31. I am just noticing for the first time that I feel nervous and emotional around women.
32. Lately, I only feel at ease in lesbian/gay surroundings.
33. Recently, I have found myself wondering what it might be like to be romantic with a woman.
34. These days, I mostly rely on my lesbian/gay friends for support, but have some good heterosexual friends as well.
35. I now fully accept my emotional and sexual preference for women.
36. The way I feel recently makes me think for the first time that I might like to be sexual with a woman.
37. I had no idea before now there were lesbian/gay people out there.
38. I have reached the point where I feel deeply fulfilled in my relationships with women.
39. I am just realizing for the first time that I have been duped into believing everyone is heterosexual.
40. I have reached the point where I have successfully incorporated my intimacy with women into my overall identity.
Appendix F

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 G

Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire
(Waldo, 1999)

Below are some questions about your experiences in your workplace. Please try to respond to each item even if you have never told any of your co-workers that you are lesbian, gay, or bisexual.

During the past 24 months in your workplace, have you ever been in a situation where any of your COWORKERS or SUPERVISORS…

0 1 2 3 4
never most of the time

1. Told offensive jokes about lesbians, gay men, or bisexual people (e.g., “fag” or “dyke” jokes, AIDS jokes)?

2. Made homophobic remarks in general (e.g., saying that gay people are sick or unfit to be parents)?

3. Ignored you in the office or in a meeting because you are gay/lesbian/bisexual?

4. Made crude or offensive sexual remarks about you either publicly (e.g., in the office) or to you privately?

5. Made homophobic remarks about you personally (e.g., saying you were abnormal or perverted)?

6. Called you a “dyke,” “faggot,” “fence-sitter” or some similar slur?

7. Avoided touching you (e.g., shaking your hand) because of your sexual orientation?

8. Denied you a promotion, raise, or other career advancement because of your sexual orientation?

9. Made negative remarks based on your sexual orientation about you to other co-workers?

10. Tampered with your materials (e.g., computer files, telephone) because of your sexual orientation?

11. Physically hurt (e.g., punched, hit, kicked, or beat) you because of your sexual orientation?

12. Set you up on a date with a member of the opposite sex when you did not want it?
13. Left you out of social events because of your sexual orientation?

14. Asked you questions about your personal or love life that made you uncomfortable (e.g., why you don’t ever date anyone or come to office social events)?

15. Displayed or distributed homophobic literature or materials in your office (e.g., e-mail, flyers, brochures)?

16. Made you afraid that you would be treated poorly if you discussed your sexual orientation?

17. Implied faster promotions or better treatment if you kept quiet about your sexual orientation?

18. Made you feel it was necessary for you to pretend to be heterosexual in social situations (e.g., bringing an other-sex date to a company social event, going to a heterosexual “strip” bar for business purposes)?

19. Made you feel it was necessary for you to lie about your personal or love life (e.g., saying that you went out on a date with a person of the other sex over the weekend or that you were engaged to be married)?

20. Discouraged your supervisors from promoting you because of your sexual orientation?

21. Made you feel it was necessary for you to “act straight” (e.g., monitor your speech, dress, or mannerisms)?

22. Made you feel as though you had to alter discussions about your personal or love life (e.g., referring to your partner as a “roommate”)?
Appendix H

Organizational Tolerance of Heterosexism Inventory
(Waldo, 1999)

The following stories describe situations involving SUPERVISORS and COWORKERS. Please imagine that these situations have happened WHERE YOU WORK. Then circle the answer that best matches your opinion.

One of the COWORKERS in your department continually makes many negative comments about lesbian, gay and bisexual people and calls them “sinners” and “perverted” in front of them.

1. How RISKY would it be for a lesbian, gay or bisexual person in your department to make a formal complaint about this person?
   A. Extremely risky; she or he would almost certainly create serious problems for herself/himself.
   B. Very risky.
   C. Somewhat risky.
   D. Slightly risky.
   E. No risk; she or he would not create any problems for herself/himself.

2. How LIKELY is it that a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department would be TAKEN SERIOUSLY if she or he filed a complaint about this person?
   A. Almost no chance she or he would be taken seriously.
   B. Little chance.
   C. Some chance.
   D. Good chance.
   E. Very good chance that she or he would be taken seriously.

3. What do you think WOULD BE DONE if a lesbian, gay or bisexual person in your department made a formal complaint about this person?
   A. Probably nothing would be done.
   B. Very little; maybe someone would talk to this person.
   C. The person would be told to stop.
   D. The person would be given a formal warning.
   E. There would be very serious punishment.
A COWORKER in your department repeatedly asks a lesbian, gay or bisexual employee why she or he isn’t married. In addition, the employee has tried to set the employee up on a date with a member of the other sex.

4. How RISKY would it be for a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department to make a formal complaint about this person?
   A. Extremely risky; she or he would almost certainly create serious problems for herself/himself.
   B. Very risky.
   C. Somewhat risky.
   D. Slightly risky.
   E. No risk; she or he would not create any problems for herself/himself.

5. How LIKELY is it that a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department would be TAKEN SERIOUSLY if she or he filed a complaint about this person?
   A. Almost no chance she or he would be taken seriously.
   B. Little chance.
   C. Some chance.
   D. Good chance.
   E. Very good chance that she or he would be taken seriously.

6. What do you think WOULD BE DONE if a lesbian, gay or bisexual person in your department made a formal complaint about this person?
   A. Probably nothing would be done.
   B. Very little; maybe someone would talk to this person.
   C. The person would be told to stop.
   D. The person would be given a formal warning.
   E. There would be very serious punishment.

A SUPERVISOR in your department talks a lot about how he thinks it’s “disgusting that homosexuals are asking for special rights” and that “they should just keep quiet about what they do in their bedrooms.” He generally makes all of the lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees feel disliked and unwanted.

7. How RISKY would it be for a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department to make a formal complaint about this person?
   A. Extremely risky; she or he would almost certainly create serious problems for herself/himself.
   B. Very risky.
   C. Somewhat risky.
   D. Slightly risky.
   E. No risk; she or he would not create any problems for herself/himself.
8. How LIKELY is it that a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department would be TAKEN SERIOUSLY if she or he filed a complaint about this person?
   A. Almost no chance she or he would be taken seriously.
   B. Little chance.
   C. Some chance.
   D. Good chance.
   E. Very good chance that she or he would be taken seriously.

9. What do you think WOULD BE DONE if a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department made a formal complaint about this person?
   A. Probably nothing would be done.
   B. Very little; maybe someone would talk to this person.
   C. The person would be told to stop.
   D. The person would be given a formal warning.
   E. There would be very serious punishment.

   A SUPERVISOR in your department has said several times that lesbian, gay, or bisexual employees should stay quiet about their “personal life” when people who don’t work at the company (e.g., clients, customers) are around.

10. How RISKY would it be for a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department to make a formal complaint about this person?
    A. Extremely risky; she or he would almost certainly create serious problems for herself/himself.
    B. Very risky.
    C. Somewhat risky.
    D. Slightly risky.
    E. No risk; she or he would not create any problems for herself/himself.

11. How LIKELY is it that a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department would be TAKEN SERIOUSLY if she or he filed a complaint about this person?
    A. Almost no chance she or he would be taken seriously.
    B. Little chance.
    C. Some chance.
    D. Good chance.
    E. Very good chance that she or he would be taken seriously.

12. What do you think WOULD BE DONE if a lesbian, gay, or bisexual person in your department made a formal complaint about this person?
    A. Probably nothing would be done.
    B. Very little; maybe someone would talk to this person.
    C. The person would be told to stop.
    D. The person would be given a formal warning.
    E. There would be very serious punishment.
Appendix I

**Internalized Homophobia Scale**
*(Wright, Dye, Jiles, & Marcello, 1999)*

Answer using the scale from 1-5 where 1 indicates “strongly agree” and 5 indicates “strongly disagree.”

1. I have a positive attitude about being (gay/lesbian/bisexual).
2. *I feel uneasy around people who are very open in public about being (gay/lesbian/bisexual).*
3. *I often feel ashamed that I am (gay/lesbian/bisexual).*
4. For the most part, I enjoy being (gay/lesbian/bisexual).
5. *I worry a lot about what others think about my being (gay/lesbian/bisexual).*
6. I feel proud that I am (gay/lesbian/bisexual).
7. *I wish I weren’t attracted to the same sex.*

* = Reverse scored
Appendix J

Media and Web Sources for Recruitment

The Advocate magazine
Allies list-serv – LGBT at Penn State University
Arizona Lesbians list-serv
Arkansas lesbian list-serv
Asian Pacific Islander lesbian/bisexual women list-serv
Bay Windows Forum Message Board – LGB in New England
Blacklines magazine – African American LGB in Chicago area
ChicagoDyke list-serv
Dallas Fort Worth Lesbians list-serv
DykeDiva Message Board
Ebony Lesbian list-serv
En La Vida magazine – Latino/Latina LGB in Chicago area
Equal Rights Nevada list-serv
Film Dykes list-serv
Fine wine lesbians list-serv
Frontage Women list-serv
Gay Colorado list-serv
Gay ElPaso list-serv
Gay Hawaii list-serv
Geekdyke list-serv
Gimpgirl list-serv – lesbians with disabilities
Girlfriends magazine
GLSTN list-serv - Gay, Lesbian Straight Teachers Network
Ivillage.com – Lesbian Life Message Board
Latebloomerz list-serv
Lesbian Health list-serv
Lesbian news list-serv
Lesbian vets list-serv
Lesbian Webring Message Forum
LesbiaNation – General Forum Discussion Board
Lesbians in South Carolina list-serv
LEZBRIAN list-serv - Lesbian and Bisexual Women Library Workers
LGB Caucus at Virginia Tech list-serv
Midwest lesbians list-serv
Minneapolis LGBT list-serv
Mississippi LGBT College Activism list-serv
Never Never Land Message Board – Lesbian chat room and community
Northwestern's GLUU list-serv
OWLS list-serv – Older and Wiser lesbians
Pink Depression – Iowa lesbian list-serv
PlanetOut.com message boards (2) – Employment Non-Discrimination Act & out and work
Polk County Gay and Lesbian Community Message Board
POWR-L list-serv
Rainbowgirlz list-serv
San Diego LGBT list-serv
San Francisco Lesbian/Bi list-serv
Sappho Connection list-serv
Technodyke message board – “Quizzness”
Tennessee Lesbian Social Group Message Board
The Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Alliance of SMSU – Southern Missouri State University
United Gays and Lesbians of Wyoming - Internet Classified Ad
UpStateLesConnect list-serv – Upstate New York Lesbians
VoyForums: The Center’s (Cleveland) LGBT Message Board
Women In Management list-serv
Womyn on Womyn (WOW) list-serv: a Les-Bi-Trans Women’s Group
Zami sister outsider list-serv – Atlanta African-American Lesbians, Bisexual, transgender
Appendix K

Distribution of Data for all Subscales

Figure 1K. Distribution of WHEQ Direct.
Figure 2K. Distribution of WHEQ Indirect.
Figure 3K. Distribution of Internalized Homophobia.
Figure 4K. Distribution of Individual Awareness.
Figure 5K. Distribution of Individual Exploration.
Figure 6K. Distribution of Individual Deepening.
Figure 7K. Distribution of Individual Internalization.
Figure 8K. Distribution of Group Awareness.
Figure 9K. Distribution of Group Exploration.
Figure 10K. Distribution of Group Deepening.
Figure 11K. Distribution of Group Internalization.

Std. Dev = 6.17
Mean = 25.4
N = 398.00
Figure 12K. Distribution of Disclosure.
Figure 13K. Distribution of Organizational Tolerance of Heterosexism.
Appendix L

Receipt of Donation

In recognition of the participants who completed the survey, $200 was donated to the Human Rights Campaign, which lobbies and educates for equal rights for all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.
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Objective: To work as a psychologist embracing social justice, advocacy, and empowerment.

Education: Doctoral Candidate: Counseling Psychology, Expected Graduation: May 2004
The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
Dissertation: Out and About: Predictors of Lesbians’ Outness in the Workplace

Master of Science and Education Specialist: Counseling and Human Systems
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, May 1999
Thesis: Barriers and Coping Strategies in Lesbians' Career Development

Bachelor of Science: Psychology
Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL, April 1997

Related Experience:
September 2003 to present
COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
PENNYSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY University Park, PA
Associate Staff: Co-facilitate group therapy with general therapy graduate group, and provide intakes. Assess clients’ concerns and facilitate appropriate referrals.

September 2003 to present
LGBT MENTOR PROGRAM
PENNYSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY University Park, PA
Program Coordinator: Coordinate grant-funded program that matches LGBT graduate students with other LGBT or questioning students. Interview and assess fit of mentors and mentees with the program. Responsible for training, documents, evaluation, supervision, publications, and marketing. Write grants to fund the program.

August 2002 – August 2003
COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES
PENNYSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY University Park, PA
Psychology Intern: Conduct individual, group, and crisis therapy with students dealing with: anxiety, loss, eating disorders, drug and alcohol dependence, racial issues, sexual assault, sexual abuse, relationships, sexual orientation, suicidal ideation, and mood disorders.

Publications: