

“The Role of LGBT-focused Sport Group Involvement in Reducing Minority Stress”

SCRI Conference 2015

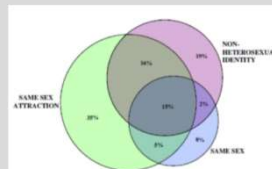
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Minority Stress

- Sexual Minority Status



- Is Sexual Minority Status Stigmatized?
 - threat to gender norms (Bem, 1991)
 - vilified in certain belief systems
 - experienced across the life span

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Minority Stress

- Consequences of stigmatization: *minority stress*
 - » Negative reflected appraisals lead to:
 - Devalued *individual identity*; e.g., internalization of stigma known as *internalized homophobia* (Herek et al., 1997)
 - *Social isolation* (i.e., *anomie*; Durkheim, 1897)
 - In sum – negative *individual identity* and disconnected from larger *social identity*
 - Identity concealment also takes a toll – hypervigilance is psychologically taxing, linked to worse health

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Given the Minority Stress model...

- What could help?
 - » ...to enhance social integration?
 - » ...to enhance identity development?... and create the circumstances to reduce (*stressful*) identity concealment for those with a stigmatized identity?



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Study Description

- **224 participants** took part in a **longitudinal** study of LGBT-focused sport group participation
 - » Recruited primarily from a large Canadian city
 - » Facilitated by Survey Research Centre at UW
 - » Top sports: softball/baseball; curling; soccer; volleyball; bowling; water polo; basketball; ice hockey; rugby; tennis
 - » Average Age: 37, SD = 9.91, min = 20, max = 68
 - » Sex: 60% male, 37% female, 0.6% transgender, 1.6% diverse response (e.g., genderqueer, not defined)
 - » Sexual Orientation Identity: regardless of sex, 62% gay, 27% lesbian, 2% bisexual, remainder unlabeled, other

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Sample of Key Measures –

Predictors

- Ego Involvement Scale (Kyle et al., 2006)
 - 15 items rated from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 4 = *strongly agree*
 - » Yields measures of key needs met in sport group, e.g., *Social Bonding, Identity Expression, Identity Affirmation*

Outcomes

- (also from...) Ego Involvement Scale (Kyle et al., 2006)
 - » Yields measures that reflect commitment to the group, e.g., *Attraction, Centrality...*
- Disclosure of Sexual Minority Identity
 - » mean ratings for disclosure to friends, family, day to day life from 1 = no one knows to 5 = all know, M = 4.32, SD = 0.75

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Sample of Findings

The diagram illustrates the relationship between social and identity needs and sport group attraction/centrality. On the left, two ovals labeled 'Social Bonding' and 'Identity Expression' are connected by a large grey arrow pointing to two ovals on the right labeled 'Sport Group Attraction' and 'Sport Group Centrality'. Below this, a bullet point states: 'Having social and identity needs met, increased importance of sport group in participants' lives'. A second large grey arrow points from an oval labeled 'Identity Affirmation' to a small photograph of a white door.

- Having social and identity needs met, increased importance of sport group in participants' lives

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Summary & Discussion

- Evidence that having social/identity needs met in LGBT-focused sport can help "undo" minority stress process
- Additionally, spillover to everyday life – i.e., disclosure of sexual minority identity
- Challenges notions of "inclusiveness"
- *"Then and Now"*

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