

**‘DARING TO BE OURSELVES’: EXPLORATIONS OF AUTHENTICITY,
COMPASSION, AND DISCRIMINATION FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND
QUEER PEOPLE OF COLOR**

by

Brandon Aundre Valentine

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Psychology)
in The University of Michigan
2015

Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Ramaswami Mahalingam, Chair
Professor Elizabeth R. Cole
Associate Professor Lilia M. Cortina
Professor Fiona Lee

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother, who raised me to be resilient and compassionate, to my partner, who supports and cares for me in all that I do, and to my Black and Brown Queer mentors who continue to inspire and lead me toward new possibilities.

“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.”

—Maya Angelou

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my family for always believing and supporting me in all my endeavors. Without the love and support of my mom and grandparents, I would not be where I am today. I also want to thank my friends who are like family: Courtney, David, Rita, Ali, Jes, Lanice, Verónica, and others who have cared and guided me in more ways than one. Thanks to my partner, Michael, who always gives me endless patience and new perspectives, to my first mentors, Connie Shears and Ron Scott for nurturing my curiosity, and to Terri Conley for expanding my academic horizons. Finally, I also thank Ram Mahalingam for his guidance, compassion, and friendship and my dissertation committee for helping me complete this process.

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I explore psychological authenticity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people of color (LGBQ-PoC) with respect to multiple forms of discrimination and well-being. Authenticity is commonly defined as “the unobstructed operation of one’s true or core self in one’s daily enterprise” (Goldman & Kernis, 2002, pg. 18). Across two quantitative studies I investigated perceived discrimination, LGBQ-PoC microaggression, and workplace heterosexism in connection with authenticity and well-being. In one qualitative study, I further studied the connection between discrimination, authenticity, and well-being through in-depth interviews using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

In Study 1, I consider the connection between discrimination, authenticity, and well-being using a mediational model. Results illustrated that authenticity and discrimination/microaggressions were negatively correlated. Authenticity was negatively correlated with depression and negative affect. Finally, authenticity mediated the relationship between discrimination/microaggressions and well-being.

In Study 2, I analyzed data from Latino/a and White LGBQ individuals separately using a moderated mediation model to test the relationship between workplace heterosexism, authenticity, and well-being (i.e. depression, stress, and mindfulness) with gender as a moderator. Findings indicated that heterosexism is negatively related to authenticity and authenticity is negatively related to depression and stress while being positively related to mindfulness for Latino/a LGBQs only. White LGBQs only showed a negative relationship

between authenticity and depression as well as a positive relationship between authenticity and mindfulness. Authenticity also mediated the relationship between heterosexism and well-being, however this effect was moderated by gender such that it only existed for Latina women.

Finally, in Study 3 I qualitatively explore the importance of authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC. Findings indicated that LGBTQ-PoC experience pressure to conform and being silenced as challenges to their sense of authenticity. Despite these challenges they emphasized the importance of maintaining authentic sense of self. Additionally, their definitions of authenticity challenge common theoretical perspectives, by emphasizing the importance of others for maintaining authenticity. Participants also associated authenticity with compassionate listening and gaining support from others. Taken together, these studies speak to the diverse lived experiences of LGBTQ-PoC and emphasize the importance of authenticity for understanding their experiences with discrimination and well-being.

Keywords: LGBTQ, people of color, authenticity, discrimination, well-being, mindfulness

CHAPTER I

Stress, Resilience, and Identity for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Queer People of Color

Research on the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people of color (LGBQ-PoC) is growing in prominence, however there is still much we need to learn about their lived experience (Huang, Brewster, Moradi, Goodman, Wiseman, & Martin, 2010). While a considerable amount of research in psychology has focused on sexual orientation and race/ethnicity, typically these social identities are studied in isolation. Social identities, refers to the social groups which people belong to. These groups provide individuals with a sense of identity and location within the broader social world. While belonging to various social groups can provide a sense of pride and self-esteem, certain groups (i.e. minority or marginalized) are targeted for discrimination, prejudice, and stereotyping (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Intersectionality theory suggests that the experiences of an individual are formed by the interactions of multiple social identities the individual maintains (Cole, 2009; Mahalingam & Leu, 2005). Additionally, intersectionality highlights the importance of considering the multiple forms of marginality and privilege, which impact individuals specific experiences (Crenshaw, 1995). This perspective provides a framework for studying the unique implications of an individual's social location. Though LGBQ-PoC have written extensively about their own lives, little empirical research has considered the unique perspective of these individuals (Bowleg, 2013; Ferdman, 1999). Instead, the majority of LGBQ research has considered mainly White samples or does not report

racial/ethnic demographics (Bowleg, 2013). The intersectionality perspective helps address this gap by guiding researchers to investigate how multiple social identities (i.e. race, gender, sexual orientation) interact to illuminate our understanding of larger social inequalities (i.e. racism, sexism, heterosexism) (Bowleg, 2013). Thus, the study of LGBTQ-PoC from an intersectional perspective recognizes their lived experiences as racial and sexual minorities without thinking of these identities as solitary constructs. While much research regarding LGBTQ issues focuses on White samples, many researchers have called for investigations of the unique experiences of LGBTQ-PoC (Harper, Jernewall, & Zea, 2004). Furthermore, these researchers argue that when research fails to consider the implications of racial/ethnic identities, it is in fact reinforcing the dominant narrative of White LGBTQs and silencing the voices of people of color (Greene, 2002).

Most of the research that examines the lives of LGBTQ-PoC focuses specifically on issues of stress and resilience in relation to discrimination (Meyer, 2010). Moradi, DeBlaere, & Huang (2010) summarize that this work can be distilled into two primary hypotheses: risk and resilience. The risk hypothesis suggests that LGBTQ-PoC are subject to greater amounts of stress due to the fact that they must contend with both heterosexism and racism (sometimes referred to as double jeopardy). Additionally, they may lack the same level of support as White LGBTQs since some LGBTQ-PoCs experience rejection from their communities of color as well as white LGBTQ communities (Moradi et al., 2010). Alternatively, the resilience hypothesis states that since LGBTQ-PoC experience racism from an early age, they are more prepared for managing the stressors of heterosexism than White LGBTQs when they come out. Thus, this perspective suggests that LGBTQ-PoC are better at coping with the stress of discrimination as compared to their White counterparts (Meyer, 2010). While some researchers refer to these perspectives as

competing, I believe each hypothesis can add to the description of the lived experiences of LGBTQs of color.

The study of social oppression has illustrated that marginalized individuals generally experience considerable mental and physical health disparities due to discrimination. Specifically, health disparities for LGBTQ individuals (Herek & Garnets, 2007; Lewis, 2009; Meyer, 2003) and ethnic minorities (Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000; Williams & Mohammad, 2009) have been well documented. Minority stress theory posits that these health effects are due, in part, to the stress of experiencing discrimination and marginalization (Meyer, 2003). In support of the stress hypothesis, some research has suggested that experiences of discrimination are cumulative, thus creating more stress for those with multiple marginalized identities (Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, & Walters, 2011). In one study researchers found a link between increased psychiatric symptoms and experiences of both racism and heterosexism for black and Latino gay men (Díaz, Ayala, Bein, Henne, & Martin, 2001; Zamboni & Crawford, 2007). Similarly, other research has demonstrated elevated risks of depression and suicidality for LGBTQ-PoC compared to heterosexual PoC (Cochran, Mays, Alegria, Ortega, & Takeuchi) and White LGBTQs (Meyer, Deitrich, & Schwartz, 2008).

However, research from the resilience perspective, has illustrated few differences in health outcomes for White versus ethnic/racial minority LGBTQs. For example, Meyer, Deitrich, & Schwartz, 2008), using the minority stress model, found little difference in negative health effects in LGBTQ-PoC as compared to Whites LGBTQs. While the reason for such findings remains unanswered, resilience has been suggested as a possible explanation (Meyer, 2010). According to the resilience perspective, people of color have considerably more resources, in terms of coping, skills, and networks, for dealing with the stress of discrimination than Whites

(Meyer, 2010). These resources are primarily based on shared experiences in communities of color and the personal development of coping skills necessary to manage stress, thus LGBTQ-PoC may have an advantage over White LGBTQs when it comes to heterosexism. However, this hypothesis does not fit with theories on stress that argue LGBTQs of color are disadvantaged due to their multiple marginalized identities and have less resources for stress management (Meyer, 2010). Thus, while there is still debate regarding stress and resilience for individuals with multiple marginalized identities, the overall negative implications for their lives and well-being merit further investigation.

The resilience perspective provides a different way of looking at the impacts of social oppression for the lives of individuals with multiple marginalized identities. In considering LGBTQ-PoC, for instance, much research has reported various health and social disparities, however, little work has considered how individuals persist through such challenges, develop healthy stable identities, and form supportive community networks. Broadly speaking, it is well known that the lives of this unique population are quite diverse and cover a broad range of experiences. In fact, while it has become common to distill the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people into a single acronym (i.e. LGBTQ), there are distinct nuances to each separate identity (Harper, Jernewall, & Zea, 2004). Similarly, the lives of ethnic/racial minorities are considerably diverse and PoC is used as a method of bringing together these common identities. While there is a wide range of experience present in this population, I am focused on the shared experience of these individuals, specifically the implications of stigma and stress as well as potential sources of resilience, to bring a new perspective to this area of research.

To begin exploring this topic, I designed a brief pilot project for a community sample of African-American/Black Same Gender Loving men. My broad aim in this project was to gain a

better understanding of the implications of minority stress for this group of men as well as a the potential benefits provided by their inclusion in a shared community. In effect, I wanted to explore potential constructs of resilience and growth while recognizing the unique difficulties of their marginalized social status.

Exploratory Project: Authenticity and Compassion in the Adodi Community

Adodi, a community organization for Same Gender Loving (SGL) men of African descent, is a national organization with chapters based in several cities across the United States. SGL is a term coined by Cleo Manago, a social activist for black health and well-being, to describe individuals within the African American community who are attracted to and engage in sexual behavior with those of the same-sex (Same Gender Loving, 2012). While comparable to terms such as gay and lesbian, SGL is different in that it recognizes and highlights the uniqueness of sexual orientation within African-American culture. Broadly speaking, SGL has been adopted as an Afrocentric alternative to these other identities (i.e. gay and lesbian), which frequently reference Eurocentric sexual minority identities. Therefore, SGL culturally affirms African-American/Black homosexual and bisexual individuals through its roots in African-American cultural conception (Parks, 2001).

Broadly defined, Adodi is an organization founded “to create a safe space that is affirming to black men who love black men and whose experiences and voices have been excluded by both mainstream American culture and the African-American community (<https://sites.google.com/site/adodifellowship/>).” Founded in 1986, Adodi takes a spiritual and compassionate approach to creating community and supporting one another. The word Adodi, plural for Ado, comes from the Yoruba language and can be roughly translated to mean a man who loves another man. The overall mission of the organization is to engender empowerment,

self-awareness, and spiritual growth for members through the building of a supportive community (Beasley, 2008).

In the current project, I seek to explore the experiences of discrimination as well as aspects of resilience for members of the Adodi community. Through this exploration, I hope to speak to the broader lived experiences of LGBTQ-PoC individuals and illuminate future directions of research. This project has two specific aims: 1) examine the connection between experiences of discrimination and various well-being outcomes and 2) explore the unique social and cultural dynamics of the Adodi community to identify specific areas of focus in the study of resilience.

Method

I partnered with the local Adodi Detroit chapter to conduct this study and collected data through participant observation and a short paper and pencil survey. Of approximately 50 attendees, 42 completed the survey portion. I also conducted a small debriefing session where participants could ask questions about the research, survey, and general direction of the project.

Participants. Forty-two attendees of the retreat consented to participate in the study with 97.6% identifying as cisgender men and 2.4% as transgender men. Additionally, 83.4% identified as African-American/Black and 14.3% as Multi-racial. Age ranged from 28 to 69 years of age ($M_{age} = 50$) and income ranged from \$8,000 to \$201,496 ($M_{income} = \$58,102$). Levels of formal education were fairly high with 53% having completed college or attained a higher degree. Considering sexual orientation identity, 26.2% identified as Gay, 64.3% as Same Gender Loving, and 9.5% declined to specify. Additionally, 73.8% indicated that they only engaged in sex with other men and 26.2% indicated they engaged in sex with both men and women. Participants identified as Christian (45.2%), spiritual (21.4%), Atheist (11.9%), Buddhist (4.8%) Unitarian Universalist (4.8%), and Yoruba (2.4%).

Procedures and measures. The university Institutional Review Board and the Adodi retreat organization committee approved all measures and procedures. Observational data were gathered in March of 2013 during the one and a half day retreat. Survey data were gathered during an afternoon session on the first day of the retreat. I selected several measures to gauge psychological well-being in the areas of stress, depression, emotional regulation, and mindfulness. Inclusion of these measures is meant to provide a range of constructs for considering overall well-being for men in this community. I also assessed experiences of racism and heterosexism. The measure of racism covers experiences in more general contexts, while the heterosexism measure is specific to a workplace context. The purpose of covering both general and specific contextual experiences is to gain a broader perspective of the implications of discrimination for the lives of these men.

Perceived discrimination. The Everyday of Discrimination scale (9 items; EOD; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997) was used to measure daily experiences of racial discrimination. Sample items include: “You are treated with less courtesy than other people” and “You are threatened or harassed.” Participants indicated how often they had experienced these instances due to their perceived race/ethnicity, using a 7-point scale (1 = *Never* and 7 = *Daily*). Cronbach’s alpha was .90.

Workplace heterosexism. The Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ; Waldo, 1999) was used to assess experiences of heterosexism within the workplace. Sample items include, “During the past year, has a coworker or supervisor told offensive jokes about lesbian, gay men, or bisexual people?” and “During the past year, has a coworker or supervisor made you afraid that you would be treated poorly if you were open about your sexual orientation?” Participants were asked to rate how often they had experienced these events within

the past year using a 5-point scale (0 = *never* to 4 = *most of the time*). Cronbach's alpha was .75.

Depression. The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (20 items; CES-D; Radloff, 1977) was used to assess depressive symptoms. Sample items include: "I was bothered by things that usually do not bother me" and "I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor." Participants indicated how often they had specific feelings or engaged in certain behaviors over the past week, using a 5-point scale (1 = *Never* and 5 = *Most of all of the time*). Cronbach's alpha was .82.

Stress. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) was used to measure individual differences in stress. Sample items include "In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?" and "In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control important things in your life?" Participants rated how often they experienced ten situations within the past month using a 5-point scale (0 = *never* to 4 = *very often*). Cronbach's alpha was .83.

Emotional regulation. The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross & John, 2003) was used to assess individual differences in the use of two forms of emotional regulation (cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression). Cognitive reappraisal is a coping strategy whereby individuals actively reinterpret difficult stimuli to produce less negative emotional reactions. Sample cognitive reappraisal items include: "When I want to feel more positive emotions (such as joy or amusement), I change what I'm thinking about" and "When I'm faced with a stressful situation, I make myself think about it in a way that helps me stay calm." Cronbach's alpha for cognitive reappraisal was .77. Expressive suppression, another coping strategy, is used to redirect attention in an attempt to modify emotional states. Sample items for

expressive suppression include: “I keep my emotions to myself” and “I control my emotions by not expressing them.” Cronbach’s alpha for expressive suppression was .70. In general reappraisal is considered to be a helpful method of emotional regulation, while suppression is thought to be maladaptive. Participants rated their agreement to each statement on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 7 = *Strongly agree*).

Mindfulness. The Mindful Mindset Scale (MMSS; Mahalingam, 2011) was used to assess individual differences in mindfulness. Sample items include: “I feel happy when good things happen to friends even when they do not deserve them” and “I strive to be compassionate to the sufferings of those who are not related to me.” Participants rated agreement to each statement using a 5-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*). Cronbach’s alpha was .77.

Observation. I also gathered observational data to explore areas of resilience within the Adodi community. To conduct these observations I was trained by my advisor, who provided tips for taking field notes as well as a general overview of what to focus on during the retreat. I received a full overview of the organization and the retreat plan from the head of the Retreat Planning Committee, who was my primary contact within the organization. The retreat was divided into several small workshops, each of which was lead by a different Adodi member. Generally, sessions focused on community building, personal reflection, and exploration of shared experiences. The general theme of the event was one of community, support, and affirmation. One period (approximately 1 hour) was allocated for me to collect survey data and administer a project debriefing.

Researcher participation. The organizers requested that I serve as more than an observer and actually participate in the full range of activities as a way to help build trust with the

community. I was only able to attend and participate in this retreat because of my own social identities. As a gay identified black man, Adodi members considered me one of their brothers and treated me with the same warmth and acceptance as a long-term member. Participating as a community member allowed me to gain deeper insight into the relationships and culture of the community much more than simple observation would have allowed. Prior to attending the retreat, I was unfamiliar with the organization and any of its members. In developing the study, however, I met with two Adodi members a few months in advance to learn more about the organization and collaborate on the specifics of the investigation. Both of these Adodi members helped inform me about the specifics of the community, retreat day, and the overall organizational culture. Since I was participating in activities throughout the day, I was not always able to take notes as the events transpired. Thus, I typically took time during session breaks to write down notes about my observations and experiences. Furthermore, after the entire day of events, I took time to reflect on my own experience and wrote down my general perceptions and experiences. Taken together, I draw on my direct observations as well as personal experiences during the retreat day as qualitative data.

Results and Discussion

Survey. I used simple bivariate correlations to explore relationships between the survey constructs. Table II.1 shows full correlational data as well as means and standard deviations for all demographics and measures. In general, participants with higher education earn more money. Age and perceived discrimination are negatively correlated, suggesting that younger participants rate higher on discrimination. Perceived discrimination is also positively correlated with depression and stress. Additionally, workplace heterosexism is positively correlated with

depression. Finally, mindful mindset is negatively correlated with workplace heterosexism, perceived stress, and positively correlated with emotional reappraisal.

The survey results from this brief investigation, while limited, do suggest interesting relationships between several key constructs. First, as suggested in minority stress literature, discrimination does appear to be negatively associated with various aspects of well-being (Meyer, 2003). With this sample, I found that both experiences of racism and heterosexism negatively related to depression and stress. While these results do not imply causation, they do provide further support for the notion that discrimination can have deleterious effects on the health and well-being of LGBQ-PoC. As previously mentioned, the relationship between discrimination and health is well document in minority stress literature, however there is less work considering this relationship for LGBQ-PoC. Thus, the work presented here is a brief foray into exploring the impact of discrimination for individuals with multiple marginalized identities.

I also found intersecting relationships between mindfulness, measures of well-being, and discrimination. Mindfulness was positively related to emotional reappraisal and negatively related to stress. Again, while this result is not causal, previous research has illustrated the benefits of mindfulness in terms of stress reduction (Williams, Kolar, Reger, & Pearson, 2001), developing coping skills (Arch & Craske, 2006), and improvements in overall health and well-being (Bishop et al., 2004; Brown, Ryan, & Creswell, 2007). These results support previous work and also help expand it to include experiences of LGBQ-PoC. We also found that mindfulness was negatively related to workplace heterosexism, which is a fairly novel finding. While research investigating the relationship between mindfulness and discrimination is limited, theoretically mindfulness is considered to be a possible method of managing the stress of discrimination. Mindfulness has been found to improve the ability of individuals to regulate

negative emotions (Coffey, Hartman, & Fredrickson, 2010), mentally compartmentalize negative experiences from sense of self-worth (Brown et al., 2007), and discourage emotional reactivity, thus leading to more objective and deliberate responses to negative situations (Barnes, Brown, Krusemark, Campbell, & Rogge, 2007). Some research has supported this hypothesis, showing that mindfulness moderates the relationship between discrimination and depressive symptoms, such that those with higher level so of mindfulness have less depression when confronted with discrimination (Brown-Iannuzzi, Adair, Payne, Richman, & Fredrickson, 2013). Thus, the relationships between mindfulness, discrimination, and well-being I present here could be further evidence to support the beneficial properties of mindfulness for minority individuals.

Observations. Three primary themes emerged from my participation and observation of the retreat: 1) *Importance of spirituality*, 2) *Compassionate community*, and 3) *Embracing true self*. These themes are explored in more detail below.

Importance of spirituality. Spirituality was one of the most defining features of this community and was present in many activities throughout the retreat. Participants identified with a wide range of religious/spiritual traditions and spoke frequently about the importance of these identities. Even those individuals who identified as atheist or non-religious still participated in activities that were aimed at evoking spiritual or religious significance. For example, the retreat was opened with the ceremonial pouring of libations, a common practice in many indigenous cultures meant pay homage to the dead, specifically ancestors, through the pouring of purified water on the ground. In African traditions, specifically Yoruba, the ceremony not only pays respect to the ancestors but also welcomes them into the space to become participants in the public functions. During the Adodi libations ceremony, water was poured from a large glass vase into a bowl set on the floor. As the water was slowly poured, participants around the room spoke

the names of people they wanted to welcome into the space. This ceremony set the tone for the rest of the retreat and served as powerful reminder of the strength of the Adodi community. The ceremony was quite emotional at times, as several men spoke the names of those who were lost to HIV/AIDS or violence. As the men invoked their ancestors, loved ones, and mentors, they not only reinforced their connection to these individuals, but also their connection to the larger Adodi community.

Compassionate community. Compassion was another strong theme which emerged throughout the retreat. Adodi brothers greeted each other quite warmly usually giving one another long hugs or kisses on the cheek. While the majority of the men were from the local area, there was also a sizable contingent from other parts of the country, thus many of the participants hadn't seen each in a while and there were many joyful and emotional reunions. During one of the first workshops, participants paired up to practice active listening. During a brief time, participants were given the chance to talk about themselves and their partner would sit and listen intently without responding or asking questions. At the end, the listener would summarize what they heard and give their own insight and ask deeper questions. In general, responses to this activity revealed that being listened to in such an active way was a relatively novel experience for many of the men. While many expressed how uncomfortable it felt to be the target of such focused attention, they eventually felt a sense of care from the listener. For many of these men, being able to freely express their thoughts and have an active listener was cathartic and allowed them to express pent up ideas and emotions.

The importance of compassion was evident throughout the retreat and many participants spoke at length about the importance of the Adodi community for their own continued health and well-being. Most of the men spoke openly about various forms of trauma and how being a part of

Adodi helped them cope and process the long-term effects of these experiences. Discussions of these traumas reflect the overarching principles of Adodi, which emphasizes the importance of compassion to encourage self-awareness and empowerment. These principles were evident throughout the day in the ways that people communicated, cared, and connected with each other.

Embracing true self. Much of the retreat focused on aspects of self-perception and self-acceptance. Primarily these sessions were aimed at fostering dialogue about the impact of negative self-perceptions and how to shift these perceptions to develop more accurate and healthy self-concepts. For example, in one workshop called Mirror, Mirror, participants were asked to stand in a circle around one person and act as their “mirror”. With their eyes closed, the person in the center would say “mirror, mirror, on the wall...” and one at a time, the other men in the circle would tell him what they saw (e.g. “you have beautiful skin”). More than making simple observations, the purpose of this activity was to provide everyone with a new perspective and highlight aspects of beauty, strength, and uniqueness. The activity was very personal and many participants were brought to tears. During a discussion following the activity, many spoke of their own habits of self-doubt or their tendency to focus on negative aspects of themselves. In their experience, the activity helped them see more positive aspects of themselves and distilled them with a sense of self-confidence

During another workshop, participants got into groups to dialogue about issues of black masculinity and gay/SGL identity. Additionally, they used magazine clippings and other imagery to illustrate their perceptions of beauty, masculinity, and gay/SGL identity. Most of the men in the group I participated in discussed their issues with the negative or skewed portrayals of black men (gay and straight) in popular media. These portrayals, they suggested, contributed to unrealistic expectations about their own masculinity, body shape and size, and sexual desire. In

talking openly about these representations of sexuality and gender, the men were able to process their expectations of their own social identities.

While Adodi primarily functions as a social community organization, in general the principles of the organization highlight the lesson that was communicated in these activities. There was a strong emphasis on the development of self-awareness and sincere communication in several aspects of the retreat. In the end, it was clear that the aim of the retreat, and in fact the organization as a whole, was to foster personal growth and a deeper understanding of self for all men involved.

Outline for Dissertation Research

Stemming from my involvement with Adodi, I have developed an interest in understanding the impacts of discrimination and factors of resilience for individuals who occupy marginalized racial and sexual orientation identities. While the Adodi project was specifically concerned with African-American gay/SGL men, my subsequent work focuses more broadly on the lived experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people of color (LGBQ-PoC). While LGBQ represents four separate sexual orientation identities, each with their own unique trajectories, I focus on their experience as a group to highlight their shared experience; specifically social oppression. Similarly, while PoC is a broad term encompassing many marginalized racial/ethnic identities, the shared experience of social oppression for non-white individuals, is of considerable importance. Together, the experiences of LGBQ-PoC individuals within the US represent a very unique perspective that has often been overlooked in psychological research.

In the research presented here, I specifically focus on LGBTQ-PoC considering the importance of authenticity for their lives and experiences of well-being. Additionally, I investigate how individuals find meaning in compassion and use it in response to discrimination. Finally, I consider the relationships between authenticity, compassion, and experiences of discrimination in both general and work/organization level contexts. My exploration of these issues draws on intersectionality to fully engage with the multidimensional nature of LGBTQ-PoC experience and identity. I have used a mixed methods approach to studying this topic and will present research from both quantitative survey and qualitative interviews to discuss the unique perspectives of these individuals.

In Chapter II, I present research from a survey of LGBTQ-PoC that explores the connection between authenticity, discrimination and microaggressions, and psychological well-being. This chapter provides a basis for understanding how authenticity is important for both discriminatory experiences and well-being in general for this population. My findings replicate previous research, suggesting a positive link between authenticity and well-being as well as a negative link between discrimination/microaggressions and authenticity. However, I also extend the literature to illustrate that authenticity mediates the relationship between discrimination/microaggressions and well-being, thus providing further insight into the mechanisms for the impact of these constructs on LGBTQ-PoC lives.

In Chapter III, I explore a similar question but specifically in workplace/organizational contexts. Again, I used survey data to explore the connections between workplace heterosexism, authenticity, and well-being for White and LGBTQs of color. Additionally, I consider the importance of gender in moderating the effects of these various relationships. Through separate analysis of the White and Latino/a samples, the results suggest that authenticity is positively

linked to well-being for all participants. However, workplace heterosexism was negatively related to authenticity for Latino/as only. Furthermore, authenticity only showed a mediating effect between workplace heterosexism and well-being for Latina women. This suggests that for LGBQ Latina women, authenticity operates as an underlying mechanism in the relationship between workplace heterosexism and well-being.

Finally, in Chapter IV, I explore issues of compassion, authenticity, and discrimination for LGBQ-PoC through qualitative interviews. I explored three primary issues in this study: (1) how participants define and make meaning of authenticity and compassion for their lives, (2) how authenticity and compassion are both impacted by discrimination and used to work through issues of discrimination, and (3) how authenticity and compassion operate in organizational contexts. Across 14 interviews, I describe several important themes that illustrate the importance of relating to others, compassion as action, and using authenticity to navigate social situations, specifically issues of discrimination.

Across these three studies, I explore and describe the lived experiences of LGBQ-PoC in several unique ways. This research brings much needed attention to this population and emphasizes the importance of considering these psychological constructs from the perspective of these individuals. Furthermore, this work will help add to the expanding literature considering authenticity and compassion as critical aspects of human experience.

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Table I. 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Bivariate Correlations for Adodi Survey Measures

	Mean	SD	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1) Age	49.59	9.91	-0.01	0.18	-0.09	0.05	0.16	0.12	0.17	-0.36*	-0.21	-0.26	-0.22	0.06	-0.19	0.29
2) Gender	1.02	0.15	1	0.45**	0.09	0.23	-0.09	0.19	0.13	0.33*	0.19	0.12	-0.02	0.12	-0.01	-0.17
3) Race	2.24	2.79		1	0.03	0.21	-0.13	0.06	-0.03	-0.04	0.06	-0.14	-0.13	0.25	-0.18	0.16
4) Religion	4.74	2.46			1	-0.042	-0.11	0.18	0.02	0.28	-0.08	0.04	0.05	0.22	-0.10	0.08
5) Sexual Orientation	4.12	1.95				1	0.13	0.12	0.26	-0.05	-0.25	-0.01	-0.30	0.01	-0.01	0.18
6) Sexual Partner Gender	1.52	0.89					1	0.18	0.38*	-0.24	0.02	0.05	-0.07	-0.19	0.13	0.07
7) Income	58102.82	39998.77						1	0.59**	0.08	0.14	-0.10	-0.27	0.01	-0.15	0.25
8) Education	6.34	2.12							1	0.02	0.09	0.02	-0.16	0.17	-0.12	0.18
9) Perceived Discrimination	2.41	0.94								1	0.44**	0.55**	0.32*	0.06	-0.10	-0.30
10) Workplace Heterosexism	1.33	0.37									1	0.39*	0.30	0.14	0.19	-0.40*
11) Depression	2.40	0.40										1	0.46**	0.00	0.00	-0.34*
12) Perceived Stress	3.28	0.52											1	-0.16	-0.12	-0.36*
13) Emotional Reappraisal	5.65	0.94												1	0.06	0.46**
14) Emotional Suppression	3.36	1.23													1	-0.22
15) Mindful Mindset	3.96	0.44														1

Note. * $p < 0.05$ & ** $p < 0.01$

CHAPTER II

Self-Presentation or Self-Preservation: Exploring Psychological Authenticity, Discrimination, and Well-Being for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Queer People of Color

While the concept of authenticity is discussed in various ways across disciplines of study (Vannini & Franzese, 2008) the importance of authenticity for health, well-being, and the recognition of “true-self”, are widely known in psychology (Harter, 2002). At its core, psychological authenticity refers to the ability of individuals to align their behavior with internal values, thoughts, and beliefs (Harter, 2002). Theoretically, authenticity is often linked with similar constructs such as “sincerity, truthfulness, and originality” (Vannini & Franzese, 2008, p. 1621). However, Erickson (1994) claims that authenticity represents something much deeper: the ability to fulfill one’s personal expectations to oneself. While partially shaped by our interactions with others, authenticity is primarily self-referential; we derive a sense of authenticity by aligning our sense of self with our behavior (Erickson, 1994). This alignment between sense of self and behavior is achieved through a self-regulatory process, whereby individuals must behave in ways that reflect their internal expectations and needs while avoiding acting only to meet the expectations of others (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008). Therefore the maintenance of psychological authenticity is quite crucial to one’s well-being and accurate sense of self (Deci & Ryan, 1995).

Stigma theory suggests that the stigma experienced by certain social groups—derived from cultural perceptions and morals—leads to issues of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination of these groups (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998). Since some social groups are socially valued more than others, authenticity may be especially important for deciphering the psychological impacts of stigma and lived experiences of marginalized individuals. The discrimination that arises from this stigma process has considerable implications for the health and well-being of minority individuals (Herek & Garnets, 2007; Lewis, 2009; Meyer, 2003). Minority stress, a unique form of stress experienced by minority individuals as a result of stigma, has been shown to have considerable negative implications for the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ) individuals (Meyer, 2003). In general, there is a lack of research considering the implications of minority stress for LGBQ people of color (LGBQ-PoC), however, some research has suggested that minority stress is cumulative suggesting that LGBQ-PoC experience more stress due to experiences of both racism and heterosexism (e.g. Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, & Walters, 2011). In contrast, other work has suggested that LGBQ-PoC actually experience less stress due to heightened resilience developed through early and consistent exposure to racism (Meyer, 2010; Meyer, Deitrich, & Schwartz, 2008).

While, the importance of authenticity for psychological well-being has been considered in many contexts, there is also an overall lack of research considering its importance for minority individuals. Though not explicit, some research has suggested that authenticity is closely connected to well-being for LGBQs through the study of identity disclosure. For example sexual orientation identity disclosure has been found to enhanced self-esteem, openness, and self-expression (Herek, Chopp, & Strohl, 2007). Similarly, self-expression and appearance management of sexual orientation identity has been linked with a greater sense of authenticity for

LGBQ individuals (Hutson, 2010). Although discrimination and authenticity have profound implications for the lives LGBQ individuals, little work has considered how they are related or influence each other.

While the life experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals vary widely, LGBT has commonly been used as an acronym to represent a group of people who experience similar forms of marginalization and social oppression. By referencing LGBT, we recognize the fact that the lived experiences of these people are closely related to their sexual orientation identity and larger social issues pertaining to their same-gender attractions, behavior, and relationships (Harper, Jernewall, & Zea, 2004). While transgender individuals are commonly subsumed into the larger LGBT acronym, acknowledging their shared experience as sexual minorities, there are unique dimensions of transgender experience, which drastically differentiate their experience from LGBQ individuals (Fassinger & Arseneau, 2007). Therefore, while we recognize the importance of investigating the lived experiences of transgender people, considering the broad range of gender identity is beyond the scope of the current investigation. In this paper, we use the term LGBQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer) to specifically reference the experiences of sexual orientation identity. Furthermore, we focus on people of color within the broader LGBQ community, who have often been overlooked or excluded from empirical investigations that consider sexual minority experience.

Boehmer (2002) found in a review of 3,777 LGBT public health articles, approximately 85% failed to report information regarding race/ethnicity. The interaction of sexual orientation and other social identities (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, class) has been shown to have different implications for individuals based on the composition of their oppressed and privileged identities (Croteau, Talbot, Lance, & Evans, 2002). Although there has been considerable interest in the

health and well-being of LGBQ individuals, the lack of research considering the specific perspectives of LGBQ-PoC represents a considerable gap in the literature. The current project incorporates several lines of research to address these gaps and explore the relationship between authenticity and discrimination in connection with well-being for LGBQ-PoC.

Background

On a basic level, psychological authenticity involves a general understanding of one's personal experiences, values and beliefs. Several perspectives have expanded on this basic definition and speak to multiple ways of conceptualizing authenticity. Goldman and Kernis (2002) define authenticity as "the unobstructed operation of one's true, or core, self in one's daily enterprise" (p. 18). Here, the importance is placed squarely on maintaining an accurate understanding of one's inner nature and being able to express this nature without resistance. Derived from a conceptual understanding of the philosophical study of authenticity, Goldman & Kernis (2002) further break this definition down into four distinct yet interlocking constructs: *awareness*, *unbiased processing*, *behaviors*, and *relational orientation*. *Awareness* is generally understood as self-knowledge and trust in one's motives, desires, and feelings. It incorporates personal recognition of emotions, strengths, and weaknesses as well as recognition of one's multifaceted and potentially contradictory nature. *Unbiased processing*, is concerned with objective understandings of information relevant to the self. Those with high levels of unbiased processing do not deny or ignore information about their own strengths and weaknesses. *Behaviors* are described as how individuals act in ways that fall in line with their own core values and beliefs. Finally, *relational orientation* refers to the extent to which individuals want others, particularly those they are close to, to see their true un-obstructed self (Goldman & Kernis, 2002).

Many researchers have taken a person-centered approach to the study of authenticity providing deeper perspective on the interaction between internal psychological processes and social context (e.g. Wood, et al., 2008; Wyatt, 2001). Barrett-Lennard (1998) defines a three part model whereby congruence between “1) a person’s primary experience, 2) their symbolized awareness, and 3) their outward behavior and communication” (p. 82) gives rise to three aspects of authenticity. These three aspects (*self-alienation*, *authentic living*, and *accepting external influence*) have been used to derive a self-report measure for assessing authenticity (Wood, et al., 2008). The first aspect, *self-alienation*, involves the inevitable incongruence between conscious awareness and real life experience. Second, *authentic living*, describes how individuals can behave in ways that are in line with their own awareness of their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. Finally, *accepting external influence* specifies those situations when individuals regulate their behaviors in accordance with the desires of an external party (Wood, et al. 2008). While the person-centered definition is not the only perspective used to understand authenticity, it provides a very comprehensive explanation and a distinct method for to exploring authenticity within diverse social contexts.

Authenticity has been the focus of much theory regarding its connection to psychological health and well-being (Rogers, 1964, 1980; Yalom, 1980). Early conceptualizations suggest that authenticity is achieved through satisfying higher order psychological needs (Maslow, 1968). Fulfilling these needs, allows individuals to explore higher order needs such as self-growth, inner nature, and authenticity. Likewise, Rogers (1961) claims that authenticity results from the congruence between self-perception and actual experience (or behavior) and problems arise when incongruence is experienced in this area. When self-perception and experience are

mismatched, the resulting incongruence contributes to a diminished experience of psychological well-being and potential psychopathology (Rogers, 1961).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) has been used to explain the importance of self-regulation for achieving authenticity as well as its connection to well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1995, 2000). From this perspective, individuals have three core needs: 1) *competence*, the need to be effective in dealing with one's environment, 2) *relatedness*, the need to have close relationships, and 3) *autonomy*, the need to control the course of one's life (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). SDT suggests that individuals have an inherent drive to self-growth and mastery of these needs, leading to the experience of authenticity (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Here, self-regulation is described as a method used to satisfy these psychological needs (i.e. competence, relatedness, and autonomy) (Goldman & Kernis, 2002). Research suggests that utilizing self-regulation to maintain congruence between one's actions and core sense of self is vital to one's sense of authenticity. For example, one study found that students who connected their sense of self with academic goals and achievements experienced a greater sense of authenticity (Goldman & Kernis, 2002). Participants here used self-regulation to match their internal desires for academic success to direct their behavior and experience satisfaction. In another study on personality congruence, researchers found that striving to achieve intrinsic goals leads to greater well-being as compared to those who used extrinsic goals (e.g. Sheldon & Kasser, 1995). In general, this suggests that engaging in activities for internal desires and needs is more beneficial and may lead to greater authenticity and well-being.

Authenticity and Identity Disclosure

When considering the importance of authenticity for sexual minority individuals, we must turn to research, which explores the process of identity disclosure. Sexual orientation has

often been described as an invisible social identity, as compared to more visible identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, and age (Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005). Here, invisible references the necessity for LGBTQ individuals to disclose their sexual orientation or to keep it concealed for issues of safety or to avoid discrimination. For LGBTQ individuals, management of their sexual orientation identity is a prominent and stressful issue (Clair et al., 2005; Crawford, 1996; McLaughlin, Bell, & Stringer, 2004). While, public attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals have improved in the past few decades, these individuals continue to experience issues of discrimination and rejection quite frequently (Badgett, Lau, Sears, & Ho, 2007; Herek, 2009). Many LGBTQ's may attempt to conceal their sexual orientation identity to avoid discrimination (Herek, Chopp, & Strohl, 2007). While this strategy may help reduce the negative outcomes of discrimination, for LGBTQ's concealing a part of themselves may impede their overall sense of authenticity as well as lead to considerable negative health implications (Creed & Scully, 2000; Reimann, 2001; Sabat, Lindsey, & King, 2014). Feelings of inauthenticity may arise due to the stress of concealment and the resulting incongruence between internal feelings and external presentation (Clair, et al., 2005; Goffman, 1963). Smart and Wegner (2000) suggest that, "concealing a stigma leads to an inner turmoil that is remarkable for its intensity and its capacity for absorbing an individuals mental life" (p.221).

Researchers have also theorized that for LGBTQ-PoC, coming out may be a more stressful decision (Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller, 2003). These individuals may in fact consider concealing their sexual orientation identity more so than White LGBTQs for fear that coming out would make them susceptible to even more discrimination (Kanter, 1977). Some research has supported this theory, indicating that compared to their White counterparts, LGBTQ-PoC are less likely to come out at in the workplace (Ragins, et al., 2003). Additionally, other research has found that

experiences of heterosexism within racial minority communities are related to LGBTQ-PoC coming out later than White LGBTQs (Grove, Bimbi, Parsons, Nanín, 2006; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2004). While these findings are limited, the importance of considering identity disclosure and management for LGBTQ-PoC is evident and may be connected with issues of authenticity and discrimination.

Hutson (2010) found in a qualitative analysis, that using appearance (e.g. clothing and style) to publicly disclose identity provides LGBTQ individuals with feelings of freedom and greater authenticity. Stone (1970) indicated that appearance is a form of social transaction used to help individuals identify one another nonverbally. Given the relative invisibility of sexual orientation as an identity, it is easy to see how appearance would be crucial to not only developing a stable LGBTQ identity but also for communicating that identity to others. Social interactionist theorists have suggested that this method of nonverbal communication is closely linked to personal experiences of self and identity (Hutson, 2010; Millard, 2009; Waskul, 2002). Much research has suggested that individuals draw meaning about their identities by managing appearance (e.g. Edgley, 2006; Glassner, 1989; Millard, 2009; Vannini & McCright, 2004). Thus, while authenticity and sexual orientation identity disclosure are not synonymous, the importance of disclosure for LGBTQ's overall health and sense of psychological authenticity cannot be ignored. In fact, when we consider the strategies that seek to forcibly conceal sexual orientation, the importance of authenticity becomes even more evident.

Research on sexual orientation change efforts (SOCE) has also highlighted the importance of authenticity for LGBTQ individuals. SOCE are programs that try to influence LGBTQ individuals into changing their sexual orientation identities (Fjelstrom, 2013). Medical and psychological establishments have overwhelmingly denounced such programs, and much

research has shown that SOCEs are ineffective and considerably harmful (Morrow & Beckstead, 2004; Shidlo & Schroeder, 2002). This research has indicated that the environment created in these spaces is highly negative of LGBQ identity and for many individuals produces significant experiences of stress and cognitive dissonance between their inner feelings and external representations of their identity (Rodriguez, 2010; Cole, 2006). Fjelstrom (2013) in particular indicated that participants of SOCE experiences significant feelings of inauthenticity. Additionally, individuals who have left such programs claim that declaring their LGBQ identity afterwards is an intense experience of freedom and authentic acceptance (Fjelstrom, 2013).

However, coming out and expressing marginalized sexual orientation identities may also places LGBQ individuals at greater risk for discrimination (Hutson, 2010). There is are clear health disparities for LGBQ individuals, who are more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and other psychological disorders as compared to heterosexuals (Cochran, 2001). Minority stress theory suggests that marginalized individuals experience unique stressors that can lead to such health disparities (Meyer, 2003). These stressors can appear in many forms including major discriminatory events and smaller issues of bias such as microaggressions, which are defined as daily discriminatory events faced by marginalized individuals that can be verbal or nonverbal, intentional or unintentional, as well as social or environmental (Sue et al., 2007). While it is common for such events to be perceived by the perpetrator as innocuous or harmless (e.g. Sue, Nadal, Capodilupo, Lin, Torino, & Rivera, 2008), research suggests that there are significant negative health implications for the targets of microaggressions (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007).

Minority stress for LGBQ-PoC. Some have suggested that minority stress is cumulative, indicating that individuals with multiple marginalized identities (i.e. LGBQ-PoC) experience significant stressors at a much greater rate than those who only occupy one of these social identities

(Balsam, et al., 2011). Some studies have shown that LGBTQ-PoC often report facing racism and exclusion within LGBTQ spaces, such as being refused entry into bars or being provided poorer service (Han, 2007; Kudler, 2007). Additionally, on many gay dating websites, white gay men commonly state racial preferences for partners, which is often perceived by LGBTQ-PoCs as a practice of exclusion and rejection (Phua & Kaufmann, 2003; Plummer, 2008). While stated as simple preferences, such instances actually highlight the racial divide within LGBTQ communities and speak clearly to the prevalence of racism. As Cohen (1997) suggests, while the ideals of LGBTQ communities are often perceived as radical, progressive, and inclusive of diverse individuals, in actuality the experiences of non-white LGBTQ's are often highlighted by racial oppression. Similarly, research has also highlighted the prevalence of heterosexism within racial/ethnic minority communities. For instance, some research has suggested that African American communities often perpetuate heterosexist attitudes (Mays, Cochran, & Rhue, 1993; Malebranche, Fields, Bryant, & Harper, 2009). These findings, generally support the notion that LGBTQ-PoC experience more discrimination and subsequent stress than their White counterparts, however there are contradictory findings (Swank, Fahs, & Frost, 2013).

Other research has illustrated that little to no differences in terms of experiences of discrimination between White and LGBTQ-PoCs. Ragins and colleagues (2003) found that lesbians and gay individuals of color in the workplace did not report more heterosexism than White LGBTQs. Similarly, Meyer, Dietrich, & Schwartz (2008), have illustrated no differences in negative health effects between White and LGBTQs of color. While there is no clear consensus on LGBTQ-PoC experiences of discrimination as compared to White LGBTQs, there is considerable evidence to support the notion that they maintain greater difficulty in terms of identity disclosure. This could indicate that authenticity differs between these two groups and may be influenced to some degree by

discrimination for LGBTQs of color.

Aims and Hypotheses

Our overall aim in this study is to explore the relationships between discrimination, authenticity, and well-being. Based on our understanding of self-disclosure as an important and stressful process of LGBTQ-PoC and the prominent role perceived discrimination can play in outness, we predict that both perceived racial discrimination and LGBTQ-PoC experiences of microaggressions will be negatively related to authenticity (*H1*). Second, as previous research has suggested, authenticity is critical to psychological well-being, thus, we predict that authenticity will be positively related to positive affect and negatively related to depression and negative affect (*H2*). Third, since previous work has shown the stress of discrimination is linked with decreased well-being, we predict that discrimination and microaggressions will be positively related to depression and negative affect and negatively related to positive affect (*H3*). Finally, given that authenticity is crucial for well-being and is potentially influenced by the stress of discrimination for LGBTQ-PoC we hypothesize there will be an indirect effect of discrimination/microaggressions on well-being through authenticity (*H4*).

Method

Participants and Procedures

Participants were recruited online through various websites including Facebook, Craigslist, and via emails to LGBTQ listservs around the country. They completed the study online using Qualtrics, an online program designed for survey data collection. The recruitment message asked participants “to participate in a simple survey about their experiences in the LGBTQ community”. Participants were informed that the survey would take approximately 30 minutes and they would be provided with a \$5 online gift card for participation. All participants were provided with a brief summary of procedures, length of the study, and informed consent

before they began the survey. All demographic information was collected at the end of the survey with the exception of a single question asking participants about sexual orientation identity. This question was used to screen for people who did not meet recruitment criteria of identifying as LGBTQ. After completion of the survey, participants were lead to an external form and asked to provide their email address to receive the gift card. Email addresses were recorded separately from actual data and only used to handle distribution of online gift cards.

Participants consisted of 148 LGBTQ identified people of color drawn from a larger sample of LGBTQ individuals. Age ranged from 18-61 years ($M_{age} = 29.36$, $SD = 6.96$). The sample identified as Hispanic/Latino/a (58.8%), Black/African-American (18.9%), Native American (11.5%), Asian/Pacific Islander (7.5%), and Multiracial (3.3%). Most participants identified as women (63.6%) followed by men (36.4%). Regarding sexual orientation, 66.9% of the sample identified as gay, 14.2% as lesbian, 15.6% as bisexual, and 3.3% as queer. Personal income ranged from \$0 to \$125,000 a year ($M_{income} = \$54,311$, $SD = \$33,443.79$). Fifty percent of the sample had at least a high school diploma, 10.1% had some college experience, 16.9% had an associate's degree, 15.5% had a bachelor's degree, 4.7% had some graduate school experience, and 2.7% had a master's degree.

Measures

Perceived discrimination. The Everyday of Discrimination (9 items; EOD; Williams, Yu, Jackson, & Anderson, 1997) was used to measure daily experiences of racial discrimination. Sample items include: "You are treated with less courtesy than other people" and "You are threatened or harassed." Participants indicated how often they had experienced these instances due to their perceived race/ethnicity, using a 7-point scale (1 = *Never* and 7 = *Daily*). Cronbach's alpha is .85.

Microaggressions. The LGBT People of Color Microaggressions Scale (18 items; LGBT-PCMS; Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, & Walters, 2011) was used to measure both racism and heterosexism as it pertains to LGBT-PoC. Items in this scale covered the shared experience of microaggressions for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. While we do not focus on transgender individuals in the current study, the LGBT-PCMS does not specifically target these individuals, so we felt it was appropriate to use for our sample of LGBQ individuals. Sample items include: “Having to educate White LGBT people about race issues” and “Being the token LGBT person of color in groups or organizations.” Participants indicated if the statements represented experiences they had encountered within the past six months using a 6-point scale ranging from (1 = *It happened, and it bothered me NOT AT ALL* and 6 = *It happened and it bothered me EXTREMELY*). Cronbach’s alpha is .92.

Authenticity. The Authenticity Scale (12 items; AS; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008) assessed individual differences in authenticity. Sample items include: “I think it is better to be yourself, than to be popular”, “I don’t know how I really feel inside” (reverse coded), and “I am strongly influenced by the opinions of others” (reverse coded). Participants rated agreement with each statement, using a 7-point scale (1 = *does not describe me at all* and 7 = *describes me very well*). Cronbach’s alpha is .71.

Affect. We used the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (20 items; PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) to assess participants’ positive and negative emotions and feelings. Participants were asked to respond to ten Positive Affect (PA) items and ten Negative Affect (NA) items using a five-point scale (1 = *Very slightly* and 5 = *Extremely*). The prompt asked participants to state if they experienced any of the listed emotions at the present moment. Since the emotions presented in this scale are quite common, we asked participants to rate if they felt

any of them at the present moment. We expected that if we made the time duration any longer (e.g. 6 months as in the LGBT-PCMS) participants might indicate that they have experienced all of the emotions presented. PA sample items include: “excited, interested, and strong” ($\alpha = .77$) and NA sample items include: “distressed, upset, and scared” ($\alpha = .86$).

Depression. The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (20 items; CES-D; Radloff, 1977) was used to assess depressive symptoms. Sample items include: “I was bothered by things that usually do not bother me” and “I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.” Participants indicated how often they had specific feelings or engaged in certain behaviors over the past week, using a 5-point scale (1= *Never* and 5 = *Most of all of the time*). Cronbach’s alpha is .88.

Plan of Analysis

We ran a series of simple mediation analyses using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) for SPSS. Mediation is a statistical method of analysis, used to understand the mechanism that underlies a relationship between a predictor and outcome variable by a third, mediating variable. With this method of analysis, the mediator is used to clarify the relationship between the predictor and outcome variable.

Figure II.1 illustrates our general model of analysis and hypotheses. Each analysis uses one measure of discrimination (Experiences of Discrimination [EOD]; Microaggressions [MA]) entered as a predictor for one of four well-being outcomes (Depression [CES-d]; Negative Affect [NA]; Positive Affect [PA]). We use authenticity as a mediator in every model. To control for the effects of other variables, demographics (i.e. age, gender, education, and income) were entered as covariates.

The PROCESS macro uses path analysis to calculate unstandardized coefficients for the relations between each variable. We report these unstandardized coefficients for all regressions and calculated standardized coefficients for the indirect effect only. We used bias corrected bootstrapped confidence intervals (BCa CI) calculated on 1,000 samples to assess significance of the indirect effect. While the Sobel test is frequently used to determine significance in mediation analyses, Field (2013) suggests using BCa CI because Sobel results can often be unstable for small sample sizes. With this method, if the confidence interval does not include zero we can assume that all values within the interval are plausible values and thus the effect is significant.

Three types of effects for meditational analyses are reported in PROCESS: total, direct, and indirect. The indirect effect represents the effect of the predictor on the outcome through a third “mediating” variable. There is much debate about whether the term mediation should be used, with some researchers claiming indirect effect to be more accurate (see Hayes, 2013 for a review). For convenience we will use both terms in describing our findings. Next, the direct effect represents the effect of the predictor on the outcome independent of the indirect effect. The total effect represents the sum of both the direct and indirect effect.

The PROCESS macro also offers several methods of estimating effects sizes including Preacher and Kelley’s (2011) kappa squared (k^2) value. We report this value to describe effect sizes for each significant finding; however, it is important to note that this value can only be calculated without the inclusion of covariates in the model. Thus, the k^2 effects sizes we report are based on the models that do not include the four covariates. This measure of effect sizes can be interpreted as follows: $k^2 = 0.01$ (small effect), 0.09 (medium effect), and 0.25 (large effect).

Results

Preliminary Analysis

The results of bivariate correlations are reported in Table II.1. Age is negatively related to positive affect and positively related to depression, suggesting that older participants report more symptoms of depression and less positive emotions. Education is positively correlated with positive affect, negatively related to depression as well as negative affect, suggesting that those with more formal education report more positive affect and less depression and negative affect. Finally, Income is positively related to depression and negative affect. For our subsequent analyses we included these demographic variables as covariates.

Everyday racial discrimination. Figure II.2 shows the unstandardized coefficients for the specific paths in this model. Everyday discrimination is negatively related to authenticity in all four models calculated for well-being measures, $b = -.39, p < .001$, supporting *H1*. *H2* is partially supported, such that authenticity is significantly negatively related to depression and negative affect but does not share a significant relationship with positive affect. *H3* is also partially supported. As shown in Table II.2, there is a positive relationship between discrimination and depression as well as negative affect in the total and direct effect models. There is also a positive relationship between discrimination and positive affect, which is counter to *H3*.

As shown in Figure II.2, *H4* is partially supported. There is a significant indirect effect of discrimination on depression and negative affect through authenticity. No significant indirect effect exists for the relationship involving positive affect. As a reminder, significance for the indirect effect is determined by observing the bootstrapped confidence intervals. Intervals that do not include zero are deemed significant. The indirect effect on depression is a medium effect, $k^2 = 0.22$, BCa CI [0.10, 0.34] and the indirect effect on negative affect is a large effect, $k^2 = 0.35$, BCa CI [0.22, 0.47]. Again, the test for effect sizes using PROCESS does not allow for the

inclusion of covariates, so the effect sizes reported here were calculated without inclusion of the demographic covariates.

LGBQ-PoC microaggressions. Figure II.3 illustrates that *H1* is supported and shows a negative relationship between microaggressions and authenticity, $b = -.40$, $p < .001$. *H2* is partially supported, such that authenticity is significantly negatively related to depression and negative affect. There is no significant relationship between authenticity and positive affect. As shown in Table II.3, *H3* is also partially supported indicating significant positive relationships for microaggressions with depression as well as negative affect. Microaggressions are also significantly positively related to positive affect, which is counter to *H3*.

H4 is partially supported as illustrated by the significant indirect effects in Figure II.3. Thus, there is a significant indirect effect of microaggressions on depression and negative affect through authenticity. There is no significant indirect effect for microaggressions on positive affect. The indirect effect on depression has a medium effect $k^2 = 0.19$, BCa CI [0.06, 0.35], and the indirect effect on negative affect has a relatively large effect, $k^2 = 0.25$, BCa CI [0.09, 0.41]. Again, these effect sizes were calculated without inclusion of the covariates.

Discussion

In the current study, we sought to investigate the connection between discrimination, authenticity, and well-being for LGBQ-PoC. While psychological authenticity has typically been studied in general contexts, showing strong connections with well-being (Goldman & Kernis, 2002; Rogers, 1964, 1980; Yalom, 1980), less work has considered the unique implications of this construct for minority individuals. At its core, authenticity is a process of self-regulation, which enables a person to find congruence between their inner values and expectations and their external representations of self (Goldman & Kernis, 2002). Some research has suggested that

authenticity plays a role in the social transactions of LGBTQ identities, whereby appearance is used to express sexual orientation, thus being closely linked with issues of self and identity (Hutson, 2010). Additionally, the process of coming out and self disclosing LGBTQ sexual orientation identity is a difficult decision to make and is a stressful process overall (Clair et al., 2005; Crawford, 1996; McLaughlin, Bell, & Stringer, 2004). Meyer, (2003) made clear that discrimination against LGBTQ individuals, produces unique stressors (i.e. minority stress), which can lead to overall negative implications for psychological well-being. Although there is still debate about whether this stress is more detrimental for LGBTQ-PoC as compared to White LGBTQ's (Meyer, 2010), some research has suggested that greater visibility of LGBTQ-PoC do impact their decisions to come out and feel authentic. Our findings help address a gap in the current literature by illustrating the connection between discrimination and authenticity and further exploring the relationship between discrimination and well-being. Furthermore, these results speak to the importance of exploring these issues from an intersectional perspective.

Discrimination, Authenticity, and Well-Being (Hypotheses 1, 2, & 3)

Confirming our first hypothesis, discrimination based on race and microaggressions for LGBTQ-PoC individuals are negatively related to authenticity. While no causal relationship can be inferred from these results, this finding may suggest that discrimination negatively influences experiences of authenticity. Alternatively, individuals with lower levels of authenticity may be at greater risk of discrimination. Though we cannot infer a directional relationship from this finding, we believe it contributes to our broader understanding of the implications of discrimination for minority individuals. Recent research has indicated that perceived discrimination is negatively related to self-esteem, life satisfaction and perceptions of control (Schmitt, Branscombe, Postme, & Garcia, 2014). As Self Determination Theory suggests,

authenticity encompasses these constructs and is developed through mastery of competence, autonomy, and relatedness (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004; Deci & Ryan, 2008). We also believe this finding helps delve deeper into issues of self-disclosure for LGBTQ-PoC. Research has illustrated that coming out, specifically within workplace contexts, for LGBTQ-PoC may be more difficult (Ragins et al., 2003). Similarly, LGBTQ-PoC may be targeted more for discrimination due to their greater visibility as racial minorities (Kanter, 1977; Ragins et al., 2003). Taken together, the fact that authenticity is negatively related to discrimination here, may suggest that for LGBTQ-PoC individuals expecting or experiencing more discrimination may influence their ability to feel authentic. Some research suggests that, while LGBTQ-PoC individuals may have some resilience factors against discrimination (i.e. Meyer, 2010; Meyer, et al., 2008) the negative relationship between authenticity and discrimination might create disparities with regards to self-disclosure.

Our second hypothesis is partially supported, showing negative relationships between authenticity and depression as well as negative affect, but sharing no significant relationship with positive affect. This is consistent with past work showing the close link between authenticity and psychological well-being. Ryan, LaGuardia, & Rawsthorne (2005) found that authenticity was negatively related to depression as well as other aspects of psychological well-being. Likewise, similar research has shown that authenticity is related to greater positive affect and reduced negative affect (Harter, 2002; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997). Although we expected to find a positive relationship between authenticity and positive affect, this finding does not discount our previous results or suggest that authenticity is any less beneficial for psychological well-being. Research on positive affect (PA) and negative affect (NA) has suggested that both constructs are independent of each other, meaning that individuals can be

high in both, low in both, or high in one and low in another (Naragon & Watson, 2009). Thus, while previous research has illustrated that authenticity is negatively related to NA and positively related to PA (e.g. Reinecke & Trepte, 2014), for this population the relationship between authenticity and PA may not be as significant or exist at all. Further research is needed to explore this possibility.

Both discrimination and microaggressions are significantly positively related to depression and negative affect. However, there is also a significant positive relationship between the predictors and positive affect, which contradicts our hypothesis. Previous research has shown substantial empirical evidence for the negative effect of discrimination on psychological well-being (Williams, Neighbors, & Jackson, 2003). Yet, there is also evidence to suggest that discrimination does not affect all facets of well-being in the same way. For example, in a review on the impacts of discrimination on health, Paradies (2006) found that discrimination had double the amount of significant harmful effects for negative outcomes (e.g. negative affect) as compared to positive outcomes (e.g. positive affect) of well-being. Other research has found similar results indicating a stronger link between discrimination and these negative outcomes as compared to positive outcomes (Schmitt, Branscombe, Postmes, & Garcia, 2014). This suggests that discrimination may have more significant implications for negative outcomes than for positive ones. However, we were surprised to find a positive relationship between discrimination/microaggressions and positive affect. This could suggest that for this sample, discrimination was linked with heightened emotional response across the board, not necessarily limited to negative affect. Additionally, the positive relationship between discrimination and positive affect could also suggest that people who generally report more positive feelings are also more sensitive to experiences of discrimination. As previously mentioned the independent nature

of both positive and negative affect suggest that individuals can score highly in both categories simultaneously (Naragon & Watson, 2009). Further research is warranted to understand the nature of this relationship.

Authenticity Mediating Discrimination and Well-Being (Hypothesis 4)

In our final hypothesis, we predicted an indirect effect of discrimination on well-being through authenticity. We have partial support for this hypothesis, indicating indirect effects for everyday discrimination and microaggressions on depression and negative affect; positive affect did not show an indirect effect. Both of these models illustrated medium to large effects, suggesting strong results for authenticity as a mediator. Thus, we can say that authenticity does partially explain the relationship between perceived discrimination/ LGBQ-PoC microaggressions and depression as well as negative affect. As Fjelstrom (2013) and others have suggested, the dissonance that can arise for LGBQ individuals based on their identities is a difficult experience. Thus, being able to openly disclose sexual orientation identity is a beneficial and empowering experience (Fjelstrom, 2013; Hutson, 2010). We believe this finding is important to consider in the context of LGBQ-PoC who may find authenticity more difficult to maintain. The implications of racial discrimination as well as the dissonance that can arise from concealing ones' sexual orientation identity can be quite profound. The indirect path of discrimination through authenticity seems to suggest that both racial and sexual orientation discrimination impede LGBQ-PoC experiences of authenticity and subsequently well-being. This finding may also help explain some of the mechanisms of the direct negative relationship between discrimination and well-being.

As previously mentioned, some research has illustrated that LGBQ-PoC self-disclose less frequently than white LGBQ's and may be at increased risk of experiencing discrimination due

to their greater visibility as racial minorities (Ragins et al., 2003). Thus, we also suggest that the implications of increased authenticity may not always be positive. Hutson, (2010) suggests that for LGBTQ's, being open also brings the possibility of increasing experiences of discrimination. This could be the case for LGBTQ-PoC individuals who may be targeted more than white LGBTQ's for discrimination.

Strengths and Limitations

We recognize several important strengths and limitations in this study. While our sample was relatively small and not collected using randomized control sampling, this is a common limitation in studies that recruit similar samples, since finding LGBTQ-PoC individuals is more difficult than collecting a more generalized sample. We believe our recruitment and data collection strategy is a considerable strength of this study since we were able to survey participants from non-college samples across the US. Another limitation is that analysis of these data is based on a cross-sectional design, which limits our ability to form causal conclusions. While this does limit our ability to broadly theorize, this work is exploratory and represents a preliminary step into the study of authenticity of LGBTQ-PoC, a topic that has received very little attention in psychological research. Our findings are novel and provide a crucial starting point for future investigations of connections between authenticity and LGBTQ-PoC lived experience.

Our findings also help address the larger need for research in many areas, which focuses on LGBTQ-PoC perspectives. As we have mentioned the study of LGBTQ identity and experience has largely focused on White individuals without considerations of other intersecting identities. Our focus on LGBTQ-PoC is an intentional decision to focus on the distinct contextual experiences of this population whose experiences are rooted in their racial and sexual orientation

identities. Much more work is needed that will focus specifically on the contextual perspectives and experiences of this population.

Conclusion

As discussed throughout, considerable research has drawn connections between discrimination and well-being as well as authenticity and well-being. However, no research has considered how these three constructs operate together. The current investigation brings these two lines of research together, demonstrating that authenticity helps explain the association between discrimination and well-being. These findings contribute to the literature in three distinct ways. First, we show clear evidence of a negative relationship between experiences of discrimination and authenticity, suggesting that discrimination may be detrimental to the experience of authenticity. Second, we provide further support for the positive implications of authenticity for well-being, specifically for LGBTQ-PoC. Finally, we illustrated that authenticity is helpful in partially describing the relationship between discrimination and well-being. This final finding, is quite novel and can help explain how discrimination operates in connection with psychological well-being. As we have mentioned, the experience of psychological authenticity, while crucial for psychological well-being in general, may be especially important for LGBTQ-PoC. Here we have clear evidence to support the notion that multiple forms of discrimination can influence the experience of authenticity and lead to decreased well-being.

In future research, we plan to explore these issues longitudinally. As many identity theories have indicated, social identities are developmental processes that unfold across the lifespan. By investigating the development of authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC over a period of time, we may be able to gain a deeper understanding of importance of this construct for identity development within a minority context. Additionally, we plan to study these ideas within specific

racial minority identities (i.e. African-American and Latino/a) within LGBTQ communities. While broadly speaking, people of color do have many shared experiences, we also recognize that each of these identities have distinct experiences that interact with LGBTQ identity in different ways. In general, we believe that much more research is needed to fully explore the lived experiences of LGBTQ-PoC and should continue to do so in ways that uncover their unique perspectives in various social contexts.

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Table II. 1. Study 1: Correlations between Demographics, Predictor, Outcome, and Proposed Mediator Variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	29.36	6.96	–	0.03	-0.17*	0.34**	0.33**	-0.22*	0.10	-0.03	0.13	-0.06
2. Gender	1.91	0.92		–	-0.09	0.00	0.23**	-0.38**	0.14	-0.09	0.24**	-0.09
3. Education	3.76	1.88			–	-0.18*	-0.47**	0.22*	-0.31**	0.27**	-0.16	0.15
4. Income	54310.09	33443.79				–	0.42**	-0.02	0.33**	-0.31**	0.24**	0.06
5. Depression	2.68	0.49					–	-0.18*	0.73**	-0.60**	0.57**	0.33**
6. Positive Affect	3.17	0.57						–	-0.01	0.04	0.03	0.41**
7. Negative Affect	2.84	0.72							–	-0.74**	0.74**	0.64**
8. Authenticity	4.20	0.65								–	-0.67**	-0.42**
9. Everyday Racial Discrimination	3.84	1.09									–	0.58**
10. LGBTQ-PoC Experiences of Microaggressions	3.35	0.70										–

* $p < 0.05$ & ** $p < 0.01$

Table II. 2. Study 1: Total and Direct Effect Models for Everyday Racial Discrimination

Outcome Variable	Total Effect Model			Direct Effect Model		
	R ²	<i>b</i>	Boot CI	R ²	<i>b</i>	Boot CI
Depression	0.54	0.18*	0.12, 0.25	0.58	0.11*	0.03, 0.18
Negative Affect	0.6	0.47*	0.38, 0.55	0.7	0.29*	0.20, 0.38
Positive Affect	0.27	0.19*	0.02, 0.20	0.29	0.17*	0.05, 0.28

Note. Asterisks indicate significance based on bootstrapped confidence interval

Table II. 3. Study 1: Total and Mediation Effect Models for LGBT-PoC Experiences of Micoraggressions

Outcome Variable	Total Effect Model			Direct Effect Model		
	R ²	<i>b</i>	Boot CI	R ²	<i>b</i>	Boot CI
Depression	0.53	0.28*	0.19, 0.38	0.58	0.20*	0.10, 0.30
Negative Affect	0.62	0.70*	0.58, 0.82	0.72	0.54*	0.42, 0.65
Positive Affect	0.35	0.27*	0.15, 0.39	0.36	0.30*	0.17, 0.44

Note. Asterisks indicate significance based on bootstrapped confidence interval

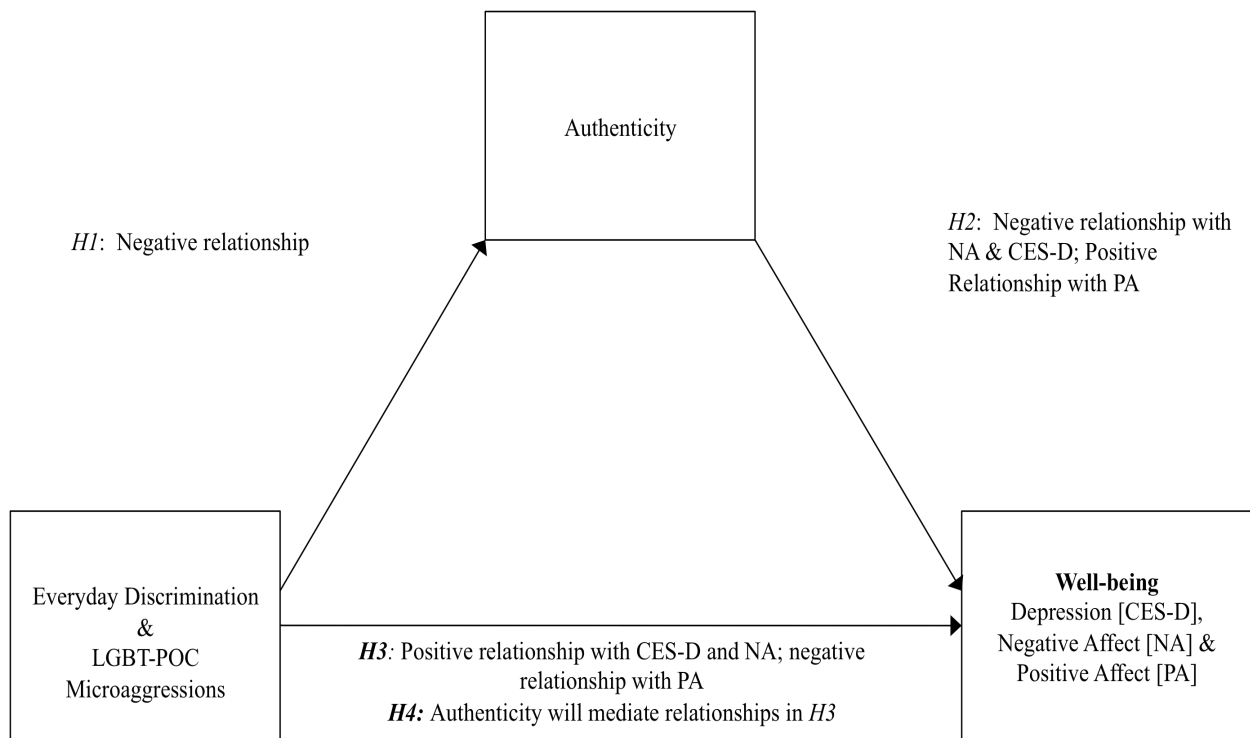


Figure II. 1. Proposed Mediation Model and Hypotheses for Everyday Discrimination/LGBT-PoC Microaggressions, Authenticity, and Well-Being Outcomes

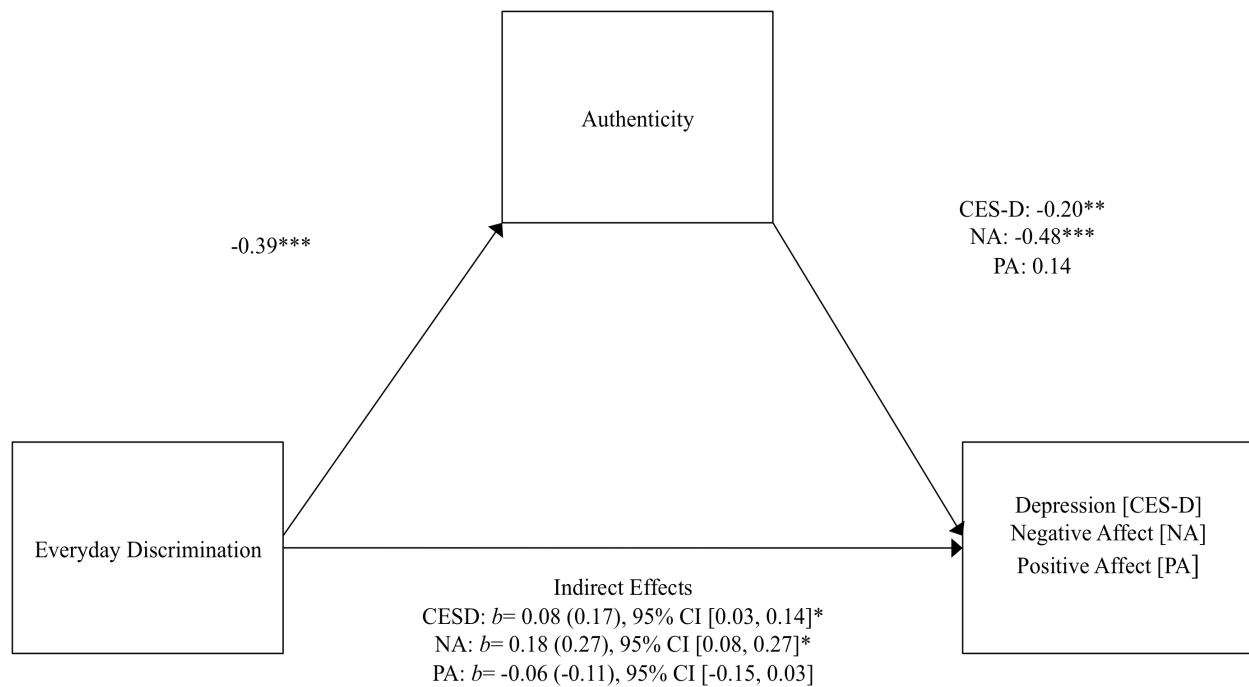


Figure II. 2. Mediation Analysis of Everyday Discrimination, Authenticity, and Well-Being Outcomes in Study 1

Note. Demographic variables entered as covariates. The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 1,000 samples. Asterisks indicate significance of relationships (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$). Single asterisk on indirect effects indicates significance based on bootstrapped confidence intervals.

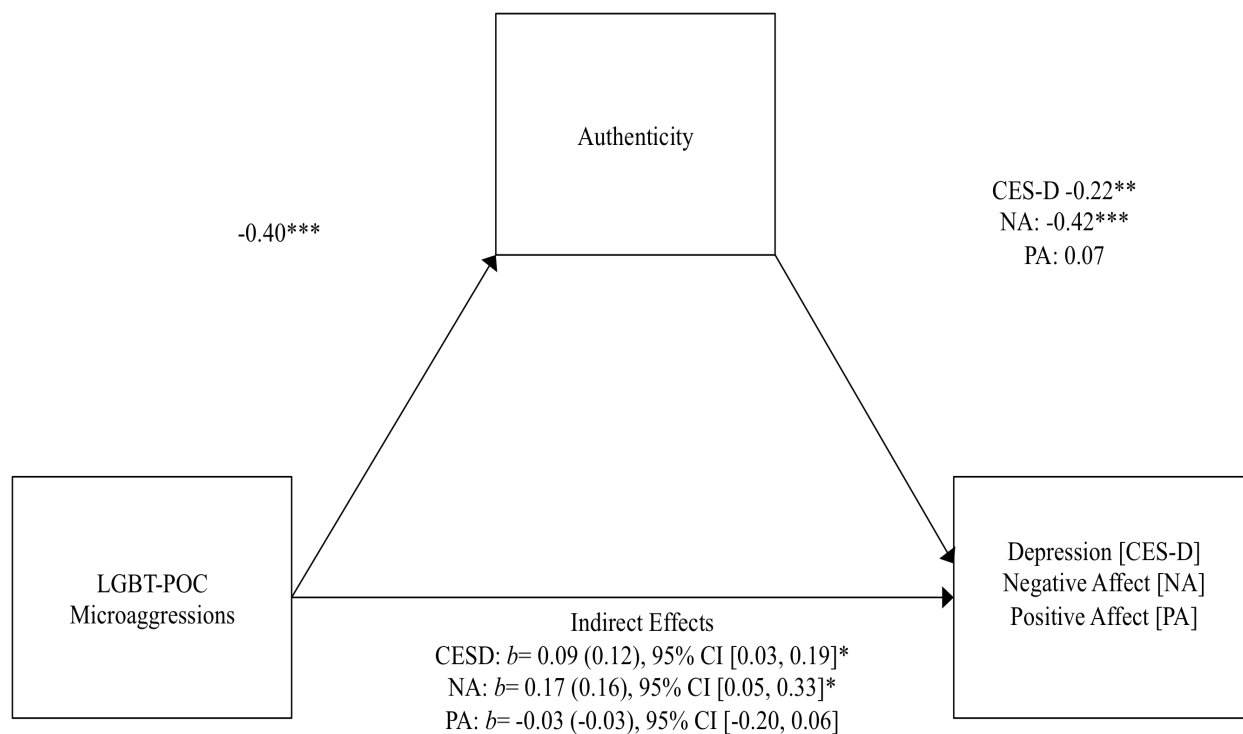


Figure II. 3. Mediation Analysis of LGBT-PoC Microaggressions, Authenticity, and Well-Being Outcomes in Study 1

Note. Unstandardized regressions coefficients are given and standardized regression coefficients for the indirect effects are given in parentheses. Demographic variables entered as covariates. The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 1,000 samples. Asterisks indicate significance of relationships ($*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$). Single asterisk on indirect effects indicates significance based on bootstrapped confidence intervals.

CHAPTER III

LGBQ Workplace Discrimination, Authenticity, and Well-Being

Minority stress theory suggests that minority individuals face a distinct form of stress due to their marginalized status, and that this stress exhibits negative implications for psychological well-being (Meyer, 2003). While discrimination based on gender and race have been outlawed for several decades in the U.S., women and racial minorities still face issues of discrimination in workplaces and organizations (Berdahl & Moore, 2006). The implications of this discrimination have been well documented and suggest considerable negative implications for physical, psychological, and organizational well-being for women and people of color (Schneider, Hitlan, & Radhakrishnan, 2000; Schneider, Swan, & Fitzgerald, 1997). Similarly, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ) people, face significant forms of discrimination as well as profound negative effects for health, well-being and organizational outcomes (Meyer, 2003).

LGBQ individuals must manage a unique stressor that is not present for other minority groups; namely identity disclosure. Research has suggested, that since sexual orientation is a relatively invisible identity, LGBQ individuals are expected to “come-out” and disclose their sexual orientation identity (Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005). Not only is this a stressful process but it also places LGBQ individuals at risk of becoming targets of discrimination (Herek, Chopp, & Strohl, 2007). While some LGBQ individuals decide to conceal their identity to avoid direct experiences of discrimination, this decision has negative implications for self-esteem,

psychological authenticity, overall psychological distress, and organizational success (Meyer, 1995, 2003; Croteau, Anderson, & VanderWal, 2008; Ragins, 2008). Some have theorized that the stress of identity management may be greater for individuals with multiple marginalized identities (i.e. LGBTQ women and people of color) (Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller, 2003). Given that these individuals experience racism and/or sexism, they may fear opening themselves up to other forms of discrimination by coming out (i.e. heterosexism) (Kanter, 1977).

Despite the fact that minority employees may experience multiple forms of discrimination simultaneously, little research has considered the implications of discrimination for individuals with marginalized racial, gender, and sexual orientation identities (Berdahl & Moore, 2006; Ragins et al., 2003). Intersectionality researchers have argued that the study of social identities in isolation is limiting, and provides an incomplete representation of lived experience (Cole, 2009; Mahalingam & Rabelo, 2013). In general intersectionality emphasizes the multiplicative nature of social identities, and highlights the fact that the experiences of individuals with multiple marginalized identities are highly integrated and cannot be explained in isolation or as simply combining the additive effects (Cole, 2009; Mahalingam & Rabelo, 2013). From this perspective we can expect that LGBTQ individuals within the workplace will have distinctly different experiences based on their racial and gender identities.

To address the lack of research concerning individuals with multiple marginalized identities, the current investigation explores the implications of workplace heterosexism for LGBTQ individuals while also considering the influence of racial and gender identity. Specifically, we focus on Latino/a individuals, who are often underrepresented in psychological and organizational literature (Huang, Brewster, Moradi, Goodman, Wiseman, & Martin, 2010). In focusing on the experiences of Latino/a individuals, we seek to bring a perspective that has often been

overlooked in this area of study. Additionally, by exploring the influences of gender, we also hope to shed light on the unique perspectives of women as well. As Moradi and Deblaere (2010) have urged, a more nuanced approach is needed in the study of discrimination, whereby research considers the combined experiences of racial, gender, and sexual orientation identity, to explore the unique lived experiences of these individuals. Taken together, the current investigation seeks to describe the unique experiences of individuals with multiple marginalized social identities with respect to workplace heterosexism, psychological authenticity, and well-being.

Contextual Factors for Latino/a LGBTQs and Double Jeopardy

Recent national surveys have found that approximately 4% of Latino/a individuals identify as LGBTQ and 17% of LGBTQs identify as Latino/a (Gallups, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2013). However, despite their prevalence, LGBTQ Latino/a individuals are largely underrepresented in psychological research on sexual orientation and Latino/a identity (Huang et al., 2010). Given their racial and sexual minority status, Latino/a LGBTQs face issues of racism and heterosexism (Ramirez-Valles, Kuhns, Campbell, & Diaz, 2010; Reisen, Brooks, Zea, Poppen, & Bianchi, 2013). Some researchers have suggested that individuals with multiple marginalized identities experience “double jeopardy” in the workplace (Ferdman, 1999). Double jeopardy was first used to hypothesize about the unique disadvantages experienced by women of color (Almquist, 1975). From this perspective women of color are discriminated against on two fronts, racism and sexism, and are the primary targets of harassment (Berdahl & Moore, 2006). While double jeopardy was originally used to describe the unique experiences of women of color, it has also been used to describe the implications of multiple forms of discrimination for other groups as well, such as LGBTQ people of color.

Considering LGBQ Latino/as, some research has found evidence to support the notion that they are at increased risk for discrimination and its negative effects. For example, in a recent study in focused on HIV-positive gay Latino men, results indicated positive correlations between experiences of heterosexism and depression as well as loneliness. These researchers also found a negative relationship between heterosexism and self-esteem (Ramirez-Valles, Kuhns, Campbell, & Díaz, 2010). Additionally, other studies have found connections between heterosexism and psychological distress such as depression and decreased self-esteem among Latino/a LGBQs (Díaz, Bein, & Ayala, 2006; Reisen, et al., 2013; Velez, Moradi, & DeBlaere, 2015). Similarly, other research has illustrated increased experiences of internalized heterosexism (Barnes & Meyer, 2012) and life stressors (Meyer, Schwartz, & Frost, 2008) for LGBQ Latino/as as compared to White LGBQs. However, little research has considered the experiences of LGBQ Latino/as within the workplace and their experiences of discrimination within this specific context. While the investigation of LGBQ individuals within the workplace has growing in prominence, much more work is needed to help elucidate their diverse experiences.

Workplace Heterosexism and Identity Disclosure

An estimated 9 million adults in the United States identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBQ) and make up an approximate 4-17% of the work force (Gates, 2011; Ragins, 2004; Ragins et al., 2003). In a recent review of 30 studies, Katz-Wise and Hyde (2012) found that 25% of LGBQ individuals in the US reported workplace discrimination. This form of discrimination, more commonly referred to as *workplace heterosexism*, has been defined as stigmatization or harassment of non-heterosexual individuals, identities, behaviors, or relationships in the workplace (Waldo, 1999). Heterosexism refers to “the cultural ideology that perpetuates sexual stigma by denying and denigrating any non-heterosexual form of behavior,

identity, relationship, community” (Herek, 2004, p. 16). Thus, heterosexism represents a form of stigma that—when operating at the organizational level—seeks to place disproportionate value on heterosexual individuals while promoting anti-LGBQ attitudes at the macro level. Much research has indicated that workplace heterosexism is linked with poorer mental health and well-being for LGBQ individuals (Huffman, Watrous-Rodriguez, & King, 2008; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Smith & Ingram, 2004; Waldo, 1999). While LGBQs face many of the same stressors that other marginalized groups face in the workplace (i.e. prejudice, stereotypes, and employment discrimination) they also face unique challenges.

Ragins (2004) suggests that the relative invisibility of sexual orientation and LGBQ identity is one such challenge and is especially pronounced within workplace contexts. When considering disclosing sexual orientation at work, LGBQs carefully consider the costs and benefits of opening up in a potentially hostile environment. For instance, research suggests that LGBQ employees fear consequences of coming out at work such as job loss, social rejection, and even assault (D’Augelli & Grossman, 2001; Herek, Cogan, & Gillis, 2002). This fear leads some LGBQ individuals to conceal their identity in an attempt to avert direct experiences of discrimination. Some research has suggested that the fear of discrimination from coming out might also be more stressful for LGBQs of color and women (Ragins et al., 2003). These individuals may fear facing additional discrimination on top of the sexism and/or racism they already experience (Kanter, 1977, Ragins, et al., 2003). Many writers and theorists have argued that for Latino/a and Black LGBQs, coming out may be more difficult because of cultural factors such as importance of family, focus on traditional gender norms, and religious values (Díaz, 1998; Greene, 1998; Savin-Williams, 1996; Stokes & Peterson, 1998). Similarly, racism within predominantly White LGBQ communities creates additional complications for LGBQ people of color trying to come out (e.g. Icard, 1986; Savin-Williams, 1996).

Considering gender, some research has illustrated that decisions to come out are variable among women (Diamond, 2000; Diamond & Savin-Williams, 2005; Peplau & Garnets, 2000; Schneider, 2001) yet the reasons for such variability are not clearly understood. One suggestion is that women, because of sexist and heterosexist threats, use interactional strategies which are based on their perceptions of risk and the broader context to decide when and how to come out (Goffman, 1963; Sullivan, 2001). These strategies necessitate that women evaluate many factors of their environment prior to coming out, which is a considerably stressful process.

While some research has suggested that concealing sexual orientation identity in some circumstances may be beneficial (e.g. hostile work environments: Cain, 1991; Fassinger, 1995) in general this strategy tends to induce stress and can lead to negative psychological, behavioral, and interpersonal consequences (Crocker, Major, & Steele, 1998; Meyer, 2003; Ragins, Singh, Cornwell, 2007; Smith & Ingram, 2004). For example, concealment has been linked with experiences of inauthenticity, lower levels of self-esteem, and lacking connection with other people (Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005; Creed & Scully, 2000; Goffman, 1963; Reimann, 2001; Sabat, Lindsey, & King, 2014). Concealment has also been suggested to distance employees from co-workers and supervisors, preventing the creation of authentic relationships (Fassinger, 1996). If LGBTQ individuals do not disclose their identity at work, they may face a significant disconnect between how they manage their identity at work versus outside of work (Ragins, 2004). This could inhibit experiences of authenticity especially considering the importance of identity congruence and authenticity in promoting psychological well-being (Leary & Tangney, 2003).

The Importance of Authenticity

Theorists have argued that the literature on authenticity is plagued by definitional confusion (Vannini & Williams, 2008). One common definition in psychology is provided by

Kernis (2003) who defines it as the “unobstructed operation of one’s true, or core self in one’s daily enterprise” (p. 13). While some theory has linked authenticity with descriptive words such as “sincerity, truthfulness, and originality” (Vannini & Franzese, 2008, pg. 1621), Erickson (1994) has suggested that authenticity is much deeper than these descriptors and actually revolves around the ability to fulfill one’s personal expectations to one’s self. Though authenticity is partly shaped by our interactions with others, it is mostly a self-referential construct that relies on upholding internal commitments and expectations (Erickson, 1994). More specifically, authenticity is reflected in concrete aspects of an individual’s behavior and social interaction. For example, being open about one’s LGBQ identity in a given context could be seen as an authentic representation of one’s identity. In fact, some qualitative work has suggested that for LGBQ individuals, authenticity is closely connected with identity disclosure and feelings of personal well-being (Hutson, 2010). Being able to freely express one’s identity through self-expression and presentation has been discussed as a method used particularly by LGBQ individuals to facilitate social interactions and has been linked with personal experiences of identity stability and well-being (Hutson, 2010; Millard, 2009; Waskul, 2002).

When measured quantitatively in psychology, authenticity is typically approached from the person-centered perspective, which described the interaction between self-perception and social interaction/contexts (e.g. Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008; Wyatt, 2001). Barrett-Lennard (1998) suggests that there are three interlocking aspects which are key to understanding authenticity: “1) a person’s primary experience, 2) their symbolized awareness, and 3) their outward behavior and communication” (pg. 82). These aspects have been used to derive a measure of authenticity based off of three distinct psychological characteristics (*self-alienation, authentic living, and accepting external influence*). *Self-alienation* references the

incongruence between conscious awareness and actual experience. *Authentic living* represents the experience of acting in congruence with one's own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. Lastly, *accepting external influence* represents the influence of others or the external environment. Those who have higher levels of accepting external influence are more likely to self-regulate in a way that meets the desires of another individual and not their own (Wood et al., 2008). When measured, low levels of self-alienation and accepting external influence are considered beneficial while higher levels of authentic living are critical to authenticity. Taken together, self-alienation, authentic living, and accepting external influence make up a tripartite method of measuring authenticity.

Since authenticity is closely linked with issues of behavior and interactions with one's environment, many theorists have suggested a strong link between authenticity and well-being (Rogers, 1964, 1980; Yalom, 1980). Maslow (1968) suggests that authenticity is gained by satisfying higher order psychological needs, which then allows the individual to focus on self-growth, the nature of their inner self, and other aspects of authentic self. Rogers (1961) also theorized about authenticity stating that authenticity results from congruence between self-perception and actual behavior. Incongruence between these experiences would lead to decreased psychological well-being and psychopathology (Rogers, 1961). Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) explains the importance of understanding self-regulation in the connection between well-being and authenticity (Deci & Ryan, 1995, 2000). Self-regulation refers to a process by which individuals regulate their own behavior or actions to meet internal desires and needs, thus satisfying higher psychological needs such as competence, relatedness, and self-determination (Goldman & Kernis, 2002). In other words, self-regulation allows individuals to maintain congruence between core sense of self and behaviors/actions.

Authenticity and identity. Scholars argue that authenticity uniquely influences issues of social relationships and personal sense of self (Handler, 1986; Trilling, 1971). Similarly, authenticity seems to be closely linked with issues of identity and how individuals become engaged with their environment (Bauman & Briggs, 1990). People use authenticity to create distinctions and recognize the differences between people, identities, and cultures (Bell & Valentine, 1997; Bourdieu, 1984). Thus, authenticity can be seen as incredibly important for defining and describing how individuals interact with their social identities and environments.

In a qualitative examination of LGBTQ identity and appearance, Hutson (2010) discusses the importance of self-expression and performance of identity for sense of authenticity. She found that LGBTQ individuals closely associated the ability to disclose their sexual orientation and openly express their identity through appearance and performance, with general feelings of freedom and authenticity (Hutson, 2010). Similarly, Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) have suggested that performing authenticity, with respect to ethnic identity, is commonly associated with enacting genuine characteristics of a specific culture. In a qualitative investigation, Waters (1990) found that strongly identifying with ethnic identity was related to feeling special and having a sense of being part of important cultural traditions.

Authenticity also seems to have unique implications for women as well. Prior research has shown a distinct connection between trauma and lower levels of authenticity for women (Woods, 1999; Wright, Crawford, & Del Castillo, 2009). Lower levels of authenticity are also related to depression and decreased self-esteem among women (Tolman & Porche, 2000). In studies considering traumatic experiences among men and women, experiences of depression appear to be greater for women (Scott, Wolfe, & Wekele, 2003). While authenticity is important for the success and well-being of everyone, available research seems to indicate that for women,

people of color, and LGBTQ individuals, authenticity may represent a critical psychological construct which is easily influenced by discrimination, stress, and trauma. However, this is primarily theoretical, as little research has directly explored the connection between discrimination and authenticity for marginalized individuals.

Authenticity and work. Authenticity has long been the subject of research in workplace settings, however rarely considered the experience of employees with marginalized social identities. In a recent study of authenticity and well-being in the workplace, researchers found that authenticity was positively linked with well-being and was partially mediated by perceptions of meaning of their work (Mènard & Brunet, 2011). Additionally, theoretical work regarding authenticity in the workplace has suggested that authenticity is important for managers and other leaders, primarily because it fosters feelings of authenticity and well-being among employees (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005). Authentic leaders are said to have a deep awareness of who they are, follow an internal moral compass with regards to their decision making, and be willing to act on their core values while maintaining transparency in their interactions with others (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). These studies suggest that workplace contexts can have serious implications for experiences of authenticity. Furthermore, given the research regarding identity and authenticity, we expect that authenticity will be an important characteristic to explore for LGBTQ Latino/as.

Mindfulness

We also seek to draw a connection between authenticity and another process of self-regulation—mindfulness. Having roots in Buddhist and other contemplative traditions, mindfulness represents a process of maintaining active non-judgmental awareness on the present moment (Bishop

et al., 2004). Brown and Ryan (2003) suggest that the goal of mindfulness is to be pre-reflexive and thus engage in self-focused attention without conscious awareness or judgment of what is happening. Much research, including Self-Determination Theory, has suggested that awareness and attention are crucial to self-regulation and general well-being (Brazier, 1995; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Martin, 1997; Ryan & Deci, 2000). From this perspective, mindfulness can be seen as a process of self-regulation which allows for the fulfillment of basic psychological needs such as self-determination (Hodgins & Knee, 2002). In fact, research has supported this theory and indicates that mindfulness not only improves basic self-awareness, but also emotional regulation, stress, and depressive symptoms (Argus & Thompson, 2008; Brown & Ryan, 2003; Gilbert, & Tirsch, 2009; Hayes & Feldman, 2004; Sephton et al., 2007; Thompson & Waltz, 2007). Thus, mindfulness, like authenticity, represents a process of self-regulation that is also strongly connected to psychological well-being.

Psychological and organizational studies literature clearly suggests that workplace heterosexism is quite prevalent and has significant negative implications for LGBTQ employee health and well-being. Similarly, authenticity has been clearly shown to be beneficial for well-being and other outcomes in the workplace. However, no research has previously explored the connections between experiences of workplace heterosexism and authenticity, we expect that a link does exist considering the negative impact discrimination has on overall well-being. Our primary aim is to explore the dynamics of workplace heterosexism and authenticity from an intersectional perspective to gain a better understanding of how these constructs jointly influence psychological well-being for LGBTQ Latino/a employees.

Theoretical Grounding: Intersectionality

The experiences of marginalized individuals are frequently studied in psychological and organization literature, however this work primarily considers social identities in isolation. Intersectionality, a theory derived from a critical feminist framework, describes an approach for studying how multiple social identities give rise to distinct lived experiences based on an individual's unique social location. Crenshaw (1995) coined the term intersectionality to define a multifaceted perspective for observing gender, race, sexuality and other social identities. She argues that studying social identities in isolation from one another produces an incomplete interpretation of individuals' experiences. Instead, intersectionality provides a means to explore human experiences, outcomes, and processes by focusing on the importance of *interactions* between social identities (Cole, 2009). From this perspective, social identity is seen not as a solitary construct, but as a socio-psychological process and a product of intersections between many social identities (Mahalingam & Leu, 2005; Stewart & Cole, 1996; Stewart & McDermott, 2004). While much research in psychology considers the impact of marginalized identities from an additive perspective, intersectionality provides a means to explore the *multiplicative* impacts of such identities (Mahalingam & Rabelo, 2013). Thus, race and sexual orientation are identities that affect an individual's life simultaneously; an accurate representation of LGBTQ-PoC experience cannot be gained by summing the discrete of racism and heterosexism. Considering the lives of LGBTQ Latino/as from an intersectional perspective is quite different from studying these identities in isolation and allows for a larger perspective of the individual's experience. Specifically, we are using intersectionality to theorize about factors and experiences that are specific to LGBTQ Latino/as that cannot be explained by studying issues of sexual orientation and ethnicity separately.

In fact, much intersectionality research has approached similar questions of identity and social experience for the purposes of more ethically and holistically exploring the lives of

marginalized individuals. Mahalingam (2007) indicates that intersectionality is “a triangulation of a subject vis-à-vis his or her social location and social positioning along race, class, gender, and caste. This process is dynamic, multidimensional and historically contingent” (p. 43). Feminist researchers have taken advantage of this framework to more ethically study the lives of marginalized individuals in several different ways. One method seeks to highlight the dynamic between intersecting contexts and social identities” (Mahalingam, Hajski, & Sanders, 2012). For example, studies on immigrant populations have focused on the unique experience of transnational identities in relation to location contexts (i.e. national boundaries) as well as other social identities, such as being a mother (e.g. Mahalingam, Balan, & Molina, 2009; Villenas, 2001). While the measures we use in the current study do highlight the additive aspects of multiple marginalized identities, we seek to speak intersectionally about the lived experiences of LGBTQ Latino/a individuals. Considering our focus on the unique implications of several important social identities, we believe that using an intersectional perspective helps provide a new perspective to this area of research and brings a voice to the experiences of individuals who are typically left out of LGBTQ, race, and discrimination literature.

Aim and Hypotheses

Our primary aim in the current investigation is to describe and understand the implications of workplace heterosexism for authenticity as well as several well-being outcomes (depression, stress, and mindfulness) for LGBTQ Latino/a individuals. We also consider White LGBTQs in an attempt to speak to the conflicting literature on minority stress. We divided our sample between White and Latino/a LGBTQs to explore the unique relationships between these variables within two different racial contexts. Additionally, we sought to explore these relationships considering the implications of gender; to bring much needed attention to the

experiences of women in this area. To meet these aims, we propose a moderated mediation model as illustrated in Figure III.1.

We have three primary hypotheses. Considering the negative association between fear of discrimination and identity disclosure (D'Augelli & Grossman, 2001; Herek, Cogan, & Gillis, 2002), we predicted that workplace heterosexism would be negatively related to authenticity (*H1*). Similarly, considering the importance of authenticity for psychological well-being (Goldman & Kernis, 2002), we predicted that authenticity would be negatively related to depression and stress (*H2a*) while being positively related to mindfulness (*H2b*).

Finally, we predicted that since authenticity appears to be critical for LGBQ individuals and subject to the influences of discrimination (Hutson, 2010), workplace heterosexism would also have a positive indirect effect on depression and stress through authenticity (*H3a*) as well as a negative indirect effect on mindfulness through authenticity (*H3b*). Additionally, considering the negative implications of trauma on authenticity among women (Woods, 1999; Wright, Crawford, & Del Castillo, 2009), we expected that this indirect effect would be conditional, thus only being present for women.

Method

Participants and procedures

Participants were recruited online through social media websites such as Facebook and Craigslist. A brief recruitment message asked participants “to participate in a simple survey about their experiences in the LGBTQ community.” Participation in the survey took approximately 30 minutes and participants were compensated with a \$5 online gift card for their participation. All participants first completed informed consent before proceeding with the survey and gave their email address at the end of participation in a separate survey to receive the

gift card. Participants were screened at the beginning of the survey to make sure they meet the inclusion criteria of identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer. All data were collected online using the Qualtrics survey website.

White and Latino/a LGBQ identified individuals ($N = 229$) were selected from a larger sample of LGBQ participants. Participants were split by race/ethnicity and analyzed separately. The majority of white participants identified as men, had at least an associate's degree, and identified as gay. The majority of Latino/a participants identified as women, had at least a high school degree, and also identified as gay. Participants held jobs in a variety of sectors. Examples include: educators, business professionals, and service workers (i.e. restaurant and retail). Table 3.1 presents full demographic information for both groups.

Measures

Workplace heterosexism. The Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ; Waldo, 1999) was used to assess experiences of workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation. We used a shortened version (9-items) and sample items include, "During the past year, has a coworker or supervisor told offensive jokes about lesbian, gay men, or bisexual people?" and "During the past year, has a coworker or supervisor made you afraid that you would be treated poorly if you were open about your sexual orientation?" Participants were asked to rate how often they had experienced these events within the past year using a 5-point scale (0 = *never* to 4 = *most of the time*). Cronbach's alpha for WHEQ was .82.

Authenticity. The Authenticity Scale (12 items; Wood et al., 2008) was used to measure individual differences in authenticity. Sample items include: "I think it is better to be yourself, than to be popular" and "I don't know how I really feel inside" (reverse coded). Participants

rated their agreement with each statement using a 7-point scale (1 = *does not describe me at all* to (7 = *describes me very well*). Alpha was .86.

Stress. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) was used to measure individual differences in stress. Sample items include “In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?” and “In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control important things in your life?” Participants rated how often they experienced ten situations within the past month on a 5-point scale (0 = *never* to 4 = *very often*). Alpha was .77.

Mindfulness. The Mindful Mindset Scale (MMSS; Mahalingam, 2011) was used to assess individual differences in mindfulness. Sample items include: “I accept my own shortcoming” and “I am compassionate to myself when I am not living up to my own expectations....” Participants rated agreement to each statement using a 5-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree* to 5 = *Strongly agree*). Alpha for these 26 items was .90.

Depression. The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D; Radloff, 1977) was used to assess depressive symptoms. Sample items include: “I was bothered by things that usually do not bother me” and “I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.” Participants indicated how often they had specific feelings or engaged in certain behaviors over the past week, using a 5-point scale, ranging from (1 = *Never* to 5 = *Most of all of the time*). Alpha for these 20 items was .89.

Analysis Plan

We used conditional process analysis to test three moderated mediation models (one for each outcome variable). Conditional process analysis is a method of statistical analysis used to explore the conditional nature of the mechanism by which one variable passes its effect on to

another (Hayes, 2013). This method integrates the tests of mediation and moderation. Using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) for SPSS, we selected model 59 and entered workplace heterosexism (WHEQ) as the predictor, authenticity as the mediator, and gender as a moderator. Our outcome measures were depression, stress, and mindfulness. Figure III.1 illustrates this model as well as our specific hypotheses. Specifically, this model allows for the testing of one moderator on the direct and indirect effects of a mediation model. For our study, we suggested that gender would moderate the indirect effect (i.e. paths *a* through *b*: workplace heterosexism → authenticity → well-being outcomes).

We report unstandardized coefficients and used bias corrected bootstrapped confidence intervals (BCa CI), calculated on 1,000 samples, to determine significance of the indirect effect. Using BCa CI, we can determine significance of the effect if the interval does not include zero. The indirect effect can be interpreted as the effect of a predictor on the outcome through a proposed mediator. Thus, the indirect effect is a quantitative representation of the intervening, or mediator, variable. The direct effect represents the part of the effect of the predictor on the outcome that is independent of the path through a mediator. Here, we present *conditional* direct and indirect effects. Conditional indirect effects are calculated using the product of the unstandardized regression weight for paths from the predictor to the mediator (*a*) and the path from the mediator to the outcome (*b*) for all values of the moderator (i.e. gender). Similarly, the conditional direct effects are calculated using the coefficient of the path from the predictor to the outcome (*c*) at all values of the moderator.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Table III.1 gives full demographic data for all participants and specifics based on each racial group. Table III.2 displays means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for Latino/a participants and Table III.3 displays this data for White participants. For Latino/a LGBQs, age is negatively related to authenticity and mindfulness, and positively related to depression. Education is negatively related to depression and positively with stress and mindfulness. Income is negatively related to authenticity and mindfulness, while sharing a positive relationship with depression. Finally, job length is negatively related to authenticity, and positively with depression. For White LGBQs, education is negatively related to stress. Additionally, job length is negatively related to authenticity.

Conditional Process Analyses

Workplace heterosexism for Latino/a LGBQs. Figure III.2 illustrates the unstandardized coefficients for the moderated mediation model for Latino/a participants. For Latino/a LGBQ participants our primary hypotheses are supported. Workplace heterosexism is negatively related to authenticity (*H1*). Additionally, authenticity is significantly negatively related to depression and stress while being positively related to mindfulness (*H1a & b*). These results also show a positive indirect effect of workplace heterosexism on depression and stress as well as a negative indirect effect on mindfulness through authenticity. These effects are conditional, as predicted (*H3a & b*) suggesting that authenticity mediates the relationship between heterosexism and well-being for women only. As shown in Table III.4, gender moderates the indirect path for depression, stress, and mindfulness for Latino/as. Figure III.2 demonstrates the specifics of this moderated effect such that the indirect effect of authenticity is significant for women only

Workplace Heterosexism for White LGBTQs. Figure III.3 shows the unstandardized coefficients for the moderated mediation model for White participants. Our primary hypotheses are mostly unsupported for White LGBTQ participants. Workplace heterosexism is not significantly related to authenticity (*H1*). *H2a* is partially supported, since authenticity is significantly negatively related to depression, but not related to stress. Authenticity is also positively related to mindfulness (*H2b*). *H3a* and *H3b* are also not supported, as there were no significant indirect effects between workplace heterosexism and the well-being outcomes for men or women.

Discussion

Our focus was the association between workplace heterosexism, psychological authenticity, and three well-being outcomes (depression, stress, and mindfulness) for LGBTQ individuals. We explored these relationships considering the implications for race as well as gender. Few empirical studies have considered the connection between discrimination and authenticity and little work has considered the implications of discrimination for individuals who occupy multiple marginalized identities with regards to race, sexual orientation, and gender.

Our first hypothesis concerned the association between workplace heterosexism and authenticity. We expected that experiences of heterosexism would be negatively related to authenticity for both White and Latino/a employees, however we found that this link only existed for Latino/as in our sample. This link was negative and although only correlational, suggests that workplace heterosexism could have deleterious effects on the general experience of authenticity. This seems to support previous work that has found that LGBTQ employees of color disclose their sexual orientation less at work (Kanter, 1977; Ragins et al., 2003). Research regarding sexual orientation disclosure has indicated that concealing or attempting to change one's sexual

orientation does have significant negative implications for well-being and authenticity (Fjelstrom, 2013). While we expected authenticity to be important for both White and Latino/a LGBTQs, our findings suggest that this was only significant for Latino/a participants. We expect that this may be the case because LGBTQ Latino/as face unique stressors based on their marginalized social status, which may lead to more difficulties or apprehension in coming out and experiencing authenticity.

In our second hypothesis, we predicted that authenticity would be positively related to mindfulness while being negatively related to depression and stress. This hypothesis was fully supported for Latino/a participants and partially supported for White participants. In the White sample, we only found significant relationships between authenticity and depression as well as mindfulness. Overall, this finding clearly supports previous work, which has illustrated strong links between psychological well-being and authenticity (Deci & Ryan, 1995, 2000; Goldman & Kernis, 2002). However, as we show here, authenticity seems to only be linked with stress for Latino/a LGBTQs. We expect that this might be due to the fact that previous research has suggested coming out/identity disclosure is more stressful for LGBTQ people of color (Ragins et al., 2003). Given that Latino/a LGBTQs face issues of racism, some work has suggested that they will experience more stress because they might fear taking on more discrimination by coming out (Kanter, 1977). Our findings support this notion and illustrates that issues of authenticity may be more closely linked with stress for LGBTQ people of color than for their white counterparts.

Our final hypothesis focused on the expected indirect effect of workplace heterosexism on the well-being outcomes through authenticity. We suggested that this effect would be conditional based on gender such that it would only exist for women. This hypothesis was supported for Latino/a LGBTQs only. Specifically, we demonstrate here that workplace

heterosexism has a positive indirect effect on depression and stress as well as a negative indirect effect on mindfulness through authenticity for women only. Previous work has shown that authenticity is significantly influenced by trauma for women more so than for men (Wright, Crawford, & Del Castillo, 2009). Additionally, authenticity has been shown to mediate the relationship between childhood trauma for women and negative outcomes (i.e. self-esteem and depression) (Scott, Wolfe, & Wekerle, 2003). While trauma and discrimination are different constructs and experiences, this research illustrates that negative life events can significantly impact authenticity for marginalized individuals. Here we found that workplace heterosexism for Latina LGBTQs was indirectly related to depression, stress, and mindfulness through authenticity. This relationship was not significant for white LGBTQ women, as we expected, which might suggest that the implications of workplace heterosexism are considerably more negative for women of color.

In general findings illustrate the important connection between authenticity and discrimination within workplace contexts. Through examination of workplace heterosexism for employees who occupy multiple social identities, we found that authenticity is critical in describing the relationship between heterosexism and well-being for Latina LGBTQ women. Our findings suggest that considering the implications of race and gender in the study of workplace heterosexism is crucial and helps uncover differences in experience across various levels of marginalization and privilege in these social identities.

Strength and Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be carefully considered for interpreting our findings. Though our findings are based on fairly small sample sizes, these are common when dealing with hard to reach samples such as LGBTQ-PoC. Using online survey methodology, we

were able to draw participants from the larger community and did not have to rely on college subject pool samples. We believe this is a considerable strength of the current study, since these results are more generalizable to larger LGBTQ-PoC communities. While the use of self-report measures may also be considered a limitation for the current study, the measures we used are common and have been validated in the broader literature. Additionally, self-report is often the only method possible for measuring constructs such as experiences of discrimination and sense of authenticity. We believe that having participants report their own personal experiences is a considerable strength since these issues are subjective and uniquely impact the lives of those who experience them. Finally, while many of our findings are correlational, this research is largely exploratory and represents a preliminary exploration of the relationships presented here. These results are quite novel and can help inform future work to explore these issues in greater depth.

Implications and Future Directions

Our results echo the importance of including an intersectional perspective in the study of workplace discrimination and authenticity. Considering the importance of authenticity for LGBTQ employee's experiences of workplace heterosexism can also help shed new light on the importance of marginalized identities in the workplace and organizational climate. While we primarily focused on the negative implications of workplace heterosexism on LGBTQ psychological well-being, we also believe that our findings are also important for job performance and career outcomes as well. There is strong evidence to support the fact that workplace heterosexism is negatively linked to poor job performance and generally negative career outcomes. Waldo (1999) found that LGBTQ employees who experience discrimination in the workplace are more likely to retreat from work (e.g. being late or absent) or leave positions prematurely. Similarly, Ragins and Cornwell (2001) found that workplace heterosexism is

negatively correlated to job and career attitudes for LGBTQ employees. Velez and Moradi (2012) recently found that workplace heterosexism is negatively related to job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and the perceived fit of employee's values with their organization. Similarly, Rabelo and Cortina (2014) found that heterosexist harassment is closely related to job attitudes, promoting decreased satisfaction at work and burnout. In general these attitudes can be quite detrimental to general job performance, increase turnover intentions, and negatively impact career progress (Fried, Shirom, Gilboa, & Cooper, 2008; Whitman, Van Rooy, & Viswesvaran, 2010).

LGBTQ employees are also strongly impacted by their perceptions of organizational climate for heterosexism. Workplace climate is quite important, having the ability to signal whether the organization is a safe space to disclose LGBTQ identity (Croteau, Bieschke, Fassinger, & Manning, 2008; Fassinger, 2000). Research suggests that perceptions of organizational climate for heterosexist issues is directly predictive of LGBTQ levels of outness, such that those who perceive their organization to be permissive of heterosexism are less likely to disclose their LGBTQ identity (Brenner, Lyons, & Fassinger, 2010). Additionally, LGBTQ employees also seem to manage their identity disclosure in distinct ways based on their perceptions of organizational climate. Styles of avoidance (i.e. withholding or altering) of sexual orientation identity information are positively related to climates that are perceived to be more permissive of heterosexism, while integrative styles (i.e. disclosing sexual orientation and actively managing the consequences) is linked with less heterosexism climates (Chrobot-Mason, Button, & DiClementi, 2001).

Our findings which illustrate a connection between authenticity and mindfulness are quite novel and suggest that the two constructs might be similar and based on similar psychological

processes. As Self-Determination Theory has suggested, authenticity is primarily a process of self-regulation of behavior to meet internal needs such as autonomy, self-determination, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Mindfulness has also been described as a self-regulatory process, however is more a practice of focusing attention, regulating emotions, and staying present (Hodgins & Knee, 2002). While this connection between authenticity and mindfulness is correlational, it could suggest that the practice of mindfulness might help manage sense of authenticity. In future studies, we hope to examine the practice of mindfulness to see if it can influence sense of authenticity directly through experimental and interventional methodologies.

We also plan to tease about the experiences of workplace heterosexism and authenticity for Latina and other women of color, to see if these findings are common among different populations. Our findings here point specifically to the importance of including gender and racial identity in the study of heterosexism and we believe that further exploration of this topic is warranted. Additionally, we want to explore the influence of workplace heterosexism and the importance of authenticity within specific workplace contexts (e.g. corporations, restaurant workers, or educators). Some workplaces may be more hostile towards LGBTQ women of color and others may not be. Exploring these contextual factors could help us gain a better understanding of the unique position these individuals occupy within the broader landscape of the workplace.

Conclusion

Social identities while often studied in isolation and separate from context, should be considered in relation to the broader environment. Specific to our study, these findings suggest that within the workplace ethnicity significantly influences the experience of LGBTQ employees and suggests that issues of discrimination are experienced differently based on race.

Additionally, authenticity seems to be of particular importance for LGBQ individuals. These findings raise interesting questions for several fields of study. For instance, how might clinicians, vocational coaches, managers, or human resource officers best support White and Latino/a LGBQ individuals? Our results suggest that LGBQ Latino/as, and perhaps other people of color, face more difficulty in the workplace with regard to heterosexism. Thus, these individuals may need different kinds of support and mentoring. For example, organizations might be able to provide LGBQ-PoC with a space for regular networking meetings. This could serve to connect individuals with similar identities to each other to find support and validation of their experiences within the organization. Similarly, more senior LGBQ-PoC employees could be partnered with newer employees to provide guidance and mentoring in navigating the challenges in the workplace. These partnerships could prove to be quite fruitful for both individuals in terms of increasing access to support and passing along best practices for being LGBQ-PoC within the work context. Though our results are quite novel, more research is needed to help elucidate the complex nature of multiple social identities on workplace heterosexism. Future research should consider how workplace heterosexism and experiences of authenticity influence workplace outcomes such as career commitment and advancement.

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Table III. 1. Study 2: Demographics split by Race/Ethnicity

		Overall (N = 229)	White (N = 142)	Latino/a (N = 87)
Gender	Men	44.60%	57.00%	16.10%
	Women	52.40%	35.20%	80.50%
	Transgender	3.00%	7.70%	3.30%
Education	Less than High School	0.90%	1.40%	0%
	High School	31.00%	6.30%	71.30%
	Vocational Training	7.00%	10.60%	1.10%
	Some College	12.70%	16.90%	5.70%
	Associates Degree	21.40%	25.40%	14.90%
	B.A./B.S.	15.30%	23.20%	2.30%
	Some Graduate School	6.60%	9.20%	2.30%
	M.A./M.S.	5.20%	7.00%	2.30%
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian	14.80%	19.70%	6.90%
	Gay	65.50%	54.20%	83.90%
	Bisexual	14.90%	19.70%	6.90%
	Queer	3.10%	6.30%	2.30%
Mean (Standard Deviation)				
Age (in years)		28.48 (6.09)	27.19 (3.14)	30.60 (2.55)
Income (\$)		56423.52 (37922.57)	\$50523.77 (\$41016.62)	\$66052.99 (\$30052.02)
Job Length (in years)		2.84 (2.94)	2.61 (5.73)	3.22 (6.12)

Table III. 2. Study 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Bivariate Correlations for Latino/a Participants

	Mean	SD	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	30.60	6.12	0.03	-0.32**	0.61**	0.60**	0.09	-0.25*	0.36**	-0.08	-.023*
2. Gender	1.93	0.68	—	-0.25*	-0.270*	-0.08	-0.40**	0.16	0.14	-0.03	-0.26*
3. Education	2.92	1.59		—	-0.11	-0.32**	0.36**	0.07	-0.48**	0.26*	0.47**
4. Income	66052.99	30052.02			—	0.46**	0.20	-0.46**	0.43**	-0.14	-0.24*
5. Job Length	3.22	2.55				—	0.00	-0.38**	0.43**	-0.05	-0.13
6. Workplace Heterosexism	1.27	0.72					—	-0.40**	0.50**	-0.16	-0.57**
7. Authenticity	4.05	0.42						—	-0.50**	-0.28*	0.42**
8. Depression	2.87	0.42							—	-0.10	-0.28*
9. Stress	3.00	0.31								—	-0.06
10. Mindful mindset	3.19	0.24									—

Note. * $p < .05$ & ** $p < .01$

Table III. 3. Study 2: Means, Standard Deviations, and Bivariate Correlations for White Participants

	Mean	SD	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Age	27.19	5.73	0.01	0.18*	.17*	0.27**	0.01	0.08	-0.10	-0.14	-0.12
2. Gender	1.59	0.93	—	-0.02	0.12	-0.11	-0.30*	0.11	-0.16	-0.13	-0.07
3. Education	5.00	1.62		—	0.08	0.09	0.15	0.05	0.05	-0.17*	0.10
4. Income	50523.77	41016.62			—	0.04	-0.04	-0.04	-0.01	-0.10	-0.12
5. Job Length	2.61	3.14				—	0.14	-0.26**	0.10	0.10	-0.08
6. Workplace Heterosexism	2.05	0.56					—	-0.53**	0.76**	0.268*	0.10
7. Authenticity	4.03	0.71						—	-0.63**	-0.37**	0.09
8. Depression	2.78	0.53							—	0.39**	0.25**
9. Stress	3.11	0.42								—	0.10
10. Mindful mindset	3.60	0.40									—

Note. * $p < .05$ & ** $p < .01$

Table III. 4. Study 2: Test of Moderated Mediation

	Latino/a	White
Predictors	b (SE)	
<i>Mediator variable model (predicting authenticity)</i>		
Gender	-0.65 (0.19)**	0.12 (0.17)
WHEQ	-0.47 (0.10)**	0.02 (0.15)
WHEQx Gender	0.32(0.14)*	-0.10 (0.17)
R^2	0.26	0.01
<i>Dependent variable model (predicting depression)</i>		
Gender	1.49 (1.01)	1.67 (0.40)**
WHEQ	.036 (0.10)**	-0.03 (0.08)
WHEQx Gender	-0.35 (0.14)*	0.08 (0.08)
Authenticity	-0.27 (0.12)*	-0.24 (0.07)**
Authenticity x Gender	-0.33 (0.23)	-0.37 (0.10)**
R^2	0.45	0.53
<i>Dependent variable model (predicting stress)</i>		
Gender	-0.73 (0.80)	0.57 (0.42)
WHEQ	-0.24 (0.08)**	-0.08 (0.08)
WHEQx Gender	0.22 (0.11)*	0.11 (0.09)
Authenticity	-0.33 (0.09)**	-0.10 (0.08)
Authenticity x Gender	0.09 (0.19)	-0.18 (0.10)
R^2	0.18	0.18
<i>Dependent variable model (predicting mindfulness)</i>		
Gender	1.00 (0.57)	0.95 (0.48)
WHEQ	-0.22 (0.06)**	-0.27 (0.09)**
WHEQx Gender	0.06 (0.08)	0.27 (0.10)**
Authenticity	0.18 (0.07)**	0.22 (0.09)*
Authenticity x Gender	-0.26 (0.13)	-0.25 (0.12)*
R^2	0.48	0.13

Note. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.001$

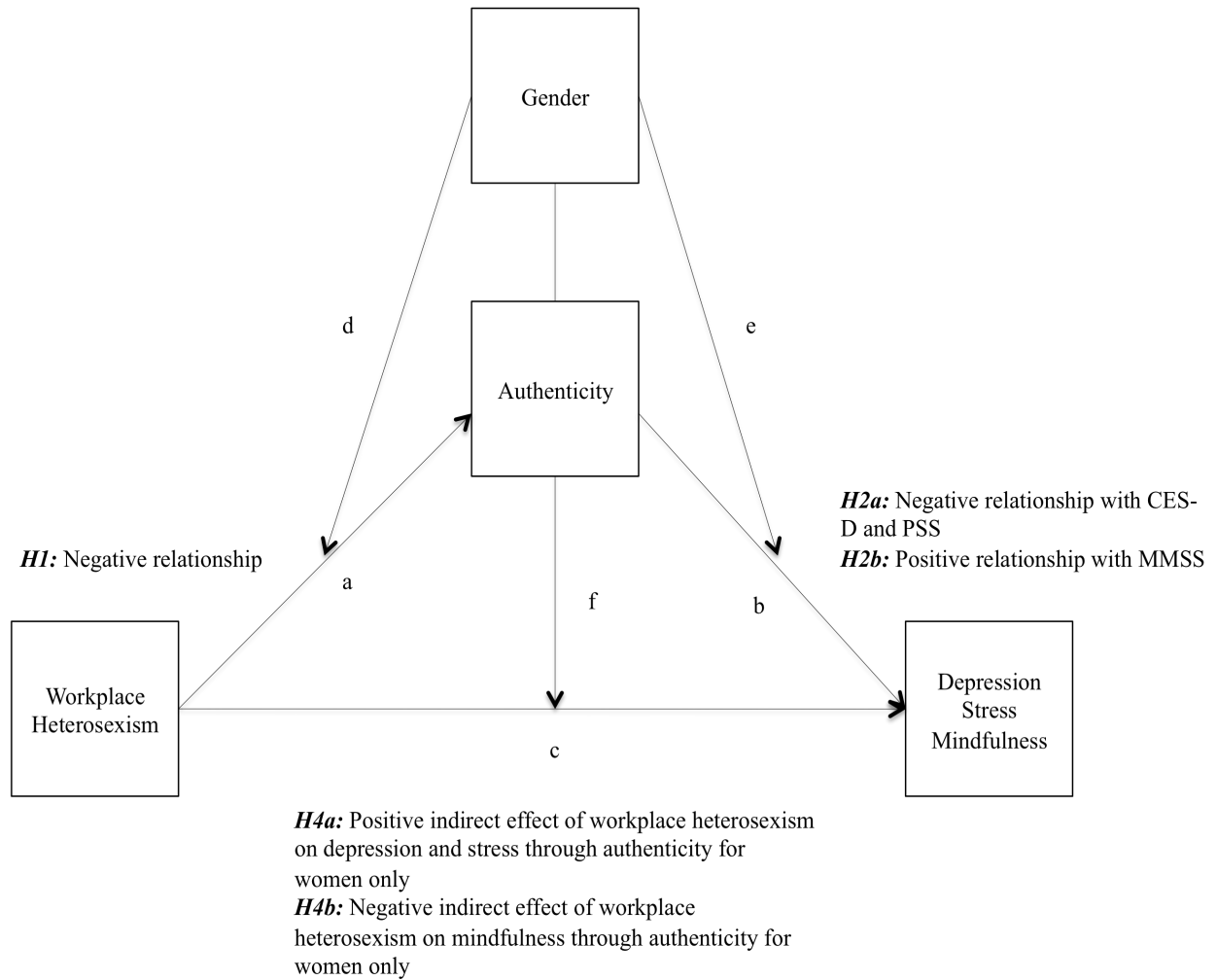


Figure III. 1. Proposed Conditional Mediation Model and Hypotheses for Workplace Heterosexism, Authenticity, and Well-Being Moderated by Gender in Study 2

Note. Proposed conditional mediation model and hypotheses for Workplace Heterosexism, Authenticity, and Well-being outcomes moderated by gender in Study 2. Well-being measures: Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), and Mindful Mindsets Scales (MMSS).

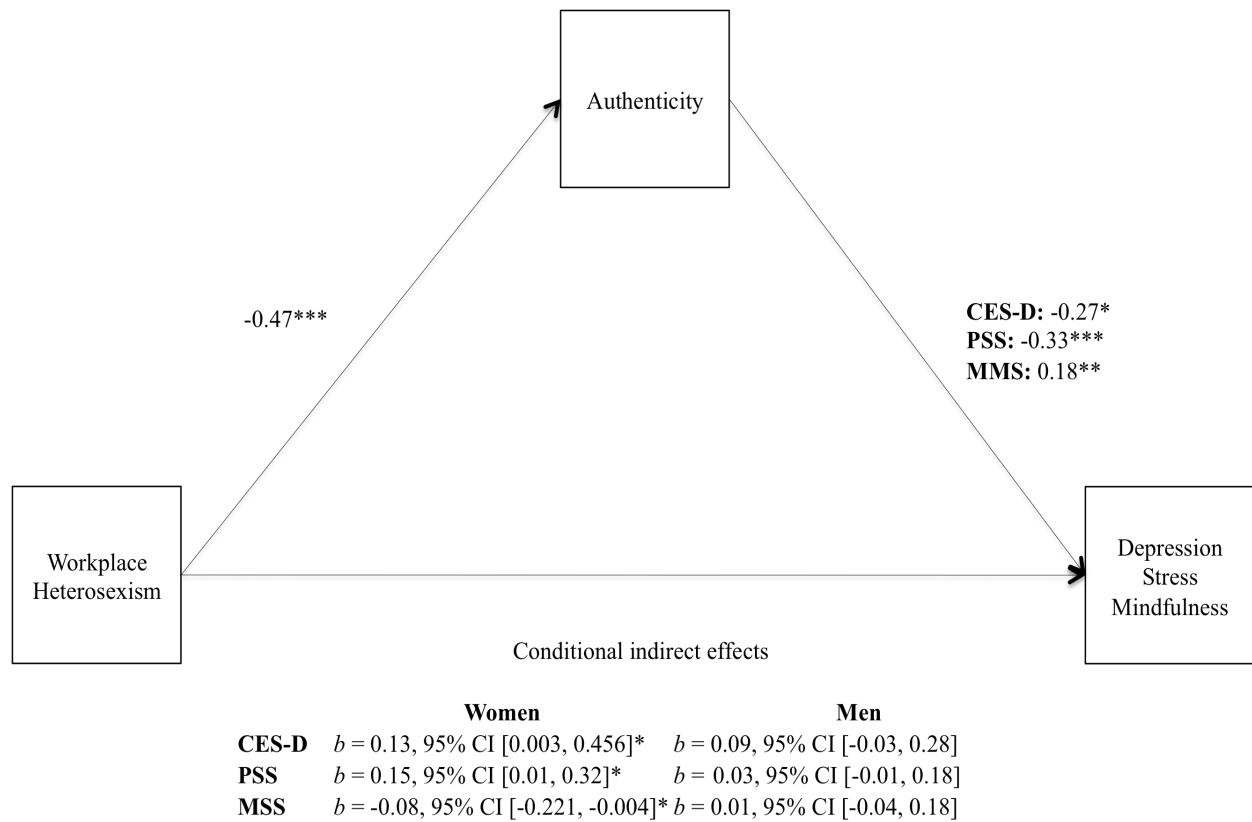


Figure III. 2. Moderated Mediation Model for Latino/a Participants

Note. Conditional direct and indirect effect coefficients are unstandardized. Asterisks for direct effects indicate significance of relationships ($*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$). The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI (BCa CI) based on 1,000 samples. Asterisks for indirect effect indicate significance based on BCa CI. $N = 87$.

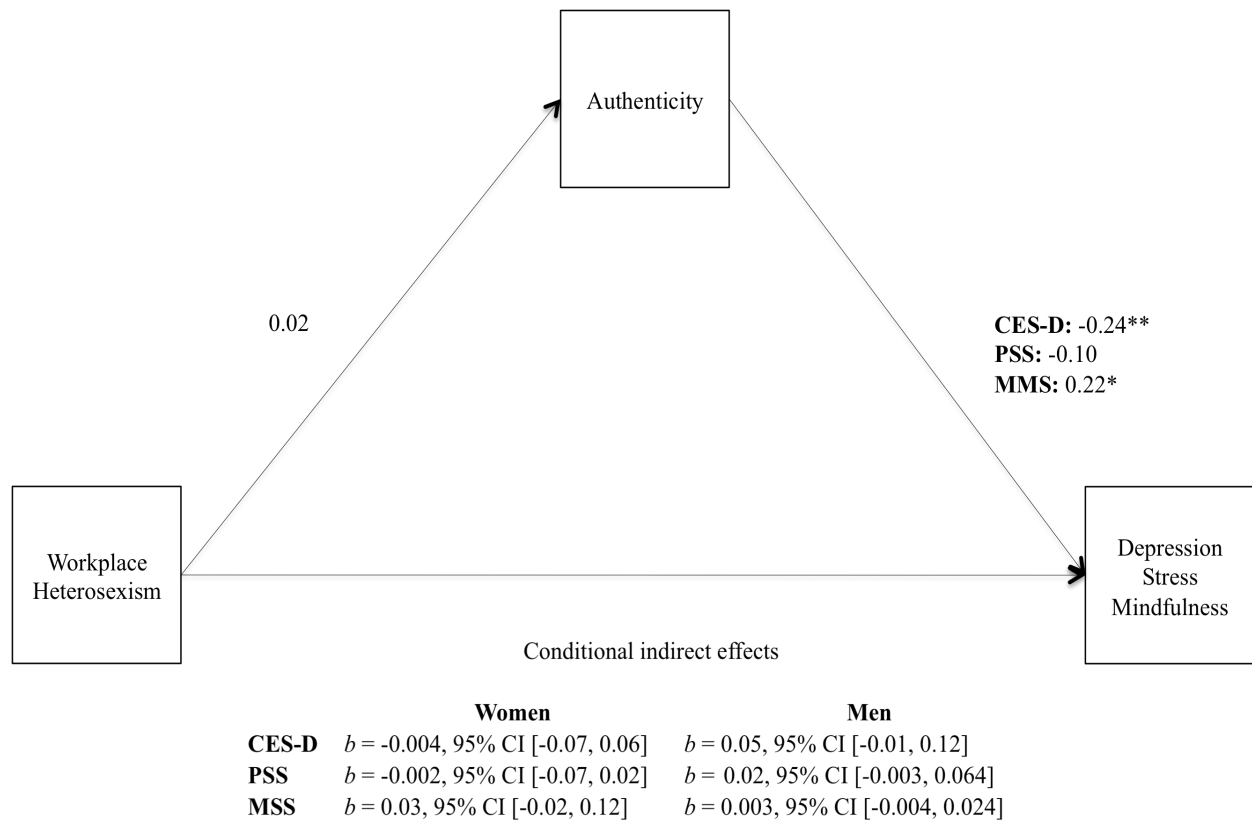


Figure III. 3. Moderated Mediation Model for White Participants

Note. Conditional direct and indirect effect coefficients are unstandardized. Asterisks for direct effects indicate significance of relationships (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$). The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI (BCa CI) based on 1,000 samples. Asterisks for indirect effect indicate significance based on BCa CI. $N = 142$.

CHAPTER IV

“I’m really good at just being myself”: The Importance of Authenticity for the Lives of LGBQ People of Color

Research in the area of workplace inclusion and diversity has considered many processes of diversity management and employee representation, but has largely focused on issues related to individuals with ‘visible’ identities, such as race and gender (Priola, Lasio, De Simone, & Serri, 2014). Little work has considered the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBQ) individuals whose identities are not always visible or must be actively concealed. Exploring issues of diversity and inclusion seems quite pertinent considering recent work, which has illustrated that approximate 15% to 43% of LBGQ employees report some form of discrimination at work (Badgett, Lau, Sears, & Ho, 2007). A more recent meta-analysis of 30 studies by Katz-Wise and Hyde (2012), found similar results indicating that 25% of LGBQ individuals in the US report workplace discrimination. Furthermore, a third of the studies covered in this meta-analysis considered direct comparisons between LGBQ and heterosexual individuals and found that LGBQ employees experienced significantly more discrimination than their heterosexual counterparts (Katz-Wise & Hyde, 2012) The negative implications of discrimination for LGBQ health and well-being is well known. Meyer (2003) suggests that these individuals face a unique form of stress, called minority stress that can lead to decreases in physical and psychological health.

The impacts of such discrimination may be considerably worse for LGBTQ people of color (PoC), who not only face experiences of heterosexism but also racism (Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller, 2003). Studies considering the impacts of marginalized identity often explore racial, gender, and sexual orientation identities in isolation or completely exclude them from consideration (Ferdman, 1999). While there has been considerable research regarding discrimination for racial and sexual minorities separately, little existing work considers the impacts of discrimination for those with multiple marginalized identities, specifically LGBTQ-PoC (Ragins et al., 2003). As intersectionality researchers have argued, no social identity exists within a vacuum, separate from other identities and the broader social context (Mahalingam & Leu, 2005). In fact, intersectionality emphasizes the multiplicative nature of social identities; suggesting that the unique positions of individuals on axes such as race, sexual orientation, and gender have distinct implications for their lived experience (Mahalingam & Rabelo, 2013). From this perspective, differences in privilege and oppression across these social classifications create unique individual experiences (Swank & Fahs, 2012). Thus, the experiences of a white gay man in a workplace context could be considerably different than a black lesbian woman. As Stewart & McDermott (2004) summarize, “a) no social group is homogenous, b) people must be located in terms of social structures that capture the power relations implied by those structures, and c) there are unique, non-additive effects of identifying with more than one social group” (pp. 531). Utilizing an intersectional perspective helps improve our overall understanding of LGBTQ individuals within organizational/workplace contexts and helps us avoid incomplete interpretations of their lived experience.

Approach

Our primary aim in the current study is to understand the lived experience of LGBTQ-PoC within organizational contexts. By using a qualitative perspective to access this information we hope to provide participants with a space to communicate their unique experiences without having to give up any of the innate complexity of their lives. Considering this qualitative perspective and our overall aim, we approached the design of this study and subsequent analysis, from a phenomenological perspective. Phenomenology, broadly defined, is the study of subjective experience and focuses on the concept of ‘lifeworld’— everyday lived experience (Anosike, Ehrich, & Ahmed, 2012; van Manen, 1990). For the researcher, using phenomenology as a methodology requires being present and considering the multidimensional nature of an individual’s experience (Giorgi, 2009). Belle, Burley, and Long (2014) indicate that using phenomenology allows the researcher to ask the question ‘what is it like?’ in order to produce a descriptive essence of an individual’s experience. Additionally, Groenewald (2004) indicates that using phenomenological methodology allows the researcher to explore the phenomenon from the perspective of those who interact with it in their daily lives. Thus, just as a lantern illuminates a dark room, so too can phenomenology help make clear the obscurities of a chosen phenomenon. (Shank & Villella, 2004). We used a phenomenological approach to illuminate the lived experiences of authenticity and compassion for LGBTQ-PoC individuals within organizational contexts.

Interpersonal factors within organizations

The importance of interpersonal relationships is becoming increasingly important in organizational research (Dutton, Workman, & Hardin, 2014). Recent work has suggested that interpersonal factors have a considerable impact on employee identity, well-being, and overall work progress (e.g. Dutton & Ragins, 2007; Gersick, Dutton, & Bartunek, 2000; Gittell &

Douglass, 2012). Among these interpersonal factors, authenticity and compassion have emerged as prominent phenomena of focus for organizational researchers (Dutton, Workman, & Hardin, 2014; van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). While much research has evaluated the importance of these phenomena within general and organizational contexts, there is an overall lack of research on what authenticity and compassion mean for marginalized individuals in organizations.

Issues of diversity management and inclusion within the workforce have gained considerable attention in recent years (Dobbin, 2009). While these types of initiatives vary widely, in general their aim is to reduce discrimination and increase diversity among marginalized groups within organizational contexts (Edelman, Fuller, & Mara-Drita, 2001). However, some research has suggested that diversity management initiatives do not often measure up to their own aims (e.g. increasing racial diversity) and can even lead to backlash by members of privileged groups within organizations (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006; Legault, Gutsell, & Inzlicht, 2011). Thus, while many organizations are embracing the use of diversity initiatives, it seems they may often fall short of providing adequate support for the diverse individuals they bring in.

We suggest that exploring the importance of authenticity and compassion for marginalized individuals within organizations can contribute greatly to our understanding of what is needed to provide adequate support for these individuals within potentially hostile environments. Authenticity, while commonly considered a trait of independence is actually strongly connected to feeling accepted and valued by others (Harter, Marold, Whitesell, & Cobbs, 1996; Neff & Harter, 2002). Compassion represents the ability of people to connect and communicate with others on an emotional level and to provide support through trial and suffering (Dutton, Workman, & Hardin 2014). Taken together, both authenticity and compassion

speak to the importance of valuing individuals within organizational structures and providing avenues for comfort, safety, and progress that can help any organization grow and thrive.

Authenticity

Vannini and Williams (2009), provide a comprehensive overview of the current discussion of authenticity within the various fields of social science. In their explanation, authenticity, while being the focus of research for several decades is still the subject of much definitional confusion. A common definition used in psychological literature comes from Goldman and Kernis (2002), who define the construct “as the unobstructed operation of one’s true or core self in one’s daily enterprise” (p. 18). Early conceptions of authenticity take a realist perspective, while more recent discussions consider it from a position of social-construction (Vannini & Williams, 2009). The realist perspective can be clearly summarized by looking at common dictionary definitions, which characterize authenticity as something that is “based in facts; accurate or reliable” and of “undisputed origin; genuine” (“authenticity,” 198). The realist perspective suggests that authenticity is best understood as an inherent characteristic of certain individuals; thus, representing something that cannot be stripped away or achieved because the individual simply is or is not authentic (Vannini & Williams, 2009).

In contrast, the social-constructionist view suggests that authenticity is far more malleable and is a phenomenon based in the landscape of society and culture, which is constantly changing (Peterson, 1997). This method of conceptualizing authenticity clearly illustrates the fact that it cannot be described as an immutable state, but rather a process of representation, whereby individuals and groups seek to become more aligned with particular qualities that are seen as ideal in a particular time and place (Vannini & Williams, 2009). Thus, it seems that authenticity can be understood as “ultimately an evaluative concept” (Van Leeuwen et al., 2006,

pp. 392). As such, authenticity would seem to refer more to how we evaluate others and ourselves against internally held and cultural values. These values are not static, however, and are subject to the flux of cultural beliefs, practices, and tastes. In the end authenticity seems to be best described by its ever-changing nature and definition. While on a basic level, it can be understood as the expression of one's internal thoughts and feelings one must also take into account the current social context, to gain an accurate understanding of how authenticity is manifested and experienced.

Much research has shown that authenticity is positively related to psychological well-being (e.g. Ménard & Brunet, 2011; Toor & Ofori, 2009) and negatively related to anxiety, stress, and depression (e.g. Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997). Erikson (1968) considered authenticity as one of the prime indicators of identity achievement. Similarly, authenticity has been shown to be important for organizational culture as well in areas such as leader/team relations, productivity, and general behavior (Hannah, Walumbwa, & Fry, 2011). Other researcher have also found that perceptions of having an authentic organizational climate were negatively related to emotional fatigue and burnout (Grandey, Foo, Groth, & Goodwin, 2012). On an individual level, authenticity is beneficial for employee well-being, work engagement, personal accomplishment, and job satisfaction (Ménard & Brunet, 2011; van den Bosch & Taris, 2013). Authenticity has also been shown to be beneficial for organizational leaders and general team outcomes (Spitzmuller & Ilies, 2010; Hannah et al., 2011).

Though authenticity has typically been considered as universally important for well-being, growth, and stability, research considering cultural perspectives suggests that the relative importance of authenticity may vary depending on cultural context. For example, Some research has suggested that individuals from more interdependent cultures (those cultures more concerned

with issues of social connection, Triandis, 1990) consider outward expressions of internal thoughts or feelings, as unimportant for psychological well being (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). People in interdependent cultures, characterized as those concerned more with social connectedness than autonomy, are suggested to conform more to social situations and thus do not confront issues of feeling false or inauthentic (Markus, Mullally, & Kitayama, 1997). Those from independent cultures, characterized by valuing autonomy, are more likely to experience self-promotion and thus would find social conformity to be harmful to their well-being (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). However, recent research considering Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2004) suggests that once the primary psychological needs of connectedness, autonomy, and competence are satisfied authenticity can arise. Additionally, this perspective also suggests that the need to make authentic personal choices is a requirement for psychological well-being which spans all cultural contexts (Deci & Ryan, 2004). Thus, it may be that differences in cultural perceptions of authenticity simply definitional in nature. One of our primary aims in the current investigation is to explore the definitions and conceptualizations of authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC for comparison to common understandings presented in the literature.

Authenticity for LGBTQs. For lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer (LGBTQ) individuals, issues of authenticity and self-presentation are crucial to expressions of identity. Huston (2010) found that for LGBTQ individuals, appearance and self-presentation cues feelings of authenticity and helps them recognize shared sexual orientation identity with others. Additionally, the desire for authenticity can be a motivating factor for self-reflection and maintaining alignment between internal values/desires and behaviors. Unlike other social identities, sexual orientation can be considered more invisible since it is not readily observable and heterosexuality is often expected

as the default (Clair, Beatty, Maclean, 2005). For LGBTQ individuals, coming out is associated with increased well-being and authenticity (Hutson, 2010). Yet, the decision to come out is not an easy one to make especially in organizational settings where the invisibility of sexual orientation identity is much more pronounced (Ragins, 2004). In fact research on LGBTQ individuals in the workplace has suggested that they carefully consider coming out at work; weighing the benefits of coming out and being authentic with the possibility of facing rejection, job loss, or even assault because of prejudice attitudes (D'Augelli & Grossman, 2001; Herek, Cogan, & Gillis, 2002). While concealing ones' LGBTQ identity may provide protection from some of these issues, the act of concealing comes with its own set backs including stress, decreased well-being and authenticity, and distancing from colleagues (Meyer, 2003; Smith & Ingram, 2004).

Furthermore, the decision to come out may be considerably more difficult for LGBTQ-PoC. Several studies have indicated that LGBTQ-PoC fear negative consequences (e.g. job loss and social rejection) of coming out in the workplace (D'Augelli & Grossman, 2001; Herek, Cogan, & Gillis, 2002). This fear may stem from the perception that coming out will result in even more experiences of discrimination for LGBTQ-PoC (Kanter, 1977). In fact, Ragins and colleagues (2003) found that as compared to Whites, LGBTQs of color were in fact less likely to come out in the workplace. This evidence, while not explicitly linked with the construct of authenticity, suggests that for LGBTQ-PoC sexual orientation identity disclosure is quite difficult, thus representing a major challenge to maintenance of psychological authenticity.

Compassion

Compassion, broadly defined, comprises an interpersonal process of “noticing, feeling, sense making, and acting that alleviates the suffering of another person” (Dutton et al., 2014, p.

277). Research has highlighted the importance of compassion for the recipient, suggesting benefits in healing from physical condition (Brody, 1992) and psychological distress (Bento, 1994). Similarly, compassion has been shown to increase positive emotions and reduce negative emotions in the workplace (Lilius et al., 2008) and increase sense of attachment and commitment to organizations (Grant, Dutton, & Ross, 2008). Additionally, acts of compassion have been linked with feelings of worth, dignity, and feeling valued within organizations (Dutton et al., 2012; Frost, 2003).

Compassion also has considerable implications for how people see themselves and find authenticity at work. For example, research has suggested that compassion helps individuals see themselves as more capable, others as caring, and the larger organization as more understanding (Lilius et al., 2008). Furthermore, compassion has significant benefits for *providers* (i.e. those who are compassionate to others) including feeling greater satisfaction from helping and being more prosocial in interpersonal interactions (Stamm, 2002; Grant et al., 2008). Acting compassionately has also been shown to demonstrate stronger leadership and intelligence in organizational settings (Melwani, Mueller, & Overbeck, 2012). However, the most profound effect is found in the relationship between those who provide and those who receive compassion. Research suggests that providers and recipients in work settings have shown stronger connections to one another through deepening trust as well as continuous reciprocity of compassion within the relationship (Clark, 1987; Dutton, Lilius, & Kanov, 2007; Powley, 2009).

Yet, much of this research does not consider the unique implications for LGBTQ-PoC in organizational contexts. In order to do that, it is critical to understand what these terms mean to for these individuals and how enacting them can improve their overall experience. By understanding how these individuals define and deploy compassion and authenticity, we can also

create better strategies for providing support for encouraging success within organizational structures. Thus, by dissecting how LGBTQ-PoC individuals interact with their own identities and with others, we can delve more deeply what they need to maintain balance and healthy relationships.

In the current project, we investigate the importance of both authenticity and compassion for LGBTQ-PoC individuals in their lives more broadly and in specific organizational contexts. To understand how these constructs impact LGBTQ-PoC well-being and success, we explore their narratives around discrimination, identity, and relationships from a phenomenological perspective. We examined three primary research questions: (Q1) How do LGBTQ-PoC define and make sense of authenticity and compassion? (Q2) How are compassion and authenticity impacted by experiences of discrimination? and (Q3) How are compassion and authenticity influenced in organizational contexts?

Method

Participants

Participants were 14 self-identified gay ($N= 5$), lesbian ($N= 4$), queer ($N= 4$), and pansexual ($N= 1$) individuals. Eight participants identified as Black/African-American, three identified as Multiracial, two identified as Latino/a/Hispanic, and one identified as Asian. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 33 ($M= 25.7$, $SD= 4.23$) and were highly educated: four participants reported graduate degrees, seven reported college degrees, one reported some college education, and two reported a high school degree. Seven participants identified as women, six identified as men, and one participant did not identify as part of the gender binary. Table IV.1 displays the demographic break down for each participant. All names and identifying information of the participants have been altered to maintain confidentiality.

Participants were recruited using snowball sampling in a large Midwestern metropolitan area. The researchers first recruited two individuals known to fit the study criteria and asked them to refer others. To determine eligibility, participants were screened via phone to verify that they identified as a Person of Color, LGBTQ and were at least 18 years old. I served as the sole interviewer and conducted all interviews in a private room on the university campus between January and March of 2014.

Procedures

Interviews were semi-structured to allow participants the room to describe their lived experiences in a detailed and thoughtful way. I followed a set interview protocol consisting of warm-up topics, core questions, and follow up questions (Appendix A). Interviews ranged in length from one to one and a half hours and were digitally recorded. After each interview, I spent approximately 20 minutes reflecting and taking notes on my perceptions of the participant and interview in general. These notes included my observations of the participants' body language, facial expressions, mood, demeanor, any distractions that arose during the interview, as well as any important information that was not recorded. Once completed these notes were used later with the transcripts as part of the overall method of analyzing the data. Participants were compensated with a \$20 Visa gift card.

Data Analysis

Phenomenology. We used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; see Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009), a systematic method for interpreting first person accounts of unique psychological phenomena, to analyze this data. IPA aims to describe an individual's unique lived experience as well as the shared experiences of a specific group. This method also helps the researcher situate personal meaning within a specific context (Larkin & Eatough, 2011). Using

this method, the investigator's role is to interpret participants' lived experiences. The participant is seen as the expert describing his/her experiences and interactions with the phenomena in question. IPA is derived from the hermeneutic phenomenology perspective of Heidegger, which views the personal and social as intertwined (Smith, et al., 2009). Therefore, instead of considering individual experience in a vacuum, IPA allows the investigator to consider the *person-in-context* (Larkin & Eatough, 2011). The interviewer must interpret these narratives to give light to the deeper meaning of these everyday experiences. IPA is a preferred method of analysis used in marginalized populations since it requires the researcher to carefully attend to the lived experiences of individuals who are frequently silenced by common assumptions about their lives (Griffin & Mays, 2012). Contextual factors also play a large role in understanding the situated nature of the individual's experience. Recognizing the intersectional nature of human identity and experience, the researcher must also recognize the importance of the context that directly impacts the participant's subjective awareness of the phenomenon in question.

We followed the steps for IPA analysis as outlined in Smith et al. (2009). After audio recordings were transcribed, we conducted several close readings of the interviews to gain an understanding of the participants' experiences and to highlight areas for further focus and connection across interviews. We subsequently identified important conceptual themes, which we brought together into unique clusters for each interview text. Next, we looked for patterns and connections across interviews. At this step several themes were re-evaluated or re-arranged for clarity. Initial analysis was preliminarily descriptive and subsequently progressed in a more interpretative fashion. We then carefully selected excerpts to represent and describe each theme.

Positionality. The researcher must also take stock in their positionality within the context of the investigation. Recognizing that the researcher will have their own subjective notions

allows for thoughtful interaction with these notions such that they will not arise in such a way that unduly biases the research practice. This is of particular importance for researchers within the social sciences who engage in critical research, which takes a moral or political stance. Many researchers claim that any influence of a researcher's ideology or positionality on the research design introduces bias and should be avoided. However, opposing views claim that all research is impacted by the positionality of the researcher. Griffith (1998) states that "bias comes not from having ethical and political positions – this is inevitable – but from not acknowledging them. Not only does such acknowledgment help to unmask any bias that is implicit in those views, but it helps to provide a way of responding critically and sensitively to the research" (p.133). From this perspective it becomes clear that acknowledging researchers positionality is not only necessary to avoid bias, but is also helpful in promoting critical discussion about the overall research process and outcomes.

Considering the overall focus and aims of this study, my positionality as the primary researcher is important to consider. I have approached the design and process of this study to help promote a perspective that is commonly marginalized or ignored all together in this area of study. My focus on the lives of LGBTQ-PoC is also driven by my own personal identities as a gay black man. Taken together, these two motives speak clearly of my primary ideology to conduct critical social research to promote discussions LGBTQ-PoC experiences and perspectives.

Results and Discussion

Our overall aim in this investigation was to explore the ways that LGBTQ-PoC individuals define and interact with the phenomena of authenticity and compassion, specifically with respect to of discrimination. Four primary themes emerged from our data analysis:

1. *Authenticity as a situated process*: ‘Actually engaging with your surroundings and contexts’
2. *Negotiating authenticity in difficult contexts*: ‘It’s not always easy being who you are’
3. *Compassion requires being able to listen*: ‘so many people don’t get heard’
4. *Compassion is an active process of engagement*: ‘compassion is almost like a step towards action’

We have selected excerpts from the transcribed interviews to be used as examples and to help us describe the significance of each theme.

Authenticity as a Situated Process: ‘Actually Engaging with your Surroundings and Contexts’

Research has commonly placed strong emphasis on the importance of the individual for the development of authenticity. The person-centered approach suggests that the influence of external forces (i.e. other people) can detract from authenticity. Researchers from this perspective suggest that accepting external influence (i.e. conforming to the desires of others) strongly impacts an individual’s sense of authentic living (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008). While such external influences may be deleterious in the experiences of authenticity for some individuals, the social constructionist perspective would suggest that authenticity is contingent on social location and context. Therefore, for some individuals, external influence may not be as hindrance to their maintenance of authenticity. In considering the LGBTQ-PoC community, we found that the idea of external influence detracting from authenticity was not frequently supported.

In our study of LGBTQ-PoC almost all participant referenced the importance of others, in their definitions and discussions of authenticity. When asked about ‘being real’, Desmond, a 27-

year-old multiracial gay man, said: “actually engaging with your surroundings and context. Actually engaging with what’s there and not assuming that it’s another setting.” Desmond’s statement suggests that authenticity is being able to actively engage with what the current context or situation, which is referenced in the social constructionist perspective. His description illustrates the importance of being present and honest about one’s current situation. Furthermore, while he does not explicitly reference others, his consideration of context shows a perspective that is not fully isolated or independent. While this definition clearly indicates the importance of knowing oneself, we can see that context and environment is key in experiencing authenticity as well. When asked to explain his understanding of authenticity more, Desmond describes the importance of specific people and contexts:

“I like quiet people because I think they engage in a way that just, like, I don’t know allows space to people who could... to come to a good balance. They’re not trying to push their way into engaging with someone of making a show of something.”

He gives a thoughtful explanation of how *listening* and *space* as contextual factors that are important for being himself. His reference to ‘quite people’ suggests that he feels comfortable enough around these types of people to be his authenticity self and that these relationships provide a sense of space. Additionally, it appears that these types of people are not forceful or coercive and may simply provide a space for him to be his real. What is most interesting from this narrative is the fact that the space and balance described by Desmond is the product of being around a certain type of person and not being on his own. When we consider the challenges of LGBTQ-PoC identity, it becomes clear that being authentic can be difficult in many contexts. Specifically, organizations can be difficult places for these individuals to feel and express their authenticity based on the prevailing organizational culture and environment. Thus,

the issue of providing space for these individuals to find their own balance seems critical in supporting them fully, especially in organizational systems.

Many participants included descriptions of how they felt around others or specific spaces that allowed them to feel more authentic. Alex, a 25-year-old Queer White/Hispanic individual said:

“When I think about being authentic, I think about how I am with my partner and how I am with my mother and how I am with my really close friends. When I think about what that’s like, I think about it as not having fear of repercussion of anything that I say or do or mistakes or any kind of thing, just not having fear of repercussion and really being in the moment without having to filter myself extra.”

This quote provides clear contexts of where authenticity is most commonly experienced. The participant highlights the spaces and people in which she feel most comfortable, and thus, most authentic with. Additionally, Alex suggests that authenticity is not having fear from backlash against who she is or how she presents herself. This is an important concept as it connects with the shared experiences of many marginalized communities who experience discrimination and prejudice. Research suggests that experiences of discrimination in general and in organizations, work to undermine authenticity, well-being, and work success (Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller, 2003). In organizational contexts specifically, the expectation of discrimination among LGBTQ-PoC has been found to trigger some of these negative outcomes. Thus, for LGBTQ-PoC individuals both the expectation and actual experience of discrimination are traumatic and threatening events. As a consequence, these individuals often enact methods of filtering or concealing their identities to avoid such negative reprisals. While these forms of self-preservation have been documented well in broader LGBTQ communities (Ragins, 2004), we expect that they are present for LGBTQ-PoC as well and may even represent the potential for more stress since they must contend with multiple forms of discrimination simultaneously. Cole

(2009) encourages psychological researchers to interrogate the role of inequality in describing the experiences and perspectives of multiply marginalized individuals. Considering how LGBTQ-PoC experience heterosexism, racism, and other forms of stigma from an intersectional perspective helps us understand their position within the social categories of race and sexual orientation. Thus, intersectionality encourages us to move past thinking of the individuals as the sum of their identities and consider how the social categories, which label them, impact their overall experience. Alex underscores this in her narrative and suggests that spaces where she feels safe are those in which she is free to express herself without the fear of repercussions.

Some participants gave nuanced definitions of authenticity that spoke to the importance of personal intention and interpersonal connection, such as Kristina, a 26-year-old queer Asian woman: “I’ve had to realize, that being authentic really comes from the intention that I feel personally, and if other people can relate or if they see themselves in me, then that is also an authentic experience.” Participants did reinforce notions of authenticity coming from personal commitment and suggest that one must have an individual intention to maintain authenticity. However, they also connected these notions with the idea that authenticity is sustained through interactions with others. Here, we can see that Kristina is expressing her idea of authenticity coming from an internal desire and need for fulfillment. She also suggests that to her being able to relate to her is important for her own sense of authenticity. As previously mentioned, common definitions of authenticity emphasize the importance of internal desires while trying to avoid the influence of others in developing authenticity. While Kristina is acknowledging the importance of her independent initiative to develop authenticity, she also emphasizes value and support of being able to connect with others. This may be especially true for LGBTQ-PoC who, while faced with considerable challenges to their well-being and authenticity, often rely on vital support

structures (family, friends, partners). Though some perspectives may claim that this detracts from authenticity, these networks may actually be critical for reinforcing their authenticity and sense of self.

Negotiating Authenticity in Difficult Contexts: ‘It’s not Always Easy Being who you are’

One of the most common themes to arise from these interviews highlights the challenges of authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC. Almost all participants described the difficulties of being authentic in certain environments or at specific times in their lives, but further emphasized the importance of overcoming such challenges to be their authentic selves. When asked about the importance of being authentic, Ash, a 26-year-old Black Lesbian woman, spoke clearly about the overcoming the inherent difficulties:

“It’s not leaving parts of you behind even when it’s convenient to. Like, and doing it even if it is scary. Its not always easy being who you are. So to be authentically you, you have to do it even when it’s uncomfortable.”

While much research highlights the necessity for authentic sense of identity and self, there is very little description of its challenges. Ash hints at the challenge that many LGBTQ individuals face to disclose or conceal their sexual orientation identity. Her narrative references the broader difficulties of authenticity and the necessity to confront such challenges. This represents a critical point in explaining the importance of authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC. As we have mentioned, these individuals face multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization from various sources and in many contexts. Thus, the experience of fear and discomfort due to their identities is common and is a constant source of stress. Yet, most participants disavowed the possibility of dropping off a part of their identity or concealment as an option for avoiding this stress. They reaffirmed the importance of being authentic as critical to understanding their own sense of self and connection to the broader context. Given the marginalized status of these

participants, their narratives emphasize the difficulties involved in being authentic in a society that often lacks acceptance for difference. Ash's statement suggests that being open about these identities can potentially be uncomfortable or difficult, but is necessary to maintain an authentic sense of self.

Participants frequently discussed the difficulties of their identities and being in spaces where they did not feel connected to a community. Regina, a 19 year old Black Lesbian Woman, discussed the difficulty she felt being herself when she began attending a college that was primarily white and heterosexual:

“I do recall my first days here at the university and having such a culture shock in a way, it was a lot to deal with and I almost questioned my identity on campus, like well do I actually fit in, am I accepted here? Cause I don't see too many individuals like me. So it could have been easy for me to not be authentic but I found my way as far as making my presence known as an individual and not conforming to what I see around me or faking my life.”

Regina references the importance of being around others who shared her identities and what it is like to be in spaces where the majority of people are dissimilar. For instance, she illustrates how difficult it was for her to be at a school where most people were white and heterosexual, unlike herself. She communicates how she questioned her own identity and considered changing her own self-expression to attempt to fit in with those around her. In her estimation, the choice to change or conceal who she is could have been an easy decision to make since there was much pressure for her to conform. However, she eventually rejected this choice and instead elected to embrace her identity more strongly. This demonstrates her willingness to adhere to her authentic sense of self regardless of the pressure around her (i.e. concealment). Additionally, she seems to struggle with the fact that there are not many others who look like her. Thus, she highlights the importance of community and being able to connect with those who share her identities and experience. Her statements elucidate the connection between authenticity

and relatedness to others that is often not discussed in authenticity literature. Regina, along with other participants, clearly expresses the importance of finding shared identity with others and being able to form community through shared experience.

Research in this area typically fails to consider the implications of authenticity for marginalized individuals and in doing so perpetuates an understanding of authenticity that is rooted in the dominant group narrative. Yet, the narratives explicated here illustrate that authenticity is not always something easily or naturally achieved, but is still extremely important to maintain. As we expected, most participants had numerous traumatic experiences with discrimination and marginalization. These instances usually took place in institutions and organizations where they were among the minority and were often devalued and stigmatized because of their identities. For instance Ash spoke at length about a faculty member who often challenged her personally while providing critiques of her work:

“He would make comments like, I mean, ‘its about black people being lazy’ and you know 'you just don’t think that you have to work as hard' and I would have to be like 'well actually we have to work twice as hard thank you, because I have to work through that bull-shit that you are saying out of your mouth, and I have to do the work that you are giving me and I have to take the faulty critique that you are giving me because you think that I am not working hard enough, thanks.”

Her experience with this professor proved to be quite a challenging interaction and pushed her to actively question herself. We can see from her statements that the professor openly directed racist attitudes toward her as a method of critiquing both her work and who she is as an individual. This is a prime example of the discrimination felt by LGBTQ-PoC individuals, which can challenge their ability to maintain an authentic sense of self. Understandably, these experiences had a profound effect on her and caused her to actively question many aspects of herself. Later on in her narrative, she talked about how the relationship with this professor degraded her mental and physical health significantly. She clearly counters his assertion of

laziness by illustrating how much work she, and other minority individuals, must actually go through to sustain themselves on a daily basis. Instead of succumbing to these challenges, she demonstrates her resolve to be authentically herself and affirm the importance of her identity. While the professor consistently degraded her in public she pushes back, despite feelings denigrated, and advocates for herself in a way that reaffirms her own sense of authenticity. This highlights the critical nature of authenticity for marginalized people. While the maintenance of authenticity is difficult for most, we must acknowledge that it is exponentially more challenging for those individuals who are constantly criticized and degraded because of their social identities.

Leslie, a 30-year-old Black Lesbian, expressed a similar sentiment regarding authenticity. As a teenager, she was kicked out of her home and left to find her own way in a large city because of her sexual orientation, yet characterizes a distinct commitment to maintaining an authentic sense of self: “After you lose everything because of who you are, it's really important to me to be exactly that and move with it. I owe it to myself to constantly be all of those things.” Leslie expressed one of the most profound statements about the importance of authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC. Overall, she emphasizes the importance of persevering and maintaining truthfulness to oneself despite pressure, discrimination, and challenge.

As we have seen the importance of authenticity for LGBTQ-PoCs is quite evident and represents a critical aspect of how they see themselves on a daily basis. Unlike common definitions of authenticity, that focus primarily on independent attributes, these participants described the trait as something that they actively used to engage with others and navigate their social environments. While many participants highlighted the importance of relying on oneself for constructing authentic identities, they also illustrated the critical role of loved ones and a supportive social network in reinforcing and validating their self-perceptions. These definitions

are underscored by the considerable challenges of discrimination, marginalization, and prejudice, faced by many participants. These challenges can often work to undermine the ability of these individuals to maintain their own authenticity. While participants consistently described these experiences as difficult and even traumatic, they also expressed their ability to persevere and use their own sense of authenticity to carry them through. In the end, while some of these challenges did lead to deleterious health effects, these individuals seemed to grow through the difficulties and rely on their identities and sense of self even more strongly to maintain balance.

Compassion Requires Being Able to Listen: ‘So Many People don’t get Heard’

Listening was a common action participants used to describe and define compassion. Many either explicitly stated that listening was a method of expressing/communicating compassion or alluded to it as important in some aspect of their compassionate interactions with others. Marc, a 25-year-old Latino queer man, described it quite succinctly when asked what compassion meant to him:

“I think listening. I think so many people don't get heard. Listening is one important way of showing compassion. I think sharing to the extent that is possible and sort of ethical, sharing other peoples struggle, is sort of problem solving.”

Marc clearly illustrates the importance of being listened to, particularly for individuals who may often be ignored. Thus, for him, showing compassion through actively listening to someone is critical and is a form of helping. This emphasis on listening illustrates the active component of compassion, which is common in many participant narratives. Additionally, the mention of individuals who are not listened to references the marginality faced by many individuals, specifically LGBTQ-PoC. The act of listening, described by Marc, demonstrates the importance of compassion for these individuals who may expect to be ignored or silenced based due to their marginalized identities. Being able to actually listen to someone, hear what his or her problems

are, and then act is critical particularly for those who face issues of discrimination. This also speaks to the importance of being able to keep space for listening for those who are going through moments of struggle or difficulty.

Sarah, a 32-year-old black lesbian woman, expressed a similar sentiment: "...compassion to me means having empathy, and care and concern for the well being of others and yourself. It looks like listening, first and foremost it looks like space for me to be who I am." The connection between listening and compassion is quite telling of the way that these participants interact with those around them. Listening is a clear indicator for these participants of compassionate expression, connection, and having the space to be authentic. While they do not indicate if a certain disposition of the listener is necessary, these narratives suggest that it is not necessarily about being in agreement or responding but more about an individual showing up for them and dedicating the time and energy to simply listen.

The importance of listening becomes even clearer when we consider the impact for LGBTQ-PoC in environments where they do not feel heard. Along with describing listening as an expression of compassion, participants also described the feeling of being ignored or silence as the opposite of being shown compassion. Kristina describes experiences of being silenced at her job. In her explanation of being a person of color and a Lesbian in a primarily white and heterosexual space, she illustrates how white men are commonly the first to speak and most listened too, while those from marginalized identities are usually tasked with speaking for their entire group and are frequently not taken seriously in their comments:

"When I throw in something, say the facilitator of the conversation, boss, sort of brushes what I say aside sort of like, 'oh thanks, thanks for contributing that' and moves on with the conversation. And doesn't actually do anything with it. It just happened, like a fart. Like it just happened and its like 'okay, that just happened and lets get over it, that was uncomfortable. Why would she bring that up in a public space?' And then everyone moves on."

This experience describes situations that are common for LGBTQ-PoC who often feel devalued, silenced, or ignored in spaces where they are the minority. On one hand LGBTQ-PoC may feel marginalized and silenced, they can also be hyper-visible in spaces where they are the only representative of their communities. In those situations where they are silenced, the context or culture is actively working to devalue and undermine how they represent themselves. For those who feel hyper-visible, being the sole representative or speaker for their community can be considerably stressful and overwhelming. Either scenario presents difficulties for the well-being and success of LGBTQ-PoC individuals in organizational contexts. The likelihood of these experiences happening are high and point toward the importance of providing space, the ability to be heard, and comfort for these individuals to accurately represent and express themselves.

In fact, many individuals suggested that compassion, specifically through listening, was an important method for connecting with others. Desmond spoke about what compassion means for him and why it is important:

“Compassion is recognizing another persons experiences as real, and valid. I think that’s really important and I think that if you don’t show compassion then you close yourself off to so much in life so yeah that’s important.”

Desmond reasserts the importance of listening for showing compassion and also emphasizes the necessity to let others be themselves and validate their own experiences. This contrasts the previous experiences Kristina described where her experiences were not validated or supported. Desmond also suggests that showing compassion is a way of opening oneself up to others and broader experiences, and that this process is in fact quite important for personal well-being. Opening up to others is potentially critical for this population considering the common experience of rejection and marginalization many LGBTQ-PoC face. Many participants expressed the importance of sharing in the good and bad of others as an important method of relating to

others. In these experiences, they were able to bring their own past to bear on the situation of another person to help them navigate the challenges in a meaningful way. Kristina exemplifies this when she creates a distinction between sympathetic and empathetic ways of being compassionate:

“I think there is a big difference between someone who is compassionate because they are sympathetic about an issue or empathetic about an issue...empathy for me requires some sense of authenticity in the conversation. I think sympathy can be as easy as saying, ‘oh there are poor people in the world, that’s really sad.’ Empathy is feeling that pain and understanding how that pain or that joy, whatever that feeling is and resonating it with my self...it requires a follow up and accountability to an extent. Cause I can always feel bad for people if I want to but feeling bad about something and recognizing how the person going through it and I can connect and do something about it. That’s definitely deeper and meaningful.”

Her narrative is quite insightful and speaks to a deeper understanding of compassion that gets to the heart of engaging with others. Kristina’s emphasis on empathy suggests that she is not only concerned with showing pity for what others are going through but in actively engaging with them. She also connects her understanding of compassion with authenticity, indicating that empathy is an authentic way of connecting with others, while sympathy is merely surface level. While Kristina was the most descriptive in creating this distinction, many participants communicated similar understandings of compassion. Mostly, participants used compassion to describe how they felt in connection with those they felt the most comfortable around and how they could freely express themselves in such spaces.

Compassion is an Active Process of Engagement: ‘Compassion is Almost like a Step Towards Action’

The importance of compassion in the lives of LGBTQ-PoC is quite evident from these narratives. Many participants described compassion as something much more than an emotional reaction: “I think compassion is almost like a step towards action and doing something on behalf

of whatever you feel compassionate about.” Alex exemplified a common description of compassion as action. Atkins and Parker (2012) discuss the importance of action in the compassionate response to suffering in organizations. They argue that action in this case represents the behaviors of another person who is attempting to remedy the suffering of an individual. In general, compassionate actions are multidimensional and can take many forms including concrete (providing material or monetary support) and abstract (listening, showing concern, dedicating time) actions (Dutton et al., 2014). These behaviors are interwoven with other processes which require individuals to be receptive and show empathy for another’s suffering in order to provide compassion: “Compassion is thinking about being able to put yourself in the other person's shoes and think about how you feel like you want to be treated in a situation and then acting on that.” Here, Roland explains the importance of being able to take another person’s perspective and then acting on that experience to help them overcome their suffering.

The process of experiencing empathy and acting on an individuals need may sound difficult, however, many participants described being considerably adept at reading situations and people to be able to provide a compassionate response. Leslie discusses how she sees herself acting compassionately in daily life:

“I have an openness to experience enough to like, go beyond my own self and kind of just be moving through the world, aware of what other people may be going through and trying to like meet them there and be helpful. Be it, just not being a problem, like, not trying to add to their, like, plight or like the weight on their shoulder or actually just being helpful and I think it's different than like being a good Samaritan 'cuz I just feel like there's a vulnerability that is required on both ends, you know? Like you have to be vulnerable enough in your own self to be able to understand someone else's vulnerability and then choose not to judge them or kind of be callous towards them but choose to be... present for them.”

Leslie clearly demonstrates an understanding of several forms of acting compassionately and also the necessity to open herself up to the experience of someone else. In doing this, she

also illustrates the importance of vulnerability and the potential risk that compassion may bring to the provider. These are important concepts to understand in the lives of LGBTQ-PoC who have so often faced multiple forms and instances of suffering. The fact that they would be willing to open themselves up to further pain shows the importance that is placed on engaging compassionately with others to promote healing and connection.

Conclusion

The impact of interpersonal relationship constructs has become increasingly important in the study of organizational outcomes (Dutton et al., 2014). Both authenticity and compassion have been the focus of research considering how these constructs impact performance, satisfaction, success, and other outcomes for individuals within organizational structures (van den Bosch & Taris, 2014). However, these investigations do not consider the importance of social identity, specifically how marginalized individuals can interact with compassion and authenticity in organizations. In this investigation, we took a phenomenological approach to examine how lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people of color define and find meaning with these constructs in their general lives and organizational contexts. We argue that by understanding how these individuals live and experience authenticity and compassion in their everyday lives, we can develop a deeper sense of their perspective and needs for greater organizational support and success. We found that participants (1) define authenticity as critical for their social interactions and environment, (2) are deeply knowledgeable about the difficulties of maintaining authenticity as well as the inherent value, (3) define compassion as the ability to listen, empathize, and take on another's perspective in an authentic way, and (4) highlight compassion as an action of working to help others.

This study is the first to explicitly explore the importance of compassion and authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC in any context. Our findings regarding how participants define and live authentically are critical in understanding the construct and its broader implications for marginalized communities. While participants stayed true to common descriptions of authenticity being derived from internal desires, they rejected notions that this should be done in isolation or without the input of others (i.e. family, friends, loved ones). In fact, the idea that authenticity is strengthened through the input of others was common among participants. This finding speaks to the importance that these individuals place on other people in helping them define who they are and interact with their environment.

We also help broaden the current authenticity literature, by providing descriptions of the difficulties of developing and maintaining authenticity. Participants in this study experienced multiple forms of discrimination, stigma, and marginalization based on their social identities, yet relied on these identities to carry them through the subsequent stress. Many expressed the experience of questioning, concealing, or changing their identities to prevent stress, but emphasized the importance of avoiding such pitfalls and instead embrace their own authentic selves. These findings illustrate that while authenticity is considered extremely important, it is not always something that is easily achievable. While those in dominant groups may be able to easily express their identities without consequence, marginalized people must constantly question whether doing so will be worth the consequences and stress.

Narratives about authenticity also illustrated some key differences in the ways participants defined the construct versus how it is commonly defined/measured in the literature. Previous work considering authenticity emphasizes the importance of avoiding the influence of others while developing an accurate sense of self. While participants in this study did reference

this notion, they also used their connections with other people, specifically loved ones, in defining authenticity. Specifically they referenced the importance of being around other LGBTQ-PoC in defining and managing their overall sense of self. We might infer from these definitions, that future works should consider how authenticity might be experienced differently based on context and social location. For LGBTQ-PoC the importance of considering others might reference the importance of community in helping sustain healthy lives and buffer against the negative implications of oppression. Revised measures of authenticity might include questions, which specifically ask about specific contexts or people in which individuals feel most authentic. Thus, we believe it is important to consider the role of social identity and experiences of discrimination when discussing authenticity.

This study also contributes to the literature on compassion and helps broaden our understanding of what the construct means and is used in diverse contexts. Our finding that compassion is commonly defined as the act of listening and being authentically present with others, supports previous research. Being able to notice the suffering of another requires listening, being empathetic, and intuitive to the person suffering and the broader situation/context (Kanov et al., 2004; Miller, 2007; Way & Tracy, 2012). Participants clearly communicated this sentiment in their definitions of compassion. They also described how being the recipient of compassion involved these actions or behaviors by others. Their narratives broadly describe the importance of being open and present with someone else to express compassion in a time of need. This is considerably important for organizations where individuals spend a significant amount of time and are subject to many forms of stress. Being able to provide space for individuals to both express and receive compassion could go a long way in helping change

organizational culture to be more open and accepting as well as help diminish everyday stressors before they become insurmountable problems.

We also further support previous compassion research by providing clear descriptions of how compassion is more than an emotional response. Participants here were very adamant about the importance of action in their descriptions of compassion. Atkins & Parker (2012) describe action as one of the sub processes in the compassionate response to suffering. This emphasizes the importance of not only noticing someone's pain but also going beyond it to do something to improve it. Participants often described situations where they were the recipient of compassion that included someone being present and then acting in a way that helped them in some way. While these actions can take many forms, we believe this finding has considerable implications for organizations and diversity initiatives. Considering the growing interest in making organizations more diverse places, compassion could be a worthwhile endeavor for welcoming and helping alleviate the pain of marginalized individuals in organizational contexts.

Taken together, these participants speak to the overwhelming importance of considering both authenticity and compassion in the lives of LGBTQ-PoC individuals. Their narratives are deep and descriptive, highlighting the unique perspective of individuals who have faced considerable marginalization, discrimination, and prejudice. Despite these experiences, they depict resilience, perseverance, and a commitment to self-reliance. Similarly, they emphasize benefits of community and social support in fostering well-being and stability.

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Table IV. 1. Study 3: Demographic Variables by Participant

Name	Age	Sexual orientation identity	Racial identity	Gender identity	Religion identity/Affiliation	Highest level of education
Leslie	30	Lesbian	Black/African-American	Woman	Non-religious	Master's degree
Robert	28	Gay	Black & Multiracial	Man	Non-religious	Master's degree
Roland	25	Queer	Black/African-American	Man	Spiritual	Bachelor's degree
Jessie	26	Queer	Black/African-American	Woman	Christian	Bachelor's degree
Desmond	27	Gay	Multiracial	Man	Christian	Bachelor's degree
Alex	25	Queer	White, Hispanic, & Black	Masculine-of-Center Womyn	Christian	Bachelor's degree
Reggie	22	Gay	Latino/a/Hispanic	Man	Non-religious	Bachelor's degree
Kristina	26	Queer	Asian	Woman	Buddhist & Atheist	Bachelor's degree
Sean	33	Gay	Latino/a/Hispanic	Man	Non-Religious	Master's degree
Regina	19	Lesbian	Black/African-American	Woman	Non-religious	Some college
Cody	21	Gay	Black/African-American	Man	Agnostic	High school diploma
Denice	20	Pansexual	Black/African-American	Woman	Believes in God	High school diploma
Ash	26	Lesbian	Black/African-American	Woman	Non-religious	Bachelor's degree
Sarah	32	Lesbian	Black/African-American	Woman	Spiritual	Master's degree

Note. All participants self-identified as cisgender and names presented are pseudonyms.

APPENDIX A.

Interview Protocol

Background / Warm-Up

1. Tell me a little bit about yourself.
2. What do you do? What are you passionate about?
3. What is your favorite or the best part of that?
4. What is your least favorite or the worst part of that?

Core Questions

5. What are some words you use to describe yourself?
 - a. Do you think about these descriptors frequently?
6. Do you see those things interacting one another? How so?
7. Can you think of a time when certain aspects of yourself were triggered more than others?
8. What about a time when you noticed certain aspects interacting with one another?
9. Often people talk about “being yourself”, “being truthful to who you are”, or “being real”. What does that mean to you?
 - a. What are some words you use to describe that idea?
10. What do you find most challenging about “being yourself”?
 - a. Can you tell me about a time when it was difficult being yourself?
11. What are the situations/contexts in which it is easy for you to be yourself?
 - a. What about that situation helps? Can you give an example?
12. Are there certain situations (or people) in which you feel you ‘ought’ to be or acting in a certain way (i.e. performance mode)?
 - a. When does this happen?
13. What does compassion mean for you?
14. What are some things you say or do in order to show compassion to others?
15. What are some things you say or do in order to show compassion to yourself?
16. Who is the most compassionate person you know? What makes them compassionate?
17. Can you think of a situation where you were the recipient of compassion?
 - a. What was that like? How did you feel physically/emotionally?
18. What do you think it means to “feel invisible or silenced”?
 - a. Have you ever felt this way?
19. Have you ever experienced a situation where you were treated differently/poorly because of who you are/how you identify?
 - a. Can you describe that more? When? Where? Who was involved?
 - b. Has something like this ever happened at work or school?
20. How did you feel immediately during that event? How did you feel later?
 - a. What was your reaction to that person(s)/event?

CHAPTER V

Conclusions and General Discussion

Authenticity, while central to the human experience, holds special significance for those with marginalized social identities. For lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer people of color (LGBQ-PoC), authenticity is critical for self-recognition, communication of social identities, and navigating complex social environments. Facing multiple forms of discrimination, LGBQ-PoC encounter significant challenges in developing and maintaining psychological authentic and perceptions of self. Yet, despite such challenges, LGBQ-PoC continually strive to define and present themselves with sincerity and originality. The multidimensional nature of authenticity for LGBQ-PoC requires research methodologies from multiple perspectives in order to fully describe and understand their lived experience. This final chapter discusses the relevance of Chapters II, III, and IV for the psychological study of authenticity and the lived experience of LGBQ-PoC. Theoretical contributions will be discussed, as well as limitations and future directions of this work.

Summary of Findings

The current research contributes to literature on the lived experiences of LGBQ-PoC by focusing on the importance of authenticity, compassion, and discrimination. Chapter II explored the connection between perceived discrimination/microaggressions, authenticity, and psychological well-being. While previous research has illustrated strong relationships between

discrimination and well-being (Herek & Garnets, 2007; Lewis, 2009; Meyer, 2003) as well as authenticity and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1995; Goldman & Kernis, 2003; Wood, Linley, Maltby, Baliousis, & Joseph, 2008), respectively, little to no research has considered the influence of discrimination. Similarly, there is limited research considering the influence of authenticity for the lives of LGBTQ-PoC. Using a mediational model, I found that authenticity is significantly negatively related to both forms of discrimination. Additionally, authenticity is strongly connected to well-being for LGBTQ-PoC and mediates the relationship between discrimination and well-being. These findings help explain the relationship between discrimination and well-being for LGBTQ-PoC.

In Chapter III, I tested another mediation model considering workplace heterosexism, authenticity, and well-being. I split the sample into two groups, White and Latino/a, to gain a better understanding of how these variables interact across racial groups and also analyzed gender as a moderator. As in the first study, authenticity was entered as the mediator, workplace heterosexism was entered as a predictor, and outcome variables consisted of depression, stress, and mindfulness. The primary difference with this model was the inclusion of gender as a moderator. I hypothesized that workplace heterosexism would significantly relate to authenticity and authenticity would significantly relate to well-being outcomes across the racial groups. Additionally, I predicted that workplace heterosexism would have a conditional indirect effect on well-being through authenticity such that this effect would only exist for women in both groups. This final hypothesis is based on prior research suggesting that for women issues of trauma influence their psychological health and sense of authenticity more than men (Woods, 1999; Wrighte, Crawford, & Del Castillo, 2009).

The first two hypotheses were only supported for Latino/a LGBTQs such that workplace heterosexism was negatively related to authenticity and authenticity was negatively related to depression and stress while being positively related to mindfulness. For the final hypothesis, I found that workplace heterosexism was indirectly related to well-being through authenticity for Latina women only. These results provide considerable insight into the influence of both gender and race on the relationship between workplace discrimination and authenticity/well-being. Considering that workplace heterosexism was indirectly linked with well-being through authenticity for Latinas only, suggests that their experience is quite different in workplace contexts as compared to other individuals in the sample.

In Chapter IV, I turn to qualitative methods to delve deeper into the importance of authenticity for the lives of LGBTQ-PoC. In this study, I am specifically interested in the lived experience of LGBTQ-PoC with respect to issues of authenticity, compassion, and discrimination. Phenomenology provides a theoretical and methodological perspective to explore the subjective and multidimensional lived experience of individuals and is of particular use for work with minority populations (Giorgi, 2009; van Manen, 1990). Specifically, it allows the researcher to take in the breadth of an individual's day-to-day lived experience of a phenomenon and use these descriptions to help illuminate and describe broader shared experiences (Anosike, Ehrich, & Ahmed, 2012; Belle, Burley, and Long, 2014; van Manen, 1990).

Through an analysis of 14 interviews with self-identified LGBTQ-PoC individuals, I illustrate four primary themes: 1) *authenticity as a situated process*, 2) *negotiating authenticity in difficult contexts*, 3) *compassion requires being able to listen*, and 4) *compassion is an active process of engagement*. In the first theme, participants highlight the importance of being authentic and true to themselves for sustained health and to facilitate real connections with

others. The second theme explores the many challenges faced by LGBTQ-PoC with respect to authenticity. Being silenced, rejected, or pressured to conform, were all mentioned as distinct challenges, yet participants further emphasized that maintaining authenticity in spite of such challenges was critical. In the third theme, I highlight the importance of listening for participant's sense of compassion as well as its connection to authenticity. For them, the process of being listened to and heard was enormously impactful, considering the many instances of rejection and discrimination they have faced. Furthermore, listening was commonly described as a method for creating authentic connections with others. In the final theme, participants characterized compassion as an active process whereby individuals must be personally and emotionally willing to be present and authentic with others. Together the themes I present in this investigation speak to the broader importance of authenticity as well as the unique difficulties of pursuing and maintaining authentic ways of being in diverse contexts for the lives of LGBTQ-PoC.

Overall, these studies contribute broadly to our increasing understanding of the unique experiences of LGBTQ-PoC and speak specifically to the challenges faced by LGBTQ-PoC. One primary theme, which draws these studies together, is the influence of both stress and resilience in the lives of these individuals.

Stress and Resilience

Research in the area of LGBTQ-PoC individuals has primarily focused on the study of stress and resilience (Meyer, 2010). The stress hypothesis suggests that based on their multiple marginalized identities, LGBTQ-PoC face more stress than their White counterparts. In support of the stress hypothesis, some research has illustrated that minority stress is cumulative for LGBTQ-PoC (Balsam, Mokubam Beadnell, Simoni, & Walters, 2011). Several studies have showed a

link between increased psychiatric symptoms and the experience of both racism and heterosexism (Díaz, Ayala, Bein, Henne, & Martin, 2001; Zamboni & Crawford, 2007).

Similarly, other research has indicated that LGBTQ-PoC are at greater risk of depression and suicidality than White LGBTQ (Meyer, Deitrich, & Schwartz, 2008).

In contrast, the resilience hypothesis suggest that since LGBTQ-PoC face racism from an early age, they learn coping strategies to manage the stress and have a community for support and guidance. Through these mechanisms, they develop more resilience than White LGBTQs who are less prepared for the discrimination they face when they come out (Moradi & DeBlaere, 2010). In support of this hypothesis, some research has illustrated little to no difference between PoC and White LGBTQs with respect to health and well-being (Meyer, 2010). Ragins, Cornwell, and Miller (2003) also found that LGBTQ-PoC do not experience more instances of discrimination in the workplace than White LGBTQs. While there were little differences in experiences of discrimination between racial groups in this study, the researchers did find that LGBTQ-PoC were less likely to disclose their sexual orientation at work (Ragins et al., 2003).

While I do not directly test these hypotheses in the current research, my findings do seem to support the stress hypothesis. In both Chapters II and III, I show that for LGBTQ-PoC discrimination significantly influences various well-being outcomes. Findings from the second chapter are of particular importance to this hypothesis, since I show that workplace heterosexism is negatively related to authenticity for Latino/a LGBTQs only. Additionally, in this study, I demonstrate the effect of authenticity as a mediator between the connection of workplace heterosexism to well-being for Latina LGBTQs. These results point to the fact that discrimination may be more prominent for LGBTQs with other marginalized identities.

While these data may lend support to the stress hypothesis, Chapter III clearly suggests that resilience is an important aspect of how LGBTQ-PoC see themselves and manage the stress of discrimination. While I do not draw direct comparisons based on race in this study, the narratives explicated by participants clearly illustrate the difficulties they face to maintain authentic identities in the face of discrimination and marginalization. While most of these participants described experiences of trauma and rejection based on their identities, in general, they emphasized the importance of remaining true to themselves. In effect, being real and authentic for these individuals was something that they could use as a compass to navigate difficult contexts and as a method of connecting with others.

The Importance of Authenticity

The influence of psychological authenticity for LGBTQ-PoC has not been considered in great depth, but in general, authenticity has been closely linked with the development and maintenance of well-being and accurate sense of self (Goldman & Kernis, 2002). Authenticity is primarily thought to arise from the process of self-regulation of behavior to align with internal beliefs and values. Self-Determination Theory (SDT) suggests that individuals have three primary needs: *competence*, *relatedness*, and *autonomy* (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). Self-regulating one's behavior to meet these core needs gives rise to overall psychological well-being and authenticity (Goldman & Kernis, 2002). Some researchers have suggested that authenticity is linked with social identity as well. Specifically, Hutson (2010) suggests that LGBTQ individuals use self-presentation as a form of social communication to identify other LGBTQs, navigate complex social contexts, and develop accurate sense of self. Similarly, research has illustrated that in communities of color authenticity is often used to communicate truthfulness and similarity with others and to maintain alignment with cultural and community traditions

(Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983; Waters, 1990). While studies considering the implications of discrimination for authenticity are limited, some research has shown that trauma has significant negative implications for authenticity (Woods, 1999; Wright et al., 2009). These findings primarily focus on the difficulties of traumatic experiences for women and the considerable negative implications for their health, well-being, and sense of authenticity (Scott, Wolfe, & Wekele, 2003; Tolman & Porche, 2000). While these studies do not directly explore discrimination, it is feasible to expect that discrimination might have similar implications.

As stated in Chapters II and III, I illustrate a link between authenticity and discrimination for LGBTQ-PoC and indicate that authenticity can partially explain the relationship between discrimination and well-being. This is a considerable contribution to the current literature as it demonstrates that for this population the effects of discrimination may in fact operate by impacting the self-regulatory processes that lead to authenticity and subsequently psychological well-being.

Rethinking Definitions of Authenticity

In the qualitative investigation, participants spoke frequently about the importance of being real and authentic for their continued health and well-being. While common definitions and measures of authenticity suggest that the construct is developed primarily independently (e.g. Wood et al., 2008) the majority of participants in the Chapter IV suggest that interaction with others is crucial for their overall sense of self. Authenticity was consistently mentioned as a feeling that was cued when participants were around specific people or in certain spaces. As described in the social constructionist definition of authenticity (Vannini & Williams, 2009) authenticity is a construct that is constantly changing according to the social landscape and cultural values. It would appear that participants here describe authenticity in accordance with

this constructivist notion and rely on connections with others and familiar contexts to define their sense of self. These narratives may also speak to findings in cultural psychology, which indicate that some cultures do not conceptualize authenticity as an independent characteristic (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Considering these perspectives of authenticity, future work should strive to take a more constructivist view of the trait. Specifically, considering implications of community, loved ones, and social contexts, would provide a more dynamic method of exploring authenticity, particularly in communities of color.

Strengths and Limitations

This work represents a novel approach to the study of LGBTQ-PoC experience and provides useful perspectives for theoretical and methodological investigations of authenticity. However, this research does have limitations. The quantitative research presented here was conducted using online survey methodology. Given the flexibility of Internet technologies, online methodologies represent an ideal way of reaching out to human populations (Robinson, 2001). Internet based studies provide many benefits including private user-friendly access, a high degree of flexibility with respect to time and location (Mann & Stewart, 2000; Mustanski, 2001), assurance of anonymity (McCoyd & Kerson, 2006), and relative limitless geographic access (Mann & Stewart, 2002). These benefits have been especially helpful in allowing researchers to access disparate or vulnerable populations such as LGBTQs (Willis, 2011). We found this method of data collection to be strength since it allowed us to gain responses from a large community sample from across the US and access an especially hidden population (LGBTQ-PoC).

However, there is also a socio-economic divide for Internet access and usage (Steyaert & Gould, 2009; Wong, Fung, Law, Lam, & Lee, 2009). In 2010 approximately 57% of individuals earning less than \$30,000 used the Internet as compared to 95% who earned \$75,000 (Jansen,

2010). There also appears to be disparities for Internet use based on race as well, with an estimated 49% of African-Americans and 47.9% of Latino/as using internet at home (U.S. department of commerce, 2010). Although these numbers do not always give an accurate picture of Internet use in the US, since people increasingly have access to online resources through other mediums outside the home (e.g. smart phones and computer labs), it is clear that the use of Internet in the US is divided in some distinct ways. These divides may have come into play for the work presented here, which focuses on an often-disparaged population. It is possible that by using online survey methodologies, the current research missed a segment of LGBTQ-PoC, specifically those of lower socio-economic statuses. While this does not reduce the impact of this work, it is important to note that the results presented here may not speak to the full range of lives and experiences of LGBTQ-PoC individuals.

Another limitation of this research is the relative small sample sizes in some portions of the quantitative investigations. Using bootstrapping as a tool for testing significance in mediation has been widely advocated even for small sample sizes (20-80 cases) (Koopman, Howe, Hollenbeck, & Sin, 2015; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). However, others have raised concern regarding bootstrapping and higher instances of certain types of error within these smaller sample sizes (e.g. Fritz, Taylor, & MacKinnon). While the majority of the samples in the current work exceeded 100 cases, in Chapter III our Latino/a LGBTQ sample was fairly small ($N = 87$). Regardless, we still found significant results and believe that for LGBTQ-PoC populations which are frequently difficult to recruit, our sample sizes are adequate and provide a good starting point in exploring this relatively new line of research.

We also have some limitations in our qualitative study. In conducting the qualitative interviews for Chapter IV, we utilized the common practice of *interviewing to saturation*, which

describes the process of conducting interviews until all questions have been thoroughly explored (Schensul & LeCompte, 2010). While this is not the only method for qualitative analysis, it is one of the preferred methods and allows for variance in necessary samples sizes across studies (Trotter, 2012). Additionally, we used snowball sampling (referral sampling), which is a process of identifying a few ‘index’ participants who have the required characteristics for the study and then asking those individuals to nominate others who might fit into the study parameters. Since this method requires index participants to nominate others, they most often rely on their social and community networks. This does limit our ability to generalize to larger populations since participants may be quite similar to each other. However, snowball sampling has several benefits including being able to gain access to hidden populations (Trotter, 2012), which was a considerable challenge given the population of interest in this study.

Future Directions

Future research should continue to consider the implications of discrimination, authenticity, and well-being for LGBTQ individuals from an intersectional perspective. As I have demonstrated in this manuscript, the experiences of LGBTQ-PoC are unique and cannot be fully understood by studies that avoid considerations of race and gender. In future studies, I plan to conduct more longitudinal investigations to help uncover how authenticity changes and interacts with discrimination across time. Age and generation are other important variables to consider with this group since the ways that discrimination is expressed and experienced change over time. I also plan to continue working to understand the role of authenticity in the workplace for LGBTQ-PoC by exploring outcomes specific to the organizational contexts such as career and job satisfaction, career commitment, and turnover. Exploring the relationships between authenticity and these workplace variables can help uncover the wider influence of authenticity for

organizational success and growth. I also plan to consider the implications of diversity and inclusion programs within workplace settings in connection with authenticity.

Furthermore, I intend to explore the connection between authenticity and mindfulness/compassion in more depth through qualitative and quantitative methods. Specifically, by conducting interviews of a purposive sample of various ethnic minorities from the LGBT community and diary studies with mindfulness and Buddhist practitioners of color, I hope to delve deeper into the connection between mindfulness and authenticity while considering the implications of discrimination. Furthermore, I hope to use intervention methods and use mindfulness training to see if such practices directly influence sense of self and authenticity for LGBQ-PoC. Additionally, I will also explore changes in mindfulness and authenticity longitudinally by using newly developed mobile phone technology, which allows easy tracking of changes in these constructs. These projects will continue to explore the lived experiences of LGBQ-PoC and help expand literature in the areas of discrimination, authenticity, and well-being.

Conclusion

The approach used in this research was primarily concerned with understanding and describing the lived experience of LGBQ-PoC with respect to authenticity, compassion, discrimination, and well-being. Investigations into this population require a critical approach to unearth the unique perspectives and social contexts involved in the multifaceted experiences of these individuals. Using mixed methods, diverse theoretical perspectives, and insightful methods of analysis, I have provided a preliminary look into importance of authenticity for the lives of LGBQ-PoC. As an often-understudied population, it is my hope that future research will

continue to engage in deep and thoughtful investigations of their diverse experiences and perspectives.

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