LGBTQ+ people of color’s experiences of community bias and discrimination, identity integration, and well-being

Daniel Nguyen, Cynthia Willis-Esqueda
Department of Psychology, University of Nebraska–Lincoln

BACKGROUND

➢ Race/ethnicity, gender identity, and sexuality are all important aspects of the self, and all have consequences for well-being.
➢ LGBTQ+ people face discrimination against their gender and sexual identities from the broader society
➢ LGBTQ+ people of color (POC) also face discrimination against their gender and sexual identities specifically from their racial community, as well as racial discrimination from the broader society and within the LGBTQ+ community
➢ Little research exists that focuses on

MATERIALS AND METHODS

➢ Participants recruited through university LGBTQ+ centers, LGBTQ+ organizations, social media, listservs, and personal contacts
➢ Recruitment materials provided link to Qualtrics survey
➢ End of the survey provided information for open-ended interview
➢ Survey measures:
  - Well-being (Kessler 6, Kessler et al., 2010)
  - Racial/ethnic identity development and commitment (MEIM-R, Phinney & Ong, 2007)
  - Sexual identity exploration and commitment (MoSIEC, Worthington, Navarro, Savoy, & Hampton, 2008)
  - Gender identity (Gender Identity Scale, Ho & Mussap, 2019)
  - Psychological connection to LGBTQ+ community (LGBT community scale, Lin & Israel, 2012)
  - LGBTQ+ people of color perceived microaggressions (LGBT POC microaggressions scale, Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, & Walters, 2011)
➢ Applied thematic analysis to interview data (n=21; M age= 24.95; race: non-Hispanic White=7, Hispanic White=5, Black=3, Asian/PI=3, Multiracial=3; gender: cis female=7, cis male=2, trans female=1, trans male=1, non-binary=2, other=1, mixed=7; sexuality: gay=4, bisexual=4, pansexual=1, queer=5, mixed=7)
➢ *Survey data is still being collected

QUALITATIVE INTERVIEW RESULTS

Overarching qualitative themes:
1) Different racialized experiences: While participants of color described experiences of racial bias broadly and within the LGBTQ+ community, Whites mostly characterized their racial identity as unimportant, but also a source of privilege.
2) Formative experiences and the development of identity: Both LGBTQ+ Whites and POC struggle with issues of identity, but race plays a role in coming to terms with being LGBTQ+ for POC and less so for Whites.
3) Community bias: Discrimination against LGBTQ+ people was experienced by those of all races, but POC were more likely to discuss biases specific to their racial community.
4) Integration of identity: Because race is important for POC, the integration of race with LGBTQ+ identity may be more difficult.

INTERVIEW FINDINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of discrimination</th>
<th>People of color</th>
<th>Whites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General racial bias</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ+ racial bias</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General gender bias</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ+ gender bias</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial community gender bias</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General sexual bias</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ+ sexual bias</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial community sexual bias</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSIONS

➢ Racial bias is a unique struggle for LGBTQ+ POC
➢ Racial identity is only salient in social situations for non-Whites
➢ In cultures unaccepting of LGBTQ+ identity, coming to terms with one’s sexual and/or gender requires distancing from one’s racial community, making identity integration more difficult
➢ Finding community with LGBTQ+ POC is a protective factor for well-being for POC

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

• References available upon request: dnguyen63@huskers.unl.edu
• Dr. Cynthia Willis-Esqueda
• Kendra Quiroz
• UNL McNair Scholars Program