Queer People of Color

Exploring the intersections of social support in sexual orientation, racial and ethnic communities

Nicole Weiler
University of Minnesota

Why and What

Those who identify as both Queer (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual) and as a Person of Color (non-White identifying) face a compound effect of societal and institutional discrimination. Because of this, we should expect a significant effect on QPOC perceived social support.
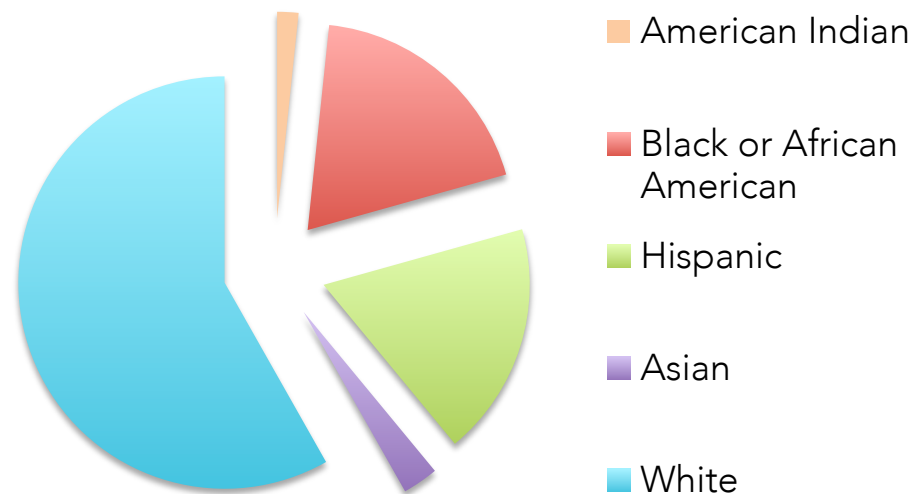
A two-way univariate ANOVA was constructed to test the intersectionality effect on the dependent variable of Social Support through secondary data analysis.

This study found limited quantitative support for intersectional interaction effects, but many significant main effects.

NESARC : National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol & Related Conditions

Utilizing secondary data analysis, this paper sampled the largest comorbidity study ever conducted with an unprecedented sample size (N = 43,093). NESARC contains an extensive battery of questions, addressing the topic of perceived social support in Wave 2 (N=34,653).

Because NESARC included an oversample of the Black and Hispanic populations, its sampling frame provided sufficient minority response to use NESARC for addressing the critical issue of race and/or ethnic disparities.

- American Indian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- White

Variables

DEPENDENT

Ethnicity: Racial identities were narrowed to an ethnic binary (ETHBINARY) composing one group of participants identifying as White, and compiling all other ethnic categories into a People of Color group.

Sexual Orientation: Sexual orientations were narrowed to a sexual orientation binary (SOBINARY) composing one group of participants identifying as Heterosexual/Straight, and another compiling those identifying as Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual into the Queer group.

INDEPENDENT

Perceived Social Support: The Interpersonal Support and Evaluation List-12 (ISEL- 12) is a 12-item scale measuring perceived availability of social resources on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *definitely false to* 4 = *definitely true,* yielding a scale that ranged from 12 to 48.

Results

There was no support for the overall intersectional effect; though item main effects show that being Queer or being a Person of Color do significantly affect social support.

Table 1.

Means on the Measure of Social Support in Heterosexual and Queer identified Communities of Color vs. White Ethnicities in NESARC Wave 2

Social Support Measure	White		POC		Significance		
	Straight	Queer	Straight	Queer	ETHBINARY	SOBINARY	INTERACTION
A	1.59	1.69	1.65	1.69			
B	1.33	1.45	1.48	1.42			p=.01
C	3.61	3.58	3.56	3.48		p=.029	
D	3.62	3.60	3.59	3.62			
E	3.32	3.20	3.42	3.31	p=.004	p=.002	
F	3.70	3.67	3.67	3.63			
G	1.62	1.62	1.66	1.57			
H	1.51	1.58	1.67	1.67	p=.002		
I	3.54	3.42	3.56	3.50		p=.003	
J	3.78	3.67	3.75	3.59	p=.01	p=.001	
K	1.52	1.54	1.71	1.59	p=.003		
L	1.46	1.61	1.55	1.65		p=.001	
Total	12.68	11.63	11.86	11.56		p=.013	

Main Effect Items for Ethnicity

(E) If I decide one afternoon that I would like to go to a movie that evening, I could easily find someone to go with me. *p=.004*

(H) If I had to go out of town for a few weeks, it would be difficult to find someone who would look after my house or apartment, like taking care of my plants, garden or pets, getting the mail or watching the house in general. *p=.002*

(J) If I were stranded 10 miles from home, someone I know would come and get me. *p=.01*

(K) If a family crisis arose, it would be difficult to find someone who could give me good advice about how to handle it. *p=.003*

Main Effect Items for Sexual Orientation

(C) If I were sick, I know I would find someone to help me with my daily chores. *p=.029*

(E) If I decide one afternoon that I would like to go to a movie that evening, I could easily find someone to go with me. *p=.002*

(I) If I wanted to have lunch with someone, I could easily find someone to join me. *p=.003*

(J) If I were stranded 10 miles from home, someone I know would come and get me. *p=.001*

(L) If I needed some help in moving to a new house or apartment, I would have a hard finding someone to help me. *p=.001*

Conclusions

Limitations

- Construction of binary variables is cultural erasure

- To be truly be intersectional, socioeconomic status should have been considered

- Only 1.7% of NESARC participants identified as Gay, Lesbian, or Bisexual

Future Study

- This study has operationalized a quantitative way to measure intersectionality.

- This study may have exposed areas where Psychological tools, historically attuned to White, Western college students, are unrepresentative of Queer, People of Color, or Queer People of Color communities. Future study should consider and construct new tools.