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Supporting Concealable Stigma at Work: The LGB Experience

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science

in the

Industrial-Organizational Psychology Program

November 2018

Abstract

Diversity research has provided valuable insight into the dynamics of stigma at work. Research has also brought attention to the unique experiences of individuals with concealable, or invisible, stigmatized identities (CSIs) albeit use of the same methodology used to study visible stigma. The current study proposes a theoretical model which consists of a framework of relationships strongly supported in existing workplace diversity literature while introducing moderating variables that are particularly relevant to the experience of employees with CSIs: group commitment strength, identity manifestation, and identity suppression. Further, the liberal use of disclosure as a single measure of identity communication is challenged, highlighting the distinctions between identity disclosure, manifestation, and suppression. Respondents included a sample of 179 LGB employees who completed an online survey regarding their most recent full-time work experience. A modified model is presented. A distinction between forms of identity expression was also supported. Implications and suggestions for future research are discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Supporting Concealable Stigma at Work: The LGB Experience

Workplace diversity remains a popular topic after decades of research, even after a shift in focus from the experience of employees with conspicuous, or visible, stigma (e.g., Eisenberger, 2002; McKay, et al, 2007; Avery, et al., 2007) to those with concealable stigmatized identities (CSIs) (e.g., Clair, Beatty, Maclean; 2005; Madera, King, Hebl; 2012). Built upon the premises of social identity and related theories, workplace diversity research has provided knowledge on the interplays of social identities and job attitudes and subsequent effects on performance outcomes (e.g., Mannix and Neale, 2005). Studies of the cognitive consequences of secrecy compared to disclosure on several work outcomes (e.g., Pachankis, 2007) have advanced diversity literature to address the idiosyncratic experiences of employees with CSIs. Researchers continue to make strides to enhance our understanding of work-life for employees with CSIs; however more elements relevant to this subgroup (i.e., identity manifestation, suppression, strength of group commitment) must be investigated to develop a more tailored model of the work experience of this subgroup.

Individuals who identify with a CSI face a unique dilemma: whether to disclose or conceal their stigma association. Though this may appear to be an advantage over the those with visible stigma, this decision imposes additional burdens, including psychological distress and anxiety, as a result of a fear of disclosure (Sedlovskaya et al., 2013). Accordingly, these burdens can affect employee performance in a variety of ways.

This more obvious distinction between the two workgroups has led to an overwhelming amount of literature on the impact of CSI disclosure on various work outcomes, the majority proposing positive outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction) of disclosure (e.g., Griffith & Hebl, 2002). Despite this preoccupation with the motivations and effects of disclosure, the influence of the

strength of commitment to the CSI group has not received much attention. Neglect of the influence of group commitment (GC) on the decision to disclose and subsequent psychological, attitudinal, and behavioral experiences among employees with CSIs is problematic to our advancement in understanding their needs. GC likely plays a significant role in the internal negotiations that lead to the decision to disclose or conceal an identity (see Clair et al., 2005). To test this effect, the current study investigates the presence of a moderating effect of GC on three highly supported relationships between disclosure and workplace attributes (i.e., perception of organizational diversity climate, supervisor-subordinate similarity, perceived supervisor support) (see Figure 1).

To fully understand the impact of identity expression, acknowledgment of the various forms of communication and their individual effects is critical. Recognizing the unique effects of distinct modes of communication are particularly pertinent to the understanding of individuals who identify with a CSI group. Unfortunately, a preoccupation with disclosure has led to a lack of differentiation and knowledge of the consequences and implications of behavioral communication, or manifestation, of a CSI. Except for the rare instances when manifestation and suppression are specifically discussed (e.g., Madera, King, & Hebl, 2012), they appear to be used interchangeably with disclosure and concealment. The current study challenges that these constructs are more distinct than previously treated. As generally defined, manifestation represents the behavioral expression of group membership (e.g., wearing a hijab, displaying pictures of a same-sex spouse, brandishing Veteran memorabilia) while suppression represents the active restraint, or repression, of an identity. Disclosure is referred to as the declaration of affiliation with a particular group while concealment is the absence of such proclamation. The distinctiveness of these variables was investigated by confirmatory factor analysis.

Identity manifestation is regarded as essentially the ultimate form of identity expression beyond disclosure despite previous treatment of disclosure as the *be all end all*. Likewise, the opposing act of identity suppression likely plays a role independent of identity disclosure in that it describes the voluntary restraint of behaviors associated with the identity, regardless of a statement of affiliation. As previous studies have shown consistent support the existence of a relationship between disclosure and job satisfaction, this study investigates the incremental validity of identity manifestation and suppression beyond disclosure by testing for a moderation effect on the relationship between disclosure and job satisfaction (see Figure 1). The model concludes with the reiteration of relationships between job satisfaction and several job outcomes consistently supported in the literature (i.e., absenteeism, organizational commitment, turnover intentions) (see Figure 1).

This study aims to contribute to existing literature on the unique experience of employees with CSIs by proposing a holistic model that describes the effects of workplace attributes on their work experience and its influence on various job outcomes. The relationships presented in the model are supported by several social psychological theories. The workplace attributes assessed are perception of organizational diversity climate (DC), supervisor-subordinate similarity (SSS), and perceived supervisor support (PSS). The job outcomes measured are turnover intention (TI), absenteeism, and affective organizational commitment (OC).

The knowledge gained will be valuable to researchers and practitioners, refocusing current understandings and diversity and inclusion (D&I) best practices that cater to visible stigma to also include employees with CSIs. Findings may reveal the significance of elements less studied in the past, introducing and promoting new factors for D&I research and practice while supplying scientist-practitioners with more inclusive management strategies and

recommendations to optimize the performance of employees with CSIs. One CSI group that has

received considerable attention from the diversity research community is the LGB group.

Likewise, this study investigates the experience of LGB employees with the expectation that its

implications will be generalizable to members of other CSI groups.

Literature Review

Social identity.

The experience of stigma is rooted in association with a social identity deemed inferior

by society. Social identity refers to an individual's knowledge that he or she belongs to particular

social groups combined with an emotional and value attachment to the group membership

(Tajfel, 1972). Henri Tajfel, a social psychologist, was curious about why discrimination and

conflict arose between groups composed of individuals who had so much in common. Tajfel and

his protégé, John Turner, then embarked on a series of experiments framed on the 'minimal

group paradigm.' This model involved random assignment of participants to groups who were

told their assignment was based on some irrelevant characteristic such as over- or

underestimation of the number of dots on a page. The duo found that when asked to allocate

points between teams, without having met anyone else in the experiment, participants tended to

award more points to their group rather than randomly or equally between groups. Tajfel

explained this group competitiveness in what he later described as social identity theory (SIT)

(Hornsey, 2008; Forsyth, 2013).

Groups provide members with its prototypical norms, boundaries, goals, purposes, and a

social context (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). SIT posits that people tend to sort themselves into social

categories (e.g., organizational membership, religious affiliation, fan club membership) based on

prototypical characteristics or stereotypes abstracted from the members (Ashforth, 1989; Forsyth,

2013). The study of this phenomenon birthed the concept of the social self, which explains the observed differences in behavior between the individual as a unique being, or their *personal* identity, and the individual as a member of a group, or their *social* identity (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). According to SIT, human interaction ranges from purely interpersonal, exhibiting more of one's personal identity (e.g., a vote for lunch preference), to strictly intergroup, a strong manifestation of their social identity (e.g., wearing a team jersey) (Hornsey, 2008). However, when social identity is salient, the group is also represented in the person's self-concept (Abrams & Hogg, 1990), blurring the line between the personal and social identities.

Turner introduced self-categorization theory (SCT), a subcomponent of social identity theory, which explains the cognitive process that leads to the formation of a social identity and adoption of its corresponding group related behaviors. This process consists of the classification of oneself and others into groups based on demographics like race, age, nationality, and even more obscure attributes (e.g., religion, sexuality, political affiliation) (Guillaume et al., 2015; Forsyth, 2013). Further, categorization involves a search for distinguishing features with accentuation of differences between categories and attenuation of differences within categories (Abrams & Hogg 1990). This disparity perception leads to in-group bias and the in-group versus out-group mentality.

Social Identity Theory and Discrimination.

Tajfel's study of group dynamics was motivated by an interest in understanding the sometimes problematic "us" versus "them" mentality that develops between groups. Group membership provides a sense of pride, involvement, concern, stability, and meaning; regardless of whether the member has a genuine interest in the group's outcome (Hogg & Grieve, 1999;

Abrams & Hogg 1990). This effect explains why people naturally gravitate toward group

formation.

To understand the root of intergroup conflict entails understanding the interaction of

group dynamics and social identity. According to the self-esteem hypothesis, intergroup behavior

is motivated by the pursuit of positive social identity. Group members, driven by the need for

positive self-esteem, engage in positive intergroup distinctiveness (Hogg & Terry, 2000).

Consequently, lower self-esteem would cultivate in-group bias to subsequently raise one's self-

esteem (Hogg & Abrams, 1990). Research supports this idea as increased self-esteem has been

found to be related to the opportunity to engage in intergroup discrimination (Oakes & Turner,

1980).

Social categorization is also believed to be a function of accessibility and comparative

and normative fit. High fit would describe a strong reflection of social reality while categories

may be accessible due to priming, frequent activation, or high motivation to use them (Hornsey,

2008). If social reality reflects a preoccupation with maintaining a status quo through social

stratification, identification with a marginalized group would essentially be social suicide.

Therefore, in a society where certain groups are devalued (e.g., the protected classes, LGB

members, transgender individuals, immigrants), social categorization will perpetuate intergroup

distinction and discrimination based on these values. The power of societal values is described

by system justification theory which materialized in a study that found that low-status minorities

displayed more in-group devaluation, or preference for the dominant group, due to

internalization of negative feelings toward their own group (Rudman, Feinberg, & Fairchild,

2002).

The role of social identity in acts of discrimination has strong implications for the work environment and diversity management. Employees with CSIs face a unique challenge due to the obscurity of their minority status. In deciding whether to communicate this stigma affiliation, employees are likely to avoid the possibility of discrimination and conceal or suppress CSIs at work, which may not necessarily be the better choice.

Legal Context. Although the law protects marginalized groups from employment discrimination, the specified list of protected classes (i.e., race, color, religion, nationality, disability groups) is not exhaustive of groups undervalued in society. The protected classes were established as a means of identifying and qualifying marginalized groups for stringent protections against discrimination. They consist of groups who have faced disparate treatment due to discriminatory practices that were previously accepted as appropriate treatment and are protected by Title VII which prohibits discriminatory employment practices based on membership in these groups. Furthermore, while Title VII is necessary in enforcing social justice, the protected classes have at least two shortcomings: they are not inclusive to all groups that may face discrimination, and it forces individuals to proclaim their stigmatized identities to reap its *limited* benefits.

CSIs present unique challenges to social justice efforts. Although legally protected from unfair employment practices, employees may still experience various forms of discrimination that contribute to a hostile work environment. Employees who identify with a concealable protected class (e.g., based on religion, nationality, or disability) may still decide to conceal this affiliation to avoid categorization and subsequent disparate treatment. Sexual orientation and sexual identity exemplify unprotected CSIs whose members have historically been ostracized and continue to face discrimination. Organizations are not obligated to afford LGB or

transgender employees the same protections that are provided African Americans, women, and foreign-born Americans, (see Beatty & Kirby, 2006) however, most progressive organizations do.

Despite the long history of discrimination and disregard in legal protections, the LGB community has experienced a few victories in recent years, most notably the establishment of same-sex marriage in 2015. One year prior, equality for LGB and transgender workers was strengthened by the passage of Executive Order 13672 which required federal contractors and subcontractors to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes on EEO statements. Rescission of E.O. 13673 in 2017 softened this enforcement.

Social Context. Diversity awareness and appreciation have become the new norm in modern society. LGB employees have broken their silence to embrace their identities in industries where they were stiffly silenced (e.g., sports, armed forces, police, firefighters) (National Research Defense Institute, 1993). The fight for transgender rights has also gained momentum (e.g., Houston Equal Rights Ordinance, Ord. No. 2014-530). Firms who aim to demonstrate diversity appreciation beyond minimum requirements treat sexual orientation as a protected class (Neely Martinez, 1993). The value of diversity, and particularly identity disclosure, is also evident in the repeal of the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy that restricted service members from disclosing their LGBT identity (Alford & Lee, 2016) albeit the succeeding transgender military ban. Furthermore, while the LGBT community celebrate advancing parity for the LGB group, support for the transgender community remains in flux.

Perception of Organizational Diversity Climate (DC)

One way for an employer to assess the success of organizational D&I efforts is to measure DC among employees. The measurement of DC is a measure of employee perceptions of characteristics of the organizational climate concerning organizational justice (i.e., distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice). Perceived equity and fairness are essential to a productive work environment due to its impact on various outcomes including job commitment and satisfaction, attitudes, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Dundar & Tabancali, 2012). Diversity climate has also been found to, directly and indirectly, impact organizational effectiveness through such individual-level affective reactions (Cox, 1994). Therefore, aside from remaining compliant with anti-discrimination laws, it is in the best interest of employers to ensure perceptions of fairness and transparency of organizational operations to maintain high levels of DC.

Studies of workplace diversity have investigated the effects of DC on various work outcomes among minority member employees. Among LGB employees, studies have consistently supported the relationship between identity disclosure and D&I efforts (e.g., nondiscrimination policies, CSI-support groups) (Rostosky & Riggle, 2002) and gay-supportive organizations (Griffith & Hebl, 2002; Waldo, 1999). Pertaining to employees with concealable identities, studies imply that employees who believe their organization values diversity, especially members of their identity group, are more likely to disclose their association and have positive work outcomes. Ragins and Cornwell's (2001) study found that explicitly LGB-inclusive organizational nondiscrimination policies and practices were associated with job outcomes (i.e., compensation, promotion) through perceptions of discrimination. Perceptions of

an organization's value of diversity were also found to mediate the effect of SSS on job

outcomes (i.e., absenteeism) (Avery, McKay, Wilson, & Tonidandel, 2007).

A strong diversity climate can compensate for the exclusivity of protection provided by

Title VII through communicating a more inclusive appreciation of diversity. Such

communication is essential to garner confidence among CSI group members who lack legal

protection against disparate treatment. Such a sense of security will likely provide the

reassurance necessary for employees with concealable stigma to fulfill any desire to disclose at

work. This relationship was supported in a study by Huffman, Watrous, and King (2008) who

found an association between formal and informal organizational support for LGBT employees

and disclosure at work. Likewise, we predict a positive relationship between DC and CSI

disclosure among employees.

Hypothesis 1a: Perceived organizational diversity climate will be positively related to

disclosure of a stigmatized concealable identity.

Supervisor-Subordinate Similarity

Social psychology literature surrounding diversity issues has been devoted to the

investigation of how people attract others, how in-groups and out-groups are formed, and the

benefits and challenges of maintaining healthy diversity (e.g., Hogg et al., 2004; Mannix &

Neale, 2005; Korte, 2006). The similarity-attraction theory (SAT) provides a relatively intuitive

explanation for this phenomenon. The theory posits that people like, and are attracted to, people

similar to themselves in terms of personal characteristics or group memberships (Byrne, 1971).

This explains the homophily that spontaneously materializes in social settings, including the

workplace, and the need to be proactive in diversity promotion efforts. SAT may also inform professionals of strategies that may enhance diversity initiatives through interventions dealing directly with employees who identify with marginalized groups.

Though the dynamic of SAT has been explored primarily among dominant identity groups, and in regard to lateral coworker relationships (e.g., Frable, Hoey, Platt, 1998), the findings appear to translate to the supervisor-subordinate relationship as well (Riordan & Shore, 1997; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). The consensus among relational demographers suggests that the presence of similar others increases the positive affect of those individuals. Another common idea is that the presence of similar leadership reduces discriminatory perceptions and experiences (Ely, 1995).

 A review of the literature also reveals numerous effects of demographic similarity that support improvements in interpersonal relationships, such as communication and integration within social groups (see Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). In the opposite direction, a negative correlation was found between supervisor-subordinate dissimilarity and ratings of subordinate effectiveness, personal attraction toward subordinates, role clarity experienced by subordinates, and attendance (Tsui, 1989; Avery et al., 2007); essentially reflecting some of the pitfalls of diversity.

With a strong influence on the interpersonal bond between supervisor and subordinate, supervisor-subordinate similarity (SSS) would be expected to provide the emotional support necessary to encourage disclosure. In a reciprocated process, both supervisor and subordinate may benefit from sharing a stigma. As explained by leader-member exchange theory (LMX), leaders form strong bonds with some members over others based on leader and follower characteristics and interpersonal relationships (high versus low-quality LMX relationships)

(Hogg et al., 2005). Subordinates benefit from high-quality LMX relationships through money, trust, resources, and privileges. Studies of LMX show that this leader-member exchange is related to various positive attitudes including organizational citizenship behaviors, perceptions of organizational justice, and trust in leadership.

As these findings depict the experience of the dominant culture, the current study sought to test these effects among the subgroup of employees with CSIs. Considering the formation of trust from the perception of a shared identity with a supervisor, the influence of trust on the efficacy of the manager, and well as decreased perceptions and experiences of discrimination (Morand, 1996; Ely, 1995), SSS could have substantial implications for workplace group dynamics. It is with this understanding that a positive relationship between SSS and disclosure of a CSI is expected.

Hypothesis 1b: Supervisor-subordinate identity similarity is positively related to disclosure of a stigmatized concealable identity.

Perceived supervisor support. Unlike the other workplace attributes included in the model (see Figure 1), perceived supervisor support (PSS) does not assess an aspect of organizational diversity orientation, however, the relationship between PSS and employee performance has received consistent support in studies of the general population. PSS refers to employee perception of the extent to which their supervisor values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, 2002). The effects of PSS are persistent at every level along the corporate ladder. Whether an entry-level employee or a department manager, all employees seek the support of their superiors (Shanock, 2006).

Research suggests that PSS plays a significant role in employee attitudes. Research supports a relationship between PSS and employee outcomes like job employee retention (Eisenberger, 2002). Studies have also directly linked PSS to satisfaction on the job (e.g., Huffman, 2008; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Baruch-Feldman (2002) found that the effect persisted when the proximity of the authority figure was expanded from immediate supervisor to unit supervisor, the immediate supervisor's supervisor.

A large portion of PSS research surrounds its impact on work outcomes through its interaction with perceived organizational support. As this study focuses on PSS, it is important to distinguish between these two sources of support while remaining aware of their complementary nature. Support received from a supervisor does not imply PSS as the support could be attributed to the organization as represented by the supervisor (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Furthermore, the performance benefits of PSS may be explained by organizational support theory, an extension of social exchange theory, which posits that employees trade effort and dedication for tangible (e.g., pay, bonuses) and intangible socioemotional rewards.

Supervisors can provide the latter type of support, feelings of value and caring, which are likely perceived as a more altruistic, or authentic, expression of support when compared to the more methodical organizational displays of appreciation (e.g., a yearly bonus). Maertz et al. (2007) found that supervisors rated high in PSS provided frequent "important" rewards such as consideration, good assignments, flexible work schedules, feedback, recommendations, recognition, and mentoring support. Intangible rewards are likely to elicit feelings of appreciation and communicate satisfaction with one's performance as well as a sense of value in their membership on the team which would be especially valuable to employees with CSIs who must work under additional stress such as continuous self-monitoring.

The expected benefits of PSS may also be a function of SSS. As beings of vices and virtues, supervisors are not excluded from the influence of self-categorization processes, in-group bias, and acts of discrimination against out-group members. In line with the tenets of LMX, supervisors may exhibit preferences through variable levels of support of members within their team (Baruch-Feldman, 2002). In this case, PSS would be especially influential when the leader-member relationship is strong as in the case of SSS.

Research on the effects of PSS on employees with CSIs remains scarce. To bridge the gap, Huffman (2008) linked PSS to JS among LGB employees. This provided a baseline for future researchers to assess additional factors unique to the CSI community. The common theme of the theories previously mentioned is that supervisors are a source of emotional support. A relationship built on the exchange of support between supervisor and subordinate is expected to promote the trust necessary to encourage subordinate disclosure of a CSI. Therefore, the current study seeks to expand upon Huffman's finding by investigating the role of disclosure as a potential mediator between PSS and JS. Furthermore, this study examines the influence of PSS on CSI disclosure.

Hypothesis 1c: Perceived supervisor support is positively related to disclosure of a stigmatized concealable identity.

Group Commitment

A major component of social identity, as explained by Tajfel (1974), is the emotional and value significance of group membership. This emotional attachment to the group is parallel to the idea of GC, or the strength of commitment a person feels toward their in-group. Social

identity theory suggests that strength of group-defined identification is related to social behavior (Abrams & Hogg, 1990). Under this premise, strength of identification is expected to intensify the relationship between workplace attributes and disclosure through the desire to embrace their social identity.

GC is expected to moderate the relationship between SSS and disclosure. This logic was partially supported in a study that found that interviewees with a stronger strength of denomination identity disclosed their religious denomination significantly more to an interviewer of the same faith (Hargie, Dickson, & Hargie; 2005). As applied to the workplace, the rate by which LGB employees are expected to disclose their identity to an LGB supervisor should increase with increasing strength of group commitment.

Hypothesis 2a: The relationship between supervisor-subordinate identity similarity and disclosure will be moderated by group commitment such that the strength of the relationship will increase as group commitment level increases.

Research in this area of SIT is scarce therefore investigation of the impact of GC on the relationships between various workplace attributes and worker outcomes would be beneficial. This knowledge will contribute to our understanding of the variability of the experiences of employees with CSIs based on relative GC levels. Consistent with the logic that higher GC will increase the likelihood to disclose; given the perceptions of safety modeled by SSS, PSS, and DC; a moderation effect of CSI GC on the relationship between workplace attributes and disclosure is expected.

Hypothesis 2b: The relationship between perceived organizational diversity climate and

disclosure will be moderated by group commitment such that the relationship will

increase as group commitment level increases.

Hypothesis 2c: The relationship between perceived supervisor support and disclosure will

be moderated by group commitment such that the relationship will increase as group

commitment level increases.

Identity Expression

The literature surrounding workplace diversity management tends to focus on members

of marginalized "visible" identity groups (e.g., groups based on race, color, gender, age, physical

appearance, dialect). Unlike those with CSIs, these individuals are unable to hide, or conceal,

their stigma leaving them vulnerable to disparate treatment. This may lead some to believe that

individuals with visible stigmatized identities are at more of a disadvantage than those with CSIs

who inherently have a choice of whether to disclose or conceal their association with a

stigmatized group. Those with CSIs have a perceived luxury of being able to weigh the

advantages and disadvantages of disclosure versus concealment and, ultimately, the ability to

choose with which group to be associated and categorized. Studies support the notion that these

internal negotiations of whether to disclose or conceal a CSI cause the debilitating stress

experienced by those with concealable stigmas (Clair et al., 2005). Therefore, it appears that

individuals with a CSI only have a choice between two forms of stress: the stress of being "out"

or the stress of keeping their CSI a secret.

Employees with CSIs also have the unique choice of whether or not to manifest their identity. As the literature focuses on visible stigma, disclosure and manifestation are mostly treated as indistinguishable acts. In a study of the LGB community, three methods individuals use to reveal concealable identities are identified and highlight the difference between CSI disclosure and manifestation. The methods are described as signaling, normalizing, and differentiating (Clair et al., 2005). Signaling refers to hint dropping for one's peers to 'read between the lines' to learn of their identity. Normalizing involves a more direct approach of revealing an identity (disclosure) followed by an attempt to assimilate into the dominant culture by playing down one's lifestyle differences (behavioral suppression). Conversely, with differentiation, an individual discloses their identity, embracing their differences, while presenting their social identity as equally valid as what is dominant (manifestation). This range in behaviors highlights the difference between identity disclosure and manifestation. While a person who signals or normalizes may have disclosed their identity, they still choose to downplay their differences to fit in with the dominant group. With differentiation, a person has decided to disclose and manifest their identity, embracing their differences and speaking out against discrimination, becoming a source of information and challenge to stereotypes. The ability to differentiate between CSI disclosure and manifestation is crucial to the ability to distinguish their unique contributions to employee experience.

Disclosure. The proposed benefits of disclosure are promising. One advantage of disclosure of a CSI is the awareness that is brought to the identity which allows teaching moments and opportunities to disprove stereotypes (Corrigan, 2005). Another benefit of transparency is the increased likelihood to learn of similar others in one's environment and gain from the psychological benefits of being a member of a group of members who share the same

CSI (Frable, Platt, & Hoey, 1998). These benefits would be extremely valuable in a workplace setting where employees with CSIs can benefit from perceptions of support from ingroup members they were unaware of as well as outgroup members who have the opportunity to become aware, knowledgeable and accepting of the CSI.

Fear of disclosure has been found to be significantly related to work and career attitudes, psychological strain, work environment, and career outcomes (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Further, there also appears to be negative consequences of selective disclosure, or disclosure to some individuals but not others. The communication privacy management model highlights the complexity of managing CSIs after disclosure to only select people. According to the model, individuals with private information must negotiate how and with whom the information may be shared (Petronio, 2002). Further, this loss of control of identity management can have psychological ramifications and impact their interpersonal relationships at work.

By conceptualizing disclosure as a continuum in which disclosure increases with increasing number of groups (e.g., friends, family, coworkers, superiors) told, it is anticipated that an increase in disclosure will be associated with an increase in JS. This effect was demonstrated in a study by Griffith and Hebl (2002) who found that disclosure led to JS through favorable reactions received from their coworkers. Similarly, Day and Schoenrade (1997) found that more open employees had higher JS. Therefore, disclosure is appointed as an antecedent to JS in the model (see Figure 1).

Hypothesis 3: Disclosure of a CSI is positively related to job satisfaction in which higher levels of disclosure leads to increased job satisfaction.

Identity Concealment and Suppression. Despite the clear differences between the terms conceal and suppress, the distinction is distorted in the literature. This study (see Figure 1) proposes that these 2 terms, in the measurement of disclosure and identity suppression, are similar but indeed different and have distinct influences within a path model. Identity concealment refers to the act of hiding one's identity from public knowledge. The only definite way to confirm affiliation with a social identity without the perceiver making assumptions would be an explicit assertion of association. As such, the inverse of the act of concealment is disclosure. Identity suppression refers to the more forceful act of subduing, restraining, or repressing expression or thoughts of one's identity from the mind. The opposite of identity suppression is identity manifestation. On most occasions, however, employees who choose to conceal their CSI will also suppress signs of it.

Concealment. Concealable identities do not appear to be a major issue due to its obscure nature, however routine self-concept differentiation through concealment in select contexts (e.g., work) has shown to affect psychological well-being. A study investigating the effects of identity concealment and suppression through public-private schematization, a form of self-monitoring, demonstrated that more routine public-private schematization was associated with perceived social stress and depressive symptoms (Sedlovskaya et al., 2013).

Organizational factors (e.g., prior experiences of workplace discrimination) play a large role in the decision to disclose or conceal a CSI (Ragins & Cornwwell, 2001). Ellison et al. (2003) found that employees with disabilities often chose to conceal due to an expectation of discrimination from coworkers. Similarly, the literature on religious identity management in the workplace reports fear of adverse reactions as a primary hindrance of religion disclosure at work. Employee decision of self-expression relied heavily on the receptiveness of others, or the

religious climate of the workplace (Lips-Wiersma & Mills, 2002). Employees tended to modify their expressions following environmental cues of difference or fit.

     Suppression. A vast amount of research has been conducted on the effects of identity suppression. An employee's decision to suppress a CSI can be influenced by individual and environmental factors (Clair et al., 2005; Lips-Wiersma & Mills, 2002). Individual factors include variations in personality, such as propensity to take risks in decision making, self-monitoring tendencies, one's developmental stage, and affiliation with additional CSIs. Environmental factors consist of organizational context and legal protections, and interpersonal context (Clair et al., 2005). While limited, there is undoubtedly an opportunity for organizations to play an influential role in employees' decisions to suppress or manifest CSIs.

     According to Pachankis (2007), individuals with a CSI experience an intense internal conflict based on the salience of the stigma, its likelihood of being discovered, and the costliness of discovery that has cognitive consequences including preoccupation, vigilance, and suspiciousness. Choosing to suppress one's CSI is a commitment to continuous identity management which, with time, becomes excessively burdensome. Strategic perception management theory discusses the ongoing task of individuals hiding an identity to closely monitor their social interactions in order to detect clues of identity leak while simultaneously participating in the interaction, being careful not to disclose the hidden identity. The continuous self-monitoring and suppression of clues of a CSI place excessive weight on one's cognitive load (see Smart & Wegner, 1999) which has strong implications on employee performance. Identity suppression also has implications for identity development. According to Jourard (1971), the formation of a positive self-concept evolves from an authentic sense of self which is developed from social interaction feedback about one's self. Accordingly, an individual hiding a core part

of their being blocks their ability to engage in these genuine social interactions which will hinder their ability to fully develop a positive self-concept (see Pachankis, 2007).

Suppression of a CSI has shown to have many affective consequences including anxiety, depression, hostility, demoralization, guilt, and shame (Pachankis, 2007). Numerous studies support the consequential emotional stress that results from identity suppression. In their model of secrecy, Lane and Wegner (1995) found that increased thought suppression and intrusions are associated with depression, anxiety, and hostility. Individuals who conceal a CSI have been found to have lower social confidence and self-esteem and higher anxiety and depression than those with visibly stigmatized and nonstigmatized identities (Frable, Platt, & Hoey, 1998). Public-private schematization appears to be related to higher levels of stress, especially at work where the identity was concealed and suppressed (Sedlovskaya et al., 2013). The psychological stress experienced due to suppression may become so unbearable that it ultimately leads to the decision to disclose as suggested by a study of lesbian and gay firefighters. The firefighters expressed that they came out once they felt the "strain of aggressively hiding their homosexuality was far more costly" than the public acknowledgment of their true identity (National Defense Research Institute, 1993, p. 127).

Eventually, as Pachankis' (2007) model proposes, the concealing individual will begin to exhibit certain behaviors as a result of the cognitive and affective effects of secrecy (e.g., impression management, social avoidance and isolation, the increased importance of feedback, impaired relationship functioning). Direct effects of identity suppression on job performance have also been studied. Employees who suppressed their sexual orientation have been found to display lower levels of affective commitment, job satisfaction, and perceptions of support from top management (Day & Schoenrade, 1997). To minimize the likelihood of a negative impact on

business, organizations would benefit from ensuring their diversity management programs are inclusive to CSIs. Based on existing research on the consequences of identity suppression, CSI suppression is expected to moderate the relationship between disclosure and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4: The relationship between disclosure and job satisfaction is negatively related to suppression of a CSI.

Manifestation. Manifestation of an identity involves the expression of group association beyond simple disclosure. The distinction between manifestation and disclosure has not been firmly established in current literature, but the exclusivity of the terms is particularly important in the study of social identity management in the work setting. While some employees may choose to disclose a CSI but not actively embrace it, others may manifest their CSI without a proclamation of their affiliation.

Behavioral manifestations (e.g., display of telling photographs, discussing personal life details, wearing a hijab or other religious garments) may act as a reinforcement of CSI disclosure for an employee who has already shared their group membership. Thus, any benefits of disclosure may be enhanced through the embodiment of the CSI. Although there are only a few studies that discuss identity manifestation, support for a relationship between manifestation and job satisfaction has been found (i.e., Madera, King, & Hebl; 2012). In an attempt to enhance existing literature, a potentially magnifying effect of manifestation on the relationship between disclosure and JS is investigated as proposed in Hypothesis 5.

Hypothesis 5: The relationship between disclosure and job satisfaction is positively

related to suppression of a CSI.

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction is also a focal point in diversity literature. In the case

of CSIs, the relationship between identity disclosure and job satisfaction is crucial. Based on the

findings of previous research, JS appears to be the mechanism that transforms the psychological

benefits of CSI disclosure into improvements in the performance of the discloser. The

association between JS and various performance variables has also been supported by dozens of

studies. Three outcome variables that receive a considerable amount of attention in diversity

literature (e.g., Tsui, Egan & O'Reilly, 1992), and are adopted in the current study, are

absenteeism, turnover cognitions, and organizational commitment. Studies have displayed

consistent support for relationships between these three variables and JS (e.g., Godin & Kittel,

2004; Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell, 2007; Wasti, 2003). The current study attempts to reproduce

these relationships as stated in Hypotheses 6a-6c.

Hypothesis 6a: Job satisfaction is negatively related to absenteeism.

Hypothesis 6b: Job satisfaction is positively related to organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 6c: Job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intentions.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants.

LGB employees with full-time work experience were invited to participate in the study.

The final sample consisted of 179 respondents of whom reported identification with the LGB

community. The group consisted of 149 women, 26 men, and 4 who identified as non-binary. The majority (79.9%) of respondents identified as gay or lesbian, 13.4% as bisexual, and 6.7% chose to self-disclose. The racial and ethnic breakdown of the sample was the following: 67.6% Black, 24% White, .6% American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.1% Asian, 6.1% Hispanic, and .6% preferred not to disclose. The average age was 32 (*sd* = 7.14) and ranged from 20 to 57. The most reported (30.2%) position classification was trained professional, followed by middle management (12.8%), junior management (12.8%), and support staff (11.7%). Average tenure was 5.89 years (*sd* = 4.56). Respondents worked in a variety of industries, including primary/secondary education (22.9%), military (14.5), and construction (8.4%). Respondents were also located in many states; the top three represented were North Carolina (22.9%), Illinois (17.3%), and California (8.4%).

      Procedure. An anonymous survey was sent to several LGB leaders, organizations, and social media influencers who had been contacted and debriefed on the purpose of the study months in advance. The researcher, and several supporters, also shared the survey link across social media platforms (i.e., Facebook, Instagram) ultimately accruing respondents through snowball sampling. Business cards containing the survey link were also passed out at various Pride Month events in two major Texas cities.

      Once participants followed the link, they were required to sign a Consent Form (see Appendix A) to access the survey. Participants were instructed to respond to items about their current or most recent full-time work experience. No identifiable information was collected through this process.

Measures

Each scale used in this study was adapted from a scale used in prior research. Due to the conceptual similarity of disclosure and manifestation, these variables were tested to confirm distinctiveness. The first intervention consisted of a set of four interviews of individuals who identified with a CSI. The interviewees were asked to respond to the disclosure scale and items one and five of the manifestation scale to assess how the perception of the term "disclosed" compares to "discuss" and "talk about." After sharing the items, three of four participants interpreted the items as appropriately measuring two distinct constructs. Next, to ensure the measures were adapted to our target population, the three LGB interviewees were consulted on the applicability of the remaining manifestation scale items. A consensus was reached, and one item was removed from both the manifestation and suppression scales. See Appendix B for complete survey and scales used.

Perceived Organizational Diversity Climate (DC). A nine-item diversity climate perceptions scale (see McKay et al., 2007) was used to assess the extent to which respondents perceived their organization valued diversity. Item responses were scored on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = *well above expectations* to 5 = *well below expectations)*. High scores indicate perceptions that the organization places high value in diversity. The scale had excellent reliability (Cronbach's α = .96).

Supervisor-Subordinate Identity Similarity (SSS). SSS refers to respondents' perception of whether or not their supervisor is a member of the in-group or out-group. SSS was measured using the following single item: To the best of your knowledge, would you say your supervisor is a member of the LGB or transgender community? Responses were scored 3 = yes, 2 = no, 1 = no idea. As the study focused on the experience of LGB employees, the transgender

subgroup was included in this item to recognize the solidarity that exists within the LGBT

community, especially in regard to in-group versus out-group topics.

Perception of Supervisor Support (PSS). PSS refers to the extent to which employees

feel their supervisor cares about their well-being, values their contribution, and supports them in

their role. Following the approach of many other researchers (e.g., Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, &

Allen, 2007; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006; Eisenberger, 2002), PSS was assessed using an

adapted version of Eisenberger's (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support by

replacing "the organization" with "my supervisor". Seven items were used, and responses were

scored on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = *well below expectations* to 5 = *well above

expectations)*. The scale was very reliable (Cronbach's α = .96).

Group commitment (GC). GC refers to the degree of emotional and value significance

of group membership. Strength of GC was assessed using twelve items adapted from Phinney's

(1992) Multi-Ethnic Identity Measure which was designed to measure how identity strength.

Items assess how strongly individuals are inclined to explore the history of their identity and how

strongly they feel committed to the group (see Weber, Appel, & Kronberger, 2015). Responses

were scored on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from *1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly

disagree)* and had good reliability (Cronbach's α = .89).

Level of Disclosure. Respondents' level of LGB identity disclosure in the workplace was

assessed with four items adapted from a similar scale previously used (see Huffman, Watrous-

Rodriguez, & King, 2008). Items measured to what extent the respondent had disclosed to

individuals within various work units (i.e., coworkers within and outside department, leadership,

low-level management). Response anchors mirrored those used in Ragins, Singh, and Cornwell's

(2001) "outness" measure: 1 = no one, 2 = some people, 3 = most people, and 4 = everyone. The scale had excellent reliability (Cronbach's α = .94).

Identity manifestation. The extent to which respondents manifested their LGB identity at work was assessed with nine items adapted from Madera, King, and Hebl's (2012) Manifest Group Identity Scale. Responses were scored on a 5-point agreement Likert scale (ranging from *1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)*. Higher scores represent a higher strength of identity manifestation. The scale had good reliability (Cronbach's α = .89).

Identity suppression. The degree to which respondents actively suppressed their LGB identity while at work was measured using nine items adapted from Madera, King, and Hebl's (2012) Suppressed Group Identity Scale. Responses were scored on a 5-point agreement Likert scale (ranging from *1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)*. Higher scores represent a higher strength of identity suppression. The scale had excellent reliability (Cronbach's α = .94).

Job satisfaction (JS). Overall job satisfaction was assessed using the Spector (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The JSS consists of 36 items and measures satisfaction with the following nine job features: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, coworkers, nature of work, and communication. The aggregation of scores from all nine subsets provided the overall satisfaction score. Items were scored on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from *1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)*. The scale had excellent reliability (Cronbach's α = .92). Higher scores represent higher levels of job satisfaction.

Absenteeism. Absenteeism was measured using a single-item scale of the self-reported number of days absent in the past year of employment.

Affective Organizational Commitment (OC). Affective organizational commitment refers to the respondents' emotional attachment to their organization that motivates them to

remain a committed employee. Affective organizational commitment was measured using

McKay's et al. (2007) 4-item scale. Responses were scored based on a five-point Likert scale

(ranging from *1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly disagree)* and had good reliability (Cronbach's

α = .89). Higher scores represent a strong commitment to the organization.

Turnover Intentions (TI). Intentions to leave the organization were assessed using

McKay's (2007) two-item scale on thoughts and likelihood of leaving the organization. The scale

was anchored with a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = *far short of expectations* to 5 = *far*

exceeds expectations) and had excellent reliability (Cronbach's α = .90). An example item is "I

hardly ever think about leaving the company." Scores were recoded so that lower scores

represented lower intention to leave the organization.

Results

Analyses

To sufficiently test the proposed path model, two analyses techniques were utilized. The

first goal was to confirm the distinction of two strongly related variables: disclosure and

manifestation. Disclosure is a popular topic in identity literature while the phenomenon of

manifestation is almost non-existent. A reflection of this discrepancy, a PsycINFO search of

"disclosure AND identity" produced 198 results while "manifestation AND identity" produced 3.

While there appears to be some similarity between the two constructs, specifically when

comparing items of the measures used in this study, disclosure represents an explicit assertion of

identity association while manifestation represents a behavioral form of expression. This

includes prolonged discussion of the identity as opposed to a simple statement of affiliation. To

support this operationalization a confirmatory factor analysis was necessary.

To assess the appropriateness of our use of these two variables as distinct, the fit of a two-factor solution was compared to that of a one-factor solution. The two-factor solution consisted of testing the loading of the four disclosure scale items on one latent variable and the nine items of the manifestation scale on a separate latent variable. The one-factor solution was tested by loading all 13 items onto one latent variable.

To test the relationships proposed in the path model (see Figure 1), a path analysis was performed using MPlus. Scores for each variable were averaged and standardized, and composites were computed to test for the moderation effects of GC, manifestation, and suppression as outlined in the model (see Figure 1). Interaction effects were graphed (see Figures 2-4).

Histograms were analyzed to check for a normal distribution for each variable. Each appeared to be normally distributed. GC and PSS had a slight negative skew while suppression had a slight positive skew. Correlations are provided in Table 1.

For both subsets of analyses, Chi-square, comparative fit index (CFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were used to assess model goodness of fit.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

To ensure disclosure and manifestation were conceptually distinct constructs, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted in which the fit of a two-factor solution was contrasted with a one-factor solution. The one-factor model, with the disclosure and manifestation scale items loaded on the same factor, did not fit well to the data ($\chi^2(63) = 352.55$, $p < .001$; $CFI = .83$; $RMSEA = .16$). The two-factor solution was a better fit ($\chi^2(62) = 144.62$, $p < .001$; $CFI = .95$; $RMSEA = .09$) supporting our utilization of them as distinct constructs.

Path Analysis

A path analysis was run on the hypothesized model (see Figure 1). This original model did not fit well to the data (χ^2 (47) = 158.19, $p < .01$; $CFI = .61$; $RMSEA = .12$) (see Figure 5). None of the paths from the workplace attributes (i.e., DC, SS, PSS) to disclosure of a CSI displayed any statistical significance, failing to support hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c.

In a test of the projected moderating effect of level of GC (see Figure 1), the GC and disclosure means were standardized, and three interaction variables were created by multiplying the standardized mean of each workplace attribute score by the standardized mean of GC. Disclosure was then regressed on GC, DC, PSS, SS, and the interaction variables (i.e., GC*DC, GC*PSS, and GC*SS). The interaction of GC and PSS was found to have a significant impact on identity disclosure ($r = .64$, $p > .01$), supporting hypothesis 2c. GC did not appear to moderate the relationships between the other variables (i.e., PSS, SS) and disclosure, failing to support hypotheses 2a and 2b (see Figure 5).

The underpinning relationship of the model that connected the workplace attributes and the employee outcomes was that between disclosure and JS. Despite findings in previous research, the regression of JS on disclosure was not statistically significant, failing to support hypothesis 3 (see Figure 5). A moderating effect of identity manifestation was tested by regressing JS on manifestation, disclosure and the manifestation*disclosure composite. No relationships were found, failing to support hypothesis 5. The same analysis was conducted to test for a moderation through identity suppression by regressing JS on suppression, disclosure, and the suppression*disclosure composite. No interaction effect was found, failing to support hypothesis 4 (see Figure 5).

The relationships between JS and the outcomes variables were tested (see Figure 1). Absenteeism was regressed on JS, revealing a small significant relationship with absenteeism (r

= -.20, $p < .01$). This supports our proposition (hypothesis 6a) that lower job satisfaction correlates with more missed work days. Job satisfaction did not appear to have an impact on organizational commitment or turnover intentions, failing to support hypotheses 6b and 6c (see Figure 5).

Final Model. After interpreting the fit of the proposed model (see Figure 5), an exploratory approach was taken to reconstruct a model that better fit to the data. After several modifications, the modified model emerged as the best fit to the data (χ^2 (18) = 27.94, $p < .06$; $CFI = .98$; $RMSEA = .06$) (see Figure 6).

After failing to find support for the proposed relationships between disclosure and the exogenous variables, each variable was removed one at a time and then two at a time to check for improvement of model fit. The removal of SSS and PSS immediately improved the model fit. Furthermore, DC was found to be significantly related to disclosure of a CSI ($b = .36$, p < .01) in the hypothesized direction; as perceptions of diversity climate increased level of CSI disclosure increased. Another path was added to the model as DC also appeared to be related to job satisfaction ($b = .54$, p < .01) and improve model fit (see Figure 6). A negative relationship was found between DC and identity suppression ($b = -.26$, p < .01) as expected; as DC decreased, CSI suppression increased. This path also improved the model fit (see Figure 6).

The original moderation path through GC on PSS-disclosure was no longer significant. Consequently, the three GC moderation paths were removed from the model.

The relationship between disclosure and JS did not improve; however, manifestation was found to moderate the disclosure-JS relationship ($r = -.13$, $p < .02$) (see Figure 6). A test of simple slopes indicated that at both low ($\beta = .35$, $\rho = .00$) and high ($\beta = .22$, $\rho = .05$) disclosure levels, JS levels significantly increase from low to high manifestation. As expected, low

manifestation was related to low JS while high manifestation was related to high JS. While the difference in disclosure levels appear negligible with low manifestation, its influence appears to be greater when manifestation is high, as those who report low levels of disclosure and high levels of manifestation experience the highest JS (see Figure 2). Support for a negative moderating effect of CSI suppression on the relationship between disclosure and JS was not found. Nevertheless, suppression was significantly related to disclosure in the sensible direction ($r = -.44$, $p < .01$). These results strongly suggest that a lower rate of disclosure is related to higher levels of CSI suppression.

Both manifestation and suppression appeared to interact with disclosure in its effect on absenteeism. A positive moderation effect was found between manifestation and the relationship between disclosure and absenteeism ($r = .17$, $p < .01$) (see Figure 3). A simple slopes test confirmed that high manifestation made a large impact at higher levels of disclosure ($\beta = .25$, $\rho = .02$) compared to its effect at lower levels of disclosure ($\beta = .08$, $\rho = .07$). Identity manifestation appeared to have a larger impact on employees with high levels of disclosure while those with lower disclosure levels displayed more stability in attendance despite their level of manifestation (see Figure 3). Identity suppression appeared to moderate the relationship between disclosure and absenteeism ($r = -.16$, $p < .05$) (see Figure 4). While there is indeed an interaction present, the simple slopes test did not display significance at high ($\beta = -.12$, $\rho = .27$) or low disclosure levels ($\beta = .04$, $\rho = .37$). While the effects of disclosure appeared negligible at low levels of suppression, disclosure appeared more important at higher levels of suppression. High levels of suppression and disclosure were related to fewer workdays missed.

Finally, the employee outcomes variables were removed one at a time to test for improvement in model fit. Organizational commitment was found to be significantly related to

disclosure ($r = .64$, $p < .01$) in the expected direction; the more satisfied the employee, the more committed they appeared to be to the organization. Similarly, turnover intentions were found to be related to job satisfaction ($r = -.50$, $p < .01$) in the expected direction; the more satisfied the employee, the less they less they intended to abandon the organization. Job satisfaction was not found to be related to absenteeism.

Discussion

This study applied several social identity-related theories to the experience of employees with stigmatized, yet concealable, social identities. An extensive model of characteristics of the organization and employee outcomes was developed based on theory and previous research findings. Further, the model was tailored to incorporate the experience of those with concealable stigma with the inclusion of group commitment strength, identity manifestation, and identity suppression as moderators of the more common relationships analyzed in diversity research. This study is one of few to investigate the influence of identity manifestation and may be the first to investigate its incremental validity as a moderator of the relationship between disclosure and job satisfaction.

The delineation of disclosure and manifestation was supported by confirmatory factor analysis. These results support their treatment as distinct constructs. Support for the independence of these terms informs the future study of social identity and expression by highlighting another facet of identity expression that could provide a more comprehensive investigative lens. There are also implications for the field. While the physical embodiment of diversity in the workplace is important, encouragement of identity manifestation should be included in D&I efforts as well.

The workplace elements in this study were variables commonly investigated by diversity researchers. Support for the influence of these variables was inconsistent in the present study. The hypothesized relationship between organizational diversity climate, the most commonly studied workplace feature, and disclosure fit the model as found in prior studies (e.g., Driscoll, Kelley, & Fassinger, 1996) while PSS and SSS appeared to be unrelated to disclosure. Such results suggest that supervisors may have little, if any, influence on an employees' decision to disclose a CSI. Support at the organizational level may supersede the importance of support at the supervisor level as reiterated by Huffman et al. (2008).

The results of this study may also signify intersectionality of the multiple CSIs possessed within the sample. While organizational diversity efforts are typically inclusive of all groups, supervisors may show support for one identity but not another. As in the case of SSS, the perks of supervisor-subordinate LGB camaraderie may be severed by incongruence of a more salient identity group.

The presence of a moderating effect of group commitment strength was not supported for any of the proposed paths in the modified model (see Figure 6). As a variable discussed in detail in SIT, group commitment remains neglected in diversity research. More research into the concept will be informative to how organizational features may variably impact members of CSI groups at different levels of GC.

Contrary to what previous studies have found (e.g., Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Griffith & Hebl, 2002), and perhaps the most daunting of the results, was the absence of a relationship between disclosure and JS. Surprisingly, Model 2 supports a strong relationship between organizational diversity climate and JS, as suggested in prior studies (e.g., Ellis & Riggle, 1995). This suggests that while formal disclosure may not be necessary for employees with CSIs to

experience job satisfaction, communication of inclusivity and job safety with minority groups should.

The hypothesized moderation effect of manifestation on the disclosure-JS relationship was supported. Results suggest lower manifestation is related to lower job satisfaction regardless of the decision to disclose, while high manifestation is related to higher job satisfaction overall (see Figure 2). As expected, manifestation and disclosure were found to be highly related. Further, while JS appeared to be unrelated to disclosure, its relationship with manifestation was statistically significant. Therefore, not only does an inclusive climate appear to correlate with JS but the ability to behaviorally embrace one's CSI also makes a positive difference. The impact of manifestation beyond disclosure is supported regarding maintaining employee job satisfaction and suggests a need to focus on encouraging identity embodiment and enhancing perceptions of safety for such acts at work. These results have direct implications for human resources professionals looking for ways to best include invisible minority groups within their workforce. Support for a moderating effect of suppression on the relationship between disclosure and JS was not found. This variable should be investigated further.

Looking to mirror several other studies that examined the business benefits of JS, its relationships with absenteeism, affective commitment, and turnover intentions were measured. Direct effects were found for the latter two variables, which suggests JS is related to employee emotional commitment to the organization and their willingness to remain committed through minor grievances. This makes practical sense as affective organizational commitment and turnover intentions were found to be highly related.

JS was not found to be related to the number of absences; however, attendance appeared to be related to disclosure through the interaction effects of manifestation and suppression. As

expected, the effects were nearly perfect mirror images of each other (see Figures 3 and 4). The

interaction is revealed at low levels of manifestation and high levels of suppression while the

interaction effect is negligible at high levels of manifestation and low levels of suppression. Days

of work missed were lowest when the employee reported low manifestation with high disclosure

and high suppression with high disclosure. This suggests that the counterproductive effects of

suppression may be offset when disclosure is high. These findings support the positive narrative

of disclosure concerning its direct impact on worker outcomes.

Furthermore, organizations can significantly enhance their D&I practices by focusing on

enhancing perceptions of diversity climate, thereby eliciting feelings of safety among members

of CSI groups. Employees have responded positively to displays of organizational justice which

can be improved through transparency in organizational operations and decision making. More

specifically, organizations should encourage acts of manifestation of CSI group membership that

do not require formal disclosure (e.g., company participation in PRIDE events, encourage

workspace decor) as this has been found to be related to employee job satisfaction. Furthermore,

while this study targets employees with concealable stigma, specifically LGB employees, its

findings apply to both visible and concealable identities with and without a stigma.

Limitations and Future Research

This study aimed to contribute to existing workplace diversity literature by focusing on

the experience of employees with CSIs and the impact of different forms of communication of

such identities on the psychological experience and performance of this workgroup. As many

researchers have done, the experience of one group was investigated with the expectation that

results would generalize to other similar groups. Due to the preponderance of the LGB subgroup

within this population, as well as the abundance of literature surrounding the LGB experience,

this group was sampled in the current study. However, one must also acknowledge the idiosyncrasies of the individual CSI subgroups and the potential for these differences to affect generalizability. Considering the significant strides toward diversity appreciation in America, differentials in discrimination experience are expected to be negligible however replication of this study with other CSI groups would further test this opinion.

The lack of support found for the influence of PSS and SSS on employee CSI disclosure suggests supervisors may have less impact on perceptions of safety than expected and may warrant a change in focus to the influence of coworkers. A deeper investigation of the role of supervisors may examine the influence of supervisor CSI disclosure and manifestation on employee disclosure and manifestation instead of supervisor similarity which leaves room for doubt that the supervisor, in fact, shares a CSI. Also, the perception of supervisory support of subordinate CSI may have a stronger relationship with CSI disclosure than the general support measured by PSS.

In assessing potential common method bias, there were opportunities for better control that should be utilized in future studies. Measures were taken to eliminate the ambiguity of certain items not applicable to the LGB population. Varying anchor properties (i.e., number of points, labels) and balancing positive and negative items would have also lessened the likelihood of bias on the bivariate relationships found within the model. Common method bias is not a major concern in regard to the moderation effect of CSI manifestation. According to Siemsen, Roth, and Oliveira (2010); since common method bias would lower measure reliability, attenuation of the interaction would occur. Therefore, a persisting interaction effect is a strong implication of an actual interaction effect.

Investigations of sensitive topics such as stigma and disclosure present a challenge to researchers seeking participants willing to share their experiences voluntarily. As this study entailed disclosure of a CSI, development of trust and buy-in from the target population were vital. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality and secure management of data. Although this may have appeased most, the subgroup of non-participants contributes to voluntary response bias.

Solicitation of participants relied heavily on snowball sampling. The majority of the respondents were invited through social media platforms (i.e., Instagram, Facebook) which limits the sample to individuals who frequent these platforms perhaps (e.g., millennials). Since millennials are known as the most LGB accepting generation to date, this confound has the potential to artificially inflate disclosure and manifestation rates. Many participants were also solicited through LGB social media influencers on Instagram where networks are publicly viewable. This would limit the sample to LGB individuals who are comfortable with broadcasting their LGB connections. Future studies should leverage other resources to include the less "out" LGB employee population.

The effects of similarity-attraction also manifested from the snowball sampling technique. The diversity in our sample was very limited (e.g., 85.1% female, 67.6% Black), reflecting the demographics of the social media influencers who solicited their followers to participate. Such a strong presence of women and racial minorities introduces issues of intersectionality. A study controlling for these confounding variables will further enhance our understanding of CSIs and their interaction with other concealable and visible stigmatized groups.

While the sample size is a common limitation, participation count in this study was adequate. The sample size necessary to declare statistical power is debatable. Upon accepting a 10% margin of error, the recommended sample size plateaus at around 100 respondents for a population of 20,000 or more. Ethnographer Gary J. Gates (2017) reported that ten million, or four percent, Americans identify as LGBT. Based on this estimate, a sample of 179 respondents, and a 95% confidence level, our margin of error is 7.32% which is adequate.

Lastly, considering the role of politics in stigma and diversity climate, which manifests within the organizations in that region, a between-regions study would be powerful. Due to state laws, experience with discrimination would vary based on location. Perhaps employees with CSIs in more liberal states (e.g., California) have consistently more positive experiences with disclosure and embracing their true-selves at work compared to similar employees in a more conservative state (e.g., Wyoming). This information will be especially useful for employers looking to create an inclusive work environment within a less progressive climate.

Conclusion

This study found support for the distinction between two forms of identity communication: disclosure and manifestation. As previous research has regarded communication as a single construct, the distinct effects of behavioral communication of certain identities have been neglected. After the delineation of this single factor description of communication, manifestation appeared to better explain the positive impact of CSI revelation on employee attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction). This has strong implications on the way disclosure is defined and studied in future studies and also highlights manifestation as an important variable in the study of concealable and stigmatized identity groups. Despite treatment of manifestation as a moderator, the relationships found suggests disclosure is best described as a moderator of the relationship

between manifestation and JS. Manifestation was also related to JS directly and interacted with

disclosure in its relationship with absenteeism, suggesting a need for a continuation of its study.

SSS and PSS may be unrelated to the decision to disclose a CSI. The strong effects found

for the impact of organizational diversity climate on job satisfaction and suppression have strong

implications for the benefits of perceptions of fairness among employees. HR professionals

seeking to optimize attitudes and performance, while maintaining an atmosphere inclusive to

employees with CSIs, would benefit from enhancing perceptions of justice (e.g., ensuring

transparency and consistency in organizational decision-making). Enhancing DC will also lower

acts of CSI suppression which may affect worker outcomes such as attendance. Moreover,

organizations should prioritize developing a culture where employees feel safe to manifest their

identities as opposed to providing a limited sense of safety to disclose CSI membership, but

within the societal norm.

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Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study Variables

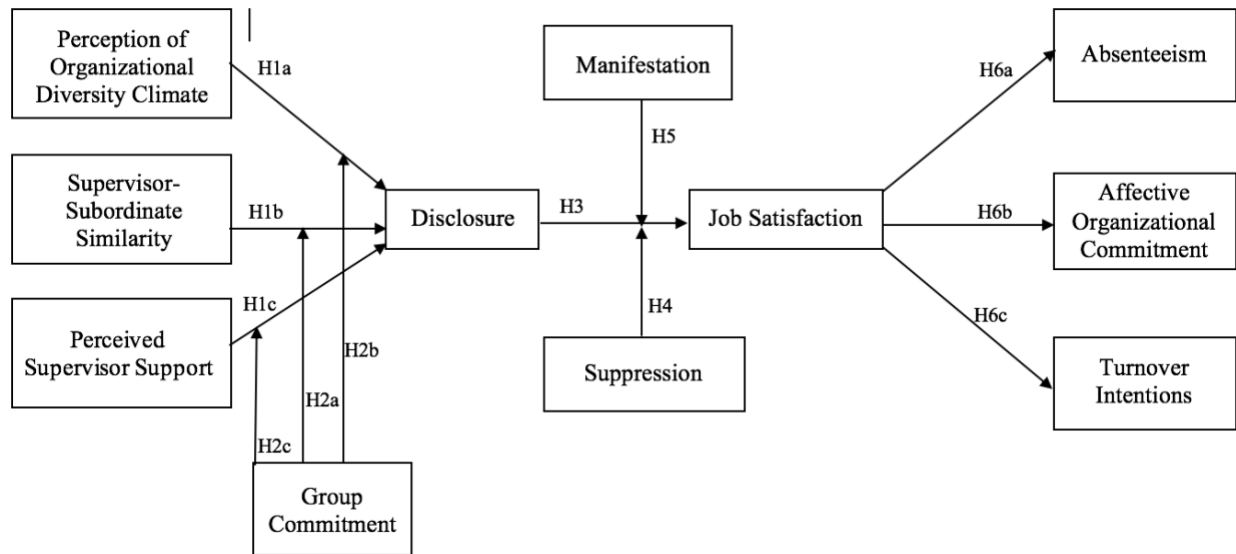| Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. DC	2.91	1.02	1										
2. SSS	1.23	.57	.00	1									
3. PSS	3.89	1.08	.48**	.03	1								
4. GC	3.99	.72	.18*	-.02	.17*	1							
5.Disclosure	2.53	1.02	.32**	-.09	.15*	.19**	1						
6. Manifestation	2.88	1.08	.38**	-.00	.27**	.45**	.67**	1					
7. Suppression	2.22	1.12	-.46**	.00	-.30**	-.29**	-.64**	-.77**	1				
8. JS	3.33	.69	.71**	.05	.65**	.14	.20**	.28**	-.36**	1			
9. Absenteeism	4.83	5.44	-.10	-.03	-.08	.05	-.06	-.03	.08	-.12	1		
10. OC	3.59	1.14	.64**	-.00	.60**	.19*	.15*	.22**	-.30**	.77**	-.13	1	
11. TI	2.67	1.44	.58**	.04	.49**	.18*	.17*	.29**	-.25**	.75**	-.09	.72**	1

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.
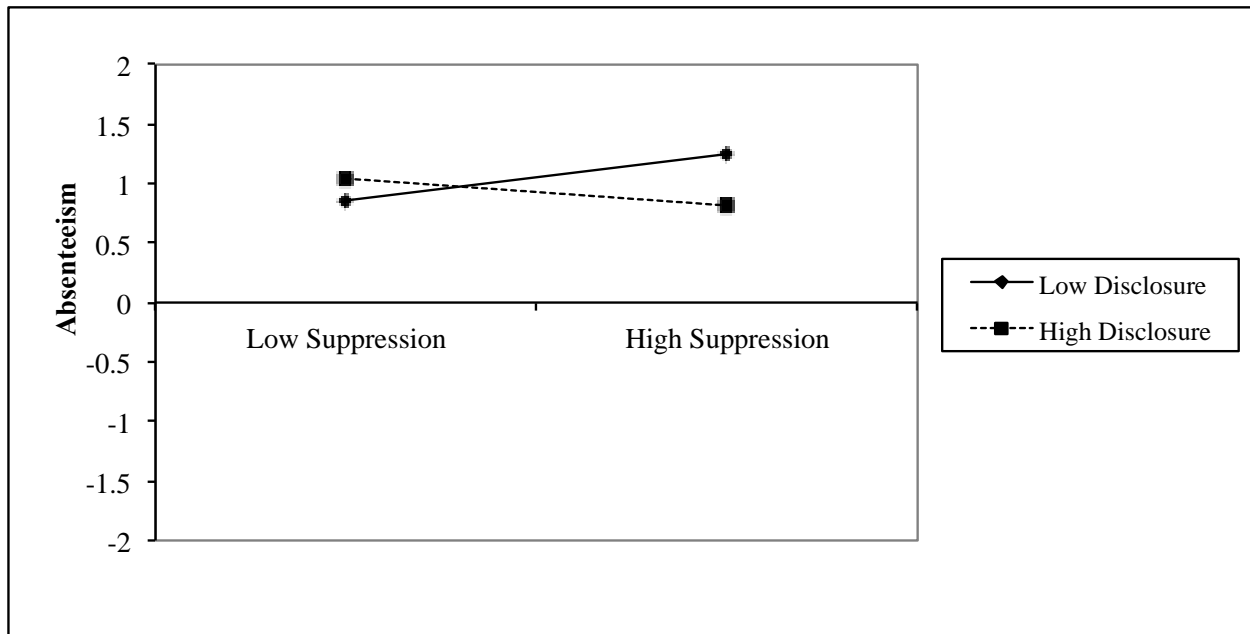
Figures

Figure 1. Hypothesized Model.
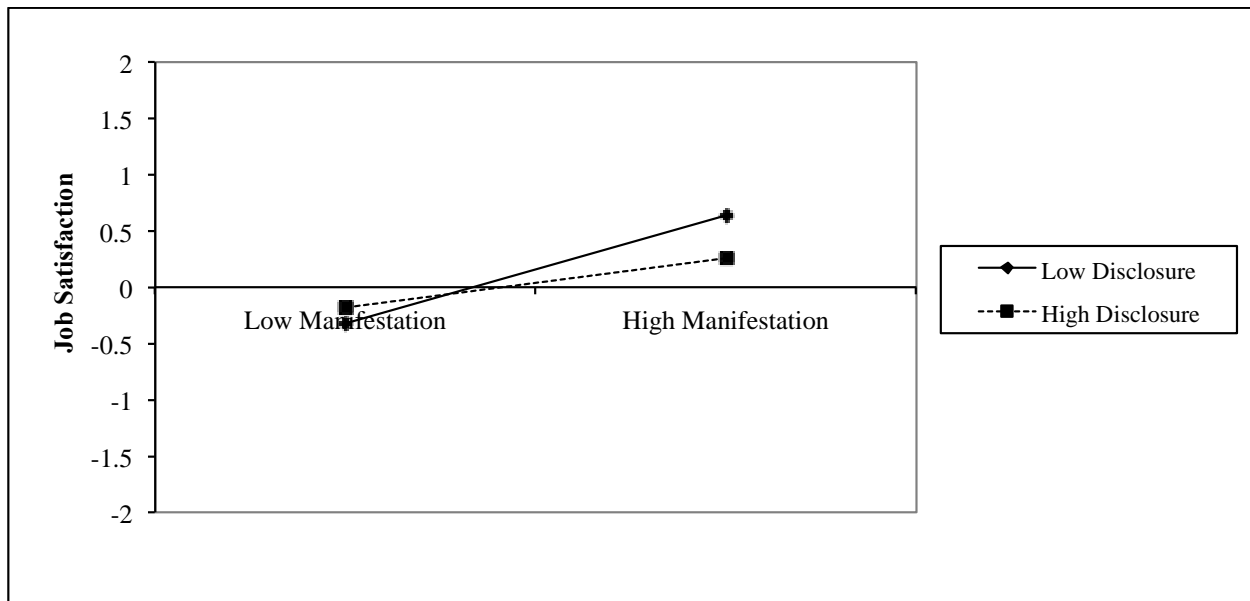
Figure 2. Moderation of Manifestation on Disclosure and Job Satisfaction. This figure illustrates the interaction effect between manifestation and disclosure on job satisfaction and highlights the effect of disclosure at high levels of manifestation.
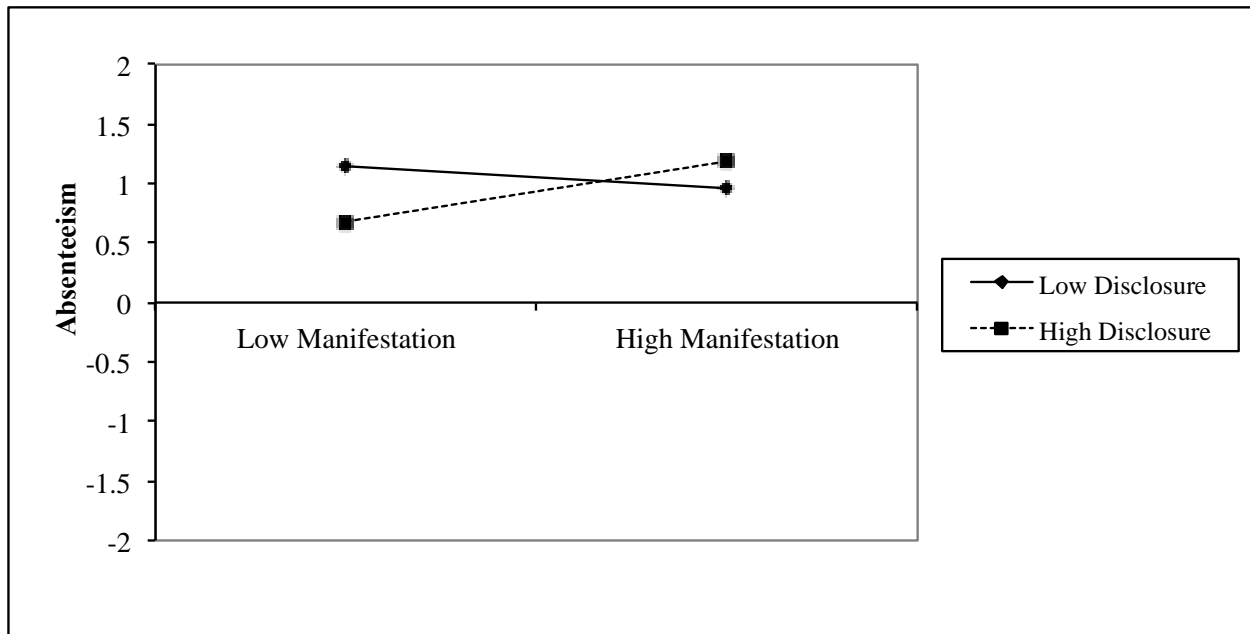
Figure 3. Moderation of Manifestation on Disclosure and Job Absenteeism. This figure illustrates the interaction effect between manifestation and disclosure on absenteeism and highlights the effect of disclosure at low levels of manifestation.

Figure 4. Moderation of Suppression on Disclosure and Job Absenteeism. This figure illustrates the interaction effect between suppression and disclosure on absenteeism and highlights the effect of disclosure at high levels of suppression.
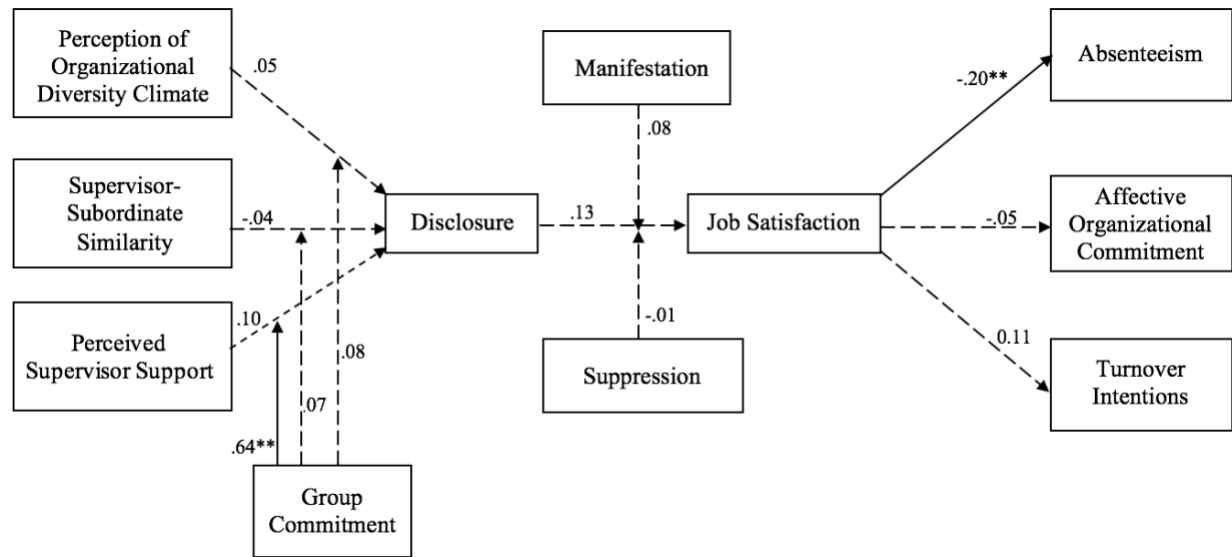
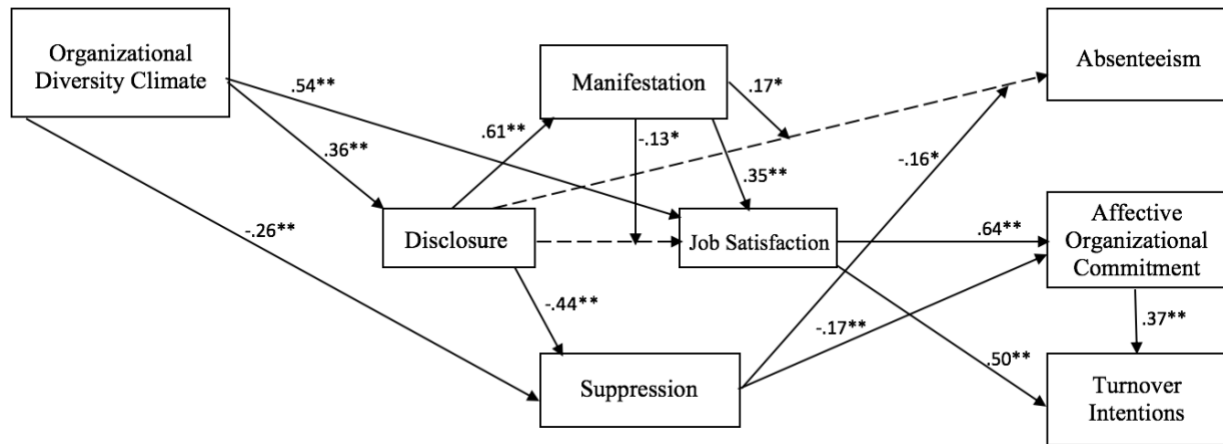*Figure 5.* Hypothesized Model with beta weights.

Figure 6. Model 2 with beta weights.

Appendix A

Consent Form

What is this study about?
The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the unique needs of employees with certain concealable identities. From what is known about secrecy and identity suppression, the consequences of hiding one's true self has shown to have serious negative consequences. Therefore, it should be a priority for organizations to encourage identity manifestation of their employees.

Researchers of social identity and organizations tend to neglect concealable identities (e.g., sexual orientation, disability status, religion) when discussing diversity topics. This is likely due to an ongoing lack of research and evidence on the topic. In response to this lack of research on concealable identities, this study focuses on the experience of the LGB community; specifically, full-time LGB employees.

What do I need from you?
Your honest feedback! If you agree to participate in this study, you will be navigated to the survey. The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. Please be sure to give yourself enough time to complete it in one sitting.

Are there any risks involved?
No. Due to the sensitive nature of the topics covered, responses are recorded anonymously. It is best to complete the survey in a private environment to prevent accidental disclosure of responses to those passing by.

Are there any benefits?
This study is few of its kind and will contribute to our understanding of the unique needs of individuals who identify as a member of the LGB community. Most importantly, the findings will have significant implications for organizational diversity and inclusion efforts in looking beyond race and gender to include the more obscure identities that make us all unique.
Your participation is completely voluntary.

The researchers conducting this study are Brittney Brinkley and Dr. Cox. If you have any questions you may contact Brittney at bbrinkley@mail.stmarytx.edu or at 310-307-9733 or Dr. Cox at ccox9@stmarytx.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject or concerns about this research study please contact the Chair, Institutional Review Board, St. Mary's University at 210-436-3736 or email at IRBCommitteeChair@stmarytx.edu. ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY INVESTIGATORS AT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY ARE GOVERNED BY THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

I have read, understood, and printed a copy of the above consent form and desire on my own free will to participate in this study. My consent confirms that I am 18 years of age or older.

Appendix B

Demographics Questionnaire

1. What best describes your race/ethnicity?

   o White

   o Black or African American

   o American Indian or Alaska Native

   o Asian

   o Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

   o Hispanic

   o Do not wish to disclose

2. What is your age? *(open ended)*

3. What is your gender?

   o Male

   o Female

   o Non-binary

   o Prefer to self-describe: (text box)

   o Prefer not to say

4. Do you identify as transgender?

   o Yes

   o No

   o Prefer not to say

5. What is your sexual orientation?

   o Heterosexual

- o Gay

- o Lesbian

- o Bisexual

- o Prefer to self-describe: (text box)

- o Prefer not to say

6. You are

- o Employed full-time

- o Employed part-time

- o Unemployed

- o Retired

7. Industry: (drop down)

Aerospace, defense & security

Asset & wealth management

Automotive

Banking & capital markets

Capital projects & infrastructure

Consumer markets

Energy, utilities & resources

Engineering & construction

Financial services

Forest, paper & packaging

Government & public services

Healthcare

Hospitality & leisure

Industrial manufacturing

Insurance

Media

Pharmaceuticals & life sciences

Private equity

Sovereign investment funds

Technology

Telecommunications

Transportation & logistics

Other industry

8. Number of years in this position:

Less than 1

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

More than 10

9. State:

US States (drop down)

Appendix C

Identification Scale

1. Do you consider yourself a member of the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual (LGB)

   community?

   - ○ Yes

   - ○ No

   - ○ Prefer not to say

Appendix D

Group Commitment Scale (Weber, 2015)

(*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree)*

Instructions: Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about the LGB community, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

2. I am active in LGB organizations or social groups.

3. I have a clear sense of why I like being an LGB member and what it means for me.

4. I am happy that I am a member of the LGB community.

5. I have a strong sense of belonging to the LGB community.

6. I understand pretty well what my belonging to the LGB community means to me.

7. I often talk to other people about LGB affairs.

8. I have a lot of pride in the LGB community.

9. I participate in LGB social events, such as parades, protests, or social events.

10. I feel a strong attachment towards the LGB community.

11. I feel good about the LGB community.

12. Being a part of the LGB community is an important part of who I am.

Appendix E

Level of Disclosure/ "Outness" Scale (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001)

(4-point Likert scale ranges from 1-no one to 4-everyone)

1. Among my coworkers within my department, I have verbally disclosed my LGB identity to...

2. Among my coworkers outside of my department, I have verbally disclosed my LGB identity to...

3. Among leadership (e.g., supervisors, trainers), I have verbally disclosed my LGB identity to...

4. Among low-level management (e.g., department managers), I have verbally disclosed my LGB identity to…

Appendix F

Perception of Diversity Climate Scale (McKay et al., 2007)

(*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-far short of expectations to 5-far exceeds expectations*)

Instructions: Please rate your organization on the following diversity initiatives.

1. Recruiting from diverse sources.

2. Offer equal access to training.

3. Open communication on diversity.

4. Publicize diversity principles.

5. Offer training to manage diverse population.

6. Respect perspectives of people like me.

7. Maintains diversity-friendly work environment.

8. Workgroup has climate that values diverse perspective.

9. Top leaders visibly committed to diversity.

Appendix G

Perception of Supervisor Support Scale

Adapted from SPOS (Eisenberger, 1986) (*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree)*

1. My supervisor values my contributions to the well-being of our department.

2. My supervisor shows consideration for my goals and values.

3. My supervisor really cares about my well-being.

4. My supervisor is willing to help me when I need a special favor.

5. My supervisor shows a lot of concern for me.

6. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work.

7. My supervisor tries to make my job as interesting as possible.

Appendix H

Perception of Supervisor-Subordinate Identity Similarity Scale

1. To the best of your knowledge, would you say your supervisor is a member of the LGB

    or Transgender community?

    o   Yes

    o   No

    o   No idea

Appendix I

Manifested Identity Scale

Adapted from Madera, King, and Hebl (2012) (*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree)*

Instructions: Please answer the following questions about your behavioral expression of your LGB identity while at work.

1. I discuss my LGB identity with my coworkers.

2. I display signs of my LGB identity in my workspace (e.g., pictures, objects).

3. I wear clothes or emblems (e.g., jewelry, pins) that reflect my LGB identity at work.

4. I celebrate meaningful dates or holidays related to my LGB identity at work.

5. I talk about my LGB identity with my supervisor.

6. Everyone I work with knows how important my LGB identity is to me.

7. I express my LGB identity at work.

8. I use the language, vernacular, or speech style of my LGB identity at work.

9. I listen to music associated with my LGB identity at work.

Appendix J

Suppressed Identity Scale

Adapted from Madera, King, and Hebl (2012) (*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree)*

1. I refrain from talking about my identity with my coworkers.

2. I conceal or camouflage signs of this identity in my workspace (e.g., pictures, objects).

3. I hide emblems that would reflect this identity at work.

4. I try to keep meaningful dates or holidays related to this identity secret.

5. I try not to talk about this identity with my supervisor.

6. No one I work with knows how important this identity is to me.

7. I suppress this identity at work.

8. I try not to use the language, vernacular, or speech style of this identity at work.

9. I make a point of not listening to music associated with this identity at work.

Appendix K

Absenteeism Scale

1. How many days of work (excluding vacation) were you absent in the past year of your

   employment? (text box)

Appendix L

Affective Commitment Scale (McKay et al., 2007)

(*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree*)

1. The company inspires me to do my best work every day.

2. The company motivates me to contribute more than is normally required to complete my work.

3. I would recommend the company as a place to work.

4. I rate the company highly as a place to work.

Appendix M

Turnover Cognitions Scale (McKay et al, 2007)

(*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree*)

1. I hardly ever think about leaving the company.

2. It would take a lot to get me to leave the company.

Appendix N

Job Satisfaction Scale (Spector, 1985)

(*5-point Likert scale ranges from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree*)

1. I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.

2. There is really too little chance for promotion on my job. R

3. My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.

4. I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive. R

5. When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.

6. Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult. R

7. I like the people I work with.

8. I sometimes feel my job is meaningless. R

9. Communications seem good within this organization.

10. Raises are too few and far between. R

11. Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.

12. My supervisor is unfair to me. R

13. The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.

14. I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated. R

15. My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.

16. I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work

    with. R

17. I like doing the things I do at work.

18. The goals of this organization are not clear to me. R

19. I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me. R

20. People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.

21. My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates. R

22. The benefit package we have is equitable.

23. There are few rewards for those who work here. R

24. I have too much to do at work. R

25. I enjoy my coworkers.

26. I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization. R

27. I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.

28. I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.

29. There are benefits we do not have which we should have. R

30. I like my supervisor.

31. I have too much paperwork. R

32. I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be. R

33. I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.

34. There is too much bickering and fighting at work. R

35. My job is enjoyable.

36. Work assignments are not fully explained. R