

Inclusivity and Diversity in the LGBTQ+ Community

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Though there is increasing awareness of the LGBTQ+ community, it is essential to provide careful attention to the diversity in this community. As I demonstrate in my book, [Queers, Bis, and Straight Lies: An Intersectional Examination of LGBTQ Stigma](#), LGBTQ people experience a wide range of negativities that are shaped by their intersecting identities of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, and class (among others) (Worthen, 2020). In working toward inclusivity, such diversities are essential to explore. For example, in a nationally representative United States (US) sample of 1,604 LGBTQ+ respondents that is inclusive of nine groups within the LGBTQ community, between 25% and 61% report experiences with sexuality-based discrimination (see Figure 1).

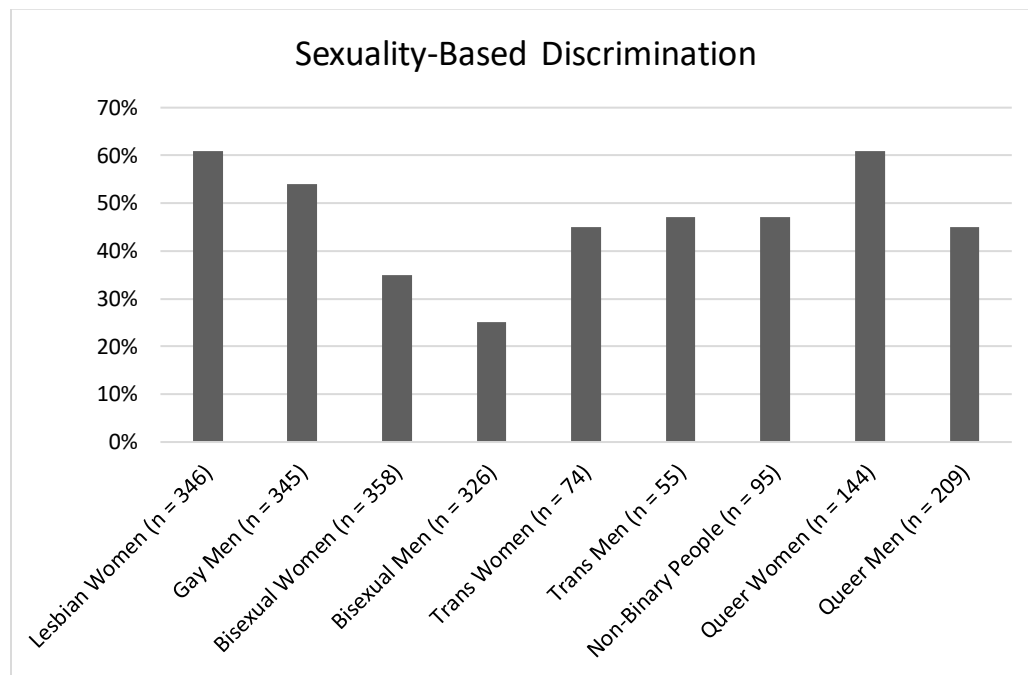


Figure 1. Sexuality-Based Discrimination Experiences of LGBTQ People adapted from Worthen (2020).

In particular, these data demonstrate that lesbian women are at a significantly heightened risk in comparison to most other groups while sexuality-based discrimination is notably less common among bisexual men. Lesbian women's experiences with at least two types of marginalization as women and as lesbians contribute to their unique experiences with discrimination that differ

from others in the LGBTQ community. Markedly, these data demonstrate the significance of exploring the intersections of both gender and sexuality in understanding the discrimination experiences of all LGBTQ people (see also Meyer, 2015).

Especially in the realm of education, discrimination experiences can take on various forms. LGBTQ+ students, faculty, and staff are at risk for such negativities which can range from hostile student-teacher interactions, to being looked over for a promotion, to losing one's job. As others have noted (Dessell et al., 2017), a "chilly" campus climate characterized by LGBTQ hostilities can sometimes be shifted through programmes such as bystander intervention and LGBTQ+ campus awareness programs. Thus, to be most effective, it is essential that we utilize best practices in these programmes that consider the unique experiences of LGBTQ+ people.

Overall, thinking about LGBTQ+ people as a "monolithic" group is not only problematic, it can lead to misguided and ill-informed policies and practices (Worthen, 2013). Providing an in depth focus on the unique experiences of the diverse groups within the LGBTQ+ community will help us to continue to work toward inclusivity in the fields of education and beyond.

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