

A Quantitative Study of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine how the constructs of ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism contribute to within-group discrimination experienced by gay men. Additionally, this study aimed to understand whether gay men perceive rejection from another gay man within the community as discrimination or as a result of another gay man's preferences for romantic and sexual interest. Without a comprehensive understanding of within-group gay discrimination, the counseling profession is without a complete understanding of the needs of gay men. Participants for this study were a national and international sample of 2159 gay men at least 19-years-old. Participants reported their experiences of within-group discrimination on the constructs of ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism, with culturalism reported at the highest level and sexism reported at the lowest level for the entire sample. Participants also reported perceptions of preference and discrimination for both romantic and sexual interest rejection. Results showed perceptions for preference being the reason for romantic and sexual interest rejection were more highly reported than perceptions of discrimination on all six constructs. Scores on sexual interest rejection for both preference and discrimination were higher than scores for romantic interest rejection on all constructs except for sizeism. Implications were developed for both the counseling profession, as well as for counselor educators and supervisors training counselors-in-training to work with gay men experiencing within-group discrimination.

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Chapter I. Introduction

Despite the conception in the literature that gay men are a homogenous population, (Groves & Smith, 2014; Lyons & Hosking, 2014; Maki, 2017; Teunis, 2007) an increase in gay subcultures has begun to exist. Gay men often categorize and label themselves and each other by their weight, level of hairiness, sexual role preference, and perceived level of masculinity (Lyons & Hosking, 2014; Maki, 2017; McGrady, 2016; Moskowitz, Rieger, & Roloff, 2008). An introduction of subcultures within the gay community allows gay men the opportunity to not only categorize themselves and other gay men, but also creates an environment for within-group discrimination to occur more easily through specific labeling. Greenwald and Pettigrew (2014) concluded that within-group favoritism was more malice than out-of-group hostility.

Although the LGBTQ community has a history of fighting for equal rights, including those of gay men (Callander, Newman, & Holt, 2015; Teunis, 2007), the literature indicates that when a group begins to experience less threat or discrimination members within the group begin to turn on one another and start to disregard their previous allegiance to one another (Barclay & Benard, 2013; Falomir-Pichastor, Gabarrot, & Mugny, 2009). This is important to note as a 2015 Mood of the Nation survey by Gallup found that 60% of Americans are now satisfied with the acceptance of gays and lesbians, compared to just 32% 10 years prior (McCarthy, 2016). The poll also found that of those Americans that are dissatisfied with the current degree of acceptance in the U.S., 10% reported being dissatisfied because they want to see more acceptance, and 13%

reported being dissatisfied because they want to see less acceptance. While gay men are seeing significant gains in societal acceptance (Kushner, Neville, & Adams, 2013), they are now at risk for experiencing within-group discrimination. It is important to note, however, that although this dissertation intends to explore within-group discrimination, the LGBTQ community still experiences unequal rights and discrimination from out-of-group members.

The counseling profession provides services for gay men who are experiencing a variety of concerns, disorders, and distress, with as many as 42% of gay men and lesbians seeking counseling services related to their sexual orientation according to Dziengel (2015). Counseling programs incorporate education for working with the LGBTQ community and promote affirmative practices for counselors-in-training (Love, Smith, Lyall, Mullins, & Cohn, 2015; Rosik & Popper, 2013). However, it can be argued that there is insufficient literature and data to understand best practices for this ever-changing population (Harper et al., 2012). The outcomes of the proposed study were intended to allow for greater understanding of within-group discrimination, from which implications for counseling and counselor education will be delineated.

Multiculturalism in Counseling and Counselor Education

According to the 2016 Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards, counselor education programs are required to integrate multicultural considerations and training in counselor preparation programs (CACREP, 2016, Section 2 F.2.). Multicultural counseling courses commonly cover several diverse populations, and in doing so, broad generalizations are discussed to prepare counselors-in-training to work with a variety of populations (Bidell, 2014; Graham, Carney, & Kluck, 2012). Sayama and Sayama (2011) argued that providing generalizations creates stereotypes, misconceptions, and

expectations for working with populations with which the student is not familiar or a member. In 2013, Bidell conducted a study measuring the impact of an LGBT counseling course on graduate students' sexual orientation competency and self-efficacy. Students that took the LGBT counseling course saw significant improvements on their assessment scores for sexual orientation competency and self-efficacy compared to those students that did not take the LGBT-counseling course. Previous studies have contributed counselors' low levels of LGBT competence to inadequate training in their counselor education programs (Bidell, 2013; Graham et al., 2012; Grove 2009).

Education and lesson plans surrounding the needs of the LGBTQ community typically occur as a chapter or unit within a counseling program's multicultural course (Graham et al., 2012). Discussions and course material covered on the LGBTQ community often include the coming out process, out-of-group discrimination, the profession's history in diagnosing homosexuality as a mental disorder, and the unethical practice of reparative therapy (Harper et al., 2012). Although it is important to cover these topics in preparing counselors-in-training to work with the LGBTQ population, it is also important to acknowledge the distinct differences regarding the needs of each subgroup in this population. For example, the needs of the transgender, lesbian, bisexual, and queer community can be different than those of gay men. Further, there are differences in the needs between various subcultures of gay men.

In 2014, Carlos P. Hipolito-Delgado, President of the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), organized a committee to update the Multicultural Counseling Competencies that had been developed by Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) to include intersectionality and the need for social justice advocacy in working with diverse populations (Ratts, Singh, Nassar-McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2016). The purpose of

developing the new Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC) was to integrate research that suggested a person's multicultural identity is made up of multiple constructs, and that clients may belong to more than one marginalized group.

In a society becoming more integrated across various forms of minority statuses, the need to embrace the intersectionality of identities arises (Grant & Zwi, 2011; Ratts et al., 2016). Crenshaw (1989) introduced the term "intersectionality" in an essay regarding race and sex to describe how multiple forms of oppression intersect and contribute to discrimination. In an effort to understand the experiences of gay men in their community, it is important to look at how ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism all intersect and contribute to feelings of within-group discrimination. Haile, Rowell-Cunsolo, Parker, Padilla, and Hansen (2014) explained the phenomenon of "interlocking" as a way to describe the need to understand how the combination of multiple oppressions creates a more complex experience for an individual. Therefore, if an individual identifies with multiple forms of oppression, the meaning and experience of each of those oppressions also transforms, making their needs more complex to identify and support. For example, a gay Black man may experience feelings of oppression for both his race and his sexual orientation. Haile et al. (2014) explained that the combination of experiencing more than one oppression at the same time changes the way he experiences the oppression of being Black, and also changes the way in which he experiences being gay because the oppressions occur simultaneously.

The purpose of this dissertation is to inform counselor educators, counselors-in-training, and practicing counselors that gay men are not a homogeneous subgroup of the LGBTQ community, and that there are within-group dynamics that exist within the gay male population. It is suggested that more time be spent on understanding the intersectionality of multiple

identities experienced by gay men (Ratts et al., 2016), rather than on misconceptions, generalizations, and stereotypes that can lead to harmful treatment by counseling professionals. In acknowledging the distinct differences between each subgroup of the LGBTQ population, as well as the differences within each subgroup of gay men (Groves & Smith, 2014), counselors are able to gain credibility and build rapport with their clients. To further develop and increase their competence, counselors have many opportunities to better understand the concerns and needs of gay men in their own community by attending workshops, trainings, and conference sessions that provide the most up-to-date implications for working with gay men (Graham et al., 2012).

Gay Men as a Population

It is difficult to accurately estimate the number of gay men in America (Kushner et al., 2013; Love et al., 2015; Shankle, Maxwell, Katzman, & Landers, 2003). A recent Gallup poll published in January 2017 found that 4.1% of adult Americans identify as LGBT, which is an increase from 3.5% in 2012. More specifically, 3.7% of American men identified as being LGBT. This number does not distinguish between gay and bisexual men. However, having a general number helps the counseling profession put in perspective the proportion of gay to straight men in society.

According to Kenneady and Oswalt (2014), gay identity model research did not begin until the late 1960s and early 1970s. Significant events during that time included the Stonewall Riots of 1969 and the American Psychiatric Association's vote to remove homosexuality as a mental illness in the Diagnostic Statistic Manual in 1973. It was not until 1979 that Cass published *Homosexual Identity Formation: A Theoretical Model* (Kenneady & Oswalt, 2014). Although Cass's model is still widely used in counselor preparation programs, the way in which sexual identity is conceptualized in today's society is much different than it was in 1979

(Kennedy & Oswalt, 2014). As a result of growing support and acceptance in today's society, research has shown that younger gay men's experiences are more positive than those of older gay men. (Baunach, 2011; Brown & Groscup, 2009; Kennedy & Oswalt, 2014). Since the 1980s, the gay community has experienced an increase in developing subcultures and has continued to evolve in the creation of labels and within-group language (Harper et al., 2012).

Labels in the Gay Community

The use of labels in the gay community is always changing, and gay men use these labels to identify each other within the community (Harper et al., 2012; Maki, 2017). During the gay liberation movement of the 1970s, the gay community began to see divisions of gay men forming (Gough & Flanders, 2009) and subcultures being created. For example, one of these subcultures is known as the Bear community, with Bears being a group of gay men that identify as embracing traditional masculine physical and social norms (Moskowitz, Turrubiates, Lozano, & Hajek, 2013). This created the option for gay men to label themselves with a different term other than "gay" to identify their sexual orientation. According to Lyons and Hosking (2014), as many as 44% of gay men identify with a gay subculture. Studies have shown that younger generations are more likely to choose a label other than the typical label of "gay" (Kennedy & Oswalt, 2014; Morgan, 2013) to describe their sexual orientation identity. Due to the challenge for counselors to understand the constantly changing labels used by gay men, Worthington and Reynolds (2009) suggest gay men self-identify their sexual orientation and explain the label they use for their counselor. While labels within the community can identify specific characteristics of a gay man, Savage, Harley, and Nowak (2005) discussed the power of language, and how members of the LGBTQ community could be suppressed or discriminated against when non-LGBTQ persons use these labels.

Labels can be empowering, but they can also be used by persons within and outside a community to oppress and discriminate (Savage et al., 2005). Within the gay community, the creation of new labels provides an opportunity to be different from what the definition of the term “gay” means within today’s society (Worthington & Reynolds, 2009). Labels that may be foreign to members outside of the gay community require a member from within the community to define them. In return, this gives gay men an opportunity to distinguish themselves differently from the stereotypes that are assumed with the term “gay” (Savage et al., 2005).

According to the 2012 ALGBTIC competencies, new labels are added and changed within the community regularly (Harper et al., 2012). It is imperative that counselors ask their clients which labels they are comfortable with, but also how they define these terms. Labels can be used to describe a gay man’s physical size and appearance, sexual position preference, or their level of masculinity (Maki, 2017; Mitchell & Ellis, 2013; Prestage et al., 2015). Many factors including age, region, and culture can influence the way labels are defined. The client’s stage of sexual identity development can also influence the client’s understanding of the terms used in the community (Worthington & Reynolds, 2009). For example, someone that has recently come out as gay may not know the labels of the various subcultures within the community or how to define them. Therefore, counselors empower and validate their gay clients during the process of identifying themselves in the community by helping them accept the language and labels that best represent them (Harper et al., 2012).

Counseling Gay Men

Barriers in Counseling

According to Lyons, Pitts, and Grierson (2014), gay men experience more psychological distress than straight men. Research shows that gay men seek counseling more than the general

population (Dziengel, 2015; Love et al., 2015). Studies have shown that sexual minorities experience higher rates of mental disorders, substance abuse and dependence, suicidal ideation, and self-harming behaviors (Lyons, 2016; Wight, LeBlanc, de Vires, & Detels, 2015). Dziengel (2015) reported the number of gay men and lesbians who seek counseling services related to their sexual minority status to be as high as 42%. Historically, the counseling profession practices with a heterosexist lens, which is alarming considering that gay men and lesbians seek counseling services at a rate of two to four times higher than straight people (Love et al., 2015). Savage et al. (2005) indicated that almost 50% of gay men and lesbians reported being dissatisfied with their counseling experience and quit attending counseling after only one session. Although gay men are willing to seek counseling services at a high rate, it is concerning that counseling professionals do not always provide affirming practice (Love et al., 2015). In fact, according to Jeffery and Tweed (2015), most counseling professionals have never received training in affirmative counseling with the LGB population.

Depending on a client's sexual orientation identity development, they may experience dissonance between their environment, including their religious beliefs, and accepting their sexual orientation identity (Palma & Stanley, 2002). Liszcz and Yarhouse (2005) conducted a study on the attitudes of religiously affiliated counselors, specialists that work with gay and lesbian issues, and generalist psychologists' attitudes in working with non-heterosexual clients. The results showed that there are significant differences in how each of the different categories of counselors define what ethical practice is in working with gay clients. The largest discrepancies were between the religious counselors and the counselors specializing in LGBT issues. The discrepancies were surrounding clients seeking services regarding the coming out process, achieving sexual behavior celibacy, and clients wanting to change their sexual

orientation. In addition to these differences, Liszcz and Yarhouse (2005) discussed the significance of value systems. They cautioned helping professionals using gay-integrative or gay-affirmative counseling approaches to be mindful not to diminish a client's religious beliefs. Ignoring or even contradicting a client's religious or spiritual beliefs can pose a significant barrier in counseling, even as counselors strive to be multiculturally sensitive to all the diverse parts of their client.

In order to develop competence and readiness for working with gay men or the LGBTQ population in general, it is recommended that counselors and counselors-in-training develop awareness of their own sexual identity (Bidell, 2014; Love et al., 2015; Stracuzzi, Mohr, & Fuertes, 2011). Kocarek and Pelling (2003) stated that many counseling programs do not spend sufficient time training counselors to work with gay men. They found that straight counselors interested in developing more competence in working with the LGBTQ population may experience difficulty based on their internalized heterosexism and fear of being labeled as a member of the LGBTQ community themselves.

A common perception in the counseling profession is the idea that clients identifying with a specific demographic may work best with a counselor that also shares that same identity (Liddle, 1996; Stracuzzi et al., 2011). However, according to a study by Gelso and Mohr (2001), a shared marginalized identity between counselors and their clients can impair the therapeutic relationship and increase the likelihood for countertransference and transference to occur. Stracuzzi et al. (2011) completed a study with gay and bisexual men and counselors to see if a similarity or perceived similarity in sexual orientation affected the therapeutic relationship. They had the counselors self-report their universal-diverse orientation (UDO) and the gay and bisexual clients rated their trust and relationship with the counselor. UDO was intended to measure a

counselor's multicultural counseling effectiveness by assessing their cognitions, affect, and behaviors related to diversity and gay men. To the researchers' surprise, the counselor's level of UDO was a significant factor in the client's rating, while similarity or perceived similarity in sexual orientation was not. Because the UDO assessed the counselor's endorsement of human diversity and openness to diversity, it makes the case that counselors who take the time to immerse themselves in dialogues and experiences with members of the gay community may be able to have a better therapeutic relationship with their gay clients, rather than simply suggesting a gay client work with a gay therapist.

Counseling professionals may experience frustration in working with gay men who experience setbacks in accepting their sexual orientation identity. Palma and Stanley (2002) discuss setbacks due to negative internalized feelings and "homoamnesia" from their support group. The term "homoamnesia" refers to the phenomenon of a gay man's family or support group insinuating expectations for the client to be heterosexual. It is also alarming that according to the Pew Research Center study (2013), 49% of non-straight respondents reported that merging with mainstream culture was believed to be the most effective way to gain equality. Lyons (2016) suggested that future research studies examine the various contexts of discrimination experienced by gay men. To assist counselors in providing culturally competent counseling, the Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC) published competencies for counseling lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, intersex, and ally individuals in 2012 (Harper et al., 2012). The competencies serve as a resource for helping members of the counseling profession train, practice, and advocate for their clients. Kocarek and Pelling (2003) suggested that in order to provide competent services for their gay clients,

counselors need to help their gay clients understand their identity as an individual within the gay community.

Discrimination

Even though the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality in 2015, discrimination based on sexual orientation remains legal in most states (Hoy-Ellis, Ator, Kerr & Milford, 2016). Discrimination in many forms including family rejection, bullying, harassment, workplace and legal discrimination have all contributed in the psychological distress experienced by gay men (Lyons et al., 2014). Gay men are still not a protected class for workplace discrimination (Kenneady & Oswalt, 2014) even within the U.S. Congress, and now with the passing of House Bill 1840/Senate Bill 1556 in Tennessee, counselors can turn away gay clients if providing services to them goes against their “strongly held personal beliefs” (Canady, 2016, p. 1). However, this poses a contradiction with the *ACA Code of Ethics* in that code A.11.b specifies that counselors cannot deny services to a client based on their own personally held values, attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors.

The word “homophobia” was first introduced by Weinberg (1972) as a term to describe a fear of gay men, lesbians, and homosexual feelings within oneself that can lead to prejudice and discrimination of people who identify themselves as having a gay or lesbian sexual orientation. Since then, the term “internalized homophobia” has also been introduced to describe resistance to coming out or self-hatred in terms of one’s minority sexual orientation status (Ryan, Legate, Weinstein, & Rahman, 2017). According to Bostwick, Boyd, Hughes, and West (2014), numerous studies have referenced discrimination as it is perpetuated from outside the community. However, few studies have looked at how discrimination has occurred within the gay male community itself. Due to the paucity of research on this phenomenon, additional

studies are imperative to improve understanding of the phenomenon of within-group discrimination as a concept.

Within-Group Discrimination

In the literature, it has been written that groups that experience discrimination from outside their community come together to combat and resist the discrimination; however, when that discrimination begins to diminish, members within the community start to discriminate against one another (Barclay & Benard, 2013; Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). This concept is experienced as gay men work as a community to obtain legal rights and celebrate their sexual orientation at community Pride events. However, not all gay men embrace the gay culture or participate in ways to advocate for their rights and sexual freedom.

Hornsey and Jetten (2004) suggested that the amount of affiliation a member has to a group determines their behavioral commitments and conformity to the group. In contrast, those that do not commit themselves as strongly to the group may engage in more individualistic thinking and behaviors. Worthington and Reynolds (2009) explained there has not been research conducted on within-group discrimination of gay men due to the lack of instruments that can accurately assess specific variables. After all, the negative stereotypes surrounding the gay community and belonging to a minority sexual orientation threatens their gender identity and what it means to be a man in today's society (Dziengel, 2015). Further, a robust review of the literature identified sexism as a common form of within and out-of-group discrimination experienced by gay men. To develop a more holistic understanding of all forms of within-group discrimination experienced by gay men, experiences with ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism will all be explored.

Statement of the Problem

The problem this dissertation aims to research is within-group discrimination of gay men based on the intersectionality of multiple forms of discrimination. A review of the literature indicated that studies have primarily focused on ageism, racism, and sexism within the gay male community. However, there is little to no research on discrimination between gay men based on classism, culturalism, and sizeism. Without a comprehensive understanding of all forms of within-group discrimination, the counseling profession is without a holistic and accurate understanding of the needs surrounding gay men. In addition, this dissertation further explores whether within-group discrimination experienced by gay men is perceived to be the result of another gay man's preferences or is indeed overt discrimination.

Significance of the Study

According to the 2014 ACA *Code of Ethics* and the 2016 CACREP standards, the counseling profession has an obligation to advocate and support their clients, which includes those who are gay males. There are several ways in which counselors can develop competence in serving their gay clients. Recognizing the resilience of the gay community and LGBTQ community as a whole can provide a historical context and understanding of the manifestation of various disorders, traumas, and distresses experienced by the community. In contrast to the discrimination endured by this population, there are also important victories and advancements that have been made. Acknowledging both the negative and positive historical events of the community enhances credibility and trustworthiness for working with this population.

In order to best serve this community, research needs to explore and understand the discriminatory behaviors gay men experience within their community. Research intended to explore the modern within-group discrimination experiences of gay men can offer the counseling profession additional credibility and competence for understanding the lived experiences of their

gay clients. It is imperative that counselors not only practice ethically with their gay clients, but also advocate for them and follow the standards outlined by the ALGBTIC competencies (Harper et al. 2012).

Distinctly different, yet also integrated, are the six constructs included in this dissertation to understand within-group discrimination among gay men. Ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism have all been identified in the literature as contributing to mental health concerns for gay men. However, collectively, there has not been a research study that has addressed how these six constructs are experienced by gay men.

Purpose of this Dissertation

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine how the constructs of ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism contribute to within-group discrimination experienced by gay men. Further, the prevalence of each construct based on various demographic categories is explored. For example, racial identity is compared to the racism construct to understand how different races report experiences of racism. Finally, counseling implications for best practices in working with gay men are offered to strengthen the competence, credibility, and trustworthiness of counseling professionals working with gay men.

The counseling profession needs to stay abreast of the changing needs of gay men in order to best serve them. No study has ever been conducted to examine within-group discrimination of gay men as a means to provide implications for counselors. There have been many studies that have researched the effects of out-of-group discrimination and how that contributes to an increase in mental health disorders (Bostwick et al., 2014). A term used to describe causation for out-of-group discrimination is “homophobia.” However, there is a paucity

of research that aims to understand the ways in which gay men experience discrimination within their own community.

Social media, dating, and hookup apps have perpetuated the ability for gay men to identify themselves with subcultures and labels that differ from the umbrella term of “gay” (Groves & Smith, 2014). Teunis (2007) reported that using the term “gay communities” rather than “gay community” is more appropriate, as there are vast differences among gay men, their concerns, and the resources they need. On gay dating and hook-up apps, gay men are allowed to choose a subculture to identify with, enter information that describes their physical body size, report their HIV status, select a sexual position preference, describe their level of masculinity, input their ethnicity, and classify their relationship status when creating a profile (Raj, 2011; Callander et al., 2015). Subculture identification and labeling typically include disclosing one’s weight, level of hairiness, and perceived level of masculinity (Moskowitz et al., 2013; McGrady, 2016). However, identifying with a subculture is a subjective experience, as there is no formal process to become a member of a subculture, and definitions and criteria for subculture identification are not provided. In fact, the subculture labels can be described differently among gay men depending on a number of different cultural factors (Boysen, Fisher, DeJesus, Vogel, & Madon, 2011; Prestage et al., 2015).

This dissertation aims to understand whether gay men perceive rejection from other gay men within the community as discrimination or preference when it comes to romantic and sexual interest. Discrimination in this context is made up of the following constructs: ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism. These constructs were identified as a way to capture the variety of forms of discrimination that occur within the gay male community. The argument of whether gay men deny a romantic or sexual partner based on preference versus

discrimination is explored. In order to study how rejection is perceived, this dissertation looks at the response of gay men who have been rejected for sexual or romantic interest based on the six constructs measured in the survey, rather than on gay men self-reporting discriminatory practices.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Ageism: discrimination of another person based on their age (Raymer, Reed, Spiegel, & Purvanova, 2017; Nelson, 2016)

Classism: prejudice or discrimination against another person for belonging to a different social class. Social class includes a person's educational level, income and socioeconomic status, as well as their current occupation (Colbow et al., 2016; Smith, Foley, & Chaney, 2008)

Culturalism: discrimination a person experiences based on the idea that they do not practice the cultural norms of their community

Discrimination: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of another person or group of people (Orbe & Camara, 2010)

Gay Subculture: gay men that adopt a group label other than the term "gay" to represent their sexual orientation. Gay subcultures are categorized by their weight, level of hairiness, and perceived level of masculinity (Lyons & Hosking, 2014; Maki, 2017; McGrady, 2016)

Gender Expression: The way in which a person expresses their gender through their appearance, gender roles, behaviors, and emotional expression as either masculine or feminine (Puckett, Maroney, Levitt, & Horne, 2016)

Hegemonic Masculinity: powerful, physically strong, and competitive traits for men, resembling a traditional masculine ideal (Connell, 1995; Ravenhill & de Visser, 2016)

Homophobia: a fear of gay men or lesbians that can lead to prejudice and discrimination of people that identify themselves as having a gay or lesbian sexual orientation (Weinberg, 1972)

Preference: personal liking of specific characteristics of someone, including physical and psychological attraction (Eastwick, Eagly, Finkel, & Johnson, 2011)

Racism: discrimination of another individual based on their race, color of skin, or country of origin

Romantic Interest: expressing interest in an affectionate, emotional and loving relationship with someone (Jingjing & Gal, 2016)

Sexism: discrimination of a person based on the way in which they express their gender and sexual identity in regards to masculinity and femininity

Sexual Interest: intent to only be sexually or physically involved with another person (Jingjing & Gal, 2016)

Sexual Racism: “discrimination between sexual or romantic partners on the basis of perceived racial identity has been referred to as sexual racism,” (Callander et al., 2015, p. 1991)

Sizeism: discrimination towards an individual based on their body shape or size; including level of muscularity, weight, and height

Straight-acting: a gay man behaving in a way that is traditionally masculine in an effort to pass as straight (Payne, 2007)

Within-Group Discrimination: the prejudicial or unjust treatment between members within the same group or community (Mata-Greve, 2016)

Research Questions

The following research questions will examine within-group discrimination experiences of gay men:

Question 1.0: To what extent do gay men report experiencing within-group discrimination?

Question 1.1: To what extent do gay men from the United States and international gay men report within-group discrimination?

Question 2.0: Is there a significance between gay men from the United States and international gay men on levels of within-group discrimination?

Question 3.0: Do gay men perceive preference or discrimination to be the reason for their rejection of romantic interest from another gay man?

Question 4.0: Do gay men perceive preference or discrimination to be the reason for their rejection of sexual interest by another gay man?

Question 5.0: How do perceptions of rejection due to another gay man's preferences differ for romantic and sexual interest for ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism?

Question 6.0: How do perceptions of rejection due to discrimination from another gay man differ for romantic and sexual interest for ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism?

Question 7.1: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for ageism compare to a participant's age?

Question 7.2: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for racism compare to a participant's race/ethnicity?

Question 7.3: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's current employment status?

Question 7.4: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's highest level of education completed?

Question 7.5: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's socioeconomic status?

Question 7.6: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's political party affiliation?

Question 7.7: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sizeism compare to a participant's body weight?

Question 7.8: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sizeism compare to a participant's height?

Question 7.9: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings?

Question 7.10: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's relationship status?

Question 7.11: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's frequency in visiting a gay dating and/or hook-up app/site?

Question 7.12: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sexism compare to a participant's self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity?

Chapter Summary

The counseling profession has an obligation to provide culturally competent best practices to the gay community. Although it is difficult to accurately measure the number of gay men in the United States, research has shown that nearly 50% of gay men report having a negative counseling experience (Savage et al., 2005). There could be many different variables that contribute to the dissatisfaction of gay men receiving counseling services; however, it is necessary that counselors understand the key differences in subcultures of gay men. Counselors could also benefit from research that aims to understand how gay men experience within-group discrimination. A comprehensive literature review identified six constructs in discrimination of gay men including ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism.

Chapter II. Review of the Literature

Within-Group Discrimination

Human beings are fundamentally social, requiring a sense of belonging and connecting (Maslow, 1943). Specifically, gay men make up a population that is classified by their same-sex sexual orientation. Because sexual identity is only one part of a gay man's overall identity, it makes sense that many types of gay men exist and there are significant differences among them. However, despite the differences among in-group members, there are also substantial disparities experienced between gay men and straight men in terms of their physical and mental health.

Society expects and values a strong display of masculinity in defining what it means to be a man and in maintaining power and credibility in a man's gender expression (Ravenhill & de Visser, 2016). According to Connell (1995), gay men are viewed as the lowest level on the masculinity hierarchy, and also perceived to exhibit more stereotypically feminine characteristics than straight men (Mitchell & Ellis, 2013). Therefore, because straight and gay men share the same gender identity, it makes sense that conflict and hostility regarding masculinity expression occurs between them. Masculinity ideology creates complexity in gay male culture and increases the potential for division and within-group discrimination to occur.

The process of learning to authentically express their gender identity, yet also portray the gender which they romantically and sexually desire, is a developmental struggle gay men experience that straight men do not. Smith and Henry (1996) described the idea that the way in which a person views themselves and their group membership are overlapping. In addition, their

individual level of self-esteem is often directly related to the group's self-esteem. The fact that 44% of gay men identify with a gay subculture (Lyons & Hosking, 2014) raises the idea that gay men do not find as much in common with the overall community as much as a specific subculture. However, while gay men may attach themselves to a specific subculture, out-of-group members still classify gay men as a homogeneous population.

Although the culture of the gay community may appear to out-of-group members as embracing diversity and accepting of a variety of levels of masculinity expression, research shows that gay men value hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is described in the literature as powerful, physically strong, and competitive traits for men (Connell, 1995; Ravenhill & de Visser, 2016). Gay men who express themselves more effeminately are at risk for discrimination from within and out-of-group men, and often try to conform to masculine role norms (Hunt, Fasoli, Carnaghi, & Cadinu, 2016).

In regard to selecting a romantic or sexual partner, Clarkson (2006) stated, "Don't discriminate against people that express their preference" (p.191). However, the debate whether romantic and sexual interest rejection is perceived as discrimination or due to a gay man's preference is a question this dissertation aims to explore. The purpose of this dissertation is also to look at how gay men discriminate against one another and their perceptions of within-group discrimination. Although gay men are a minority population, they seek counseling services at higher rates than straight men (Love et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important for the counseling profession to understand both the oppression gay men experience from society and from within their own community. To best understand the areas of within-group discrimination experienced by gay men, six constructs of discrimination were identified in the literature: ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism.

Ageism

For the purposes of this dissertation, ageism is defined as discrimination of another person based on their age (Raymer et al., 2017; Nelson, 2016). This study does not focus solely on the within-group experiences of discrimination of older gay men in the community but includes all gay men ages 19 and older. Recent studies have explored the mental health concerns of gay men (Hoy-Ellis et al., 2016; Lyons, Pitts, & Grierson, 2014; Barrett, Whyte, Comfort, Lyons, & Cramer, 2015) and how they differ from men in the straight community. Barrett et al. (2015) reported that the reason older gay men are resistant to health services and experience higher rates of adverse health is due to the amount of discrimination they have experienced in the past. While there are still laws in place that discriminate against gay men, older gay men have lived in a time where same-sex sexuality activity was illegal and resulted in imprisonment (Kushner et al., 2013).

It has not been until recently that researchers have begun exploring the needs of older gay men. One of the main barriers to identifying the needs of older gay men is that older gay men are less likely to disclose their sexual orientation identity (Shankle et al., 2003). Shankle et al., (2003) also indicated that the majority of the research for aging gay men has been on highly-educated middle-class white men and has not expanded into other forms of diversity including socioeconomic status and race. The paucity of research on this community can be viewed as an indirect form of discrimination, as the significant physical and mental health needs of older gay men are not addressed or recognized.

It is a progressive time in gay culture, as gay marriage has recently been legalized and studies are beginning to show that LGBTQ people are becoming more accepted in society (Hoy-Ellis et al., 2016). However, although there has been recent progress in LGBTQ acceptance,

many aging gay men grew up in a time where gay sex was illegal, homosexuality was labeled as a mental disorder, and conversion therapy was an acceptable treatment consideration for homosexuality (Kushner et al., 2013). It is important to consider that because gay marriage was not nationally recognized until June 2015, gay men were not able to reap the legal spousal benefits that come with a legal marriage; housing, death, consumer, tax, estate planning, employment, government, and medical benefits. In most states, gay men are not allowed to legally adopt children as a same-sex couple. Therefore, many older gay men do not have children to care for them as they age, and they have higher susceptibility to living alone and feeling isolated (Fredriksen-Goldsen, Hyun-Jun, Barkan, Muraco, & Hoy-Ellis, 2013b)

While gay men as a population have considerable higher amounts of mental health issues and psychological distress compared to straight men, older gay men have even more factors that contribute to the causation of this phenomenon (Barrett et al., 2015; Hoy-Ellis et al., 2016; Kushner et al., 2013). As older gay men experienced discrimination and victimization over their lifetime, some learned to develop high levels of internalized homophobia (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2013a). Internalized homophobia and self-hatred perpetuate and increase the psychological distress experienced by older gay men. It is imperative that counselors advocate for their older gay clients for medical and other resources they need.

In addition to the discrimination experienced by the straight community, older gay men reported feeling at-risk of experiencing discrimination from gay men within the community because of their age (Jones, 2001; Kushner et al., 2013; Shankle et al., 2003). This is unfortunate because older gay men used to find social support within the gay community, but now the community has begun favoring youth and is discriminating against them (Emlet, 2006). Research has shown that social connections and meaningful relationships are imperative in overcoming

social isolation distress. Therefore, ageism within the gay community adds another stressor and contributor to the rising mental health concerns of older gay men. It has also been reported that much of the programming and resources dedicated to serving gay men are going to gay youth and younger adults (Hoy-Ellis et al., 2016). Finally, Redman (2012) indicated that the effects of ageism within the community can also be detrimental for younger gay men, as they will not have positive role models or mentors to turn to for support.

Intragroup conflict can also rise and perpetuate ageism within the community based on the different experiences generations have lived through in LGBTQ history. The HIV/AIDS epidemic in the 1980s still has an impact on aging gay men (Shankle et al., 2003). Older gay men lost members of their support system (Jones, 2001) and went through a community division of whether to promote an image of cleanliness through being clean-shaven, or to embrace a more hairy, dominant way of expressing themselves. Emler (2006) reported that gay men with HIV/AIDS are at a higher risk of experiencing both ageism and discrimination due to their illness. Further, 96% of the participants in Emler's (2006) study reported feelings of discrimination based on the stigma of HIV/AIDS. Differences between aging gay men and younger gay men in relation to HIV/AIDS exist because older gay men may feel that younger men take for granted the medical advancements in treating the disease. Another cause for conflict related to HIV/AIDS is due to the younger generations not practicing safe sex and depending on new preventative medications, such as PrEP (Mutchler, McDavitt, Ghani, Nogg, Winder, & Soto, 2015). Finally, a recent phenomenon called "bug chasing" has been introduced in the gay community where young men actively seek out the virus as a rite of passage to their sexual orientation identity.

Research shows that a common stereotype of older gay men is the idea that they present with feminine characteristics and behaviors (Wright & Canetto, 2009). For example, in a 2005 study of heterosexual college students by Clausell and Fiske, 92% of the participants classified gay men into subgroups that were primarily feminine. Similar to heterosexism, society tends to show more favoritism towards youthfulness and masculinity (Slevin, 2008). Slevin (2008) stated that gay men who openly express their sexual identity are often associated with gender inversion and as they age they are perceived to become more effeminate.

There are differences related to the sexual performance stereotypes and abilities across ages within the community as well (Pope, Wierzalis, Barret, & Rankins, 2007). Older gay men may experience ageism based on the idea that they cannot perform as well sexually as younger men (Jones, 2001). On the contrary, younger men may also experience ageism from older gay men in the community insinuating low levels of sexual maturity, accusations of engaging in risky sexual behavior, and a lower level of sexual performance knowledge (Jones, 2001). Research has shown that gay men view their bodies as one of their strongest assets to represent their power, success, and sexual abilities (Pope et al., 2007). Pope et al. (2007) discussed how progress has been made since the Stonewall Rebellion of 1969 and how new generations are more open to talk about intimacy and relationships. This change creates opportunities for both younger and older gay men to explore and engage in discussions related to sexuality.

Classism

Classism is the second construct of within-group discrimination explored in this dissertation. For the purposes of this dissertation, classism is defined as having prejudice or discriminating against another gay male for belonging to a different social class. Social class includes a person's education level, income and socioeconomic status, as well as their current

occupation (Colbow et al., 2016; Smith et al., 2008). Like many of the other -isms explored in this dissertation, it could be argued that classism is less a form of discrimination when choosing a romantic or sexual partner, but more a result of a person's individual preferences (Ong, 2016).

McGarrity and Huebner (2014) indicated that little research has been done to examine the relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and gay men's health. They stated that gay men from lower SES are more likely to experience discrimination, have fewer opportunities to connect and participate in social activities with other gay men, and face barriers with employment. It is difficult to measure data related to the needs of the LGBTQ community in regard to social class because national surveys do not have a history of asking participants their sexual orientation. Gates (2017) reported that it was not until 2013 that the Department of Health and Human Services' National Health Interview Survey and the Department of Justice's National Crime and Victimization Survey began asking about sexual orientation. The paucity of data regarding the needs of gay men does not stop there. Gates (2017) further explained that the Department of Housing and Urban Development stopped funding data to explore homeless gay youth in 2017 under the new administration. Data collection has also been terminated for aging gay men through both the National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants and the Centers for Independent Living, as well as removed from the American Community Survey conducted by the US Census Bureau. Not collecting this important data affects the gay men needing services and suffering psychological and physical health disparities today, as well as how services and resources can be provided in the future to best meet the well-documented needs of this population.

Colbow et al. (2016) reported the lack of instruments and expressed a need for literature measuring subjective classism. According to the literature they used while creating the Classism

Attitudinal Profile (CAP), it was recommended that social class and classism be measured subjectively. In a 2012 study conducted by Gamarel, Reisner, Parsons, and Golub, socioeconomic position was the largest contributor to mental health distress for gay and bisexual men. Appleby (2001) conducted a qualitative study on gay and bisexual working-class men and participants reported feeling more discrimination from middle-class gay men than from straight men based on their lower social class.

Acknowledging that several mental health disorders are more prevalent in gay men than straight men, Barnes, Hatzenbuehler, Hamilton, and Keyes (2014) looked at education level as a contributor to mental health disorders for gay men. They found that gay men with lower education levels were at a higher risk for mental health disorders, including mood, anxiety, and substance use disorders. Educational level was also investigated in a study conducted by Callander et al. (2015), who found that men with higher levels of education were more supportive of multiculturalism than sexual racism. Whether or not gay men discriminate against each other for romantic or sexual interest based on level of education has yet to be researched.

Culturalism

A gay man may acknowledge, accept, and eventually disclose his sexual orientation, but then later realize he does not know anything about the gay culture. Culturalism in this context refers to the discrimination a gay man experiences based on the idea that they do not practice the cultural norms of the gay community. With the introduction of various subcultures in the gay community (Maki, 2017), there are vast differences for experiencing gay culture (Prestage et al., 2015). However, there are gay men who may feel comfortable disclosing that they are a man who has sex with men (MSM), but do not celebrate their sexuality, participate in advocacy activities, or embrace a gay-specific label. Unfortunately, for those gay men that do not embrace

and engage with the gay community, they do not have easy access to resources regarding gay sexual health or social support, both of which are needed to combat the heightened physical and psychological disparities experienced by gay men (Haile et al., 2014).

According to Goltz (2007), there has been such an emphasis placed on masculinity and youthfulness in today's gay culture that young gay men now have more in common with young straight men than they do with older gay men. One subculture, the Bear community, has rejected the feminine stereotypes of being gay and has embraced a more traditionally masculine demeanor (Moskowitz et al., 2013). Although this dissertation does not go into the specifics of each subculture identified in the gay male community, the Bear community encompasses many subcultures that fall under the Bear community umbrella, such as wolves, otters, and cubs (Maki, 2017). In spite of the fact that many Bear establishments are perceived to also be leather bars and exhibit a dominant environment, Manley, Levitt, and Mosher (2007) noted that the Bear community embraces a message of unconditional acceptance, rather than dominance and danger.

Gay bars can serve as establishments for gay men to escape the heteronormativity of society; however, Johnson and Samdahl (2005) found that gay men still embrace hegemonic masculinity within these establishments. Lea, Reynolds, and de Wit (2013) reported that as society becomes more accepting of gay men politically and socially, the purpose of exclusive gay establishments and bars diminishes and becomes a less critical resource for gay men to find acceptance. Their study on the use of drugs within the gay bars compared to non-gay bars showed that drug use was more normalized in gay bars than in non-gay bars. This is not surprising as many studies have shown that drug use among gay men is reported at higher rates than straight men (Groves, Rendina, & Parsons, 2014; Lea et al., 2013).

Grov et al. (2014) explored the differences in gay men who connect at gay bars, through sex parties, and those who use websites such as Craigslist.org to meet other gay men. They found that the bar scene was used by younger gay men more frequently and younger gay men had higher rates of drug use compared to older gay men. They also found that gay men using Craigslist.org had low levels of outness and connection to the gay community, and those that participated in sex parties were older, more likely to have HIV or other sexually transmitted infections and participate in barebacking (unsafe sexual intercourse). Recommendations for resources for these separate groups included prevention and education around drug and alcohol use for those at gay bars, outreach efforts to create positive and healthy connections for gay men using Craigslist.org, and HIV and sexual education outreach for those engaging in the sex party scene.

An area where gay men may find struggle within the community is through their political party affiliation. According to Kiley and Maniam (2016), only 13% of LGB (lesbian, gay, and bisexual) voters supported the Republican nominee for President of the United States. Additionally, feelings of warmth for the Democratic candidate were rated as high as 61%, while feelings of warmth towards the Republican candidate were as low as 9%. Due to the wide disparity between political party support, gay men that do not support the majority political party affiliation of the community may receive discrimination from other gay men and may be accused of not supporting social platforms or legislation related to LGBTQ issues.

Gay male culture is difficult to conceptualize because there are many paradoxes that include the expectation to conform to gender norms and expression, but also an expectation to portray gay social norms. While sexual freedom and liberation is heavily supported by gay rights organizations, the literature suggests gay men still strive for more heterosexual norms and show

preference for rejecting negative stereotypes associated with gay men. Adding to the complexity of defining norms are the differences in gay acculturation of racial minority gay men.

Racism

Racism is defined as discrimination toward another individual based on their race, color of skin, or country of origin. A recent qualitative study conducted by Ro, Ayala, Paul, and Choi (2012) revealed that African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Latino men reported racism as experienced by exclusion from the overall gay community, sexual rejection based on their race, and sexual performance stereotypes. Unfortunately for racial minority gay men, they may also receive sexual interest as a means to fulfill a fetish from another racial group (Van Daalen & Santos, 2017).

The question of whether romantic or sexual rejection of a gay man of another race is due to preference or is pre-dispositioned is complicated. In a society migrating towards using technology to find romantic and sexual partners, the potential for disclosing racial preferences and discriminating against minority races increases. In response to this phenomenon, “Discrimination between sexual or romantic partners on the basis of perceived racial identity has been referred to as sexual racism,” (Callander et al., 2015 p.1991). Most studies to this point have looked at sexual racism within the heterosexual community. However, Phua and Kaufman (2003) found that gay men were three times more likely than straight men to include racial preferences in their dating profiles. Their study also showed that Asian gay men were 10 times more likely to request a white gay man than straight Asian men requesting white women. Phua and Kaufman (2003) also reported that Black men were most likely (55%) to specify a desired race, with Asian gay men right behind them at 54%.

According to Suler (2004), the ways in which human beings can portray themselves online is often different than the way they behave in person. Having the ability to behave differently online could be a cause for virtual sexual racism. In a study of 2,177 men, Callander et al. (2015) found that 15% of the men had dating profiles that explicitly stated a racial preference. In addition, 58% of the participants in the study reported feeling they had experienced racial discrimination. A more alarming finding is that 96% of the participants reported having viewed a profile that included sexual racism. For example, gay men may post in their profile description, “No Blacks or Asians.” Although almost all participants reported seeing a sexually racist profile, 64% of the participants said it was acceptable to have a profile with sexual racism. Further, 70% of the participants did not believe that a profile with sexual racism was a form of racism. Callander et al. (2015) attributed these high numbers to be indicative of the fact that men may not view sexual racism as racism because they themselves identify with racial attraction preferences.

It is often assumed that the dominant and preferred race in the gay community is white (Bowleg, 2013; Teunis, 2007; Van Daalen & Santos, 2017). This in turn means that white gay men live different experiences within the gay community than gay men of minority races (Haile et al., 2014). This can create problems for interracial gay couples as the white partner receives more privilege and access to resources and acceptance within the gay community (Ro et al., 2013). In addition to the privilege white gay men experience in the gay community, Callander et al. (2015) found that white gay men viewed sexual racism more favorably than they did multiculturalism. This makes sense as their study also indicated that having experienced sexual racism in the past was an indicator for higher levels of multiculturalism, rather than sexual racism.

According to Han, Proctor, and Choi (2014), one way Asian men deal with being a minority gay race is by abandoning their Asian culture and trying to assimilate to what they believe to be white culture. Han (2008) found that when Asian gay men experience racial discrimination, they are made to believe that it is their own fault and that they should be grateful for the treatment they receive, as it is still better than how they would be treated in their country of origin.

Racial discrimination in gay partner selection for both romantic and sexual interest is concerning, as sexual freedom has been repressed historically for gay men (Callander et al., 2015). Teunis (2007) described sexual racism as a result of persistent racism, since racism in the larger context of U.S. culture has been an ongoing problem for decades. Gay men have fought vigorously for their right to sexual freedom since the 1970s, and that right had to be defended when the HIV epidemic surfaced. The gay community consistently tries to promote an ideal in the political scene of being accepting of all people, so the idea that racism occurs within the community goes against the political aspirations for which they are fighting (Callander et al., 2015; Teunis, 2007; Van Daalen & Santos, 2017).

Choi, Paul, Ayala, Boylan, and Gregorich (2013) conducted a study on the mental health disparities among gay men by race and ethnicity. Asian/Pacific Islander gay men reported experiencing the most mental health concerns when discrimination was measured within-group, while Latino, African-American, and Asian/Pacific Islander gay men reported high levels of anxiety and depression when they experienced racism from outside the gay community. In a previous study by Paul, Ayala, and Choi (2010), Asian/Pacific Islander men were found to be the least desired racial group in the race and ethnicity-based sexual hierarchy.

Racial minority gay men are victim to stereotypes that vary depending on their race (Ro et al., 2013; Han et al., 2014). Asian/Pacific Islander gay men are often stereotyped in the community as being submissive, more effeminate, and only attracted to white gay men (Callander et al., 2015; Han et al., 2014). A 2005 study of Asian/Pacific Islander gay men found that 82% had experienced racism within the gay community specifically (Dang & Hu, 2005). Another study by Poon (2006) found that Asian gay men experienced more racism in the gay community than homophobia within the broader Asian community. In contrast to the experiences and stereotypes of Asian gay men, Black gay men are perceived to be more sexually aggressive and dominant in gay culture (David & Knight, 2008).

According to Haile et al. (2014), the rate of HIV-infected Black men who have sex with men is as high as 46%. They also reported that Black gay men are less likely to get tested for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, and they feel more excluded and experience more stigma than white gay men. One example of an intersectional identity study of double minority statuses is David and Knight's (2008) study that found aging Black gay men experience more perceived ageism and racism than white men. They also suggested that future research explore the impact of social class on the distress experienced by Black gay men, which is conducive to this dissertation's aim to include six constructs, including classism, to increase understanding of within-group discrimination of gay men.

Latino gay men as a population within the gay community have unique experiences and needs (Callander et al., 2015; Choi et al., 2013; Ibañez, Van Oss Marin, Flores, Millett, & Diaz, 2009; Ro et al., 2013; Teunis, 2007). According to Ibañez et al. (2009), gay Latino men have high rates of HIV due to risky sexual behaviors that include inconsistent safe sex practices, multiple partners, and unprotected anal sex. In addition to the health concerns, Ibañez et al.

(2009) discussed the variability of racism experienced based on skin shade and language barriers within the gay community. They found that gay men who had darker skin tones and who had migrated to the United States before age 13 experienced more discrimination than those with lighter skin shades and had migrated after age 13. Their results also indicated that 22% of the participants felt uncomfortable being in a gay bar because of their race and 58% reported within-group racism.

With an increase in physical and psychological health disparities, experiences of sexual interest as a means to fulfill a fetish, and victimization by both within and out-of-group discrimination, it is apparent that the needs of racial minority gay men need to be addressed. Stereotypes concerning the masculinity and femininity of racial minority gay men is an issue, as well as the expression of the male gender for the larger gay community.

Sexism

Masculinity is a feature that both threatens and affirms the gay male identity (Rivera & Dasgupta, 2016). In the context of this dissertation, sexism explores the ways in which gay men express their gender and sexual identity in terms of masculinity and femininity. Although some gay men and subcultures identify with traditional masculine role norms, others seek to defy hegemonic masculinity (Hunt et al., 2016; Ravenhill & de Visser, 2016).

According to a study of straight men by Parrot, Peterson, Vincent, and Bakeman (2008), discrimination of gay men can be a result of a straight man's insecurity with their own level of masculinity. This is important to consider as gay men aspire to portray themselves in traditional and often times heterosexual normative ways of exhibiting masculinity. Payne (2007) described gay men's desire to pass as straight as "straight-acting." Payne's (2007) study of the gay app *Gaydar*, a mobile app for online dating, showed that the term "straight-acting" was a common

way gay men labeled themselves and also the type of men they were seeking. In addition to men expressing sexual racism and blatantly stating which races they are not interested in, gay men also describe their preferences in levels of masculinity and femininity.

The concept of “straight-acting” is paradoxical because although the term straight describes a heterosexual orientation, the desire is to be involved in gay romantic or sexual relations. However, Payne (2007) found that some gay men used the term “straight-acting” when screening other app users with the rationale that if they were looking for a girl or “fem,” they would be straight. This supports the research that some gay men fantasize on the privilege garnered to straight men and those men that exhibit hegemonic masculinity (Clarkson, 2006). While traditional hegemonic masculinity may be preferred by both straight and gay men, Wade and Donis (2007) found that this ideal related to lower relationship quality with their partners for both sexual orientations.

Popular culture drives and perpetuates messages related to stereotypes, as well as messages for defining roles and ways of being (Poole, 2014). Historically, the gay liberation movement of the 1970s was a time in which gay men were fighting for equal rights, but also beginning to adopt an image of hypermasculinity to be portrayed in the media and general culture (Clarkson, 2006). Defying the stereotypes of higher voices, emotional expression, limp wrists, and other traditionally feminine behaviors was fought with an adoption of bodybuilding behavior, flannel clothing, and an image of a working man (Poole, 2014). The community began dividing into subcultures with the Bear community embracing the hegemonic masculinity norms (Graves, 2007). Today, gay magazines such as *Instinct* still embrace hegemonic masculinity. Material included in the magazine includes a column where they ask gay men to identify a celebrity female they would become straight for, articles related to gay sports leagues, and tips

for seducing straight men (Goltz, 2007). The constant reception of hegemonic masculinity messages from within and out of the community can influence the sexual position gay men identify with in sexual engagements.

Two labels that are commonly used in the gay community are top and bottom. The term top refers to the man that is performing in the anally insertive position, whereas the term bottom refers to the man that is anally receptive. In a study by Ravenhill and de Visser (2017), gay men, straight men, and straight women all reported that bottoms were less masculine than tops. They also found that even if gay men self-labeled as a top, if their voice was higher-pitched and their physique was less muscular, they were perceived to be more effeminate. Finally, men that had high levels of muscularity, deep voices, and practiced hegemonic masculinity were perceived to be less masculine if they were a bottom than if they were a top.

The role of being a top or bottom in a gay relationship has garnered attention in the literature (Gil, 2007; Maki, 2017; Moskowitz & Hart, 2011; Moskowitz et al., 2008). A recent study by Moskowitz and Roloff (2017) reported that many of the previous studies examining sex role in gay relationships focused heavily on distinct independent variables. The debate in previous literature was whether sex role was pre-dispositioned, or performance based. Research had focused on penis size, self-labeling, and submissive versus dominant sexual preferences (Moskowitz & Hart, 2011). However, Moskowitz and Roloff (2017) found that participants took 15 years on average to develop their self-label through same-sex sexual stimuli. They found that men self-labeling as bottoms preferred tops that displayed more hegemonic masculinity, whereas tops did not express an emphasis on masculinity in their preferences for bottoms.

In conclusion, sexism is an important consideration in researching within-group discrimination, as the expression of masculinity and femininity is a feature gay men think about

more often than straight men and influences the subcultures they identify with and the gay men in which they are attracted. Gay men receive messages from media, society, and both straight men and gay men for how they should express themselves emotionally and psychologically. Adding to the complexity of gay identity development are the messages for how to portray oneself physically.

Sizeism

Similar to hegemonic masculinity being the preferred gender expression in the gay community and society, muscularity and leanness are the desired physical characteristics of gay men's physiques (Boisvert & Harrell, 2009; Doyle & Engeln, 2014; Duncan 2010). Although this is not true for all subcultures, the larger community of gay men has expressed interest in a physically more fit body size. Pope, Phillips, and Olivardia (2000) introduced the term "Adonis complex" to describe the phenomenon of men expressing a desire to have a body that is 28 pounds more muscular than the body they currently have. Sizeism in the context of this dissertation is defined as discrimination toward an individual based on their body shape or size, including level of muscularity, weight, and height. Gay men make up all body shapes and sizes depending on the subculture with which they identify (Lyons & Hosking, 2014; Maki, 2017).

As previously discussed in the culturalism section, gay men use apps to identify their preferences when seeking a romantic or sexual partner. This results in men not only being able to filter the subculture in which they are interested, but they can also filter by height, weight, and body type (Lyons & Hosking, 2014; McGrady, 2016). In reflecting on the criteria for subculture identification or assignment, body size and appearance play a significant role in the classification process. Although it is reported by Lyons and Hosking (2014) that 44% of gay men identify with a gay subculture, Maki (2017) explained that labels are sometimes involuntarily assigned to gay

men based on their physical appearance. For some of these men, especially men that are not familiar with gay terminology, they may be assigned a label of a subculture because of their physical appearance without knowing what that label means.

Duncan (2010) discussed the impact gay culture has had on body dissatisfaction for gay men and how gay men place a large emphasis on appearance, attractiveness, and sexual objectification of their bodies. Despite the value placed on hegemonic masculinity as a contributor to an emphasis on body satisfaction and appearance, Simpson (2013) described the expectation for gay men to be stylish, trendsetting, and youthful. He further added that gay men remain on the dating scene longer and often exhibit a more highly fashionable aesthetic to signal to other gay men their sexual orientation. Ou, Aung, Londerville, and Ralston (2007) stated that gay men not only spend more time and money on purchasing clothing, but they also use clothing to create their identity expression and recognition. Rudd (1996) found that gay men use clothing as a way to express themselves uniquely as a subculture. However, in recognizing that gay men are not a homogeneous population, it can be argued that the clothing preferences among the gay subcultures also exist.

There are two broad categories of gay subcultures often found in the literature that discuss the significant differences in body appearance preferences for the gay community; the Twink and Bear subcultures. Twinks are often depicted in the literature as young, smooth (less hairy), small-framed men. On the contrary, the Bear community embraces a large frame, heavy weight, and hairiness (Gough & Flanders, 2009; Maki, 2017). While the differences between the two subculture categories are immense, they both create opportunities for body image and eating disorder issues.

Research has shown that gay men are at higher risks for eating disorders and body dissatisfaction (Boisvert & Harrell, 2009; Siconolfi, Halkitis, Allomong, & Burton, 2009; Wichstrom, 2006). Behaviors associated with body satisfaction have been demonstrated by excessive dieting and exercising, restrictive eating, steroid and supplement use, and purging. Siconolfi et al. (2009) found that in a study of gay and bisexual men that almost 59% of the participants had an active gym membership and reported working out on average three days a week for approximately one and a half hours. Wiseman and Moradi (2010) tested the impact of Objectification Theory on gay men as it relates to body image and eating disorders and found that internalized homophobia was related to greater eating disorder symptomology as a result of body shame. In their review of the literature, Wiseman and Moradi (2010) found that men prefer attractive partners more so than women, which in turn adds additional pressure for gay men who are attracted to other men to have a more culturally accepted body. Whether that means pursuing a body that values a thin, muscular physique or, for the Bear community, a larger and heavier body type, there can be negative health disparities for both extremes.

Frederick and Essayli (2016) conducted a comparison study of 4,398 gay men and 111,958 straight men and found significant differences between gay and straight men in regard to body image. However, it is important to mention that many of the effect sizes between gay and straight men were small to medium size, which implied that straight men may also experience pressure from media and society to conform to a preferred body type. Results of the study for gay men also included 29% reporting dissatisfaction with their physical appearance and 45% dissatisfied with the muscle size. Gay men were more than six times more likely to avoid sex than straight men due to their body dissatisfaction. This is alarming and supports the research

that gay men experience more pressure from within and outside the gay community to conform to an ideal body image.

Although this dissertation aims to understand the levels of within-group discrimination gay men experience, the purpose is to understand those experiences, so the counseling profession can better meet the needs of gay men. According to Davids, Watson, Nilsson, and Marszalek (2015), it is imperative for clinicians to assess gay community involvement and participation when gay men present with body dissatisfaction issues. They recommended counselors provide psychoeducation about the influence heterosexism has historically played in the body ideals accepted and valued within the gay community. Finally, it was recommended that counselors discuss the harm of sexual objectification on how clients may participate in objectifying others, as well as how they themselves may have been sexually objectified.

Counseling Gay Men

The counseling profession provides the ACA Code of Ethics (2014), CACREP (2016) standards, the Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (MSJCC, 2015), and the ALGBTIC (2012) competencies as frameworks and resources for counseling professionals, counselors-in-training, and counselor educators. These ethical codes, standards, and competencies are not only intended to protect gay clients from potential harm, but to offer support and guidance for counseling professionals. Dziengel (2015) reported that as many as 42% of lesbians and gay men seek mental health counseling services, compared to just 10% to 12% of the straight population.

Identifying with a minority sexual orientation oppressed by many stereotypes can cause an increase in mental health concerns (Boysen et al., 2011). Stereotypes are “beliefs about the characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors of members of certain groups” (Hilton & von Hippel,

1996, p.240). Gay men hear and receive messages regularly regarding their sexual orientation, including that they are artistic, effeminate, and promiscuous (Boysen et al., 2011; Brown & Groscup, 2009). Unfortunately for gay men, stereotypes often portray mental health disorders, and research has shown that stereotypes surrounding the mental health of gay men influence counselors' practice in working with them (Boysen et al., 2011; Mohr, Weiner, Chopp, & Wong, 2009). In a study conducted by Boysen, Vogel, Madon, and Wester (2006) with counselors-in-training (CIT) and college students on stereotypical mental health symptoms of gay men, participants reported believing that anxiety, eating, mood, personality, and sexual disorders were common experiences of gay men. Although some disorders have been shown to have higher rates of frequency in gay men, eating, personality, and sexual disorders have not. Brown and Groscup's (2009) study on stereotypes surrounding gay men showed that participants did not accept most stereotypes.

According to Bidell (2014), further multicultural education is needed to understand the strengths and limitations for training mental health professionals. The ALGBTIC division of ACA, approved as an official division in 1997, is now the second largest division of ACA. ALGBTIC has held two division conferences and plans to continue offering them biannually. Although the support of the ALGBTIC division has grown tremendously, there are only 17 state branches. In 2017, members of ALGBTIC and the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC) collaborated in creating the first standards of care in assessment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender expansive, and queer/questioning (LGBTGEQ+) persons (Goodrich et al., 2017).

The counseling profession has made significant advancements over the years in its advocacy efforts for gay men; however, it is important not to forget the past. It was not until

1973 that homosexuality was removed from the DSM as a diagnosis by the American Psychiatric Association (Kushner et al., 2013). For older gay men, they went through much of their life where it was illegal in some states to engage in same-sex sexual activities, gay marriage was not legal, homosexuality was a diagnosis, society's acceptance of gay men was lower than it is today, and counselors practiced reorientation or conversion therapy on their clients in an effort to turn them straight (Hoy-Ellis et al., 2016; Kenneady & Oswalt, 2014; Kushner et al., 2013; Liszcz & Yarhouse, 2005). Although much progress has been made, the recent passing of House Bill 1840/Senate Bill 1556 in Tennessee allowing counselors to deny counseling services to gay men based on "strongly held personal beliefs" arguably sends a message to gay clients that not all helping professionals are affirming of their sexual orientation identity (Canady, 2016).

According to the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014) code A.11.b, counseling professionals have an obligation to provide competent and evidence-based practices to all clients despite their personal values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. The MSJCC and ALGBTIC competencies call for counselors to not only stay abreast of the most up-to-date literature and research available to help gay clients, but to advocate and serve as social justice champions for them. Because gay identity development models are in their infancy, it is important that counseling professionals become educated and aware of the needs surrounding their gay clients (Kocarek & Pelling, 2003).

Conclusion

A comprehensive review of literature related to discrimination experiences and distress found within the gay male population identified the following constructs as potential forms of within-group discrimination: ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism. Prior research studies in all of these construct areas have called for future research studies to

understand and address the needs of gay men. This dissertation aims to add critical value to the existing literature by focusing on how these constructs collectively impact within-group discrimination experiences of gay men. There is very little research that has explored how gay men experience within-group discrimination, yet there is an abundance of research that suggests certain ideals such as youthfulness, attractiveness, and heteronormative standards cause distress within the community. Although there are discrepancies between gay male ideals based on the various gay subcultures, this literature review of the six constructs suggests a more consistent and homogeneous set of expectations for gay men to adhere.

Chapter III. Methodology

This study examined self-reports of within-group discrimination experienced by gay men from other gay men. To comprehensively assess within-group discrimination, six constructs were identified within the literature as forms of discrimination experienced by gay men. These constructs included ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism. The researcher of this dissertation developed a survey for this study, as no survey currently exists to measure this combination of constructs, nor is there a survey designed to assess within-group discrimination of gay men. The researcher completed a pilot test of the survey before using it for this study. Information regarding the development and results of the pilot study is shared in this chapter.

Research Questions

The following research questions will examine within-group discrimination experiences of gay men:

Question 1.0: To what extent do gay men report experiencing within-group discrimination?

Question 1.1: To what extent do gay men from the United States and international gay men report within-group discrimination?

Question 2.0: Is there a significance between gay men from the United States and international gay men on levels of within-group discrimination?

Question 3.0: Do gay men perceive preference or discrimination to be the reason for their rejection of romantic interest from another gay man?

Question 4.0: Do gay men perceive preference or discrimination to be the reason for their rejection of sexual interest by another gay man?

Question 5.0: How do perceptions of rejection due to another gay man's preferences differ for romantic and sexual interest for ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism?

Question 6.0: How do perceptions of rejection due to discrimination from another gay man differ for romantic and sexual interest?

Question 7.1: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for ageism compare to a participant's age?

Question 7.2: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for racism compare to a participant's race/ethnicity?

Question 7.3: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's current employment status?

Question 7.4: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's highest level of education completed?

Question 7.5: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's socioeconomic status?

Question 7.6: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's political party affiliation?

Question 7.7: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sizeism compare to a participant's body weight?

Question 7.8: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sizeism compare to a participant's height?

Question 7.9: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings?

Question 7.10: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's relationship status?

Question 7.11: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's frequency in visiting a gay dating and/or hook-up app/site?

Question 7.12: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sexism compare to a participant's self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity?

Participants

There were two criteria participants needed to meet to participate in this study: (a) be at least 19-years-old, and (b) identify as a gay male. The primary researcher posted an invitation to participate in the survey on his personal Facebook page and made the post public (see Appendix A). The snowball method was used to collect responses from across the country and internationally. The researcher also conducted a search of private gay male social groups on Facebook from which to recruit participants for the study. After identifying Facebook groups that were open only to gay men, the researcher contacted the group's administrators and asked them for permission to post a link on the closed Facebook group's page. In addition to gay male-specific Facebook groups, the researcher contacted LGBT-identified support groups and asked group administrators for permission to post a link to the survey. The survey link was also posted to the researcher's Instagram account in his profile.

Procedure

Once IRB approval was obtained, the researcher began recruiting participants through Facebook and Instagram. The survey was posted three times over the course of four weeks, the initial post, a post was made two weeks after, and a final post one week before closing. The final two posts included a closing date for the survey, whereas the initial post did not. Upon clicking on the link to participate in the study, participants were taken to the survey in Qualtrics (see Appendix E) that began with a screening question requiring them to read through the IRB-approved information letter (see Appendix B) and to only continue to the survey if they identify as a gay male over the age of 19-years-old. A minimum age of 19-years-old was determined because the primary researcher lives in the state of Alabama where the age of majority is 19-years-old.

The informed consent letter gave participants information that was IRB-approved, including information that participation in the survey was voluntary, would take approximately 15 minutes to complete, and that there were no foreseen risks in participation. In addition, participants were informed that their answers were recorded anonymously, and they could stop the survey at any point until submission. Contact information for the primary researcher and the dissertation chair were shared in case participants had questions or wanted to contact the researcher to obtain results after completion of the study. The survey was designed by the primary researcher and results of this study were analyzed using SPSS software.

Instrumentation

No survey exists that measures within-group discrimination of gay men. Therefore, the primary researcher developed a survey and administered a pilot test to assess the validity and reliability of the survey, which was approved by the IRB. In developing the survey, a systematic

review process by a panel of experts was used to enhance content and face validity. Three rounds of feedback and edits were conducted by seven experts in the field to create survey questions. Experts included peers in the counseling profession who were enrolled in a Survey Methods course, as well as higher education professionals that identify as gay men and members of the ALGBTIC division of ACA. Feedback from the experts resulted in the development of the culturalism construct to understand within-group discrimination gay men experience as it relates to practicing social gay norms. Additional feedback led to the creation of a section on the survey to have participants score whether they perceive rejection for romantic or sexual interest as discriminatory or due to preference.

Instrument Design

The first set of questions on the survey included 24 items that assessed within-group discrimination from a gay man or group of gay men based on the six constructs: ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism. The constructs were defined as follows:

- Ageism: discrimination of another person based on their age (Raymer, Reed, Spiegel, & Purvanova, 2017; Nelson, 2016).
- Classism: prejudice or discrimination against another person for belonging to a different social class. Social class includes a person's educational level, income and socioeconomic status, as well as their current occupation (Colbow et al., 2016; Smith, Foley, & Chaney, 2008).
- Culturalism: discrimination a person experiences based on the idea that they do not practice the cultural norms of their community.
- Racism: discrimination of another individual based on their race, color of skin, or country of origin.

- Sexism: discrimination of a person based on the way in which they express their gender and sexual identity in regards to masculinity and femininity.
- Sizeism: discrimination towards an individual based on their body shape or size; including level of muscularity, weight, and height.

Four questions measured each construct (Table 1) on a 5- point Likert scale with options of never (1), rarely (2), occasionally (3), frequently (4), and very frequently (5).

Table 1.

Questions Assessing the Six Constructs of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men

| Construct | Item |
|-------------|--|
| Ageism | <p>I have been treated with less dignity and respect because of my age.</p> <p>I have been criticized for being at a gay establishment or gathering because of my age.</p> <p>I have been excluded from being asked to participate in activities based on my age.</p> <p>I have been teased for expressing interest in someone that is older or younger than me.</p> |
| Classism | <p>I have been left out of group gatherings based on my perceived socioeconomic status.</p> <p>I have been mistreated because of my perceived socioeconomic status.</p> <p>I have been criticized for my level of education (both “too high” or “too low”).</p> <p>I have been judged on my employment status and perceived level of income.</p> |
| Culturalism | <p>I have received criticism for my political beliefs or party affiliations.</p> <p>I have been teased for having interests and hobbies that are not typical of other gay men.</p> <p>I have engaged in an uncivil argument based on my religious or spiritual beliefs.</p> <p>I have been told I do not accurately represent the cultural norms and stereotypes of a gay man.</p> |
| Racism | <p>I have been accused of false stereotypes based on my ethnicity or race.</p> <p>I have been treated with less respect based on my race/ethnicity at a gay establishment and/or gathering.</p> <p>I have been desired by someone of another race or ethnicity as a means to fulfill a fetish.</p> <p>I have heard derogatory jokes and comments about people of my race/ethnicity at a gay bar and/or gathering.</p> |
| Sexism | <p>I have been told I need to behave more masculine or feminine.</p> <p>I have been teased for the way I express my gender at gay establishments and/or gatherings.</p> <p>I have been called derogatory names and harassed for my gender expression (too feminine or masculine).</p> |
| Sizeism | <p>I have been told I should be more or less “straight-acting.”</p> <p>I have received criticism for my height (too short or too tall).</p> <p>I have been told I should gain or lose weight.</p> <p>I have been criticized for my body’s level of muscularity (too little or too much muscle).</p> <p>I have been physically touched while being told I should change something about my appearance or body size.</p> |

The next part of the survey aimed to assess the degree to which participants perceived they had been denied romantic and sexual interest from another gay man due to preference and

discrimination. Participants were asked how they perceive their rejection for both romantic and sexual interest separately for each of the six constructs of discrimination. For each construct, participants selected a response on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” for both preference and discrimination. Participants were also given the option of “N/A” (Not Applicable) if they have not been denied romantic or sexual interest for each of the six constructs.

The last section of the survey collected demographic information. Demographic questions were designed to correspond with one of the constructs of discrimination. Participants reported their age, state or country (international), highest level of education completed, race/ethnicity, current employment status, socioeconomic status, political party affiliation, body weight, height, frequency for visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings, relationship status, frequency of using gay dating sites or hook-up apps, self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity, and identification of any terms they have used to self-label or others have used to label them other than the term gay.

Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the study. The results for each of the constructs were as follows: ageism (.78), classism (.79), culturalism (.64), racism (.81), sexism (.85), and sizeism (.74). The score for romantic interest rejection due to preference or discrimination was .69 and the score for sexual interest rejection due to preference or discrimination was .83. When looking at scores for preference being higher for romantic or sexual interest rejection, the Cronbach’s alpha score was .82, and the score for discrimination looking at romantic and sexual interest rejection was .84. According to George and Mallery (2003), a score $> .80$ is considered good, a score of .70-.79 is acceptable, and a score of .60-.69 is

questionable. Therefore, two constructs (culturalism and romantic interest due to preference or discrimination) were questionable, while other constructs were either acceptable or good.

Pilot Study Results

The pilot study took the participants approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Responses were collected for 20 participants randomly selected by the primary researcher to participate in the study on Facebook and were anonymously gathered by Qualtrics. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics were obtained, and Cronbach's alpha used to measure internal consistency. Analysis of the results of the six constructs identified in this pilot study for within-discrimination of gay men, revealed culturalism as the construct most reported for within-group discrimination ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 1.07$). All constructs were scored with a range of ($M = 2.06$ - 2.79 , $SD = .94$ - 1.13), which was a rating between rarely and occasionally. The lowest rated construct was classism ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 1.03$). All of the constructs had a reported Cronbach's alpha greater than .73, indicating high reliability. The Cronbach's alpha scores for racism and sexism were the highest at .88.

The results of perception for being denied romantic and sexual interest due to preference and discrimination were also examined for each construct using frequency and descriptive analyses. Results indicated that participants perceived the reason they had been denied romantic and sexual interest by other gay men was slightly more due to preference, than discrimination. However, it is important to consider that the means for both preference and discrimination were all above 57 on a scale of 0-100. The maximum for both preference and discrimination were scores of 100, indicating participants strongly agree both preference and discrimination were reasons they had been denied romantic and sexual interest by other gay men. Cronbach's alpha results were all above .95, which indicates strong reliability.

The results of this pilot study were influential in preparing and gathering information for this study of within-group discrimination of gay men. The number of participants was low ($n = 20$) based on the number of demographics and questions being asked. All the questions measuring each construct remained unchanged after the pilot study. However, the scale to measure preference and discrimination perceptions for each construct changed from a scale of 0-100 to a Likert scale of “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Finally, two demographic questions asking how often participants visit gay dating and or hook-up apps and/or sites and the state or international country participants were from were added.

Data Analysis

All results of this study were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. For research questions 1.0 and 1.1, descriptive and frequency analyses were run for each of the 24 items. Additionally, the four items for each corresponding construct were grouped together and descriptive and frequency analyses were reported for each of the constructs. Finally, the data for the first 24 items was split to look at the frequency of experiences of within-group discrimination among gay men from the United States and internationally.

To answer research question 2.0 regarding whether international or gay men reported higher rates of within-group discrimination for the six constructs, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores of international and domestic gay men. For research questions 3.0 and 4.0., a paired samples t-test for each of the constructs comparing preference and discrimination for both romantic and sexual interest rejection was completed. A paired samples t-test was also conducted to determine how perceptions of rejection due to both preference and discrimination from another gay man differed for romantic and sexual interest for research questions 5.0 and 6.0.

To analyze the results for research questions 7.1 to 7.12, a variety of different statistical analyses were run. A simple linear regression was calculated to predict ageism based on age for question 7.1. For research questions 7.2 and 7.3, a crosstabulation analysis compared romantic interest due to discrimination against both demographics of race/ethnicity and employment status, as both demographics were multiple-response variables. A one-way ANOVA was used for each demographic and its corresponding construct for rejection of romantic interest due to discrimination in order to analyze questions 7.4 through 7.12. Altogether, 12 demographic questions were analyzed from the survey to answer the research questions of this study. Tables were created to demonstrate the results of the survey.

Summary

Chapter three of this dissertation outlines the research questions, participants, procedure, instrument design, pilot study, and data analysis methods used to conduct this study. Participants were required to be gay men age 19-years-old or older and were recruited through Facebook and Instagram. Participation in the study was voluntary and the survey took approximately 18 minutes to complete. The responses were recorded anonymously in Qualtrics and a screener question was used to block participants that did not meet eligibility to participate from taking the survey. The survey used for this study was developed specifically for this dissertation and went through a pilot study process. Results of the survey were analyzed through SPSS.

Chapter IV. Results

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine how the constructs of ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism contributed to experiences of within-group discrimination among gay men. In addition to examining the experiences of within-group discrimination of gay men, determining whether rejection for both romantic and sexual interest as a result of another man's preferences or was overt discrimination was explored. A final purpose of this dissertation was to develop implications for the counseling profession to better understand and meet the needs of gay men seeking counseling services.

A survey was developed by the researcher to assess within-group discrimination and approved by an expert panel and Auburn University's IRB for this study. The first set of 24 questions asked participants to rate the frequency in which they had experienced each statement of within-group discrimination for each of the six constructs. Descriptive and frequency analyses were run for each of the 24 items. Additionally, the four items for each corresponding construct were grouped together and descriptive and frequency analyses were reported for each of the constructs. Finally, the data for the first 24 items was split to look at the frequency of experiences of within-group discrimination among gay men from the United States and internationally. The descriptive and frequency analyses for all 24 items for domestic, international, and combined participants answered research questions 1.0 and 1.1.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores of international and domestic gay men to answer research question 2.0 regarding whether international or gay men

reported higher rates of within-group discrimination for the six constructs. A paired samples t-test for each of the constructs comparing preference and discrimination for both romantic and sexual interest rejection provided results for questions 3.0 and 4.0. A paired samples t-test was also used to determine how perceptions of rejection due to both preference and discrimination from another gay man differed for romantic and sexual interest for questions 5.0 and 6.0.

Questions 7.1-7.12 required a variety of different statistical analyses to answer each of the questions. A simple linear regression was calculated to predict ageism based on age for question 7.1. For questions 7.2 and 7.3, a crosstabulation analysis compared romantic interest due to discrimination against both demographics of race/ethnicity and employment status, as both demographics were multiple-response variables. In order to analyze questions 7.4 through 7.12, a one-way ANOVA was used for each demographic and its corresponding construct for rejection of romantic interest due to discrimination. In total, 12 demographic questions were analyzed from the survey to answer the research questions of this study.

Demographics

There were 2159 individuals that participated in the study. Of the 2159 participants, 1723 (79.8%) were from the United States and 436 (20.2%) were international. Thirty-two respondents to the survey link did not meet the criteria of the study of being a gay male over the age of 19 and were not allowed to participate in the survey. Exclusion criteria removed three recorded responses because their write-in answers to the age demographic question was not acceptable. One participant wrote “Testland” in the age area, one wrote “1-year-old,” and another wrote “Wr” for his age. Overall, 2194 people clicked on the survey and 2159 valid responses recorded and analyzed for this study with a useable response rate of 98.4%.

Age

The minimum age to participate in the study was 19-years-old. Participants reported ages ranging from 19-79-years-old, with every age represented in this range except for 78-years-old. The mean age reported was 40.5 years and the most commonly reported age was 28-years-old. Table 2 gives a breakdown of the ages for the participants of this study.

Table 2

Participants' Ages

| | | <i>N</i> | % |
|-----|----|----------|-------|
| Age | 19 | 29 | 1.30% |
| | 20 | 27 | 1.30% |
| | 21 | 42 | 1.90% |
| | 22 | 36 | 1.70% |
| | 23 | 51 | 2.40% |
| | 24 | 63 | 2.90% |
| | 25 | 63 | 2.90% |
| | 26 | 65 | 3.00% |
| | 27 | 73 | 3.40% |
| | 28 | 74 | 3.40% |
| | 29 | 70 | 3.20% |
| | 30 | 58 | 2.70% |
| | 31 | 56 | 2.60% |
| | 32 | 43 | 2.00% |
| | 33 | 41 | 1.90% |
| | 34 | 65 | 3.00% |
| | 35 | 63 | 2.90% |
| | 36 | 59 | 2.70% |
| | 37 | 57 | 2.60% |
| | 38 | 53 | 2.50% |
| | 39 | 49 | 2.30% |
| | 40 | 39 | 1.80% |
| | 41 | 40 | 1.90% |
| | 42 | 40 | 1.90% |
| | 43 | 27 | 1.30% |
| | 44 | 40 | 1.90% |
| | 45 | 31 | 1.40% |
| | 46 | 38 | 1.80% |
| | 47 | 33 | 1.50% |
| | 48 | 49 | 2.30% |
| | 49 | 30 | 1.40% |
| | 50 | 57 | 2.60% |

| | | |
|-------|------|--------|
| 51 | 50 | 2.30% |
| 52 | 52 | 2.40% |
| 53 | 65 | 3.00% |
| 54 | 41 | 1.90% |
| 55 | 42 | 1.90% |
| 56 | 40 | 1.90% |
| 57 | 26 | 1.20% |
| 58 | 46 | 2.10% |
| 59 | 14 | .60% |
| 60 | 41 | 1.90% |
| 61 | 27 | 1.30% |
| 62 | 28 | 1.30% |
| 63 | 21 | 1.00% |
| 64 | 19 | .90% |
| 65 | 16 | .70% |
| 66 | 13 | .60% |
| 67 | 17 | .80% |
| 68 | 8 | .40% |
| 69 | 7 | .30% |
| 70 | 10 | .50% |
| 71 | 3 | .10% |
| 72 | 2 | .10% |
| 73 | 1 | .000% |
| 74 | 5 | .20% |
| 75 | 1 | .000% |
| 76 | 1 | .000% |
| 77 | 1 | .000% |
| 79 | 1 | .000% |
| Total | 2159 | 100.0% |

Residency

Individuals from every state and Washington, D.C. participated in the study. The state most represented was California with 175 (10.2%) participants and the states that were least represented were New Hampshire, Vermont, and Wyoming, with two participants from each state (.10%). Table 3 shows the number of participants from each of the United States and Washington, D.C.

Table 3

State of Residency (United States)

| | | <i>N</i> | % |
|-------|-----------------|----------|-------|
| State | California | 175 | 10.2% |
| | Texas | 132 | 7.70% |
| | Florida | 126 | 7.30% |
| | Georgia | 126 | 7.30% |
| | Ohio | 99 | 5.70% |
| | Illinois | 68 | 3.90% |
| | New York | 66 | 3.80% |
| | Alabama | 59 | 3.40% |
| | Pennsylvania | 49 | 2.80% |
| | Wisconsin | 48 | 2.80% |
| | Michigan | 45 | 2.60% |
| | Virginia | 42 | 2.40% |
| | Arizona | 39 | 2.30% |
| | Colorado | 39 | 2.30% |
| | Tennessee | 37 | 2.10% |
| | Minnesota | 36 | 2.10% |
| | New Jersey | 36 | 2.10% |
| | Washington | 36 | 2.10% |
| | North Carolina | 35 | 2.00% |
| | Missouri | 34 | 2.00% |
| | Maryland | 32 | 1.90% |
| | Massachusetts | 32 | 1.90% |
| | Nevada | 28 | 1.60% |
| | Indiana | 27 | 1.60% |
| | Kentucky | 27 | 1.60% |
| | Louisiana | 25 | 1.50% |
| | Iowa | 23 | 1.30% |
| | Oregon | 23 | 1.30% |
| | South Carolina | 22 | 1.30% |
| | New Mexico | 16 | .90% |
| | Oklahoma | 15 | .90% |
| | Connecticut | 14 | .80% |
| | Idaho | 10 | .60% |
| | Kansas | 9 | .50% |
| | Mississippi | 9 | .50% |
| | Utah | 9 | .50% |
| | Maine | 8 | .50% |
| | Nebraska | 8 | .50% |
| | Washington D.C. | 8 | .50% |

| | | |
|---------------|------|--------|
| Arkansas | 6 | .30% |
| Hawaii | 6 | .30% |
| Montana | 6 | .30% |
| Rhode Island | 6 | .30% |
| West Virginia | 6 | .30% |
| Delaware | 4 | .20% |
| North Dakota | 4 | .20% |
| South Dakota | 4 | .20% |
| Alaska | 3 | .20% |
| New Hampshire | 2 | .10% |
| Vermont | 2 | .10% |
| Wyoming | 2 | .10% |
| Total | 1723 | 100.0% |

Four hundred and thirty-six international participants from 60 countries completed the survey (20.2%). The United Kingdom (86, 19.7%) and Canada (76, 17.4%) were the most represented international countries. Table 4 represents the name and number of participants from each international country.

Table 4

International Residency

| Country | N | % |
|----------------|----|-------|
| United Kingdom | 86 | 19.7% |
| Canada | 76 | 17.4% |
| Australia | 45 | 10.3% |
| England | 37 | 8.50% |
| South Africa | 22 | 5.00% |
| Philippines | 21 | 4.80% |
| Mexico | 17 | 3.90% |
| Ireland | 8 | 1.80% |
| India | 6 | 1.40% |
| Netherlands | 6 | 1.40% |
| New Zealand | 6 | 1.40% |
| Scotland | 6 | 1.40% |
| Brazil | 5 | 1.10% |
| Denmark | 5 | 1.10% |
| Puerto Rico | 5 | 1.10% |
| Spain | 5 | 1.10% |
| Belgium | 4 | .90% |
| Germany | 4 | .90% |

| | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------|
| Portugal | 4 | .90% |
| China | 3 | .70% |
| Finland | 3 | .70% |
| France | 3 | .70% |
| Italy | 3 | .70% |
| Malta | 3 | .70% |
| Sweden | 3 | .70% |
| United Arab Emirates | 3 | .70% |
| Argentina | 2 | .50% |
| Czech Republic | 2 | .50% |
| Great Britain | 2 | .50% |
| Hong Kong | 2 | .50% |
| Israel | 2 | .50% |
| Japan | 2 | .50% |
| Lithuania | 2 | .50% |
| Mauritius | 2 | .50% |
| Poland | 2 | .50% |
| Trinidad and Tobago | 2 | .50% |
| Turkey | 2 | .50% |
| Venezuela | 2 | .50% |
| Vietnam | 2 | .50% |
| Bangladesh | 1 | .20% |
| Chile | 1 | .20% |
| Costa Rica | 1 | .20% |
| Cyprus | 1 | .20% |
| Fiji Islands | 1 | .20% |
| Ghana | 1 | .20% |
| Guernsey | 1 | .20% |
| Holland | 1 | .20% |
| Hungary | 1 | .20% |
| Jersey Channel | 1 | .20% |
| Macedonia | 1 | .20% |
| Norway | 1 | .20% |
| Pakistan | 1 | .20% |
| Peru | 1 | .20% |
| Republic of Korea | 1 | .20% |
| Russia | 1 | .20% |
| Serbia | 1 | .20% |
| Switzerland | 1 | .20% |
| Tasmania | 1 | .20% |
| Trinidad | 1 | .20% |
| Wales | 1 | .20% |
| Total | 436 | 100.0% |

Race/Ethnicity

To select their race/ethnicity, participants chose all races/ethnicities in which they identify. Therefore, there were more recorded responses than there were participants. Table 5 indicates the number of responses for each race, the response percentage, and the percentage of cases. The number of individuals that reported white was 1686 (78.1%), Black or African-American 133 (6.20%), American Indian 59 (2.50%), Asian 91 (2.70%), Native Hawaiian 10 (.50%), Hispanic or Latino 221 (10.20%), biracial or multiracial 106 (4.90%), and Other (e.g., Maori, Middle Eastern, Arab, Aboriginal) 97 (4.50%).

Table 5

Participants' Race/Ethnicity

| | Responses | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------|------------|
| | <i>N</i> | % | % of Cases |
| White | 1686 | 70.2% | 78.1% |
| Black or African-American | 133 | 5.50% | 6.20% |
| American Indian | 59 | 2.50% | 2.70% |
| Asian | 91 | 3.80% | 4.20% |
| Native Hawaiian | 10 | .40% | .50% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 221 | 9.20% | 10.2% |
| Biracial or Multiracial | 106 | 4.40% | 4.90% |
| Other | 97 | 4.00% | 4.50% |
| Total | 2403 | 100.0% | 111.3% |

Highest Level of Education Completed and Socioeconomic Status

For highest level of completed education, 918 (42.5%) of the participants indicated they had a bachelor's degree, 647 (30.0%) had a high school diploma/GED, 408 (18.9%) had a master's degree, 145 (6.70%) had a doctoral degree, and 41 (1.90%) had some high school education.

For self-reported socioeconomic status (SES), 152 (7.00%) participants reported being lower class, 563 (26.1%) reported being lower-middle class, 930 (43.1%) as middle class, 465

(21.5%) as upper-middle class, and 49 (2.30%) as upper class. Table 6 represents participants' selection for highest level of education completed and their self-reported socioeconomic status.

Table 6

Participants' Self-Reported Highest Level of Education Completed and Socioeconomic Status

| | | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------|----------|
| Level of Education Completed | Some High School | 41 | 1.90% |
| | High School Diploma/GED | 647 | 30.0% |
| | Bachelor's Degree | 918 | 42.5% |
| | Master's Degree | 408 | 18.9% |
| | Doctoral Degree | 145 | 6.70% |
| | Total | 2159 | 100.0% |
| Socioeconomic Status | Lower class | 152 | 7.00% |
| | Lower-middle class | 563 | 26.1% |
| | Middle class | 930 | 43.1% |
| | Upper-middle class | 465 | 21.5% |
| | Upper class | 49 | 2.30% |
| | Total | 2159 | 100.0% |

Employment Status

Similar to the race/ethnicity demographic question, participants selected all options that apply for their current employment status, which generated 2340 responses. Of the 2159 participants, 1517 (70.3%) reported being employed full-time, 231 (10.7%) part-time, 110 (5.10%) unemployed, 150 (6.90%) retired, 118 (5.50%) disabled, and 214 (9.90%) as students.

Table 7 represents the number of responses in each of the categories offered for current employment status.

Table 7

Participants' Current Employment Status

| | | Responses | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------|------------|
| | | <i>N</i> | % | % of Cases |
| Employment Status | Employment Full-Time | 1517 | 64.8% | 70.3% |
| | Employed Part-Time | 231 | 9.90% | 10.7% |
| | Unemployed | 110 | 4.70% | 5.10% |
| | Retired | 150 | 6.40% | 6.90% |
| | Disabled | 118 | 5.00% | 5.50% |
| | Student | 214 | 9.10% | 9.90% |
| Total | | 2340 | 100.0% | 108.4% |

Political Party Affiliation

When asked which political party best describes their affiliation, 129 (6.00%) participants reported being Republican, 1252 (58.0%) Democrat, 120 (5.60%) Libertarian, 423 (19.6%) Independent, and 235 (10.9%) reported other.

Frequency of Visits to Gay-Specific Establishments and Gatherings

Participants were asked how frequently they visit gay-specific establishments and gatherings, and 64 (3.00%) reported never, 452 (20.9%) less than once a year, 415 (19.2%) every 6 months, 457 (21.2%) every 2-3 months, 426 (19.7%) monthly, 255 (11.8%) weekly, 75 (3.50%) more than a few times a week, and 15 (.70%) daily.

Relationship Status

The following numbers indicate how participants identified their current relationship status: single 1150 (53.3%), in a relationship 549 (25.4%), married 385 (17.8%), divorced 41 (1.90%), and widowed 34 (1.60%).

Frequency of Visits to Gay Dating and/or Hook-Up Apps/Sites

Of the 2159 participants, 173 (8.00%) reported never having used a gay hook-up app or dating site, while 447 (20.7%) report visiting less than once a year, 116 (5.40%) every six

months, 126 (5.80%) every 2-3 months, 166 (7.70%) monthly, 219 (10.1%) weekly, 345 (16.0%) more than a few times a week, and 567 (26.3%) daily. Table 8 shows the results for demographics related to culturalism, including participants' political party affiliation, their frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings, their relationship status, and how often participants reported using a gay dating and/or hook-up app or site.

Table 8

Demographics Related to Culturalism

| | | <i>N</i> | % |
|---|---|----------|--------|
| Political Party Affiliation | Republican | 129 | 6.00% |
| | Democrat | 1252 | 58.0% |
| | Libertarian | 120 | 5.60% |
| | Independent | 423 | 19.6% |
| | Other (Specify): | 235 | 10.9% |
| | Total | 2159 | 100.0% |
| Frequency of Visits to Gay-Specific Establishments and Gatherings | Never | 64 | 3.00% |
| | Less than once a year | 452 | 20.9% |
| | Every 6 months | 415 | 19.2% |
| | Every 2-3 months | 457 | 21.2% |
| | Monthly | 426 | 19.7% |
| | Weekly | 255 | 11.8% |
| | More than a few times a week | 75 | 3.50% |
| | Daily | 15 | .70% |
| Total | 2159 | 100.0% | |
| Relationship Status | Single | 1150 | 53.3% |
| | In a Relationship | 549 | 25.4% |
| | Married | 385 | 17.8% |
| | Divorced | 41 | 1.90% |
| | Widowed | 34 | 1.60% |
| | Total | 2159 | 100.0% |
| Frequency of Visiting Gay Dating and/or Hook-Up Apps/Sites | I have never been to a gay dating and/or hook-up app/site | 173 | 8.00% |
| | Less than once a year | 447 | 20.7% |
| | Every 6 months | 116 | 5.40% |
| | Every 2-3 months | 126 | 5.80% |
| | Monthly | 166 | 7.70% |
| | Weekly | 219 | 10.1% |
| | More than a few times a week | 345 | 16.0% |
| | Daily | 567 | 26.3% |
| Total | 2159 | 100.0% | |

Body Weight and Height

Participants selected a category that best represented their body weight with 39 (1.80%) reporting being underweight, 204 (9.40%) as slightly below average, 740 (34.3%) as average, 617 (28.6%) as slightly above average, and 559 (25.9%) as overweight.

Participants indicated the following when asked to describe their height: 42 (6.60%) reported being short, 202 (9.40%) as slightly below average, 976 (45.2%) as average, 406 (18.8%) as slightly above average, and 433 (20.1%) as tall. Table 9 is a representation of participants' selected body weight and height.

Table 9

Demographics Related to Sizeism

| | | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|-------------|------------------------|----------|----------|
| Body Weight | Underweight | 39 | 1.80% |
| | Slightly Below Average | 204 | 9.40% |
| | Average | 740 | 34.3% |
| | Slightly Above Average | 617 | 28.6% |
| | Overweight | 559 | 25.9% |
| | Total | 2159 | 100.0% |
| Height | Short | 142 | 6.60% |
| | Slightly Below Average | 202 | 9.40% |
| | Average | 976 | 45.2% |
| | Slightly Above Average | 406 | 18.8% |
| | Tall | 433 | 20.1% |
| | Total | 2159 | 100.0% |

Self-Perceived Level of Masculinity and Femininity

Participants selected a category that best represented their self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity. Extremely feminine was reported lowest with 10 (.50%) participants, while 220 (10.2%) participants reported being feminine, 1342 (62.2%) masculine, 114 (5.30%) as extremely masculine, and 473 (21.9%) reported being neither masculine nor feminine. Table

10 is a representation of the frequency of selections for each category of self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity.

Table 10

Participants' Self-Perceived Level of Masculinity and Femininity

| | | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|--|--------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Self-Perceived Level of Masculinity and Femininity | Extremely Feminine | 10 | .50% |
| | Feminine | 220 | 10.2% |
| | Masculine | 1342 | 62.2% |
| | Extremely Masculine | 114 | 5.30% |
| | Neither Feminine nor Masculine | 473 | 21.9% |
| | Total | 2159 | 100.0% |

Results

Research Question 1.0: To what extent do gay men report experiencing within-group discrimination?

All of the items outlined in Table 11 correspond to a specific construct, items 1-4 (ageism), 5-8 (classism), 9-12 (culturalism), 13-16 (racism), 17-20 (sexism), and 21-24 (sizeism) to measure within-group discrimination. Nineteen of the items (1, 3-13, 15-17, 19-20, and 24) had a mean reported of 2-3, indicating a frequency of rarely to occasionally. Four of the items (2, 14, 18, and 21) had a mean score between 1-2, representing a frequency of never to rarely. Finally, one item (22) had a mean score of 3.15, which is a frequency of occasionally to frequently. The item with the lowest reported mean score ($M = 1.71, SD = .98$) was “I have been teased for the way I express my gender at gay establishments and/or gatherings” (18). The highest reported mean score ($M = 3.15, SD = 1.25$) was for item 22, “I have been told I should gain or lose weight.”

Table 11

The Extent to Which Gay Men Report Experiencing Within-Group Discrimination

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|---|----------|-----------|
| 1) I have been treated with less dignity and respect because of my age. | 2.46 | 1.15 |
| 2) I have been criticized for being at a gay establishment or gathering because of my age. | 1.90 | 1.05 |
| 3) I have been excluded from being asked to participate in activities based on my age. | 2.22 | 1.13 |
| 4) I have been teased for expressing interest in someone that is older or younger than me. | 2.74 | 1.14 |
| 5) I have been left out of group gatherings based on my perceived socioeconomic status. | 2.17 | 1.10 |
| 6) I have been mistreated because of my perceived socioeconomic status. | 2.14 | 1.06 |
| 7) I have been criticized for my level of education (both “too high” or “too low”). | 2.08 | 1.13 |
| 8) I have been judged on my employment status and perceived level of income. | 2.57 | 1.19 |
| 9) I have received criticism for my political beliefs or party affiliations. | 2.52 | 1.17 |
| 10) I have been teased for having interests and hobbies that are not typical of other gay men. | 2.63 | 1.19 |
| 11) I have engaged in an uncivil argument based on my religious or spiritual beliefs. | 2.17 | 1.10 |
| 12) I have been told I do not accurately represent the cultural norms and stereotypes of a gay man. | 2.92 | 1.28 |
| 13) I have been accused of false stereotypes based on my ethnicity or race. | 2.13 | 1.26 |
| 14) I have been treated with less respect based on my race/ethnicity at a gay establishment and/or gathering. | 1.82 | 1.10 |
| 15) I have been desired by someone of another race or ethnicity as a means to fulfill a fetish. | 2.20 | 1.23 |
| 16) I have heard derogatory jokes and comments about people of my race/ethnicity at a gay bar and/or gathering. | 2.24 | 1.27 |
| 17) I have been told I need to behave more masculine or feminine. | 2.25 | 1.19 |
| 18) I have been teased for the way I express my gender at gay establishments and/or gatherings. | 1.71 | .98 |
| 19) I have been called derogatory names and harassed for my gender expression (too feminine or masculine). | 2.17 | 1.15 |
| 20) I have been told I should be more or less “straight-acting.” | 2.23 | 1.19 |
| 21) I have received criticism for my height (too short or too tall). | 1.78 | 1.06 |
| 22) I have been told I should gain or lose weight. | 3.15 | 1.25 |
| 23) I have been criticized for my body’s level of muscularity (too little or too much muscle). | 2.61 | 1.23 |
| 24) I have been physically touched while being told I should change something about my appearance or body size. | 2.34 | 1.18 |

Note. $N = 2159$. Scores are on a scale in which 1 = never and 5 = very frequently.

The mean and standard deviation scores for each of the constructs were as follows: ageism ($M = 2.33, SD = 0.87$), classism ($M = 2.24, SD = 0.88$), culturalism ($M = 2.56, SD = 0.82$), racism ($M = 2.10, SD = 0.97$) sexism ($M = 2.09, SD = 0.93$), and sizeism ($M = 2.47, SD = 0.89$), all shown in Table 12. Although there was not a large difference between the mean scores of each construct, culturalism was the highest reported construct of within-group discrimination and sexism was the lowest.

Table 12

The Extent to Which Gay Men Report Experiencing Within-Group Discrimination on the Constructs of Ageism, Classism, Culturalism, Racism, Sexism, and Sizeism

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Ageism | 2.33 | 0.87 |
| Classism | 2.24 | 0.88 |
| Culturalism | 2.56 | 0.82 |
| Racism | 2.10 | 0.97 |
| Sexism | 2.09 | 0.93 |
| Sizeism | 2.47 | 0.89 |

Note. $N = 2159$. Scores are on a scale in which 1 = never and 5 = very frequently.

Research Question 1.1: To what extent do gay men from the United States and international gay men report within-group discrimination?

The data from the first 24 items of the survey was split to determine the frequency of experiences of within-group discrimination among gay men from the United States and international gay men. Descriptive statistics for both subgroups of gay men are presented in Table 13. For the constructs of ageism, classism, and culturalism, mean scores for participants from the United States were higher than the scores of international participants. However, for the constructs of racism, sexism, and sizeism, international participants reported higher mean scores than participants from the United States.

Table 13

The Extent to Which International and Domestic Gay Men Report Experiencing Within-Group Discrimination on the Constructs of Ageism, Classism, Culturalism, Racism, Sexism, and Sizeism

| Discrimination Construct | Domestic or International Participant | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| | | | |
| Ageism | Domestic | 2.34 | 0.87 |
| | International | 2.29 | 0.86 |
| Classism | Domestic | 2.25 | 0.88 |
| | International | 2.20 | 0.88 |
| Culturalism | Domestic | 2.58 | 0.83 |
| | International | 2.48 | 0.78 |
| Racism | Domestic | 2.09 | 0.97 |
| | International | 2.11 | 0.97 |
| Sexism | Domestic | 2.06 | 0.93 |
| | International | 2.23 | 0.93 |
| Sizeism | Domestic | 2.45 | 0.89 |
| | International | 2.52 | 0.86 |

Note. 1723 domestic and 436 international participants.

Research Question 2.0: Is there a significance between gay men from the United States and international gay men on levels of within-group discrimination?

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare mean scores of each construct for domestic and international participants. There was a significant difference in the scores for domestic ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 0.83$) and international ($M = 2.48$, $SD = 0.78$) participants; $t(2157) = 2.29$, $p = .022$ for culturalism. The Cohen's d effect size for culturalism was small, $d = 0.12$. On the construct of sexism, there was a statistical difference in mean scores for domestic ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 0.93$) and international ($M = 2.23$, $SD = 0.93$) participants; $t(2157) = -3.45$, $p = .001$. Cohen's d effect size for sexism was also small at $d = -0.18$. There was no statistical difference between the mean scores of domestic and international participants on the constructs of ageism, classism, racism, and sizeism. Table 14 shows the results of the independent samples t-test for each construct for both subgroups.

Table 14

Domestic and International Gay Men's Levels of Within-Group Discrimination on the Six Constructs of Discrimination

| | | Levene's Independent Sample t | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|------------------------|
| | | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> |
| Ageism | Equal variances assumed | .25 | .62 | .91 | 2157 | .36 |
| Classism | Equal variances assumed | .01 | .94 | .96 | 2157 | .34 |
| Culturalism | Equal variances assumed | 3.34 | .07 | 2.29 | 2157 | .022* |
| Racism | Equal variances assumed | .16 | .69 | -.25 | 2157 | .80 |
| Sexism | Equal variances assumed | .000 | 1.00 | -3.45 | 2157 | .001* |
| Sizeism | Equal variances assumed | 1.47 | .23 | -1.53 | 2157 | .13 |

Note: * $p < .05$

Research Question 3.0: Do gay men perceive preference or discrimination to be the reason for their rejection of romantic interest from another gay man?

When comparing scores for preference and discrimination to be the reason for romantic rejection from another gay man, five of the six constructs showed significant results. A paired samples t-test was conducted on each of the constructs to compare preference and discrimination for romantic interest rejection. On the construct of ageism, there was a significant difference between preference ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.33$) and discrimination ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 1.33$) for perceived romantic interest rejection; $t(2158) = 18.93$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.44$. Although an effect size of .44 is considered small to moderate, it is drastically larger than the effect sizes for all other constructs of discrimination. For classism, there was not a statistical difference between preference ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 1.46$) and discrimination ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.45$); $t(2158) = 1.81$, $p = .070$. The results for culturalism were significant with a difference for preference of ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.38$) and discrimination ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.37$); $t(2158) = 5.50$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.11$. Results on the construct of racism were significant with a difference for preference of ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.32$) and discrimination ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.44$); $t(2158) = 9.55$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.20$. For the construct of sexism, results were significant

with a difference of preference at ($M = 3.69, SD = 1.27$) and discrimination at ($M = 3.44, SD = 1.36$); $t(2158) = 8.87, p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.19$. Finally, results for sizeism were significant with a difference for preference of ($M = 3.99, SD = 1.21$) and discrimination of ($M = 3.79, SD = 1.29$); $t(2158) = 5.65, p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.16$. For all six of the constructs, participants reported their perception for being rejected for romantic interest to be a result of preference rather than discrimination. These results were significant for all constructs except classism.

Table 15

Summary of Participants' Results of Perception for Preference and Discrimination as the Reason for Their Rejection of Romantic Interest from Another Gay Man

| Construct | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------|----------------|----------|-----------|
| Ageism | Preference | 3.52 | 1.33 |
| | Discrimination | 2.94 | 1.33 |
| Classism | Preference | 3.00 | 1.46 |
| | Discrimination | 2.95 | 1.45 |
| Culturalism | Preference | 3.13 | 1.38 |
| | Discrimination | 2.98 | 1.37 |
| Racism | Preference | 3.77 | 1.32 |
| | Discrimination | 3.49 | 1.44 |
| Sexism | Preference | 3.69 | 1.27 |
| | Discrimination | 3.44 | 1.36 |
| Sizeism | Preference | 3.99 | 1.21 |
| | Discrimination | 3.79 | 1.29 |

Note. $N = 2159$. Scores are on a scale in which 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Table 16

Significance of Participants' Results of Perception for Preference and Discrimination as the Reason for Their Rejection of Romantic Interest from Another Gay Man

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>SEM</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>Df</i> | <i>p-value</i> |
|-------------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Ageism | .58 | 1.41 | .030 | 18.93 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Classism | .05 | 1.28 | .028 | 1.81 | 2158 | .070 |
| Culturalism | .15 | 1.28 | .028 | 5.50 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Racism | .28 | 1.37 | .030 | 9.55 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Sexism | .25 | 1.29 | .028 | 8.87 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Sizeism | .20 | 1.61 | .035 | 5.65 | 2158 | <.001* |

Note: * $p < .001$

Research Question 4.0: Do gay men perceive preference or discrimination to be the reason for their rejection of sexual interest by another gay man?

Comparing preference and discrimination to be the reason for sexual rejection from another gay man, revealed that all six constructs showed significant results with higher scores for preference than discrimination. Paired samples t-tests were conducted on all of the constructs comparing preference and discrimination for sexual interest rejection. On the construct of ageism, there was a significant difference between preference ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.14$) and discrimination ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.33$) for perceived sexual interest rejection; $t(2158) = 13.58$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.36$. For classism, there was a statistical difference between preference ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.37$) and discrimination ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.41$); $t(2158) = 3.04$, $p = .002$, $d = 0.65$. This effect size is medium in size, but much larger than the effect sizes of the other -isms for preference and discrimination as the perception of rejection for sexual interest from another gay man. The results for culturalism were significant with a difference for preference of ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.29$) and discrimination ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.36$); $t(2158) = 6.06$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.13$. Results for the construct of racism were significant with a difference for preference of ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.31$) and discrimination ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.42$); t

(2158) = 6.71, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = .15$. For the construct of sexism, results were significant with a difference of preference at ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.26$) and discrimination at ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.38$); $t(2158) = 7.91$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.17$. Finally, results for sizeism were significant with a difference for preference of ($M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.34$) and discrimination of ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.41$); $t(2158) = 6.27$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.16$. The results of preference compared to discrimination for rejection for sexual interest were significant for all six constructs.

Table 17

Summary of Paired Samples Statistics of Participants' Results of Perception for Preference and Discrimination as the Reason for Their Rejection of Sexual Interest from Another Gay Man

| | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------|----------------|----------|-----------|
| Ageism | Preference | 3.86 | 1.14 |
| | Discrimination | 3.42 | 1.33 |
| Classism | Preference | 3.67 | 1.37 |
| | Discrimination | 3.58 | 1.41 |
| Culturalism | Preference | 3.67 | 1.29 |
| | Discrimination | 3.50 | 1.36 |
| Racism | Preference | 3.82 | 1.31 |
| | Discrimination | 3.62 | 1.42 |
| Sexism | Preference | 3.77 | 1.26 |
| | Discrimination | 3.54 | 1.38 |
| Sizeism | Preference | 3.77 | 1.34 |
| | Discrimination | 3.55 | 1.41 |

Note. $N = 2159$. Scores are on a scale in which 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Table 18

Participants' Results of Perception for Preference and Discrimination as the Reason for Their Rejection of Sexual Interest from Another Gay Man

| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>SEM</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p-value</i> |
|-------------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Ageism | .43 | 1.49 | .032 | 13.58 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Classism | .085 | 1.30 | .028 | 3.04 | 2158 | .002* |
| Culturalism | .17 | 1.30 | .028 | 6.06 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Racism | .21 | 1.42 | .031 | 6.71 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Sexism | .24 | 1.38 | .030 | 7.91 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Sizeism | .22 | 1.62 | .035 | 6.27 | 2158 | <.001** |

Note: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .001$

Research Question 5.0: How do perceptions of rejection due to another gay man's preferences differ for romantic and sexual interest for ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism?

In comparing romantic and sexual interest rejection from another gay man due to the other man's preferences, sexual interest rejection was perceived to be higher than romantic interest rejection for all the constructs except sizeism. A paired samples t-test was conducted on each of the constructs comparing romantic and sexual interest rejection as a result of the other man's preference. On the construct of ageism, there was a significant difference between romantic interest rejection ($M = 3.52, SD = 1.33$) and sexual interest rejection ($M = 3.86, SD = 1.14$) for preference; $t(2158) = -10.02, p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.27$. For classism, there was a statistical difference between romantic interest rejection ($M = 3.00, SD = 1.46$) and sexual interest rejection ($M = 3.67, SD = 1.37$); $t(2158) = -15.33, p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.47$. The results for culturalism were significant with a difference for romantic interest rejection of ($M = 3.13, SD = 1.38$) and sexual interest rejection ($M = 3.67, SD = 1.29$); $t(2158) = -13.74, p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.40$. Results for the construct of racism were significant with a difference for romantic interest rejection of ($M = 3.77, SD = 1.32$) and sexual

interest rejection ($M = 3.82, SD = 1.31$); $t(2158) = -2.21, p = .027$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.038$. For the construct of sexism, results were significant with a difference of romantic interest rejection at ($M = 3.69, SD = 1.27$) and sexual interest rejection at ($M = 3.77, SD = 1.26$); $t(2158) = -3.89, p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.063$. Finally, results for sizeism were significant with a difference for romantic interest rejection of ($M = 3.99, SD = 1.21$) and sexual interest rejection of ($M = 3.77, SD = 1.34$); $t(2158) = 8.05, p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.17$. The results of romantic compared to sexual interest rejection due to preference were significant for all six constructs, except sizeism where higher reported means were recorded for sexual interest rejection. When asked about being rejected by another gay man for each of the constructs, participants reported higher scores for preference for sexual interest rejection than romantic interest rejection.

Table 19

Paired Samples Statistics of Perceptions of Rejection Due to Another Gay Man's Preferences for Romantic and Sexual Interest

| Construct | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Ageism | Romantic | 3.52 | 1.33 |
| | Sexual | 3.86 | 1.14 |
| Classism | Romantic | 3.00 | 1.46 |
| | Sexual | 3.67 | 1.37 |
| Culturalism | Romantic | 3.13 | 1.38 |
| | Sexual | 3.67 | 1.29 |
| Racism | Romantic | 3.77 | 1.32 |
| | Sexual | 3.82 | 1.31 |
| Sexism | Romantic | 3.69 | 1.27 |
| | Sexual | 3.77 | 1.26 |
| Sizeism | Romantic | 3.99 | 1.21 |
| | Sexual | 3.77 | 1.34 |

Note. $N = 2159$. Scores are on a scale in which 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Table 20

Perceptions of Rejection Due to Another Gay Man's Preferences for Romantic and Sexual Interest

| Construct | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>SEM</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p-value</i> |
|-------------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Ageism | -.34 | 1.56 | .034 | -10.02 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Classism | -.66 | 2.01 | .043 | -15.33 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Culturalism | -.55 | 1.84 | .040 | -13.74 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Racism | -.05 | 1.09 | .023 | -2.21 | 2158 | .027* |
| Sexism | -.09 | 1.05 | .023 | -3.89 | 2158 | <.001** |
| Sizeism | .22 | 1.28 | .028 | 8.05 | 2158 | <.001** |

Note: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .001$

Research Question 6.0: How do perceptions of rejection due to discrimination from another gay man differ for romantic and sexual interest?

In comparing romantic and sexual interest rejection from another gay man due to discrimination from another gay man, sexual interest rejection was perceived to be higher than romantic interest rejection for all the constructs except sizeism. Paired samples t-tests were conducted on all of the constructs comparing romantic and sexual interest rejection as a result of discrimination from another gay man. On the construct of ageism, there was a significant difference between romantic interest rejection ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 1.33$) and sexual interest rejection ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 1.33$) for preference; $t(2158) = -14.71$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.36$. For classism, there was a statistical difference between romantic interest rejection ($M = 2.95$, $SD = 1.45$) and sexual interest rejection of ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.41$); $t(2158) = -14.79$, $p < .001$ with a small to moderate effect size, $d = -0.44$. The results for culturalism were significant with a difference for romantic interest rejection of ($M = 2.98$, $SD = 1.37$) and sexual interest rejection ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.36$); $t(2158) = -13.29$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.38$. Results for the construct of racism were significant with a difference for romantic interest rejection of ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 1.44$) and sexual interest rejection ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.42$); $t(2158) =$

-5.50, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.091$. For the construct of sexism, results were significant with a difference of romantic interest rejection at ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 1.36$) and sexual interest rejection at ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.38$); $t(2158) = -4.00$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = -0.073$. Finally, results for sizeism were significant with a difference for romantic interest rejection of ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.29$) and sexual interest rejection of ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 1.41$); $t(2158) = 8.62$, $p < .001$ with a small effect size, $d = 0.18$. The results of romantic compared to sexual interest rejection due to discrimination were significant for all six constructs. When asked about being rejected by another gay man for each of the constructs, participants reported discrimination as higher for sexual interest rejection than romantic interest rejection except on sizeism.

Table 21

Paired Samples Statistics Perceptions of Rejection Due to Discrimination from Another Gay Man for Romantic and Sexual Interest

| Construct | | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>SEM</i> |
|-------------|----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Ageism | Romantic | 2.94 | 1.33 | .029 |
| | Sexual | 3.42 | 1.33 | .029 |
| Classism | Romantic | 2.95 | 1.45 | .031 |
| | Sexual | 3.58 | 1.41 | .030 |
| Culturalism | Romantic | 2.98 | 1.37 | .030 |
| | Sexual | 3.50 | 1.36 | .029 |
| Racism | Romantic | 3.49 | 1.44 | .031 |
| | Sexual | 3.62 | 1.42 | .031 |
| Sexism | Romantic | 3.44 | 1.36 | .029 |
| | Sexual | 3.54 | 1.38 | .030 |
| Sizeism | Romantic | 3.79 | 1.29 | .028 |
| | Sexual | 3.55 | 1.41 | .030 |

Note. $N = 2159$. Scores are on a scale in which 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Table 22

Perceptions of Rejection Due to Discrimination from Another Gay Man for Romantic and Sexual Interest

| Construct | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>SEM</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p-value</i> |
|-------------|----------|-----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------------|
| Ageism | -.48 | 1.51 | .033 | -14.71 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Classism | -.63 | 1.98 | .043 | -14.79 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Culturalism | -.53 | 1.84 | .040 | -13.29 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Racism | -.13 | 1.09 | .023 | -5.50 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Sexism | -.10 | 1.16 | .025 | -4.00 | 2158 | <.001* |
| Sizeism | .25 | 1.32 | .028 | 8.62 | 2158 | <.001* |

Note: **p* < .001

Research Questions 7.1-7.12: Perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination compared to each of the demographics' corresponding constructs

Each demographic question included by the researcher corresponded to one of the six constructs of within-group discrimination. In order to determine if rejection for romantic interest perceived as discrimination was impacted by the age of the participant, a simple linear regression was conducted.

Race/ethnicity and current employment status were two demographic variables that allowed participants to select all options that apply. To run the analysis for each of these demographics, a crosstabulation analysis was performed for both race/ethnicity and current employment status. The results of the crosstabulation showed descriptive statistics and frequencies for each of the multiple response variables and how they reported perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination.

For each of the single-option categorical demographics, the demographic variable was run against the variable of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination with its corresponding construct and a one-way ANOVA was calculated. The demographic questions and

its categorical options served as the independent variables and rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination was the dependent variable.

Research Question 7.1: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for ageism compare to a participant’s age?

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict ageism based on age. A significant regression equation was found $F(1, 2157) = 150.7, p < .001$, with an R^2 of .065. Participants’ level of discrimination for rejection of romantic interest for ageism is equal to $1.92 + .025(\text{age})$ when age is measured in number of years. Perceptions of rejection for romantic interests due to discrimination for ageism increased by .025 for each year. A model summary is provided in Table 23, regression results are shown in Tables 24 and 25.

Table 23

Model Summary of Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Ageism Compared to a Participant’s Age

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|-------|-----|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------|--------|------|-------|
| | | | | | R ² Change | F | Change | df1 | df2 |
| 1 | .26 | .065 | .065 | 1.28 | .065 | 150.74 | 1 | 2157 | <.001 |

Table 24

ANOVA Run on Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Ageism Compared to a Participant’s Age

| Model | | SS | df | MS | F | p-value |
|-------|------------|--------|------|-------|-------|--------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 248.0 | 1 | 248.0 | 150.7 | <.001 ^b |
| | Residual | 3548.5 | 2157 | 1.65 | | |
| | Total | 3796.4 | 2158 | | | |

Notes. a. Dependent Variable: When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my age, I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my age.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Age Number

Table 25

Coefficients for Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Ageism Compared to a Participant's Age

a

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | <i>p-value</i> |
|-------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|----------|----------------|
| | | <i>B</i> | <i>SEB</i> | β | <i>t</i> | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.92 | .088 | | 21.9 | <.001 |
| | Age Number | .025 | .002 | .26 | 12.3 | <.001 |

Notes. a. Dependent Variable: When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my age, I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my age.

Research Question 7.2: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for racism compare to a participant's race/ethnicity?

A crosstabulation analysis was performed for race/ethnicity against the variable of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for racism. The results of the crosstabulation showed descriptive and frequency analyses for each race/ethnicity category and how participants reported perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination. Participants selected their perception of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the following scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree, and not applicable. In looking at the perception of discrimination most frequently selected for each race/ethnicity, white gay men reported “neither agree nor disagree” ($n = 475, 28\%$), Black or African-American men selected “strongly agree” ($n = 73, 55\%$), American Indian men chose “neither agree nor disagree” and “strongly agree” ($n = 17, 29\%$), Asian men selected “strongly agree” ($n = 34, 37\%$), Native Hawaiian men reported “neither agree nor disagree” ($n = 3, 30\%$), Hispanic or Latino men chose “agree” ($n = 73, 33\%$), biracial or multiracial men selected “strongly agree” ($n = 39, 37\%$), and other gay men reported both “agree” and “strongly agree” ($n = 30, 31\%$) most

frequently. Table 26 is a demonstration of frequencies for race/ethnicity and participants' perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for racism.

Table 26

Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Racism Compared to a Participant's Race/Ethnicity

Romantic Discrimination Race/Ethnicity Crosstabulation

| | | Races/Ethnicities | | | | | | | | Total |
|--|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | | W | AA | AI | A | NH | HL | BM | O | |
| When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my race or ethnicity, I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my race or ethnicity. | Strongly Disagree | 187 (11%) | 4 (3%) | 5 (8%) | 4 (4%) | 2 (20%) | 11 (5%) | 8 (8%) | 7 (7%) | 207 |
| | Disagree | 321 (19%) | 7 (5%) | 7 (12%) | 10 (11%) | 0 (0%) | 23 (10%) | 10 (9%) | 5 (5%) | 358 |
| | Neither | 475 (28%) | 14 (11%) | 17 (29%) | 15 (16%) | 3 (30%) | 40 (18%) | 21 (20%) | 19 (20%) | 549 |
| | Agree nor Disagree | 357 (21%) | 29 (22%) | 8 (14%) | 21 (23%) | 2 (20%) | 73 (33%) | 19 (18%) | 30 (31%) | 486 |
| | Strongly Agree | 154 (9%) | 73 (55%) | 17 (29%) | 34 (37%) | 2 (20%) | 63 (29%) | 39 (37%) | 30 (31%) | 340 |
| | Not Applicable | 192 (11%) | 6 (5%) | 5 (8%) | 7 (8%) | 1 (10%) | 11 (5%) | 9 (8%) | 6 (6%) | 219 |
| | Total | 1686 | 133 | 59 | 91 | 10 | 221 | 106 | 97 | 2159 |

Notes. Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

Abbreviations: W = White, AA = African-American or Black, AI = American Indian, A = Asian, HL = Hispanic or Latino, BM = Biracial or Multiracial, O = Other.

Research Question 7.3: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's current employment status?

A crosstabulation analysis was performed for current employment status against the variable of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism. The results of the crosstabulation showed descriptive and frequency analyses for each current employment status category and how participants reported perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism. Participants selected their perception of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the following scale: strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree

nor disagree, agree, strongly agree, and not applicable. In looking at the perception of discrimination most frequently selected for each current employment status, men employed full-time reported agree ($n = 440, 29\%$), men employed part-time chose agree ($n = 74, 32\%$), unemployed men selected agree ($n = 51, 46\%$), retired men reported neither agree nor disagree ($n = 50, 33\%$), men with disabilities chose agree ($n = 44, 37\%$), and students selected agree ($n = 86, 40\%$) most frequently. Table 27 is a demonstration of frequencies for current employment status and participants' perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism.

Table 27

Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Classism Compared to Participants' Current Employment Status

Romantic Discrimination Classism Employment Status Crosstabulation

| | | Employment Status | | | | | | Total |
|---|----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| | | Employed Full-Time | Employed Part-Time | Unemployed | Retired | Disabled | Student | |
| When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my social class (including level of education, occupation, socioeconomic status, and income), I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my social class. | Not Applicable | 143 (9%) | 27 (12%) | 11 (10%) | 15 (10%) | 8 (7%) | 19 (9%) | 204 |
| | Strongly Disagree | 126 (8%) | 13 (6%) | 4 (4%) | 4 (3%) | 3 (3%) | 15 (7%) | 156 |
| | Disagree | 258 (17%) | 30 (13%) | 16 (15%) | 30 (20%) | 14 (12%) | 26 (23%) | 355 |
| | Neither Agree nor Disagree | 370 (24%) | 53 (23%) | 19 (17%) | 50 (33%) | 29 (25%) | 44 (21%) | 521 |
| | Agree | 440 (29%) | 74 (32%) | 51 (46%) | 37 (25%) | 44 (37%) | 86 (40%) | 665 |
| | Strongly Agree | 180 (12%) | 34 (15%) | 9 (8%) | 14 (9%) | 20 (17%) | 24 (11%) | 258 |
| Total | | 1517 | 231 | 110 | 150 | 118 | 214 | 2159 |

Note. Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

Research Question 7.4: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's highest level of education completed?

A one-way ANOVA was completed to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of classism against participants' highest level of education completed. There were five options for highest level of education completed, including some high school, high school diploma/GED, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree. Levene's test was done and the assumptions were met, $p < .001$. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection [$F(4, 2154) = 2824.8, p < .001$] with a small effect size and the levels of education, as shown in Table 33. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test were carried out. There was a significant difference between participants with a high school diploma/GED and participants with bachelor's ($p = .001$), master's ($p < .001$), and doctoral degrees ($p = .000$). The mean score for high school diploma/GED was $M = 3.29$, which was higher than the means for the categories in which there was a significant difference. No other statistical differences were found between the other levels of education. Table 29 shows the post hoc analysis results for level of education.

Table 28

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my social class (including level of education, occupation, socioeconomic status, and income), I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my social class.

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | MS | F | p | ηp^2 |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------|--------|--------|------|------------|
| Corrected Model | 86.9 ^a | 4 | 21.7 | 10.6 | .000 | .019 |
| Intercept | 5797.3 | 1 | 5797.3 | 2824.8 | .000 | .57 |
| Education Level | 86.9 | 4 | 21.7 | 10.6 | .000 | .019 |
| Error | 4420.6 | 2154 | 2.05 | | | |
| Total | 23355.0 | 2159 | | | | |
| Corrected Total | 4507.6 | 2158 | | | | |

Note. a. R Squared = .019 (Adjusted R Squared = .017)

Table 29

Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Classism Compared to a Participant's Highest Level of Education Completed

| Education Level | Education Level | Mean Difference | Std. Error | p-value |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------|---------|
| Some High School/GED | High School Diploma/GED | -.14 | .23 | 1.00 |
| | Bachelor's Degree | .14 | .23 | 1.00 |
| | Master's Degree | .36 | .24 | 1.00 |
| | Doctoral Degree | .49 | .25 | .55 |
| High School Diploma/GED | Some High School/GED | .14 | .23 | 1.00 |
| | Bachelor's Degree | .28* | .07 | .001* |
| | Master's Degree | .50* | .09 | <.001* |
| | Doctoral Degree | .63* | .13 | <.001* |
| Bachelor's Degree | Some High School/GED | -.14 | .23 | 1.00 |
| | High School Diploma/GED | -.28* | .074 | .001* |
| | Master's Degree | .21 | .09 | .13 |
| | Doctoral Degree | .34 | .128 | .07 |
| Master's Degree | Some High School/GED | -.36 | .24 | 1.00 |
| | High School Diploma/GED | -.50* | .09 | <.001* |
| | Bachelor's Degree | -.21 | .09 | .13 |
| | Doctoral Degree | .13 | .14 | 1.00 |
| Doctoral Degree | Some High School/GED | -.49 | .25 | .59 |
| | High School Diploma/GED | -.63* | .13 | <.001* |
| | Bachelor's Degree | -.34 | .13 | .07 |
| | Master's Degree | -.13 | .14 | 1.00 |

Notes. Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 2.052.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Research Question 7.5: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism compare to a participant's socioeconomic status?

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of classism against participants' socioeconomic status. There were five options for socioeconomic status including lower class, lower-middle class, middle class, upper-middle class, and upper class. Levene's test was carried out and the assumptions were met, $p < .001$. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for classism [$F(4, 2154) = 21.9, p < .001$] with a small effect size and socioeconomic status, as shown in Table 30. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test were completed.

Significant differences were found between lower class and all other socioeconomic statuses, including lower-middle class ($p = .018$), middle class ($p < .001$), upper-middle class ($p < .001$), and upper class ($p < .001$). There were also statistical differences found between lower-middle class and middle class ($p < .001$), lower-middle and upper-middle class ($p < .001$), and lower-middle and upper class ($p < .001$). The highest recorded mean was for lower class at $M = 3.63$, which was significantly higher than the categories in which there was significant difference. Table 36 shows the post hoc analysis results for socioeconomic status.

Table 30

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my social class (including level of education, occupation, socioeconomic status, and income), I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my social class.

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | df | MS | F | p | ηp^2 |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------|--------|--------|------|------------|
| Corrected Model | 176.5 ^a | 4 | 44.1 | 21.9 | .000 | .039 |
| Intercept | 6748.9 | 1 | 6748.9 | 3356.5 | .000 | .61 |
| SES | 176.5 | 4 | 44.1 | 21.9 | .000 | .039 |
| Error | 4331.1 | 2154 | 2.0 | | | |
| Total | 23355.0 | 2159 | | | | |
| Corrected Total | 4507.6 | 2158 | | | | |

Note. a. R Squared = .039 (Adjusted R Squared = .037)

Table 31

Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Classism Compared to a Participant's Socioeconomic Status

| Socioeconomic Status | Socioeconomic Status | Mean Difference | Std. Error | p-value |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|------------|---------|
| Lower class | Lower-Middle Class | .40* | .13 | .018* |
| | Middle Class | .76* | .12 | <.001* |
| | Upper-Middle Class | .97* | .13 | <.001* |
| | Upper Class | 1.30* | .23 | <.001* |
| Lower-middle class | Lower Class | -.40* | .13 | .018* |
| | Middle Class | .35* | .076 | <.001* |
| | Upper-Middle Class | .57* | .089 | <.001* |
| | Upper Class | .89* | .21 | <.001* |
| Middle class | Lower Class | -.76* | .12 | <.001* |
| | Lower-Middle Class | -.35* | .076 | <.001* |
| | Upper-Middle Class | .21 | .081 | .079 |
| | Upper Class | .54 | .21 | .093 |
| Upper-middle class | Lower Class | -.97* | .13 | <.001* |
| | Lower-Middle Class | -.57* | .089 | <.001* |
| | Middle Class | -.21 | .081 | .079 |
| | Upper Class | .33 | .21 | 1.00 |
| Upper class | Lower Class | -1.30* | .23 | <.001* |
| | Lower-Middle Class | -.89* | .21 | <.001* |
| | Middle Class | -.54 | .21 | .093 |
| | Upper-Middle Class | -.33 | .21 | 1.00 |

Notes. Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 2.011.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Research Question 7.6: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant’s political party affiliation?

A one-way ANOVA was completed to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of culturalism for participants’ political party affiliation. There were five options for political party affiliation including republican, democrat, libertarian, independent, and other. Levene’s test was completed and the assumptions were met, $p < .001$. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for culturalism [$F(4, 2154) = 3.66, p = .006$] with a small effect size and political party affiliation, as shown in Table 32. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test were done and can be found in Table 33.

Post hoc comparisons revealed one significant difference between Libertarian and “other” ($p = .029$), however, no other statistical differences were found between the other categories of political party affiliation. The mean for the Libertarian category was highest at $M = 3.28$, which was the highest of all categories of political party affiliation. Table 38 shows the post hoc analysis results for political party affiliation.

Table 32

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on how much I embrace gay culture (including political affiliation, religious beliefs, interests and hobbies, and practice of cultural norms), I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my acculturation to gay culture.

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | <i>Df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> | ηp^2 |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Corrected Model | 27.4 ^a | 4 | 6.85 | 3.66 | .006 | .007 |
| Intercept | 9813.0 | 1 | 9813.0 | 5238.01 | .000 | .71 |
| Political Party | 27.4 | 4 | 6.85 | 3.66 | .006 | .007 |
| Error | 4035.4 | 2154 | 1.87 | | | |
| Total | 23183.0 | 2159 | | | | |
| Corrected Total | 4062.7 | 2158 | | | | |

Note. a. R Squared = .007 (Adjusted R Squared = .005)

Table 33

Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Culturalism Compared to a Participant's Political Party Affiliation

| Political Party Affiliation | Political Party Affiliation | Mean Difference | Std. Error | <i>p</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------|----------|
| Republican | Democrat | .14 | .13 | 1.00 |
| | Libertarian | -.21 | .17 | 1.00 |
| | Independent | -.03 | .14 | 1.00 |
| | Other | .25 | .15 | .92 |
| Democrat | Republican | -.14 | .13 | 1.00 |
| | Libertarian | -.35 | .13 | .076 |
| | Independent | -.17 | .08 | .24 |
| | Other | .11 | .10 | 1.00 |
| Libertarian | Republican | .21 | .17 | 1.00 |
| | Democrat | .35 | .13 | .076 |
| | Independent | .18 | .14 | 1.00 |
| | Other | .46* | .15 | .029* |
| Independent | Republican | .03 | .14 | 1.00 |
| | Democrat | .17 | .08 | .24 |
| | Libertarian | -.18 | .14 | 1.00 |
| | Other | .28 | .11 | .11 |
| Other | Republican | -.25 | .15 | .92 |
| | Democrat | -.11 | .10 | 1.00 |
| | Libertarian | -.46* | .15 | .029* |
| | Independent | -.28 | .11 | .11 |

Notes. Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.873.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Research Question 7.7: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sizeism compare to a participant's body weight?

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of sizeism against participants' body weight. There were five options for participants to choose from including underweight, slightly below average, average, slightly above average, and overweight. Levene's test was carried out and the assumptions were met, $p = .029$. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for classism [$F(4, 2154) = 20.6, p < .001$] with a small effect size and body weight, as shown in

Table 34. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test were completed and are found in Table 35.

Significant differences were found between participants that reported being overweight and all other weight categories, underweight ($p = .041$), slightly below average ($p < .001$), average ($p < .001$), and slightly above average ($p < .001$). There were statistical differences found between participants that reported their weight as slightly below average and slightly above average ($p = .041$), and between average and slightly above average ($p = .002$). The highest mean for weight category was overweight with a mean of $M = 4.17$, which indicates that participants that chose overweight had a higher reported level of romantic interest rejection than all other weight categories. Table 40 shows the post hoc analysis results for body weight.

Table 34

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my body size and shape (including weight, height, and muscularity), I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my body size and shape.

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | Df | MS | F | p | ηp^2 |
|-----------------|-------------------------|------|--------|--------|------|------------|
| Corrected Model | 131.9 ^a | 4 | 33.0 | 20.6 | .000 | .037 |
| Intercept | 9854.5 | 1 | 9854.5 | 6150.5 | .000 | .74 |
| Weight | 131.9 | 4 | 33.0 | 20.6 | .000 | .037 |
| Error | 3451.2 | 2154 | 1.60 | | | |
| Total | 34636.0 | 2159 | | | | |
| Corrected Total | 3583.0 | 2158 | | | | |

Note. a. R Squared = .037 (Adjusted R Squared = .035)

Table 35

Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Sizeism Compared to a Participant's Body Weight

| Weight | Weight | Mean Difference | Std. Error | <i>p</i> |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|------------|----------|
| Underweight | Slightly Below Average | .03 | .22 | 1.00 |
| | Average | .00 | .21 | 1.00 |
| | Slightly Above Average | -.26 | .21 | 1.00 |
| | Overweight | -.60* | .21 | .041* |
| Slightly Below Average | Underweight | -.03 | .22 | 1.00 |
| | Average | -.04 | .10 | 1.00 |
| | Slightly Above Average | -.29* | .10 | .041* |
| | Overweight | -.64* | .10 | .000 |
| Average | Underweight | .00 | .21 | 1.00 |
| | Slightly Below Average | .04 | .10 | 1.00 |
| | Slightly Above Average | -.25* | .07 | .002* |
| | Overweight | -.60* | .07 | <.001* |
| Slightly Above Average | Underweight | .26 | .21 | 1.00 |
| | Slightly Below Average | .29* | .10 | .041* |
| | Average | .25* | .07 | .002* |
| | Overweight | -.34* | .07 | <.001* |
| Overweight | Underweight | .60* | .21 | .041* |
| | Slightly Below Average | .64* | .10 | <.001* |
| | Average | .60* | .07 | <.001* |
| | Slightly Above Average | .34* | .07 | <.001* |

Notes. Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.602.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Research Question 7.8: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sizeism compare to a participant's height?

A one-way ANOVA was completed to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of sizeism against participants' height. There were five options for participants to choose from in selecting their height category which included short, slightly above average, average, slightly above average, and tall. Levene's test was carried out and no significant differences were found for discrimination for romantic interest rejection for sizeism [$F(4, 2154) = 1.10, p = .357$] and height.

Research Question 7.9: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings?

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of culturalism against participant's frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings. There were eight options for participants to choose from in selecting their frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings that included never, less than once a year, every six months, every two to three months, monthly, weekly, more than a few times a week, and daily. Levene's test was carried out and no significant differences were found for discrimination for romantic interest rejection for culturalism [$F(7, 2151) = 1.22, p = .289$] and frequency of visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings.

Research Question 7.10: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's relationship status?

A one-way ANOVA was completed to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of culturalism with participant's relationship status. There were five options for participants to choose from in selecting their relationship status that included single, in a relationship, married, divorced, and widowed. Levene's test was carried out and no significant differences were found for discrimination for romantic interest rejection for culturalism [$F(4, 2154) = 1.44, p = .220$] and relationship status.

Research Question 7.11: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for culturalism compare to a participant's frequency in visiting a gay dating and/or hook-up app/site?

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of culturalism against participant's frequency in visiting gay dating and/or hook-up apps/sites. There were eight options for participants to choose from in selecting their frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings that included never, less than once a year, every six months, every two to three months, monthly, weekly, more than a few times a week, and daily. Levene's test was carried out and no significant differences were found for discrimination for romantic interest rejection for culturalism [$F(7, 2151) = .790, p = .596$] and frequency of visits to gay dating and/or hook-up apps/sites.

Research Question 7.12: How do perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for sexism compare to a participant's self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity?

A one-way ANOVA was completed to compare rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of sexism against participant's self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity. There were five options for participants to choose from including extremely feminine, feminine, masculine, extremely masculine, and neither feminine nor masculine. Levene's test was carried out and the assumptions were met, $p = .002$. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for sexism [$F(4, 2154) = 4.35, p = .002$] with a small effect size and self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity, as shown in Table 36. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test were completed.

Significant differences were found between participants that reported being feminine and masculine ($p = .003$) and feminine and extremely masculine ($p = .016$). No other comparisons of self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity were found. Of the categories for which had

significant differences, feminine had the highest mean of $M = 3.75$. Table 37 shows the post hoc analysis results for self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity.

Table 36

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: When a gay man rejects me for ROMANTIC interest based on my gender expression (including masculinity and femininity), I assume: - They are discriminating against me based on my gender expression.

| Source | Type III Sum of Squares | <i>Df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> | ηp^2 |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Corrected Model | 32.0 ^a | 4 | 8.01 | 4.35 | .002 | .008 |
| Intercept | 2774.4 | 1 | 2774.4 | 1506.0 | .000 | .41 |
| Masc. or Fem. | 32.0 | 4 | 8.01 | 4.35 | .002 | .008 |
| Error | 3968.1 | 2154 | 1.84 | | | |
| Total | 29556.0 | 2159 | | | | |
| Corrected Total | 4000.1 | 2158 | | | | |

Notes. a. R Squared = .008 (Adjusted R Squared = .006)

Table 37

Perceptions of Rejection for Romantic Interest Due to Discrimination for Sexism Compared to a Participant's Self-Perceived Level of Masculinity and Femininity

| Self-perceived Level of Masculinity and Femininity | Self-perceived Level of Masculinity and Femininity | Mean Difference | Std. Error | <i>p</i> |
|--|--|-----------------|------------|----------|
| Extremely Feminine | Feminine | .35 | .44 | 1.00 |
| | Masculine | .70 | .43 | 1.00 |
| | Extremely Masculine | .85 | .45 | .590 |
| | Neither Feminine nor Masculine | .65 | .43 | 1.00 |
| Feminine | Extremely Feminine | -.35 | .44 | 1.00 |
| | Masculine | .35* | .10 | .003* |
| | Extremely Masculine | .50* | .16 | .016* |
| | Neither Feminine nor Masculine | .30 | .11 | .073 |
| Masculine | Extremely Feminine | -.70 | .43 | 1.00 |
| | Feminine | -.35* | .10 | .003* |
| | Extremely Masculine | .14 | .13 | 1.00 |
| | Neither Feminine nor Masculine | -.06 | .07 | 1.00 |
| Extremely Masculine | Extremely Feminine | -.85 | .45 | .590 |
| | Feminine | -.50* | .16 | .016* |
| | Masculine | -.14 | .13 | 1.00 |
| | Neither Feminine nor Masculine | -.20 | .14 | 1.00 |
| Neither Feminine nor Masculine | Extremely Feminine | -.65 | .43 | 1.00 |
| | Feminine | -.30 | .11 | .073 |
| | Masculine | .06 | .07 | 1.00 |
| | Extremely Masculine | .20 | .14 | 1.00 |

Notes. Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = 1.842.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Conclusion

For research questions 1.0, 1.1, and 2.0, participants reported their experiences of within-group discrimination on the constructs of ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism, with culturalism reported at the highest level and sexism reported at the lowest level for the entire sample. There was a significant difference of scores for sexism between international

and domestic gay men, but no statistical difference on ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, or sizeism.

Research questions 3.0, 4.0, 5.0, and 6.0 explored preference and discrimination for both romantic and sexual interest rejection. Sexual interest rejection was perceived to be higher than romantic interest rejection for all of the constructs except sizeism when comparing romantic and sexual rejection from another gay man due to his preferences. However, when comparing romantic and sexual rejection from another gay man due to discrimination, sexual interest rejection was perceived to be higher than romantic interest rejection for all six constructs.

Research questions 7.1-7.12 asked how perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination compared to each of the demographics' corresponding constructs. A simple linear regression revealed that there was significance between participants' age and their level of discrimination for rejection of romantic interest for ageism. A crosstabulation analysis for race revealed that Black men reported the highest level of perceived racism for romantic interest rejection for 'strongly agree' responses. Employment status and romantic interest rejection for classism, revealed that disabled persons reported the highest level of 'strongly agree' responses. There were statistical significances found for highest level of education completed and classism, socioeconomic status and classism, political party affiliation and culturalism, body weight and sizeism, and self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity and sexism. There was no statistical significance found between height and sizeism, frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings and culturalism, relationship status and culturalism, and frequency in visiting a gay dating and/or hook-up app/site and culturalism.

Chapter V. Discussion

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine the experiences of within-group discrimination among gay men on the constructs of ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism. Further, this dissertation sought to explore gay men's perceptions of rejection for romantic and sexual interest as being due to another gay man's preferences or was perceived as discrimination. While previous studies sought to understand and measure the experiences of out-of-group discrimination experienced by gay men, this study intended to explore within-group discrimination. Given a more thorough understanding of the experiences of gay men within their own community, the counseling profession can better meet the needs of gay men utilizing counseling services.

Frequencies of Within-Group Discrimination for Ageism, Classism, Culturalism, Racism, Sexism, and Sizeism

Ageism

On the construct of ageism, the item with the highest reported frequency was "I have been teased for expressing interest in someone that is older or younger than me." While there is a paucity of research on age gap differences between gay men in relationships, there is a plethora of media articles acknowledging this phenomenon. The term "Chaser" is often used within the gay community to describe someone that is attracted to another man that is significantly older or younger than themselves (Maki, 2017). Allen (2015) wrote "In straight relationships with an age gap, words like 'gold-digger' and 'trophy wife' get thrown around. When it's a gay relationship,

those words change to ‘pedophile’ and ‘pervert,’” (para. 1). Participants’ ages ranged from 19-79-years-old for this study and the item with the least amount of reported ageism discrimination was “I have been criticized for being at a gay establishment or gathering because of my age.” Further research in the area of ageism should explore the types of gatherings and establishments gay men from different age groups attend, what the age differences have been in their relationships, and feelings of being treated with dignity and respect for their age from other gay men.

Classism

On the construct of classism, the item reported with the highest level of frequency was “I have been judged on my employment status and perceived level of income.” This is congruent with a study by McGarrity and Huebner (2014) that revealed that gay men who were from a lower SES experienced higher rates of anti-gay discrimination, had fewer opportunities to connect with other gay men, and faced barriers with employment. This study revealed that lower and lower-middle class participants of this study had significantly higher scores of classism than those that are from middle, middle-upper, and upper classes. This is important to consider as Gamarel et al. (2012) found that socioeconomic position was the largest contributor to mental health distress for gay and bisexual men. Further, Gates (2017) stated that the current United States presidential administration cut the funding to support the research of gay homeless youth. High scores of classism for lower and lower-middle class participants indicate a need to further explore mental health distress for this population. In addition, a question regarding feelings of judgement by the gay community at large based on SES could provide additional information related to perceptions of classism. This study asked participants if they have felt left out of group gatherings based on their perceived SES, which was the second highest scored classism item, but

participants could have compared themselves to their personal group of friends when responding to this question rather than to their experiences with the entire gay community. Media articles and documentaries such as *The Adonis Factor* (Hines, 2010), explore the experiences of gay men in relating themselves to other gay men and the stereotypes perpetuated within and outside of the community. An example of classism outlined in *The Adonis Factor* (Hines, 2010) is a case of a man that describes his experience in purchasing a new car as a way to fit in with the community despite his inability to afford the purchase. Simpson (2013) described the expectation that gay men must be stylish, trendsetting, and youthful to gain attention within gay culture.

Culturalism

“I have been told I do not accurately represent the cultural norms and stereotypes of a gay man,” was the item that received the highest rate of frequency for culturalism. Gay men reported a mean score of 2.94 on this item, which indicated a frequency of rarely to occasionally. This is in agreement with Brown and Groscup’s (2009) study that found that gay participants did not accept most stereotypes perpetuated of gay culture. This is also noticed when comparing the intersectionality of age and cultural norms, where Goltz (2007) found that young gay men have more in common with young straight men than they do with older gay men. Culturalism was the highest reported construct of discrimination for this study of all participants. The item within culturalism with the lowest reported score was in reference to religious or spiritual beliefs, but no information was collected to ask participants about their religious or spiritual beliefs and involvement.

For political party affiliation, 10.9% of the participants selected “other” to identify themselves. This is because there were more than 400 international participants and many of them belonged to a political party that was not represented in the choice selection. In looking at

domestic participants, 64% identified as Democrat and only 6.2% identified as Republican. Scores for political party affiliation were affected by this difference and are congruent with Kiley and Maniam (2016)'s findings that 61% of LGB voters felt warmth towards the Democratic candidate in the 2016 presidential election, whereas 9% felt warmth towards the Republican candidate. Further, in looking at within-group discrimination for political party affiliation, Republicans had a score of 3.71, compared to 2.37 for Democrat identified participants, suggesting that Republicans perceived experiencing within-group discrimination related to political party affiliation in the culturalism construct more so than Democrats.

Racism

Although all race/ethnicity options provided on the survey were represented in this study, the majority (78.1%) of participants identified as white. Due to the high number of participants that identified as white, it is important to look at each item more closely in the differences between races, as white identified participants had a high impact on the overall scores. The item with the highest level of frequency of occurrence was "I have heard derogatory jokes and comments about people of my race/ethnicity at a gay bar and/or gathering." Only 12% of white participants selected a frequency of frequently or very frequently for this item compared to 34% for all other race/ethnicity selections.

The item with the lowest level of frequency of occurrence was "I have been treated with less respect based on my race/ethnicity at a gay establishment and/or gathering." The number of white participants reported never or rarely was 87.8%, while the number that reported frequently or very frequently was only 3.6%. When looking at all other races besides white participants for this item, 25.4% reported being treated with less respect based on their race/ethnicity at a gay establishment and/or gathering, which is more than 7 times that of white identified participants.

Therefore, although the overall score for this item within the racism construct was the lowest, it was heavily influenced by the scores of white participants, and therefore, this contributed to the lower overall mean score for the racism construct. Feelings of exclusion from the gay community for racial minority gay men was also found by Ro et al. (2012).

Another item in the racism construct was “I have been desired by someone of another race or ethnicity as a means to fulfill a fetish.” Black or African-American men reported frequently and very frequently at a rate of 52.6% compared to 10% of white men. When all races except white are averaged together for this item, 31.4% participants reported a frequency of frequently or very frequently. This is congruent with Van Daalen and Santos (2017) who found that racial minority gay men experience sexual interest from another race as a means to fulfill a fetish.

The final item in the racism construct was “I have been accused of false stereotypes based on my ethnicity or race.” The race that reported the highest frequency of frequently or very frequently was Black or African-American men at 51.6%, and the lowest reported race for this item was white at 8.6%. When removing white participants from the other races/ethnicities for this item, 37.3% reported a frequency of frequently or very frequently. Stereotypes surrounding gender expression and racial preferences are found in the literature for racially minority gay men (Ro et al., 2013; Han et al., 2014; Dang & Hu, 2005; David & Knight, 2008). Therefore, this study’s results that minority gay men report having been accused of false stereotypes based on their race/ethnicity by another gay man or gay men at a rate of more than four times that of white men, are congruent with previous literature and studies.

This construct is especially interesting because the literature has indicated that white men are the most preferred racial demographic within the community (Callander et al., 2015; Bowleg,

2013; Teunis, 2007; Van Daalen & Santos, 2017). When the scores for white participants were run separately against the scores of racial minority participants, the levels of racism increased. For all of the items, the mean scores increased at least three times the amount, and often times more when comparing specific races to white participants.

Sexism

On the construct of sexism, two items were very close in their reported levels of frequency by participants, “I have been told I need to behave more masculine or feminine,” ($M = 2.25$) and “I have been told I should be more or less “straight-acting” ($M = 2.23$). According to Riviera and Dasgupta (2016) masculinity is a feature that both threatens and affirms gay male identity. Payne (2007) described a strong desire for men to portray themselves in hegemonic masculinity and to pass as “straight-acting.” This study is congruent with previous studies and literature that gives preference to gay men that hegemonic masculinity is preferred within the gay community and that gay men receive messages from other gay men as often as occasionally to frequently about needing to be more or less masculine or feminine and “straight-acting.” This study did not ask participants which gender expression (masculine or feminine) they have been told to be more or less of; however, this could change depending on the subgroup within the gay community in which the gay man identifies. For example, a gay man may be told to act more feminine if he identifies with Twinks, whereas a Bear might be told to behave in more masculine behaviors.

Sizeism

Finally, in looking at reported frequencies on the sizeism construct, the second highest reported construct of within-group discrimination, the statement “I have been told I should gain or lose weight” was the highest rated item with a frequency of occasionally to frequently.

However, scores of discrimination for the statement regarding height were scored much lower than those for weight. This could be due to the fact that in this study, 84.1% of the participants indicated having a height category level of average to tall. In contrast, 54.5% of the participants reported being slightly above average weight or overweight. Literature has shown that a lean, muscular, and tall body ideal is preferred within the community (Boisvert & Harrell, 2009; Doyle & Engeln, 2014; Duncan, 2010). Therefore, it makes sense that discrimination was reported low for height and higher for weight.

The second highest reported item for this construct was in relation to participants' level of muscularity. As described by Pope et al. (2000), the desire for a lean and muscular physique, also referred to as "Adonis complex" is preferred within the gay community. No demographic question regarding muscularity was included on this study. However, if there were a muscularity demographic question, further information could be gained to assess the differences in the scoring of this item.

Differences in Rates of Within-Group Discrimination between Domestic and International Gay Men

Research question 1.1 intended to explore the differences in rates of within-group discrimination between domestic and international gay men. For the constructs of ageism, classism, and culturalism, mean scores for participants from the United States were higher than the scores of international participants. However, on the constructs of racism, sexism, and sizeism, international participants reported higher mean scores of discrimination than domestic participants.

Research question 2.0 assessed whether there was significance for each of the six discrimination constructs between international and domestic participants. It was revealed that

there was significance on the constructs of culturalism and sexism between domestic and international participants. Culturalism and sexism are two constructs in which it could be expected to see differences between domestic and international gay men, as other countries have different laws and societal views of gay culture and gender expression. In the literature, stereotypes are described as ideologies that are perpetuated within culture and society (Clarke & Arnold, 2017; Brown & Groscup, 2009; Poole, 2014), so it makes sense that there are differences between international cultures and the culture of the United States for gay men, as well as differences for gender expression, which was assessed in the sexism construct.

Perceptions of Preference and Discrimination for Romantic and Sexual Interest Rejection from Another Gay Man

Preference Versus Discrimination for Romantic Interest Rejection

Research question 3.0 compared scores for preference and discrimination as the reason for romantic rejection from another gay man, with five of the six constructs showing significant results. On the constructs of ageism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism, there was a significant difference between preference and discrimination for perceived romantic interest rejection, with perceptions of preference scores higher than those of discrimination. However, for classism, there was not a statistical difference between preference and discrimination for perceived romantic interest rejection. Although classism did not report statistical significance, on all six of the constructs, participants reported their perception for being rejected for romantic interest to be a result of preference rather than discrimination. According to Nehl et al. (2014), previous research regarding dating preferences has predominately been focused on heterosexual partnerships. Additional data analysis could provide further insight into whether or not there are

differences among various demographics and groups of gay men for perceptions of romantic interest rejection.

Preference Versus Discrimination for Sexual Interest Rejection

For research question 4.0, in comparing preference and discrimination to be the reason for sexual rejection from another gay man, it was revealed that all six constructs showed significant results of higher scores for preference rather than discrimination. The results of preference compared to discrimination as being the reason for rejection for sexual interest from another gay man were significant for all six constructs, which was not the case for rejection for romantic interest, where classism did not show significance. These findings are consistent with those of Callander et al. (2015) that found that although gay men reported being bothered by seeing selective preferences, they do not perceive them to be discriminatory as much as they are preferences.

Romantic Versus Sexual Interest Rejection Due to Preference

Research question 5.0 compared romantic and sexual interest rejection from another gay man due to another gay man's preferences, in which sexual interest rejection was perceived to be higher than romantic interest rejection for all the constructs except sizeism. When asked about being rejected by another gay man for each of the constructs, participants reported higher scores for preference for sexual interest rejection than romantic interest rejection, except on sizeism. This indicates that participants from this study perceived preferences for each of the six constructs of within-group discrimination to be more the reason for sexual interest rejection than romantic interest rejection.

Romantic Versus Sexual Interest Rejection Due to Discrimination

The final research question that compared preferences and discrimination for romantic and sexual interest rejection was number 6.0. Research question 6.0 compared romantic and sexual interest rejection from another gay man due to discrimination from another gay man, and sexual interest rejection was perceived to be higher than romantic interest rejection for all the constructs. The results of romantic and sexual interest rejection due to discrimination were significant for all six constructs, and for each of the constructs, participants reported discrimination as being higher for sexual interest rejection than romantic interest rejection.

Comparisons of Demographics and Constructs of Within-Group Discrimination for Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Discrimination

Participants' Age Compared to Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Ageism

The current study found that participants' level of discrimination for rejection of romantic interest for ageism increased as participants' age increased. This is an expected outcome as the literature overwhelmingly suggested that older gay men were at higher risks of experiencing discrimination and youthfulness is preferred and projected as an ideal within the gay community (Jones, 2001; Kushner et al., 2013; Shankle et al., 2003).

Participants' Race/Ethnicity Compared to Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Racism

Research question 7.2, race/ethnicity was compared to rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for racism. Overall, there were drastic differences between racial groups when comparing race/ethnicity to romantic interest rejection for racism. Only 9% of white participants reported "strongly agree", in comparison to a range of 20-55% of the other race/ethnicity options for perceiving romantic interest rejection as a result of discrimination. Further, only 3% of Black or African-American gay men selected "strongly disagree," while 55% chose "strongly agree,"

making them the racial/ethnic group with the highest level of perceived racism for romantic interest rejection due to race/ethnicity. The selection of white was the only race/ethnicity category where more participants chose “strongly disagree” than “strongly agree.” This is congruent with literature that consistently showed that white gay men are the preferred race/ethnicity within the gay community (Bowleg, 2013; Teunis, 2007; Van Daalen & Santos, 2017).

Participants’ Employment Status, Education Level, and Socioeconomic Status Compared to Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Classism

For question 7.3, current employment status was compared to rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination for classism. All of the employment classifications reported “agree” as the most frequently reported response at rates ranging from 29% to 40% for being rejected for romantic interest as a result of classism, except for retired men. For participants that chose disabled or unemployed as their current employment status, 54% expressed they agreed or strongly agreed that they had been denied romantic interest for classism from other gay men. This is alarming as gay men that are disabled or unemployed may be facing multiple other forms of oppression. Gamarel et al. (2012) found that socioeconomic status was the largest contributor to mental health for gay and bisexual men.

Continuing on demographic questions and rejection for romantic interest through discrimination for classism, participants’ highest education level completed and socioeconomic status were considered to analyze research questions 7.4 and 7.5. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection and the participant’s level of education. The significant difference was between participants with a high school diploma/GED and participants with bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees. This is important to consider as

Barnes et al. (2014) found that gay men with low education levels were susceptible for higher risk of mental health disorders, including mood, anxiety, and substance use disorders.

For research question 7.5, there was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for classism and socioeconomic status. Significant differences were found between lower class and all other socioeconomic statuses, including lower-middle class, middle class, upper-middle class, and upper class. There were also statistical differences found between lower-middle class and middle class, lower-middle and upper-middle class, and lower-middle and upper class. As mentioned by McGarrity and Huebner (2014), little research has been done to examine the relationship between SES and gay men's health. This study discovered that gay men from a low SES class had higher reports of classism for romantic interest rejection, which in turn could be affecting their mental health. Further research needs to explore the physical and mental health needs of low SES gay men.

Participants' Political Party Affiliation Compared to Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Culturalism

A comparison of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of culturalism to participants' political party affiliation was completed for research question 7.6. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for culturalism and political party affiliation between Libertarian and other, however, no other statistical differences were found between the other categories of political party affiliation. This is surprising in that there was no significant difference between participants that chose Democrat and Republican based on the report of Kiley and Maniam (2016) that showed how significantly more gay men support the Democratic Party. One consideration that is important to note is that

there were more than 400 international participants in this study and many of these participants selected the option of other because their political party was not represented as an option.

Participants' Weight and Height Compared to Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Sizeism

A comparison of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of sizeism against participants' body weight and height was conducted to answer research questions 7.7 and 7.8. In the first part of the survey, gay men reported the level of frequency they had experienced discrimination from another gay man or group of gay men, and the statement surrounding body weight was the highest reported item. Looking further at body weight, there was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for classism and body weight. These significant differences were found between participants that reported being overweight and all other weight categories, including underweight, slightly below average, average, and slightly above average. There were also statistical differences found between participants that reported their weight as slightly below average and slightly above average, and between average and slightly above average. There is an abundance of literature surrounding the importance gay men place on body appearance and size (Boisvert & Harrell, 2009; Siconolfi et al., 2009; Wichstrom, 2006; Frederick & Essayli, 2016), and results of this study add to the literature for how gay men discriminate among each other for body weight. While there were significant differences among body weight categories, there were no significant differences between heights when comparing height to rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of sizeism to answer research question 7.8.

Participants' Cultural Demographics Compared to Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Culturalism

For research questions 7.9, 7.10, and 7.11, a comparison of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of culturalism against participant's frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings, against participant's relationship status, and against participant's frequency in visiting gay dating and/or hook-up apps/sites was performed. No significant differences were found for discrimination for romantic interest rejection for culturalism against any of these three demographics. As mentioned in the literature review, there are many different categories of gay men and vast differences in the ways in which these men experience gay culture (Prestage et al., 2015). Therefore, it is understandable that gay men do not perceive rejection for romantic interest as being due to discrimination for culturalism based on their frequency in visiting gay-specific establishments and gatherings, relationship status, or frequency in visiting gay dating and/or hook-up apps/sites.

Participants' Gender Expression Compared to Perceptions of Romantic Interest Rejection Due to Sexism

A review of the literature for ideals perpetuated within the gay community consistently brought up the pursuit of a hegemonic masculine ideal (Payne, 2007; Hunt et al., 2016; Ravenhill & de Visser, 2016). In this study, 1156 of the participants reported being masculine or extremely masculine, while only 220 participants reported being feminine, and just 10 reported being extremely feminine of the 2159 total participants. A comparison of rejection for romantic interest due to discrimination on the construct of sexism against participants' self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity was conducted to answer research question 7.12. There was a significant difference in discrimination for romantic interest rejection for sexism and self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity. Significant differences were found between participants that reported being feminine and masculine and those that reported being feminine

and extremely masculine. This is important to note because as previously mentioned, hegemonic masculinity is considered to be an ideal gender expression within the gay community and American culture as a whole. According to Poole (2014), gay men have adopted ways to contradict feminine stereotypes perpetuated in popular culture that misrepresent gay men, such as bodybuilding and lifting weights, embracing a hairier physique, and participating in competitive sports leagues (Poole, 2014; Goltz, 2007). In addition to combating stereotypes, gay men are constantly receiving messages from society that set expectations for what it means to be a man within both their gender and sexual identity (Rivera & Dasgupta, 2016). Similarly to the masculine ideal of the gay community, American culture also embraces and perpetuates a message of hegemonic masculinity of being strong, hardworking, and low emotional expression (Parrot et al., 2008; Poole, 2014). This study confirms that not only do the majority of gay men identify as masculine or extremely masculine, but there are significantly higher differences in perceptions of rejection for romantic interest due to sexism for those that identify as feminine or extremely feminine and those that identify as masculine or extremely masculine.

Limitations

There were a few limitations discovered during the study that were observed by the primary researcher and participants. Thirty-two people who clicked on the survey but did not pass the screener were recorded and removed, but there was no additional information provided through Qualtrics regarding the total number of participants that had started but did not complete the survey. Another logistical observation that was communicated from a few participants to the primary researcher was that the survey took them longer than the anticipated 10-15 minutes they anticipated. The mean time to complete the survey ended up being a little over 18 minutes, which was longer than expected.

The first demographic limitation was that there was not an option to select Washington, D.C. for residency. A few participants privately messaged the primary researcher to ask which option they should select, and the primary researcher instructed them to choose other and write in Washington, D.C. For those participants that did not select other, they may have chosen another nearby state and their residency was not accurately recorded. Another missing option within a demographic question was the option of associate degree or technical diploma/certificate for highest level of education completed. One participant messaged the primary researcher to inform him that he had a Nursing degree, and that degree was more than a high school diploma but was not a bachelor's-level degree. A final missing demographic option from the survey was being separated for current relationship status. Being separated was another option that was brought to the attention of the primary researcher after the survey was activated.

Being that there were more than 400 international participants in this study and many of these participants selected the option of other for their political party affiliation, results for rejection for romantic and sexual interest due to discrimination for political party affiliation may have been inaccurate. With over 60 countries represented, it would have been difficult to list or categorize all possible political party affiliations.

Finally, not all possible demographics were included on the survey, including HIV status to assess for serosorting, disability status for ableism, and muscularity levels for sizeism. Demographic questions regarding HIV status, perceived level of muscularity, level of outness, amount of access to gay bars/establishments, religious affiliation, and frequency of observing within-group discrimination of others could be added to the survey and compared to their corresponding constructs.

Implications for the Counseling Profession

Although results of this study can inform a variety of disciplines, this dissertation was specifically intended to explore within-group discrimination among gay men for the counseling profession. The current study provided evidence that within-discrimination exists within the gay community and that the counseling profession needs to be aware of this phenomenon when working with gay clients. Counselors support their gay clients through the coming out process, but now also need to consider the experiences of within-group discrimination their clients may encounter within the gay community. This dissertation identified multiple intersectionalities between various demographics and discrimination. Previous literature and research studies have shown that the gay community places higher value on youthfulness and that older gay men experience higher rates of internalized homophobia (Fredriksen-Goldsen et al., 2013a). Internalized homophobia perpetuates psychological distress and counselors need to assess their clients for not only for out-of-group discrimination, but also within-group discrimination.

This study revealed that the item with the highest reported level of frequency was “I have been told I should gain or lose weight.” Research has shown that gay men are at higher risks for eating disorders and body dissatisfaction (Boisvert & Harrell, 2009; Siconolfi et al., 2009; Wichstrom, 2006). Counselors need to be cognizant of the risks gay men have for experiencing eating disorder symptomology as a result of body shame. In looking at the intersectionality of culturalism and sizeism, Davids et al. (2015) recommended that counselors assess gay community involvement and how a client’s involvement in the gay community relates to their body satisfaction.

Another area of intersectionality counselors need to pay attention to are the differences minority race/ethnic groups experience compared to those identifying as white. White men were the only racial/ethnic group that strongly disagreed more than strongly agreed that their rejection

for romantic interest was due to discrimination rather than preference for racism. Research has shown that there are differences in health disparities for racial minority gay men (Ibañez et al. 2009, David and Knight, 2008; Choi et al., 2013; Callander et al., 2015). It is recommended that counselors ask their gay clients about race-related stereotypes and how their race/ethnicity is integrated within their sexual orientation identity.

The ACA Code of Ethics (2014), CACREP (2016) standards, MSJCC (2015), and ALGBTIC (2012) competencies provide the counseling profession with frameworks and resources for working with gay men. The ALGBTIC division of ACA offers conferences, resources, and competencies for working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, and ally individuals. Counseling professionals that stay abreast current research, news, and legal issues related to their gay clients are better equipped to understand their needs.

Implications for Counselor Education

As discussed by Jeffery and Tweed (2015), most counselors have never received training in affirmative counseling for LGB individuals. According to Lyons et al. (2014), gay men not only experience more psychological distress than straight men, but that perceived stigma and experiences of discrimination have been found to be factors associated with causing psychological distress. Dziengel (2015) found that as many as 42% of gay men and lesbians seek counseling services. However, Savage et al. (2005) found that almost 50% of gay men report being dissatisfied with their counseling experience and quit attending counseling after their first session, a statistic the counseling profession needs to address and improve. Additionally, counseling programs need to spend more time training counselors to work with gay men (Kocarek & Pelling, 2003; Bidell, 2014; Graham et al., 2012).

Education on the significance in training counselors to work with gay men is fundamental in providing quality care and limiting risk for clients. While some counseling programs offer specialized certificates and course offerings related to LGBTQ issues in counseling, it is not expected that every counseling program begins offering an LGBTQ-specific course. However, through providing psychoeducation and supervision during practicum and internship courses that abides by gay-affirmative practices, counselor educators and supervisors can help reduce the number of gay clients that stop attending therapy because they do not believe their therapist understands them or is harming them.

The findings of this study can better prepare counselors for examining intersectionalities of needs for their clients. The six constructs of within-group discrimination outlined by this study create an opportunity for counselors-in-training to understand the needs of each demographic and how they are experienced within the gay community. Preparing counselors to integrate and infuse multicultural considerations and training in counselor preparation programs and courses is a part of the CACREP standards (CACREP, 2016, Section 2 F.2.) Therefore, infusing a training approach that includes the intersectionality of multicultural considerations into multicultural counseling courses, as well as other counseling courses can help counselors-in-training evaluate their clients more holistically. For example, a diagnosis course can include information from this study related to body image issues for gay men. The purpose of this study was to look at six different constructs of within-group discrimination and how counselor educators can apply findings from these constructs in their curriculum and training of counselors-in-training.

Future Recommendations for Research

This is the first study to look at within-group discrimination of gay men comprehensively for ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism. Therefore, it is recommended that

additional studies more thoroughly explore each construct. As noted by a few participants, this study did not include serosorting or ableism. Only four items on the survey developed for this dissertation measured each construct of discrimination.

A qualitative study using focus groups to hear the stories of gay men could lead to additional areas of within-group discrimination. The current study identified culturalism and sizeism as the two constructs with the highest reported frequencies of within-group discrimination. Future studies should explore further how these constructs affect gay men within their community.

The survey used for this dissertation could be modified for straight and lesbian populations and could further explore issues of romantic and sexual interest rejection for each of the six constructs. Research with straight and lesbian populations in comparison with the results of this study with gay men could provide insight into the differences among all three of these populations.

Summary

The current study developed an insight into the experiences of within-group discrimination of gay men. A survey including 24 items across the constructs of ageism, classism, culturalism, racism, sexism, and sizeism revealed that gay men experience within-group discrimination at a frequency of rarely to occasionally for all constructs. The current study looked at if gay men perceive rejection for romantic and sexual interest as being the result of another gay man's preferences or as overt discrimination. Perceptions for preference being the reason for romantic and sexual interest rejection were more highly reported than perceptions of discrimination on all six constructs. Scores on sexual interest rejection for both preference and discrimination were higher than scores for romantic interest rejection on all constructs except for

sizeism. The results of this survey indicate that the counseling profession needs to consider the effects of within-group discrimination on gay clients. Future studies need to further explore more specific within-group discrimination experiences of gay men.

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Appendix A. Participant Recruitment

Permission to Disseminate Survey (Facebook Group Administrators)

Greetings!

I am a graduate student in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling at Auburn University and I am conducting a research study on within-group discrimination of gay men age 19 and older. I would like to ask permission for you to post a link to my survey on your Facebook group's (insert group name) page.

Participants will be asked to complete an anonymous survey that will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The survey titled, "A Quantitative Study of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men" has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Auburn University for gay men age 19 and older.

If you have any questions, please contact me at jlm0115@auburn.edu or my advisor, Dr. Melanie Iarussi, at mmi0004@auburn.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,

Justin Maki, M.S., NCC

Invitation to Participate (Participants)

Greetings!

If you are a gay male over the age of 19, please consider taking an anonymous survey for my dissertation research. As a graduate student in the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling at Auburn University, I am collecting data for my dissertation titled "A Quantitative Study of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men," which intends to explore experiences of within-group discrimination of gay men. This anonymous survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

If you would like to know more information about this study, an information letter and access to the survey can be obtained by clicking on the following link: (insert link).

Thank you for your consideration,

Justin Maki, M.S., NCC



“A Quantitative Study of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men”

Introduction. You are invited to participate in a research study to measure the frequency of discrimination of gay men by other gay men. The study is being conducted by Justin Maki, Doctoral Student, under the direction of Dr. Melanie Iarussi in the Auburn University Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling. You are invited to participate because you identify as a gay male, and are age 19 or older.

What will be involved if you participate? Your participation is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to fill out a survey. Your total time commitment will be approximately 15 minutes.

Are there any risks or discomforts? There are no risks associated with participating in this study.

Are there any benefits to yourself or others? If you participate in this study, you can expect to see a publication of the results shared. I cannot promise you that you will receive any of the benefits described due to the anonymity of the responses. Benefits to others may include helping direct further research on the topic of within-group discrimination between gay men.

Can I withdraw from the survey? If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time by closing your browser window. Once you have submitted anonymous data, it cannot be withdrawn since it will be unidentifiable. Your decision about whether to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling or the researcher conducting the study.

Are my responses anonymous? Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by using Qualtrics, an online survey system with an anonymity feature. Information collected through your participation may be used to fulfill an educational requirement, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional conference.

Questions? If you have questions about this study, please contact Justin Maki at jlm0115@auburn.edu or Dr. Melanie Iarussi at mmi0004@auburn.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334) 844-5966 or e-mail at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION ABOVE, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. PLEASE PROCEED ONLY IF YOU IDENTIFY AS A GAY MALE OVER THE AGE OF 19. IF YOU ARE NOT A GAY MALE OVER THE AGE OF 19, PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY TO THE ADMINISTRATOR.

Investigator _____ Date _____

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this document for use from _____ to _____, Protocol # _____

Add this approval information in sentence form to your electronic information letter!

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from 12/13/2017 to 03/29/2020 Protocol # 17-117 EX 1703

Appendix C. Request for Exempt Category Research

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD for RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST FOR EXEMPT CATEGORY RESEARCH**

For information or help completing this form, contact: THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE, 115 Ramsay Hall
Phone: 334-844-5966 e-mail: IRBAdmin@auburn.edu Web Address: <http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/phs/index.htm>

Revised 2/1/2014 Submit completed form to IRBsubmit@auburn.edu or 115 Ramsay Hall, Auburn University 36849.

Form must be populated using Adobe Acrobat / Pro 9 or greater standalone program (do not fill out in browser). Hand written forms will not be accepted.

Project activities may not begin until you have received approval from the Auburn University IRB.

1. PROJECT PERSONNEL & TRAINING

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR (PI):

Name Justin Maki Title Doctoral Student Dept./School SERC
Address 1402 Southers Court AU Email jlm0115@auburn.edu
Phone 715-828-7981 Dept. Head Dr. Jamie Carney

FACULTY ADVISOR (if applicable):

Name Dr. Melanie Iarussi Title Associate Professor Dept./School SERC
Address 2084 Haley Center
Phone 334-332-5769 AU Email mmi0004@auburn.edu

KEY PERSONNEL: List Key Personnel (other than PI and FA). Additional personnel may be listed in an attachment.

| Name | Title | Institution | Responsibilities |
|------|-------|-------------|------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

KEY PERSONNEL TRAINING: Have all Key Personnel completed CITI Human Research Training (including elective modules related to this research) within the last 3 years? YES NO

TRAINING CERTIFICATES: Please attach CITI completion certificates for all Key Personnel.

2. PROJECT INFORMATION

Title: A Quantitative Study of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men

Source of Funding: Investigator Internal External

List External Agency & Grant Number: N/A

List any contractors, sub-contractors, or other entities associate with this project.

N/A

List any other IRBs associated with this project (including those involved with reviewing, deferring, or determinations).

N/A

| | |
|--|---|
| FOR ORC OFFICE | |
| <p>DATE _____</p> <p>DATE _____</p> <p>DATE _____</p> <p>DATE _____</p> <p>COMMENTS: _____</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from <u>03/30/2017</u> to <u>03/29/2020</u> Protocol # <u>17-117 EX 1703</u></p> |

Appendix C. Request for Exempt Category Research

3. PROJECT SUMMARY

a. Does the research involve any special populations?

- YES NO Minors (under age 19)
 YES NO Pregnant women, fetuses, or any products of conception
 YES NO Prisoners or Wards
 YES NO Individuals with compromised autonomy and/or decisional capacity

b. Does the research pose more than minimal risk to participants? YES NO

Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. 42 CFR 46.102(i)

c. Does the study involve any of the following?

- YES NO Procedures subject to FDA Regulation Ex. Drugs, biological products, medical devices, etc.
 YES NO Use of school records of identifiable students or information from instructors about specific students
 YES NO Protected health or medical information when there is a direct or indirect link that could identify the participant
 YES NO Collection of sensitive aspects of the participant's own behavior, such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior or use of alcohol
 YES NO Deception of participants

*If you checked "YES" to any response in Question #3 STOP. It is likely that your study does not meet the "EXEMPT" requirements. Please complete a **PROTOCOL FORM** for Expedited or Full Board Review. You may contact IRB Administration for more information. (Phone: 334-844-5966 or Email: IRBAdmin@auburn.edu)*

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

a. Subject Population (Describe, include age, special population characteristics, etc.)

This research study is restricted to gay men over the age of 19.

b. Describe, step by step, all procedures and methods that will be used to consent participants.

- N/A (Existing data will be used)

Survey will be accessed through Qualtrics. Before accessing the survey, participants will be asked to read and accept the terms of an electronic information letter. Once participants have read through and agreed to the electronic information letter, they will be asked if they are a gay male over the age of 19. If the participant selects "no," they will not be permitted to access the survey.

Appendix C. Request for Exempt Category Research

- c. **Brief summary of project.** (Include the research question(s) and a brief description of the methodology, including recruitment and how data will be collected and protected.)

Research question: Do gay men experience discrimination from other gay men?

Data: The researcher will contact specific gay Facebook social group administrators and ask them to disseminate the Qualtrics link to the survey on the closed Facebook group's page. The three Facebook groups that have been identified by the researcher are Atlanta Gay Social Group (approximately 360 members), Atlanta Gay Men's Social Group (approximately 66 members), and Atlanta PRIDE Social Group (approximately 137 members).

The 'Anonymous Link' will be activated within Qualtrics to ensure responses are collected and anonymity is protected.

A copy of the survey questions, permission request from Facebook group administrators, and an invitation to participate in the study are attached to this IRB form.

- d. **Waivers.** Check any waivers that apply and describe how the project meets the criteria for the waiver.

- Waiver of Consent (including existing de-identified data)
 Waiver of Documentation of Consent (Use of Information Letter)
 Waiver of Parental Permission (for college students)

Participants will be required to read through an electronic information letter before clicking on the link to start the survey.

- e. **Attachments.** Please attach Informed Consents, Information Letters, data collection instrument(s), advertisements/recruiting materials, or permission letters/site authorizations as appropriate.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|------|------------------|
| Signature of Investigator | <u>Justin Maki</u> <small>Digitally signed by Justin Maki Date: 2017.02.10 19:41:31 +08'00'</small> | Date | <u>2/10/2017</u> |
| Signature of Faculty Advisor | <u>Melanie Larussi</u> <small>Digitally signed by Melanie Larussi Date: 2017.03.01 14:27:11 -08'00'</small> | Date | <u>3/1/17</u> |
| Signature of Department Head |  | Date | <u>3/1/17</u> |

3 of 3

Appendix D. Request for Modification

**AUBURN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD for RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS
REQUEST for MODIFICATION**

For help, contact: **THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE (ORC)**, 115 Ramsay Hall, Auburn University
Phone: 334-844-5966 **e-mail:** IRBAdmin@auburn.edu **Web Address:** <http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs>

Revised 2.1.2014 Submit completed form to IRBsubmit@auburn.edu or 115 Ramsay Hall, Auburn University 36849.

Form must be populated using Adobe Acrobat / Pro 9 or greater standalone program (do not fill out in browser). Hand written forms will not be accepted.

1. Protocol Number: 17-117 EX 1703
2. Current IRB Approval Dates: From: March 30, 2017 To: March 29, 2020
3. Project Title: A Quantitative Study of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men

| | | | | |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>Justin Maki</u> | <u>Student</u> | <u>SERC</u> | <u>715-828-7981</u> | <u>jlm0115@auburn.edu</u> |
| Principal Investigator | Title | Department | Phone | AU E-Mail (primary) |
| <u>Justin Maki</u> <small><i>Digitally signed by Justin Maki Date: 2017.05.29 16:38:40 -0500</i></small> | <u>1402 Southers Court</u> | <u>SERC</u> | <u>334-332-5769</u> | <u>makij@my.uwstout.edu</u> |
| PI Signature | Mailing Address | | Alternate E-Mail | |
| <u>Dr. Melanie Iarussi</u> | <u>Melanie Iarussi</u> <small><i>Digitally signed by Melanie Iarussi Date: 2017.11.27 14:30:55 -0500</i></small> | <u>SERC</u> | <u>334-332-5769</u> | <u>mmi0004@auburn.edu</u> |
| Faculty Advisor | FA Signature | Department | Phone | AU E-Mail |
| Name of Current Department Head: <u>Dr. Jamie Carney</u> | | AU E-Mail: <u>carnejs@auburn.edu</u> | | |

5. Current External Funding Agency and Grant number: N/A
6. a. List any contractors, sub-contractors, other entities associated with this project:
N/A

b. List any other IRBs associated with this project: N/A

7. Nature of change in protocol: (Mark all that apply)
 - Change in Key Personnel (attach CITI forms for new personnel)
 - Change in Sites (attach permission forms for new sites)
 - Change in methods for data storage/protection or location of data/consent documents
 - Change in project purpose or questions
 - Change in population or recruitment (attach new or revised recruitment materials as needed)
 - Change in consent procedures (attach new or revised consent documents as needed)
 - Change in data collection methods or procedures (attach new data collection forms as needed)
 - Other (explain): _____

| FOR ORC OFFICE USE ONLY | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------|---|
| DATE RECEIVED IN ORC: | _____ by _____ | MODIFIC | <div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px;"> <p>The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from <u>12/13/2017</u> to <u>03/29/2020</u> Protocol # <u>17-117 EX 1703</u></p> </div> |
| DATE OF IRB REVIEW: | _____ by _____ | PROTOC | |
| DATE OF IRB APPROVAL: | _____ by _____ | MODIFIC | |
| COMMENTS: | | INTERVA | |

Appendix D. Request for Modification

8. Briefly list (numbered or bulleted) the activities that have occurred up to this point, particularly those that involved participants.

No data has been collected and the survey has not been administered.

9. For each item marked in Question #7, describe the requested changes to your research protocol, with an explanation and/or rationale for each. (Additional pages may be attached if needed to provide a complete response.)

Changes in project purpose or questions: Original research question was "Do gay men experience discrimination from other gay men?" New research questions are:

Question 1: To what extent do gay men report experiencing within-group discrimination?

Question 2: Do gay men perceive preference or discrimination to be the reason for their rejection for romantic or sexual interest from other gay men?

Question 3: How do perceptions of preference and discrimination differ based on demographic variables?

Question 4: Which demographic variables account for the greatest variability in gay men's perceptions of discrimination?

Changes in population or recruitment: The language in the marketing materials was changed slightly (attached). The primary researcher will post the first invitation to participate and allow two and a half weeks before posting another invitation that will be up for one week, and then will make one final post available for one week. The final two posts will have a closing date identified.

Change in data collection methods or procedures: To gain a more comprehensive and broader collection of data, the researcher is asking permission to post the survey to various social media sites at the recommendation of the dissertation committee. This will include making a post public on Facebook, which will allow users to repost the survey on their own social media accounts (snowball method) for data collection. In the event someone contacts the principal investigator with a request to participate but does not have Facebook, the PI will email them the link to the survey.

Survey changes: Operational definitions added to instructions, question added in demographics regarding state of residency, and finally a question was added in demographics to assess frequency of using gay dating/hook-up apps.

10. Identify any changes in the anticipated risks and / or benefits to the participants.

No changes are anticipated in the risks and/or benefits to the participants.

11. Identify any changes in the safeguards or precautions that will be used to address anticipated risks.

No changes in risks.

12. Attach a copy of all "stamped" IRB-approved documents you are currently using. (information letters, consents, flyers, etc.)

A Quantitative Study of Within-Group Discrimination of Gay Men Official

I am a gay man over the age of 19.

Yes (1)

No (2)

Please respond to each of the following statements based on your experience/s with another gay man or group of gay men by clicking on the level of frequency using this scale:

Never (1), Rarely (2), Occasionally (3), Frequently (4), Very Frequently (5)

| | Never (1) | Rarely (2) | Occasionally (3) | Frequently (4) | Very Frequently (5) |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| I have been treated with less dignity and respect because of my age. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been criticized for being at a gay establishment or gathering because of my age. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been excluded from being asked to participate in activities based on my age. (3) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been teased for expressing interest in someone that is older or younger than me. (4) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been left out of group gatherings based on my perceived socioeconomic status. (5) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been mistreated because of my perceived socioeconomic status. (6) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been criticized for my level of education (both “too high” or “too low”). (7) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| I have been judged on my employment status and perceived level of income. (8) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

I have received criticism for my political beliefs or party affiliations. (9)

I have been teased for having interests and hobbies that are not typical of other gay men. (10)

I have engaged in an uncivil argument based on my religious or spiritual beliefs. (11)

I have been told I do not accurately represent the cultural norms and stereotypes of a gay man. (12)

I have been accused of false stereotypes based on my ethnicity or race. (13)

I have been treated with less respect based on my race/ethnicity at a gay establishment and/or gathering. (14)

I have been desired by someone of another race or ethnicity as a means to fulfill a fetish. (15)

I have heard derogatory jokes and comments about people of my race/ethnicity at a gay bar and/or gathering. (16)

I have been told I need to behave more masculine or feminine. (17)

I have been teased for the way I express my gender at gay establishments and/or gatherings. (18)

I have been called derogatory names and harassed for my gender expression (too feminine or masculine). (19)

I have been told I should be more or less “straight-acting.” (20)

I have received criticism for my height (too short or too tall). (21)

I have been told I should gain or lose weight. (22)

I have been criticized for my body’s level of muscularity (too little or too much muscle). (23)

I have been physically touched while being told I should change something about my appearance or body size. (24)

Please select the degree to which you believe you have been denied **ROMANTIC** interest for reasons of preference and discrimination by another gay man. If you have not been denied based on the following items, please select N/A.

For the purpose of this study, please consider the following definitions:

Romantic Interest: intent to have an affectionate, emotional and loving relationship with someone

Preference: personal liking of specific characteristics of someone

Discrimination: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of someone

When a gay man rejects me for **ROMANTIC** interest based on my age, I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my age. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my age. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **ROMANTIC** interest based on my social class (including level of education, occupation, socioeconomic status, and income), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my social class. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my social class. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **ROMANTIC** interest based on my acculturation to gay culture (including political affiliation, religious beliefs, interests and hobbies, and practice of cultural norms), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my acculturation to gay culture. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my acculturation to gay culture. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **ROMANTIC** interest based on my race or ethnicity, I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my race or ethnicity. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my race or ethnicity. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **ROMANTIC** interest based on my gender expression (including masculinity and femininity), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my gender expression. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my gender expression. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **ROMANTIC** interest based on my body size and shape (including weight, height, and muscularity), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my body size and shape. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my body size and shape. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please select the degree to which you believe you have been denied **SEXUAL** interest for reasons of preference and discrimination by another gay man. If you have not been denied based on the following items, please select N/A.

For the purpose of this study, please consider the following definitions:

Sexual Interest: intent to only be sexually or physically involved with someone

Preference: personal liking of specific characteristics of someone

Discrimination: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of someone

When a gay man rejects me for **SEXUAL** interest based on my age, I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my age. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my age. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **SEXUAL** interest based on my social class (including level of education, occupation, socioeconomic status, and income), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my social class. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my social class. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **SEXUAL** interest based on my acculturation to gay culture (including political affiliation, religious beliefs, interests and hobbies, and practice of cultural norms), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my acculturation to gay culture. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my acculturation to gay culture. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **SEXUAL** interest based on my race or ethnicity, I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my race or ethnicity. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my race or ethnicity. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **SEXUAL** interest based on my gender expression (including masculinity and femininity), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (6) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my gender expression. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my gender expression. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When a gay man rejects me for **SEXUAL** interest based on my body size and shape (including weight, height, and muscularity), I assume:

| | Strongly Disagree (1) | Disagree (2) | Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) | Agree (4) | Strongly Agree (5) | Not Applicable (7) |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| They do not have a preference for me based on my body size and shape. (1) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| They are discriminating against me based on my body size and shape. (2) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please answer the following questions as accurately as possible by clicking on the choice that best describes you. As a reminder, all responses are anonymous and unidentifiable.

What is your age?

What state do you live in? If you live outside of the United States, please choose “Other (International).”

* If selected “Other (International)” for residency, please specify country.

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some High School/GED (1)
- High School Diploma/GED (2)
- Bachelor's Degree (3)
- Master's Degree (4)
- Doctoral Degree (5)

How do you identify your race/ethnicity? Please choose all that apply.

- White (1)
- Black or African-American (2)
- American Indian (3)
- Asian (4)
- Native Hawaiian (5)
- Hispanic or Latino (6)
- Birracial or Multiracial (7)
- Other (Specify): (8) _____

What is your current employment status? Please choose all that apply.

- Employment full-time (1)
- Employed part-time (2)
- Unemployed (3)
- Retired (4)
- Disabled (5)
- Student (6)

Which of the following would you say best describes your socioeconomic status?

- Lower class (1)
- Lower-middle class (2)
- Middle class (3)
- Upper-middle class (4)
- Upper class (5)

Which of the following best describes your political party affiliation?

- Republican (1)
- Democrat (2)
- Libertarian (3)
- Independent (4)
- Other (Specify): (5) _____

I would describe my body weight as:

- Underweight (1)
- Slightly below average (2)
- Average (3)
- Slightly above average (4)
- Overweight (5)

I would describe my height as:

- Short (1)
- Slightly below average (2)
- Average (3)
- Slightly above average (4)
- Tall (5)

How often do you visit gay-specific establishments and gatherings?

- I have never been to a gay-specific establishment or gathering (1)
- Less than once a year (2)
- Every 6 months (3)
- Every 2-3 months (4)
- Monthly (5)
- Weekly (6)
- More than a few times a week (7)
- Daily (8)

Which of the following best describes your current relationship status?

- Single (1)
- In a relationship (4)
- Married (7)
- Divorced (8)
- Widowed (9)

How often do you visit gay dating and/or hook-up apps/sites?

- I have never been to a gay dating and/or hook-up app/site (1)
- Less than once a year (2)
- Every 6 months (3)
- Every 2-3 months (4)
- Monthly (5)
- Weekly (6)
- More than a few times a week (7)
- Daily (8)

Which of the following best describes your self-perceived level of masculinity and femininity?

- Extremely Feminine (1)
- Feminine (2)
- Masculine (3)
- Extremely Masculine (4)
- Neither Feminine nor Masculine (5)

A gay man/men have used another term to describe my sexual orientation other than the term "gay." (Ex. Bear, twink, otter, jock, etc.)

- Yes, please list all terms: (1) _____
- No (2)

I have used another term to describe my sexual orientation other than the term "gay." (Ex. Bear, twink, otter, jock, etc.)

- Yes, please list all terms: (1) _____
- No (2)