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### Cover Page Footnote

Please address all correspondence to Dr. Michael Parent ([michael.parent@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:michael.parent@austin.utexas.edu)).

# Minority Stress among Gay and Bisexual Men in Agricultural Occupations

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## ABSTRACT

Research integrating the minority stress model and vocational behavior has used broad samples of sexual minority persons. Specific work contexts, particularly traditionally masculine work contexts, may be relevant areas to the integration of minority stress theory and vocational well-being. This study examined the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction, as moderated by identity management and person-organization fit, among a sample of 114 sexual minority men, employed in agriculture, recruited from an online social network group. Contrary to prior research, integrating identity management did not moderate the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction. Person-organization fit did moderate this relationship, such that the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction was negative at high levels of person-organization fit, and positive at low levels of person-organization fit. Our findings add to work on the integration of minority stress theory and vocational behavior by examining these links within a traditionally masculine field.

## KEYWORDS

Heterosexism, job satisfaction, LGBT, psychology, workplace health

## MINORITY STRESS AND THE WORKPLACE

Minority stress theory posits that sexual minority individuals encounter stress due to their marginalized identities, and those stresses are linked to decreased well-being (Meyer 1995, 2003). One domain in which minority stress may manifest is within workplaces, and research applying the minority stress model to workplace experiences and job satisfaction has supported the model within this domain (Velez and Moradi 2012; Velez, Moradi, and Brewster 2013; Waldo 1999). Most research on minority stress and workplaces has tended to focus on work in general, using broad samples of employed people, yet vocational psychology literature posits important differences among vocational interests and workplaces. The gendered nature of work and highly sex-segregated occupations is a vital area for work on this topic (Gottfredson 1999; Watt and Eccles 2008), as research has demonstrated sexual minority persons who work within traditionally masculine occupations may face more heterosexism in the workplace and may be less open about their sexual orientation (Bridges and Pascoe 2014; Colvin 2015; Mennicke et al. 2018; Miller, Forest, and Jurik 2003). The agricultural sector is one example of a highly sex-segregated employment sector that is also critical to the United States economy and a major employer of individuals across the country. Thus, minority stress processes operating within the agricultural sector may affect hundreds of thousands of sexual minority individuals employed within that sector. In the present study, we draw from minority stress research and vocational psychology to explore moderators of the relationship between experiences of workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction within a sample of sexual minority persons employed in the agriculture sector.

In terms of the minority stress model, we examine how integrating identity management may affect the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction. Integrating identity management is an aspect of strategies for approaching outness within a workplace context (Button 2004). Integrating identity management includes being open about one's sexual identity at one's workplace and also reflects an open integration of one's sexual orientation with coworkers (e.g., feeling that one's sexual minority friends can call one at work, feeling able to invite coworkers to one's home, and feeling able to display objects such as a photo with a partner that indicate sexual minority status). Although being out is often framed as a positive action, outness within the workplace has the potential to open a sexual minority person to harassment and discrimination (Button 2004), especially within a highly sex-segregated

and masculine employment sector. In terms of vocational psychology, we also examine how person-organization (PO) fit may serve as a buffer against experiences of workplace heterosexism. PO fit is the congruence between individuals and the organizations with which they interact (in the case of the present study, where they work). PO fit reflects the degree to which an individual perceives congruence between their own values and goals and the values and goals of their employer (Kristof 1996). Broadly, higher PO fit is associated with better job satisfaction and lower employee attrition (Farooqui and Nagendra 2014; Moynihan and Pandey 2007). To the extent that the agricultural sector is highly variable in terms of job settings, we might expect PO fit to be most important to job satisfaction in workplaces with low heterosexism; in workplaces with high heterosexism, PO fit may not be sufficient to counteract the minority stress processes related to heterosexism. Results from this study may have implications for counseling and workplace policy with regard to sexual minority individuals working in traditionally masculine workplaces, and may advance the relatively nascent literature integrating minority stress theory into workplace contexts.

#### *Minority Stress and the Workplace*

Minority stress processes are chronic, unique, and socially-based stressors such as harassment, expectations of stigma, and internalized homophobia (Meyer 2003). Minority stressors have been linked to negative psychological and psychosocial outcomes among samples of sexual minority persons in numerous studies (Brewster et al. 2017; Fingerhut, Peplau, and Gable 2010; Hamilton and Mahalik 2009; Michaels, Parent, and Torrey 2016; Velez et al. 2013). However, applications of this theory to workplace functioning are rare, despite work being a major activity for most adults and being a context in which minority stress may be especially salient (Meyer 2003). When minority stress is studied in a work context, participants tend to be recruited based on whether or not they are employed and their employment sector is not assessed or modeled. Workplaces in which men are the dominant gender tend to reflect and enact traditional masculine norms (Cohen 2010; Huppertz and Goodwin 2013; Koeszegi, Zedlacher, and Hudribusch 2014), which in turn are associated with homophobia (Carnaghi, Maass, and Fasoli 2011; Parent and Moradi 2011). Our focus on men reflects the predominance of men in the field of agriculture; in 2012, men made up 82 percent of all farm laborers and supervisors, and 81 percent of farm managers (USDA - ERS 2016).

In one investigation of minority stress theory as applied to workplaces, Velez and Moradi (2012) examined aspects of the minority stress model as applied to job satisfaction with a sample of 326 employed sexual minority individuals. They found support for interrelationships among variables, with workplace heterosexism being associated with lower PO fit ( $r = -.38$ ) and job satisfaction ( $r = -.36$ ), while PO fit was associated with higher job satisfaction ( $r = .74$ ). However, when assessed as a mediation model along with assessment of the supportiveness of the workplace to sexual minority persons, the unique relationship between workplace heterosexism and PO fit was not significant nor was the indirect association between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction via PO fit. One factor that may have influenced these results is that the authors collected broad data from individuals employed in any workplace setting. Such a broad sample may include as many workplace contexts as there were participants, making the context of the results less clear. It is likely the considerable variance exists in experiences of sexual minority persons in work contexts, particularly, in fields that are traditionally masculine and male-dominated. Further, the potential influence of identity management was not included in this model, and PO fit was not assessed as a moderator as it has functioned in other studies (Alniaçik et al. 2013; Ruiz-Palomino and Martínez-Cañas 2014). Although PO fit was not an aspect of Meyer's original minority stress model (Meyer 1995), conceptually it may be similar to coping or support in that it involves the presence or absence of environmental resources to mitigate the impact of stress; such resources were framed as moderators of the stressor-outcome relationship in the original model. The present study aimed to address these limitations by (a) focusing on one, specific, highly sex-segregated work context in which we anticipate Velez and Moradi's findings to be amplified, and (b) assessing the role of PO fit as a moderator of the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction.

In another study using the same data set, Velez et al. (2013) tested two competing models of minority stress: a model in which identity management strategies served as mediators, and a model where they served as moderators. With job satisfaction as the outcome, support was found that integrating identity management strategies moderated the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction, such that the negative heterosexism-job satisfaction link was stronger for individuals with higher levels of integrating identity management. These results suggest that integrating identity management is useful in low-heterosexism environments but the beneficial aspects of such strategies

may be minimal in high-heterosexism environments. As with Velez and Moradi (2012), the sample in Velez et al.'s (2013) study included individuals employed in any job and such broad sampling makes it challenging to contextualize the implications of the findings. Thus, it may be fruitful to explore whether integrating identity management is equally adaptive in work contexts that are highly masculine. As well, in this study Velez et al. did not assess variables related to PO fit, which has been found to predict job satisfaction (Hoffman and Woehr 2006; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson 2005; Tinsley 2000). The present study will address these limitations by (a) focusing on sexual minority men employed in the field of agriculture, and (b) assessing the role of integrating identity management as a moderator of the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction.

#### *Person-organization Fit and Workplace Minority Stress in an Agriculture Context*

Sexual minority persons who work in the agricultural sector may face elevated stress due to their field's emphasis on traditional gender norms. The agricultural field is a major industry and employs over 1.5 million people in the United States in a variety of roles, such as agriculture teachers, livestock management, crop production, product development, and agriculture product sales, mostly in rural areas (USDA 2016). The field of agriculture is also male-dominated and traditionally masculine (Bell 2000; Brandth 1995; Brandth and Haugen 2005; Leslie 2017). Research on gender roles in rural settings and traditionally masculine occupations has indicated the need for greater examination of the well-being of minorities within a rural setting, including in workplace settings (Campbell and Bell 2000). Although some work has addressed gender-based ideologies found in rural communities, the concerns of rural and working-class sexual minority persons remain under-studied (Kimmel 1987). Despite the open-minded trends toward modernization within agricultural communities regarding production practices, most social norms found within the agricultural communities are rooted in traditional heteronormative sex roles (Peter, Bell, and Bauer 2000). With these heteronormative sex roles ever-present within agricultural and rural communities, sexual minority individuals may struggle with the stresses of managing minority stressors while also working toward being influential and relevant in their chosen vocations.

Relevant to this study, researchers have examined identity integration or related processes (e.g., outness) among sexual minority

persons in rural settings and traditionally masculine occupations. Sexual minorities living in rural areas may be less open about their sexual orientation and may face greater levels of stigma than their urban counterparts (Schwitters and Sondag 2017; Swank, Frost, and Fahs 2012). Researchers have also explored the experiences of sexual minority persons in traditionally masculine occupations, particularly police work (Collins and Rocco 2015; Colvin 2015; Mennicke et al. 2018; Miller et al. 2003). Although informative, much of this work relies on small samples and qualitative analyses, and extant quantitative work is generally not clearly framed within models of minority stress or vocational behavior.

### *The Present Study*

The present study will build on past work by sampling within a more specific frame (i.e., persons in the field of agriculture), and exploring a moderation model of the relationship between minority stress and job satisfaction by both PO fit and integrating identity management in this sample. We aimed to re-examine and extend portions of the models explored by Velez and colleagues (2012; 2013) among a sample of sexual minority men employed in the field of agriculture. Building from these prior findings, we hypothesized that PO fit would moderate the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction, such the association between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction would be stronger at lower levels PO fit (Hypothesis 1). Further, we hypothesized that integrating identity management would moderate the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction, such that the association between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction would be stronger at lower levels of integrating identity management (Hypothesis 2).

## METHODS

### *Participants*

To collect our sample, we used respondent-driving sampling (Heckathorn 1997) with a recruitment seed in an online social network group for sexual minority individuals involved in the agricultural sector. This secret Facebook group is open to gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals who identify as having some connection to agriculture. Members of this group often have roots in the National FFA Organization or 4-H through their involvement as adolescents. While not all members of the Facebook group have careers in agriculture, most maintain some tie to agriculture or the rural lifestyle. Since the group is secret, it is not searchable on any



search engine. Thus, members find out about and are added to the Facebook group via friend who is a current member of the group. Respondent-driven sampling is a powerful means by which to recruit hard-to-reach populations, such as sexual minority individuals in specific contexts (Wagner and Lee 2015). Probability sampling of agricultural sector employees would result in low overall percentages of sexual minority persons, making such an approach unrealistic. As well, given that sexual minority individuals can elect to simply not disclose their sexual orientation, probability sampling of sexual minorities is not possible (Meyer and Wilson 2009). We recruited 114 self-identified sexual minority men for the present study, both via the initial seed (which at the time of sampling had a membership base of about 600 individuals) and respondent-driven sampling from participants in the initial seed. Participants self-identified as gay ( $n = 108$ ) or bisexual ( $n = 6$ ). Participants in this study ranged in age from 20 to 55 ( $M = 31.51$ ;  $SD = 8.47$ ). The vast majority of participants identified as White (94 percent), which is consistent with the general racial/ethnic composition of the agricultural field as white individuals make up 91 percent of farm laborers and 96 percent of farm supervisors (USDA - ERS 2016). On a 0-100 point subjective measure of perceived socioeconomic status (SES) participants ranged from 30-98 but generally reported fairly high subjective SES ( $M = 70.06$ ,  $SD = 16.38$ ). Participants could report more than one area of employment in agriculture, and reported that they worked in areas including agricultural education (e.g., high school agriculture teacher, extension agent, higher education, or training for any of these;  $n = 49$ ); on-farm production (e.g., livestock, equine, crop production;  $n = 25$ ); industry, commodity, and governmental organizations (e.g., United States Department of Agriculture, Farm Bureau;  $n = 18$ ); off-farm production (e.g., further processing, product development;  $n = 16$ ); or another agriculture field (e.g., agriculture product sales, crop protection, agricultural veterinarian, grain exports;  $n = 18$ ).

### *Measures*

*Workplaces Heterosexist Experiences.* Experiences of heterosexism in the workplace were assessed using the Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ; Waldo 1999). The WHEQ contains 22 items about the frequency of specific events with reference to coworker or supervisor behavior in the past 12 months (sample item: "...avoided touching you [e.g., shaking your hand] because of your sexual orientation?") answered on a five-point scale (1 = *Never*, 5 = *Most of the time*). In prior work with a sample of 326 sexual minority

individuals collected online, and without a specific restriction on type of employment, square-root transformed scores on the WHEQ were correlated positively with psychological distress ( $r = .23$ ) and correlated negatively with job satisfaction ( $r = -.30$ ). In the same study, Cronbach's alpha for responses to the WHEQ was .94 (Velez et al. 2013). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for responses to items on the WHEQ was .95. As was found in the studies by Velez et al., in the present study data for the mean scores on this variable were positively skewed, and a Blom transformation was applied to the variable.

*Integrating Identity Management Strategies.* Integrating identity management was measured using the integrating subscale of the Identity Management Strategies Scale (IMSS-I; Button 2004). The IMSS-I contains ten items (sample item: "When a policy or law is discriminatory against gay men/lesbians/bisexual people, I tell people what I think") answered on a seven-point scale (1 = *Strongly agree*, 7 = *Strongly disagree*). In a prior study (Velez et al. 2013), scores on the IMSS-I were correlated positively with job satisfaction ( $r = .31$ ) and correlated negatively with internalized heterosexism ( $r = -.41$ ). As well, the IMSS-I was the only subscale of the IMSS to have a unique relationship with job satisfaction within that sample, and thus only this subscale was used in the present model. In the same study, Cronbach's alpha for responses to the IMSS-I was .92 (Velez et al. 2013). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for responses to items on the IMSS-I was .94.

*Person-organization Fit (PO fit).* PO fit was assessed using a measure of perceived organizational fit (Cable and DeRue 2002). The PO fit measure contains three items (sample item: "The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization values") answered on a seven-point scale (1 = *Strongly agree*, 7 = *Strongly disagree*). In prior research using two samples of 215 telecommunications company employees and 553 MBA graduates, scores on this measure were associated with job satisfaction, occupational commitment, and perceived organizational support. In the same sample, Cronbach's alpha for responses to the items on the PO fit measure was .91 for the telecommunications company sample and .92 for the MBA sample (Cable and DeRue 2002). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for responses to items on the PO fit measure was .95.

*Job Satisfaction.* Job satisfaction was assessed using the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire-short form (MSQ-SF; Weiss et al. 1967). The MSQ-SF contains 20 items assessing satisfaction with aspects of one's job (sample item: "The chances for advancement on this job")

answered on a five-point scale (1 = *Very dissatisfied*, 5 = *Very satisfied*). In Velez et al.'s (2013) study, scores on the MSQ-SF were correlated negatively with general psychological stress ( $r = -.31$ ) and experiences of workplace heterosexism ( $r = -.37$ ). In that same study, Cronbach's alpha for responses to items on the MSQ-SF was .92. In the present study, Cronbach's alpha for responses to items on the MSQ-SF was .94.

### *Procedure*

The present study was approved by the ethical review board at the University of Texas at Austin. Participants were recruited online via a group on a social networking site for sexual minority individuals involved in the agricultural field. Although the study was not explicitly geared toward cisgender men only, no participants selected an available option to identify as transgender. Participants completed the survey online, with measures administered in randomized order. We set a threshold of 20 percent missing data per measure being acceptable, with missing data handled via available item analysis (Parent 2013). No participants had to be excluded on the basis of missing more data than this criterion. Following completion of the survey, participants were directed to a separate survey database into which they were able to enter their email for a chance to win one of five \$25 gift cards.

## RESULTS

### *Preliminary Analyses*

Power analyses were approximated using G\*Power (Faul et al. 2007), for the most complex part of this model (i.e., prediction of job satisfaction by the independent variable, two moderators, and two interaction terms). At an alpha of .05, a power of .80, and using five predictor variables, a minimum sample of 92 would be required to detect a medium-sized effect. Mean values and Cronbach's alpha for the measures administered in this study were calculated using available item analysis (Parent 2013). As mentioned, scores on the WHEQ were Blom-transformed prior to analyses. Descriptive statistics, intercorrelations, and Cronbach's alphas for the measures are presented in Table 1.

We compared our data to the data obtained in the two prior related studies by Velez and colleagues (Velez and Moradi 2012; Velez et al. 2013). Participants in our sample reported somewhat greater experiences of workplace heterosexism ( $d = .34$ ), moderately lower integrating identity

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

	2	3	4	5	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	$\alpha$
1. Workplace Heterosexism	.89**	-.21*	-.27**	-.16	1.38	0.46	0.95
2. Blom-transformed Workplace Heterosexism		-.28**	-.20*	-.20*	0.02	0.95	
3. Integrating Identity Management			.28**	.06	4.19	1.59	0.94
4. Person-environment Fit				.70**	5.31	1.19	0.95
5. Job Satisfaction					3.79	0.73	0.94

Note: For all correlations,  $n = 114$ . \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$

management ( $d = .59$ ), and very similar levels of job satisfaction ( $d = .01$ ). PO fit could not be directly compared as Velez and Moradi (2012) used a different measure than the present study, but converting the scores to the same metric suggested that current sample reported somewhat higher PO fit compared to Velez et al.'s sample ( $d = .31$ ), which may reflect our specific sampling frame for the agricultural sector.

### Moderation Analyses

The hypotheses were assessed by using Hayes' PROCESS macro (Hayes 2012) Model 2. The hypothesized associations between the independent variable and the dependent variable, the main associations between the moderators and the dependent variable, and the interactions between the independent variables and the moderators and the dependent variable are presented in Figure 1. Experiences of heterosexism (Blom-transformed) was entered as the independent variable, integrating identity management and PO fit were entered as moderators, and job satisfaction was entered as the dependent variable. Table 2a presents the values of the predictors alone, and Table 2b presents the moderation model.

The overall with only the main effects (Table 2a) was significant,  $F(3, 110) = 18.93, p < .001, R^2 = .34$ . The moderation effects model (Table 2b) model was also significant,  $F(5, 108) = 19.86, p < .001, R^2 = .48$ . Contrary to the findings of Velez et al. (2013), the unique relationship between experiences of heterosexism and job satisfaction was not significant,  $B = -0.09, SE = 0.06, p = .11$ . There were significant direct relationships between integrating identity management and job satisfaction,  $B = -0.10, SE = 0.04, p < .01$ , and PO fit and job satisfaction,

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

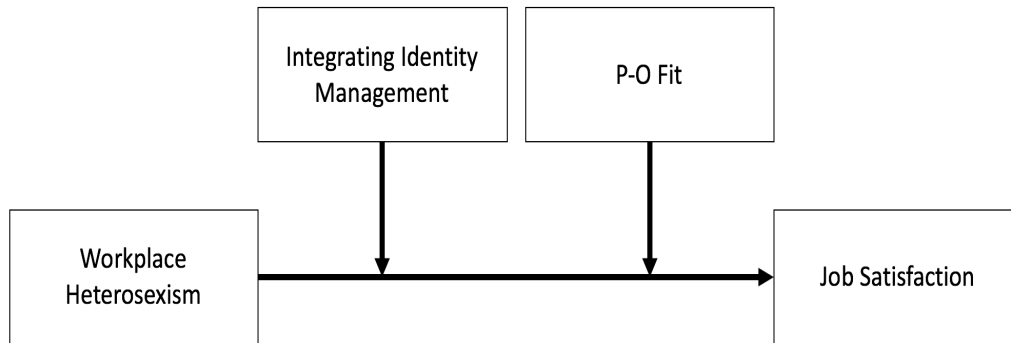


Table 2a: Main Effects Analysis Results for Job Satisfaction

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	2.511	0.245	10.243	< .001	2.025	3.000
Integrating Identity Management	-0.096	0.039	-2.441	0.016	-0.174	-0.018
Workplace Heterosexism (Blom)	-0.094	0.063	-1.501	0.136	-0.218	0.030
PO Fit	0.326	0.046	7.079	< .001	0.235	0.418

*n* = 114

Table 2b: Moderation Analysis Results for Job Satisfaction

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	3.735	0.052	71.832	< .001	3.632	3.838
Integrating Identity Management	-0.098	0.036	-2.735	.007	-0.168	-0.027
Workplace Heterosexism (Blom)	-0.091	0.057	-1.605	.111	-0.204	0.021
PO Fit	0.365	0.043	8.581	< .001	0.280	0.449
Integrating * Heterosexism	-0.039	0.041	-0.955	.342	-0.120	0.042
Integrating * PO Fit	-0.146	0.046	-3.165	.002	-0.238	-0.055

*n* = 114

$B = 0.36$ ,  $SE = 0.04$ ,  $p < .001$ . In the former case, it is important to note that the observed relationship was in the opposite direction compared to the effect observed by Velez and colleagues (2013). That is, as integrating identity management increased, job satisfaction decreased.

Regarding interactions, the interaction between workplace heterosexism and integrating identity management was not significant,  $B = -.04$ ,  $SE = .04$ ,  $p = .34$ , suggesting that while integrating identity management was generally associated with lower job satisfaction, its relationship to job satisfaction did not vary at different levels of workplace heterosexism. However, the interaction between PO fit and workplace heterosexism was significantly associated with job satisfaction,  $B = -.15$ ,  $SE = .05$ ,  $p < .01$ . To further examine this relationship, we generated the simple slope diagrams (Figure 2). Decomposition of the conditional relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction at the mean, -1 SD, and +1 SD of PO fit indicated that the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction was negative when PO fit was high,  $B = -.30$ ,  $SE = .07$ , 95% CI =  $-.44, -.15$ , nonsignificant at the mean of PO,  $B = -.05$ ,  $SE = .06$ ; 95% CI =  $-.17, .06$ , and positive when PO fit was low,  $B = .20$ ;  $SE = .07$ ; 95% CI =  $.05, .35$ .

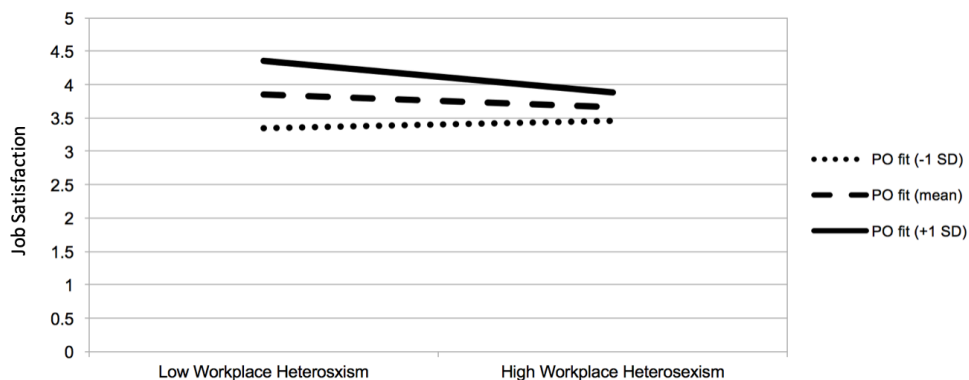


Figure 2: Simple Slopes of the Moderation of the Workplace Heterosexism-job Satisfaction Link by PO Fit

## DISCUSSION

The goal of the present study was to investigate aspects of the minority stress model as applied to the workplace, and specifically within the field of agriculture. This study builds on prior research that assessed the minority stress model among sexual minority persons within workplace contexts (Velez and Moradi 2012; Velez et al. 2013). Prior work applying the minority stress model to sexual minority persons within a workplace

context has used broad samples of employed sexual minority persons rather than sampling within specific work contexts. This sampling strategy may be a limitation, as some specific work contexts may be unique with respect to the experiences of sexual minority persons. In particular, agricultural workplaces are male-dominated and masculinized (Brandth 1995; Brandth and Haugen 2005). The present study extended prior work on this topic to sexual minority men in agriculture workplaces.

In their study of workplace heterosexism and identity management, Velez et al. (2013) found that integrating identity management moderated the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction, such that the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction was stronger for those at higher levels of integrating identity management compared to lower levels. This finding was not replicated in the present study. In our results, there was no main effect of heterosexism on job satisfaction, and the main effect between integrating identity management and job satisfaction was in the opposite direction to that observed by Velez et al.

The absence of a specific main effect of heterosexism on job satisfaction, despite our sample reporting relatively more workplace heterosexism than Velez et al.'s (2013) general employed sample, is an important unique finding. Numerous explanations for this may be further explored, and may be linked to the present sample's specific employment sector. For example, the higher rate of workplace heterosexism may be expected by participants due to the masculinized nature of the sector, and as such may be cognitively minimized as it relates to overall job satisfaction. As our sample also focused on individuals within a specific sector, more of our sample may experience a "calling" (Duffy et al. 2018) to their job, which may negate the influence of workplace heterosexism on job satisfaction.

One potential reason for the weak but negative relationship between integrating identity management and job satisfaction in the regression analysis may pertain to our use of a sample from a specific employment sector. The participants in the present sample reported levels of integrating identity management markedly lower than participants in Velez et al. (2013). Within the context of workplaces in the agricultural sector, sexual minority persons may be less likely than a general sample to use integrating identity management strategies, and when such strategies are employed they may open an individual to harassment or discrimination due to a lack workplace legal protection for many sexual minority individuals (Solazzo, Brown, and Gorman 2018). Further,

investigation of the identity management strategies of sexual minority persons in fields that may be less welcoming to sexual diversity is needed.

In their other study, Velez and Moradi (2012) tested PO fit as a mediator of the link between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction. In the present study, we found support for PO fit as being directly related to job satisfaction as well as moderating the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction. Decomposition of the moderation effect indicated that when individuals reported high PO fit, experiences of workplace heterosexism were related negatively to job satisfaction. In contrast, at low levels of PO fit, experiences of workplace heterosexism were related positively with job satisfaction. These findings suggest an unusual relationship among workplace heterosexism, PO fit, and job satisfaction within this sample. Were PO fit to serve as a buffer between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction, one would expect the relationship between workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction to remain negative and become stronger among persons with low PO fit, as compared to high PO fit. However, this was not the case. Although persons with low PO fit reported lower levels of job satisfaction regardless of level of workplace heterosexism, there was a positive relationship between experiences of workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction at lower levels of PO fit.

The findings of the present study diverged sharply from the extant research on sexual minority individuals, workplace heterosexism, and job satisfaction. One explanation that likely accounts for much of this divergence is that our sample used individuals from a specific employment center. Further, much of our sample was employed in areas of agriculture that required some level of training or education, and thus investment in the sector. It is unknown what the vocational areas were in other prior studies, but it is likely that many more participants in other samples were employed in sectors in which they had less investment or identity.

Other investigations of workplace experiences within specific employment fields also speak to the complexity of the relations among these variables. For example, Connell (2014) studied the workplace experiences of sexual minority teachers in Texas and California, noting struggles in workplace identity, identity, and behavior in the community outside of the classroom, and climates of homophobia. As many agricultural sector employees may work within small communities or maintain small-world connections even within larger communities, many of these concerns may be relevant to the present sample. Miller, Forest, and Jurik's (2003) analysis of sexual minority police officers indicated that



outness was often perceived as a risk due to systematic homophobia, with concerns including fear of harassment, fears that heterosexual colleagues will have contamination fears (e.g., that a work partner of a sexual minority police officer may be seen as also being sexual minority), and fears of a lack of support should the sexual minority officers need to call for backup. Within a highly masculinized employment sector, many of these same fears may be relevant. Sexual minority individuals are often unprotected from employment discrimination, and claims of harassment may be ignored or retaliated against. Similar to the police officers' concerns of a lack of support, even in office settings, sexual minority individuals may encounter a lack of support or even direct sabotage of their work (Brewster et al. 2014).

### *Practical Implications*

Findings from the present study provide a novel perspective on the integration of the minority stress model and vocational behavior among sexual minority men working within the field of agriculture. The present findings may have utility for counselors helping sexual minority clients within traditionally masculine occupations.

First, our study replicated some prior findings (Velez and Moradi 2012; Velez et al. 2013). However, individuals in our sample reported experiencing somewhat more workplace heterosexism compared to Velez et al.'s sample. Thus, it may be useful for career counselors to explore everyday experiences of heterosexism in the workplace, especially for individuals in traditionally masculine work contexts. Client needs regarding this may vary; some clients may benefit from identifying and building relationships with non-sexual minority allies within their workplace. Other individuals in more negative work contexts may benefit from counseling regarding approaches to working in such contexts (e.g., awareness of relevant state laws regarding the protection of sexual minority persons from employment discrimination, or practice regarding preservation of communications that may later be part of a discrimination or harassment complaint).

Second, the results indicated that, in contrast to prior samples, integrating identity management did not moderate the relationship between experiences of workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction. Individuals in traditionally masculine work environments may not benefit from being more open about their sexual orientation. Potential drawbacks of outness have been discussed within larger literature on sexual minority well-being (Lemoire and Chen 2005; Puckett et al. 2014), but this work

has not been applied specifically to work contexts.

Finally, the results indicated that PO fit moderates the relationship between experiences of workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction. For persons who have higher PO fit, this relationship was negative. Consistent with this, career counselors may explore the challenges faced by sexual minority individuals who are driven toward or have a calling for careers that may not be the most welcoming to sexual minority persons. For persons with lower PO fit, we found a small positive association between experiences of workplace heterosexism and job satisfaction in this sample. This result may suggest that sexual minority persons who are in negative contexts and who do not have strong fit with their organization may be more positive about their job satisfaction than one may expect. It is possible that other processes, such as cognitive dissonance, play some role in such a reaction.

#### *Limitations and Future Directions*

The present study must be interpreted in light of its limitations. First, the sample was composed entirely of men. Agriculture is a male-dominated field, which limited our ability to collect data from women. Future research may explore the experiences of sexual minority women or transgender persons within agriculture; given the challenge of identifying those individuals, qualitative research may be especially suited to research with those populations. Second, although our sample was diverse in terms of sexual orientation, our participants were almost entirely White. Future research efforts may aim to recruit non-White sexual minority individuals, in addition to samples of women and transgender persons. Third, the present data were cross-sectional and causality cannot be inferred. Longitudinal data would be useful to further explore the relationships among these variables as well as other relevant outcomes, such as job retention. Finally, this study assessed relations among only three minority stress model variables and one vocational behavior variable. As the minority stress model is large and complex, it is common for research in this area to select specific relevant aspects of the model to examine. Future work may seek to explore other aspects of both minority stress and vocational behavior among sexual minority persons within specific vocational contexts.

#### **DISCLOSURE STATEMENT**

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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