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## SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS IN THE FACE OF HETEROSEXISM AT WORK: BISEXUAL VS. GAY/LESBIAN EXPERIENCES

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SUBJECTIVE CAREER SUCCESS IN THE FACE OF HETEROSEXISM AT WORK:  
BISEXUAL VS. GAY/LESBIAN EXPERIENCES

by

Ramah E. Steinruck

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Major: Counseling Psychology

The University of Memphis

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## Dedication

*“The river has taught me to listen; you will learn from it too. The river knows everything; one can learn everything from it. You have already learned from the river that it is good to strive downwards, to sink, to seek the depths.”* –Herman Hesse, Siddharta, 1922.

This dissertation is dedicated to my Grandpa Schoenwetter, who taught me how to read and the value in life’s finer things (like tomatoes and radishes from the garden, and Jeopardy). He would be very proud. And the many family members, both given and chosen, who supported me throughout this part of my wild journey, I am so very fortunate to have such a full and enjoyable life; I love you lots.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Suzanne Lease, for her expertise and tenacious belief in me. Her insight and curiosity were invaluable throughout working on this dissertation, and her sense of humor and boundless energy helped carry me through. I would also like to thank my committee, Dr. Sara Bridges, Dr. Elin Ovrebo, and Dr. Eraina Schauss, whose support and guidance I so value. I respect you all so much and am very grateful to you. From the bottom of my heart - Thank you!

## **Abstract**

Many lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals report experiencing heterosexism in the workplace, and previous literature has shown that heterosexist experiences at work are related to a plethora of negative work and career outcomes. The findings from the current study of 210 LGB-identified men and women investigated the impact of heterosexist experiences at work on subjective career success. Further, moderators of the relationship between heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success, including coping self-efficacy, career adaptability, connectedness to the LGBT community, and outness at work were explored. Bisexual individuals experienced similar levels of heterosexist experiences at work as LG individuals, but had lower levels of subjective career success and outness at work. Coping self-efficacy was a significant moderator, but differed by sexual orientation such that it was a stronger moderator for lesbian and gay individuals. Implications of findings and limitations are discussed.

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## **Subjective career success in the face of heterosexism at work: Bisexual vs. gay/lesbian experiences**

Many lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals experience heterosexism in the workplace (Chung, Williams, & Dispenza, 2009; Lyons, Brenner, & Lipman, 2010).

Heterosexism in the workplace includes such things as using terms of disparagement, negative portrayals of LGB people, refusing to be inclusive, or social rejection. Heterosexist experiences in the workplace have been related to a number of negative work outcomes for LGB workers, including being passed over for promotion, receiving lower compensation, and experiencing dissatisfaction with work and colleagues (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Waldo, 1999). These negative workplace experiences contribute to LGB individuals' experiences of objective and subjective career success (Prati & Pietrantoni, 2014).

However, there are factors that might moderate the relationship between heterosexism in the workplace and perceptions of career success. These factors include an individual's level of coping self-efficacy (Chung et al., 2009), which has been shown to be a moderator of distress, and career adaptability (Jiang, 2017), which was shown to have a positive impact on career satisfaction. Additionally, factors of community connection (Frost & Meyer, 2012), and outness at work (Prati & Pietrantoni, 2014) have been shown to have positive impact on moderating heterosexism in general, and will be examined to determine the buffering effect between heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success. The current study examined these potential moderators of the relationships between heterosexist experiences in the workplace and subjective career success, and whether the moderated relationships differed for bisexual individuals compared to their gay and lesbian peers.



Bisexual individuals are often grouped into samples that include primarily lesbian or gay (LG) participants or left out of studies that focus on sexual minorities. Gay and lesbian individuals certainly have adverse experiences at work because of coworkers' homophobia (Balsam & Mohr, 2007); however, bisexual people have adverse experiences with both straight and gay/lesbian colleagues and the larger heterosexual and gay communities (Mulick & Wright, 2002). They may experience biphobia based on negative stereotypes and irrational fear about bisexual individuals (Klesse, 2011). Bisexual people also endure bi-erasure, which occurs when people assume or claim that a bisexual person is straight or gay based on the gender of his or her current partner (Klesse, 2011). Bi-erasure refers to historical or contemporary omission of bisexuality or claims that bisexuality does not exist (Israel & Mohr, 2004). Experiences of biphobia and bi-erasure may be experienced as overt biphobia, or may come in the form of multiple, repeated microaggressions.

Minority stress theory provides a framework for understanding the experiences of oppressed groups (Meyer, 1995, 2003). Minority stress for the LGB population is defined as the experiences of anti-gay, anti-lesbian, or anti-bisexual prejudice, along with the internalization of heterosexist stigma, concealment of sexual orientation, and awareness and anticipation of further stigmatization that can contribute to psychological distress (Meyer, 2009). Minority stress can contribute to psychological distress and negative health outcomes (Meyer, 1995, 2003). While, all members of the LGB community might experience minority stress, because of biphobia and bi-erasure, some individuals often assume that bisexual individuals experience fewer experiences of heterosexism (Israel & Mohr, 2004). Another form of minority stress may be the assumption that bisexual individuals do not experience bias at work when they, in fact, do so. It is important to explore levels of heterosexism that bisexuals experience compared to their gay and lesbian

peers. Finally, it is possible that factors that are protective and buffer stressor – outcome relationships for gay and lesbian individuals do not function in the same way for bisexual individuals. The current study examined whether the moderating effects of coping self-efficacy, career adaptability, community connection and outness at work on the relationship between heterosexist experiences at work and perceived career success differed for bisexual employees when compared to gay and lesbian employees (i.e., a test of moderated moderation).

### **Heterosexist Experiences in the Workplace**

Heterosexist experiences in the workplace have been found to have inverse relationships with LGB persons' physical and emotional wellbeing and to predict lower wages, less career advancement, lower job satisfaction, and less productivity (Sears & Mallory, 2014). A review of 50 studies that examined employment discrimination against North American LGBT individuals (Badgett, Lau, Sears, & Ho, 2007) reported that 16% to 68% of LGBT individuals reported experiencing employment discriminations, and 41% reported being harassed at work. Obvious discrimination in the workplace is a common experience for many LGB persons, and researchers have suggested that work discrimination has a profound negative effect on this population's well-being (Orzek, 1992; Pope, 1995, 1996; Worthington, McCrary, & Howard, 1998). These effects include reduced openness of sexual orientation (Croteau, 1996); decreased job and life satisfaction and outness (Driscoll, Kelley, & Fassinger, 1996; Lyons, Brenner, & Fassinger, 2005; Schmidt, Miles, & Welsh, 2011); decreased coping abilities (Driscoll et al., 1996); increased likelihood to experience restricted vocational or job selection (Elliott, 1993) and work adjustment (Fassinger, 1995; 1996); career indecision and lower college adjustment (Schmidt et al., 2011); enduring negative stereotypes and uncertainty about what is safe to share at work

(Hetherington, Hillerbrand, Etringer, 1989); and being fired, not hired, or not promoted (Levine & Leonard, 1984).

Although bisexual individuals are sometimes thought to experience less heterosexism in the workplace, two-thirds of the participants in a study exploring employment discrimination for bisexual individuals reported experiencing harassment or discrimination at work (Tweedy & Yescavage, 2015). Further, the Pew Research Center (2013) reported that bisexual individuals reported lower earning power than lesbians or gay men, including lower income and greater poverty. Tweedy and Yescavage (2015) reported that because of their sexuality, 5% of their participants had been fired, 7% had been denied a work opportunity, 13% had not been hired for a job, 13% had not been promoted, 20% were given an unfair review, 31% were sexually harassed, and 58% were exposed to biphobic jokes. In spite of these studies, bisexual individuals are frequently perceived to be less negatively impacted by heterosexism at work.

The impact of heterosexist work experiences on LGB individuals is often addressed through the construct of simple job satisfaction. However, subjective career success is a broader construct addressing an individual's experience of success at work, in accordance with their values, attitudes, and motivations. Subjective career success is important to both employers and employees in that organization. Many factors impact an employee's sense of career success (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2012), and the experiences of discrimination at work satisfaction have clear ramifications for career success.

### **Subjective Career Success**

Subjective career success is defined as individuals' assessment of the value of their human capital (Strumpf & Tymon, 2012), appraisal of their self-worth and capabilities (Chang, Ferris, Johnson, Rosen, & Tan, 2012), and satisfaction with their careers (Judge, Cable,

Boudreau, & Bretz., 1995). Subjective career success is informed by Derr's (1986) framework that outlines five dimensions of the potential ways that people, in accordance with their values, attitudes, and motivations, experience a sense of success at work. The five dimensions include: "getting ahead," reflecting a person's need to advance both in professional standing and organizational structure; "getting high," reflecting the areas of technical and functional skill development where individuals develop expertise in their employment; "getting secure," reflecting a person's need for a solid job that ensures stability, security, and predictability; "getting free," reflecting a person's need for independence and autonomy; and "getting balanced," reflecting a person's desire to integrate personal, family, and work life, growth, and development (Baruch, 2004).

Herrbach and Mignonac (2012) reported that women's subjective career success was negatively associated with perceived gender discrimination. Negative actions toward LGB individuals based on sexual orientation have been found to be negatively associated with subjective career success (Croteau, 1996; Rummell & Tokar, 2016). Given that LGB individuals often experience heterosexism in the workplace, it is expected that higher levels of heterosexist experiences at work will be related to lower levels subjective career success.

### **Minority Stress and Buffering Factors for Heterosexist Experiences at Work**

Minority stress theory posits that because LGB individuals experience prejudice and discrimination, they are subject to chronic stress related to stigmatization and living within a hostile and stressful social climate. Minority stress leads to negative mental health outcomes (Meyer, 1995). Valez, Moradi, and Brewster (2013) found that four minority stressors (workplace discrimination, expectation of stigma, internalized heterosexism, and identity management strategies) were associated with greater psychological distress and lower job

satisfaction. Valez et al. (2013) suggested that internalized heterosexism and concealment-related identity management strategies served as moderators of minority stress when discrimination is low, but not when discrimination is high (Valez et al., 2013). Identifying moderators that buffer the negative effects of minority stress is beneficial because those variables can be enhanced in ways that increase their protective functions. This study examined four potential moderators of the heterosexist work experience - subject career success relationship.

The first potential moderator is coping self-efficacy (CSE). CSE is defined as belief in one's ability to cope effectively with stressful or threatening events. In the face of extreme distress, CSE has been shown to be a moderator for better psychological functioning. For example, CSE has been shown to moderate emotional distress and post-traumatic stress disorder for HIV infected men following a natural disaster (Benight et al., 1997). Additionally, higher levels of CSE have been associated with better psychological adjustment to highly stressful events such as physical assault (Ozer & Bandura, 1990) and abortion (Meuller & Major, 1989). Further, the role of CSE in relation to military combat distress in military combat found that lower levels of CSE for military combat predicted greater posttraumatic stress disorder symptomology and general psychological distress one and two years following the war. (Solomon, Benbenishty, & Mikulincer, 1991; Solomon, Weisenberg, Schwarzwald, & Mikulincer, 1988). This study examined CSE as a buffer of the more moderate stressor of workplace heterosexism. Regarding experiences of general heterosexism, researchers have found that there was an association between general coping strategies and general health outcomes for lesbian and bisexual women (Lehavot, 2012). Researchers have also indicated that coping self-efficacy in the context of LGB identity mediated the link between internalized homonegativity,

expectations of rejection, and physical health symptom severity (Denton, Rostosky, & Danner, 2014).

Career adaptability is another construct expected to moderate the relationship between heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success. Career adaptability is defined as the quality of being able to change to fit new or altered circumstances (Savickas, 1997). Career adaptability includes the readiness to engage in predictable tasks changes that occur in one's work role and to cope with and adjust to unpredictable changes in work and working conditions. Career adaptability involves having planful attitudes, engaging in self-related and environmental explorations, and being an informed decision-maker. Although no literature directly addresses the potential for this construct to moderate the relationship between heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success, career adaptability has been demonstrated to have an impact on work and career outcomes such as job and career satisfaction (Chan & Mai, 2015; Fiori, Bollmann, & Rossier, 2015), job performance (Ohme & Zacher, 2015), and work engagement (Rossier, Zecca, Stauffer, Maggiori, & Dauwalder, 2012). A meta-analysis of career adaptability indicated that career adaptability has positive implications for subjective well-being (life-satisfaction, positive affect, and low levels of negative affect). Taken together, it was noted that the meta-analytic results suggest career adaptability is an important resource for bolstering well-being across work and non-work contexts (Rudolph, Lavigne, & Zacher, 2017). In a study on workplace trauma, higher levels of career adaptability were found to have a significant, albeit modest, positive relationship with lower levels of trauma symptoms (Prescod & Zeligman, 2017).

In addition to coping self-efficacy and career adaptability, this study examined whether community connection moderates the relationship between heterosexist workplace experiences

and subjective career success among LGB individuals. Community connection is defined as an individual's desire to belong to a larger collective, establish a mutually influential relationship with that collective, satisfy individual needs, and be rewarded through collective affiliation and shared emotional connection (McMillan, 1996; McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Prior research has indicated that involvement in the LGBT community can serve as a buffer against experiences of minority stress and moderate the relationships between those stressors and mental health outcomes (Frost & Meyer, 2012; Heath & Mulligan, 2008; Zimmermen, Darnell, Rhew, Lee, & Kaysen, 2015). It is plausible that community connection might also moderate the relationship between heterosexism at work and subjective career success.

Finally, this study explores how the degree to which outness at work might function as a moderator of the heterosexism at work – subjective career success relation. Concealment of sexual orientation, or not being openly out, is a component of minority stress, and choosing how out to be is a decision that LGB individuals must make repeatedly throughout their lives. Being out at work is typically defined as being open about one's sexual orientation with work peers, supervisees, and/or supervisors. Being out can also include being out to customers and others that one interacts with at work. Concealing one's sexual orientation in a heterosexist workplace might reduce the direct distress and discrimination one experiences, but it also demands constant attention to managing one's self-presentation, which has been associated with lower job satisfaction (Valez et al., 2013) and fewer workplace helping behaviors (Brenner, Lyons, & Fassinger, 2010). Outness has been found to be a positive moderator between minority stress and coping with traumatic experiences (Lewis et al., 2005). Although heterosexist workplace environments have been associated with less workplace outness (Brenner et al., 2010), it is possible that choosing to be out even in a heterosexist workplace environment frees one from the

constant attention to the management of their identities and decreases the relationship between heterosexism at work and subjective career success. Given that outness at work has been associated with higher job satisfaction (Valez et al., 2013), this study investigated if outness at work moderated the relationship between heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success.

Due to biphobia or bi-erasure, bisexual individuals' work experiences may differ from their gay and lesbian colleagues. As others often assume that a bisexual person is straight or gay based on the gender of their current partner, bisexual individuals may be less out at work if they are not in a same-sex relationship or have additional experiences with having to come out at work if they begin to date a new partner who is a different gender than a previous partner. Research indicates that bisexual individuals are less likely than LG individuals to disclose their identity in general (Balsam & Mohr, 2007). Bisexual people also may have adverse experiences with gay communities (Mulick & Wright, 2002) and experience less connection to the lesbian/gay community (Baslam & Mohr, 2007). If bisexual individuals are less connected to the lesbian/gay community, then they may receive less benefit from any buffering effect community connection provides. Since so little literature has examined the experiences of bisexual individuals separate from gay and lesbian individuals, this study examined whether the effect of the moderating variables differed for bisexual participants compared to gay and lesbian participants.

### **Purpose of Study**

The current study explored the relationship between workplace heterosexism and subjective career success, and whether potential moderators of coping self-efficacy, career adaptability, community connection, and outness at work weaken the relationship between



heterosexist workplace experiences and decreased subjective career success. The moderators explored are not intended to be exhaustive, rather, the goal was to draw on factors that may buffer the impact of heterosexist experiences at work. Given the paucity of research on bisexual individuals, the study also provides needed information about bisexual individual's heterosexist work experiences and examines how potential buffers of these experiences may differ for bisexual individuals in comparison to their gay and lesbian colleagues. The moderated moderation conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

### **Hypotheses**

1a. Coping self-efficacy will moderate the relationship between reported heterosexist workplace environments and subjective career success such that the relationship will be weaker when coping self-efficacy is higher.

1b. The moderating effect of coping self-efficacy will differ for lesbian and gay individuals compared to bisexual individuals; however, this question was exploratory with no directional hypothesis.

2a. Career adaptability will moderate the relationship between heterosexist workplace environments and subjective career success such that the relationship will be weaker when career adaptability is higher.

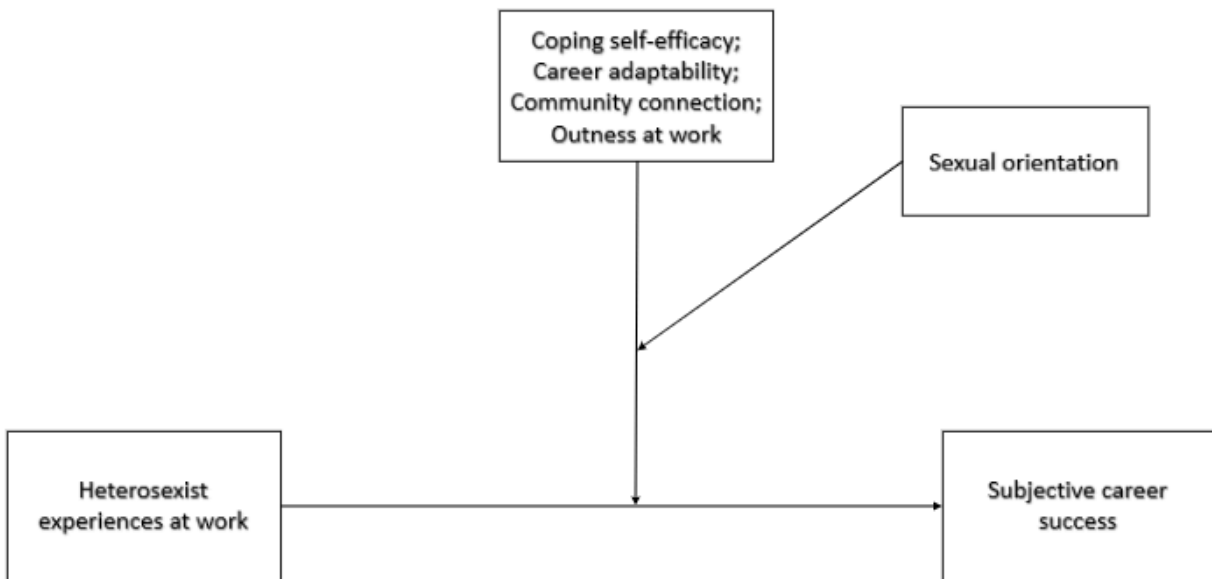
2b. The moderating effect of career adaptability will differ for lesbian and gay individuals compared to bisexual individuals; however, this question was exploratory with no directional hypothesis.

3a. Community connection will moderate the relationship between reported heterosexist workplace environment and subjective career success such that the relationship will be weaker when levels of community connection are higher.

3b. The moderating effect of community connection will be stronger for lesbian and gay individuals when compared to bisexual individuals.

4a. Outness at work will moderate the relationship between reported heterosexist workplace environment and subjective career success such that the relationship will be weaker when levels of outness at work are higher.

4b. The moderating effect of outness will be stronger for lesbian and gay individuals when compared to bisexual individuals.



*Figure 1.* Conceptual model of moderated moderation. Each of the four moderators (coping self-efficacy, career adaptability, community connection, and outness at work) was tested separately. Level of education was used as a covariate in all models.

## Method

### Participants

A total of 524 individuals responded to a web-based survey. Data from participants who identified as heterosexual ( $n = 195$ ), asexual ( $n = 6$ ), gender non-conforming ( $n = 15$ ), or other ( $n$

= 13) were excluded from analysis as were incomplete responses from participants who did not complete the survey ( $n = 4$ ). The final sample included 43 gay men, 43 lesbian women, and 124 bisexual individuals (26 men and 98 women) for a total of 210 participants. Participants ranged from 18 to 68 years old ( $M = 32.3$ ;  $SD = 9.7$ ), worked at least part time (minimum of 16 hours/week;  $M = 40.39$  hours,  $SD = 9.55$ ), and lived in the United States. When asked to report their ethnic or racial background, 89.5% identified as White, 7.6% identified as Hispanic, 5.7% identified as Multiracial, 1.9% identified as Asian American, 1.4% identified as African American, and 1.4% identified as other. In terms of their highest level of education, 38.6% of the sample reported a bachelor's degree, 34.3% a master's degree, 10% a doctoral degree, 9.5% some college, 2.9% associate's degree, 2.4% trade/vocational degree, 1.9% high school diploma, and .5% general educational development (GED).

When asked about level of income, 11.4% indicated an income below \$20,000, 31.4% indicated earning \$20,000 to \$40,000, 22.9% indicated earning \$40,000 to \$60,000, 18.1% indicated earning \$60,000 to \$80,000, 7.6% indicated earning \$80,000 to \$100,000, and 8.6% indicated earning above \$100,000. Participants had been employed for an average of 12 years ( $SD = 10.42$ ). Regarding type of work, the most frequently chosen occupational areas were education, training, and library (18.1%) and community and social services (13.3%). Business and finance, management, computer and math, healthcare practitioners, legal, and life, physical, and social sciences were all endorsed by between 5 and 10% of the participants. Other occupations (protective services, transportation, installation, maintenance, food preparation, personal care) were listed less frequently (2% and less). See Appendix A for a complete listing of occupations.

## Procedure

Data were collected via an online survey. When asked to identify sexual orientation, participants who responded with identities including pansexual, omnisexual, queer, polysexual, fluid, heteroflexible, lesbiflexible, or bi-curious were asked to accept the term “bisexual” as an umbrella term that describes a host of nuanced identities when responding to study measures. Participants were recruited via the use of snowball sampling through social networking sites, online community message boards, and LGBT listservs and organizations. Recruitment efforts were predominantly focused on social networking sites and LGBT Reddit boards. From there, a “snowball” method was used for additional recruitment wherein participants were asked to invite friends and acquaintances who identify as LGB to participate in the study. Flyers and internet postings directed participants to the Qualtrics website where they accessed the questionnaires. Participants who met the criteria were asked to indicate their consent to participate and to complete the survey online. As an incentive to participate, participants were offered an opportunity to enter a lottery for four \$25 Amazon gift cards.

LGB participants completed the demographic questionnaire, the Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ, Waldo, 1999), the Subjective Career Success Inventory (SCSI, Shockley, Ureksoy, Rodopman, Poteat, & Dullaghan, 2016), the Connectedness to the LGBT Community Scale (Frost & Meyer, 2012), the Outness Inventory (OI, Mohr & Fassinger, 2000), the Coping Self-Efficacy Scale (CSE, Chesney, Neilands, Chambers, Taylor, & Folkman, 2006), and the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS, Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). In addition to the instruments listed below, the online survey contained two attention check items in which participants were directed to select a specific response on a survey item. Participants ( $n = 2$ ) who failed the attention check had their data removed from the analyses.

## **Instruments**

**Demographic questionnaire.** Participants completed a demographic questionnaire that asked about gender, age, sexual orientation, racial/ethnic identification, geographic location, level of education, number of hours/week worked, income level, type of work, and years in the workforce.

**Workplace Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ).** The WHEQ (Waldo, 1999) is a 22-item questionnaire assessing employees' experiences of sexual orientation-based harassment and discrimination. Participants are asked to rate the frequency with which they have experienced incidents of heterosexist discrimination on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (*Never*) to 4 (*Most of the time*). Item responses are averaged to produce an overall score, with higher scores indicating more frequent instances of discrimination. Although Waldo (1999) did not provide reliability data for the WHEQ, Valez and Moradi (2012) reported a Cronbach's alpha for WHEQ items of .94. With regard to validity, WHEQ scores were correlated positively with perceived workplace tolerance for heterosexism in a sample of LGB employees (Waldo, 1999).

**Subjective Career Success Inventory (SCSI).** The SCSI (Shockley, Ureksoy, Rodopman, Poteat, & Dullaghan, 2016) includes 24 items and assesses subjective career success via eight dimensions (authenticity, growth and development, influence, meaningful work, personal life, quality work, recognition, and satisfaction) using a 5-point Likert-type response scale that ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Item responses are averaged to create an overall measure of subjective career success, on which higher scores indicate greater subjective career success. Reliability coefficients ranged from .70 to .91. This scale has demonstrated adequate convergent and discriminant validity (Shockley et al., 2016).

**Coping Self-Efficacy Scale (CSE).** The CSE (Chesney, Neilands, Chambers, Taylor, & Folkman, 2006) is a 26-item measure designed to assess an individual's confidence in performing coping behaviors when faced with life challenges or threats. Responses are provided using a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all capable*) to 10 (*totally capable*). The instrument assesses three forms of coping: problem focused coping (6 items), stopping unpleasant emotions and thoughts (4 items) and support from family and friends (3 items). All three coping subscales indicated good reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .91, .81, and .80 respectively; higher scores indicate better coping self-efficacy (Chesney et al., 2006). Benka et al. (2014) noted the moderate to high inter-correlations (.68 to .71) between the individual subscales and calculated a summary average score of the three forms of coping self-efficacy. The summary score was used in the current study.

**Career Adapt-Abilities Scale (CAAS).** The CAAS (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012) is a 24-item measure using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not strong*) to 5 (*strongest*). There are six items on each of four subscales (concern, control, curiosity, and confidence). Item responses are averaged to produce an overall score, with higher scores indicating greater levels of career adaptability. Cronbach's alpha ranged from .74 to .92 on the subscales (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). A large-scale validation study with data from several countries provided support for the hypothesized hierarchical factor structure of the CAAS and showed that the reliabilities of the overall career adaptability scale as well as its subscales were acceptable to excellent (Savickas & Porfeli, 2012). In addition, a number of studies with samples from individual countries provided evidence for the concurrent validity (including convergent and divergent validity) and for the predictive validity of the CAAS (Zacher, 2014).

**Connectedness to the LGBT Community Scale.** The connectedness to the LGBT community scale (Frost & Meyer, 2012) is an 8-item measure designed to assess various ways an individual can feel connected to the LGBT community. Participants respond to each item on a 4-Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*Agree Strongly*) to 4 (*Disagree Strongly*). Item scores are totaled to produce an overall score, where lower scores indicate more connectedness to the LGBT community. The coefficient alpha was .78 among 396 sexual minority individuals. The Connectedness scale demonstrated good convergent validity. Evidence for discriminant validity was observed across subgroups (Frost & Meyer, 2012).

**Outness Inventory (OI).** The OI (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000) is an 11-item measure designed to assess the degree to which LGBT individuals are open about their sexual orientation. Participants are asked to respond to each item on a 7-Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*person definitely does NOT know about your sexual orientation status*) to 7 (*person definitely knows about your sexual orientation status, and it is OPENLY talked about*). This measure is scored by averaging the four subscales (out to family, out to world, out to religion, and overall outness). Internal consistency ranged from .64 to .85 on the subscales (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). Studies utilizing this measure indicated good internal consistency ( $\alpha = .84 - .95$ ; Meidlinger & Hope, 2014; Riggle et. al., 2017; Wilkerson et al., 2016). For the purposes of this study's focus on outness at work as a moderating variable, only scores from item 6 (my work peers) and 7 (my work supervisors) were used and they were averaged to create score for outness at work.

## **Results**

### **Preliminary Analysis**

The data were checked for missing data, accuracy, and outliers. Less than .001% of the data were missing, which was deemed acceptable. Four univariate outliers were identified and

removed resulting in the sample of 210 participants described above. Assumptions of linearity, normality, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity were met. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables are shown in Table 1. As expected, subjective career success was negatively associated with heterosexism at work, but positively associated with being out at work, coping self-efficacy, and career adaptability. Community connection was not significantly correlated with subjective career success.

Table 1

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Measure Intercorrelations*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. HSE	1.29	.39	<i>.92</i>									
2. CC	14.66	4.54	.07	<i>.89</i>								
3. OW	4.21	2.18	-.15*	-.22**	<i>.72</i>							
4. CSE	82.77	18.90	-.20**	-.16*	.22**	<i>.95</i>						
5. CAAS	3.55	.51	.02	-.08	.14*	.55**	<i>.88</i>					
6. SCS	3.91	.48	-.33**	-.07	.23**	.48**	.42**	<i>.90</i>				
7. EdLev	7.15	1.33	-.17*	-.04	.11	.20*	.12	.28**	<i>-</i>			
8. Age	32.39	9.77	-.20**	.02	.12	.15*	-.01	.14*	.11	<i>-</i>		
9. Income	5.56	2.79	-.21**	.01	.20**	.16*	.06	.24**	.32**	.49**	<i>-</i>	
10. Hours	40.39	9.55	-.11	-.01	.25**	.11	.09	.22**	.30**	.19**	.42**	<i>-</i>
11. Years	11.95	10.42	-.10	.01	.08	.14	-.00	.07	-.06	.91**	.37**	.10

*Note.*  $N = 210$ . Cronbach's coefficient alphas appear in italics on the diagonal. HSE = Heterosexist Experiences at work; CC = Community Connection; OW = Outness at Work; CSE = Coping Self-efficacy; CAAS = Career Adaptability; SCS = Subjective Career Satisfaction; EdLev = Level of Education; Hours = Hours worked per week; Years = Years employed.  
\*  $p < 0.05$ . \*\*  $p < 0.01$ .



## **Analysis of Differences between Bisexual and Gay/Lesbian Participants**

Six one-way ANOVAs were conducted to explore if there were any significant differences between LG and Bisexual participants on variables of heterosexist workplace experiences, subjective career success, career adaptability, coping self-efficacy, community connection, and outness at work. The analysis indicated that there were no significant differences between LG and Bisexual individuals for heterosexist workplace experiences, community connection, career adaptability, and coping self-efficacy. There were significant differences for outness at work,  $F(1, 209) = 53.26, p < 0.001$  and subjective career success,  $F(1, 209) = 4.50, p < 0.05$ . Bisexual individuals ( $M = 3.40, SD = 2.11$ ) were significantly less likely to be out at work compared to their LG peers ( $M = 5.39, SD = 1.68$ ). Bisexual individuals ( $M = 3.85, SD = 0.47$ ) also scored significantly lower on subjective career success compared to LG participants ( $M = 3.99, SD = 0.49$ ).

Six one-way ANOVAs were conducted to explore if there were any significant differences between male and female participants on the study variables of interest. The analysis indicated that there were no significant differences between male and female individuals for heterosexist workplace experiences, community connection, career adaptability, coping self-efficacy, and subjective career success. There was a significant difference for outness at work,  $F(1, 209) = 7.66, p < 0.01$ . Female participants ( $M = 3.93, SD = 2.10$ ) were also less likely to be out at work compared to their male counterparts ( $M = 4.80, SD = 2.22$ ).

## **Moderation Analyses**

Tests of moderated moderation were conducted using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013, Model 3). Hayes' macro uses ordinary least squares (OLS) regression to estimate model parameters and generates confidence intervals for examining conditional (i.e., moderator)

analyses. The conditional effects of moderators are provided at the 16<sup>th</sup>, 50<sup>th</sup>, and 84<sup>th</sup> percentiles unless they are dichotomous (bisexual versus lesbian/gay). Tests of moderated moderation permit the analysis of whether the relationship between heterosexist experiences at work and levels of subjective career success was buffered by coping self-efficacy, career adaptability, connectedness to the LGBT community, or outness at work (the simple moderation indicated by the two-way interaction), and second, if those moderated relationships were different for gay and lesbian participants than bisexual participants. In the analyses, lesbian and gay participants were coded as 1 and bisexual participants were coded as 2 and variables were centered. Level of education was used as a covariate in the regression analyses because there was a strong relationship between level of education and subjective career success. Level of education was recoded into three levels: 1 = Less than High School, General Educational Development (GED), High School Diploma, Trade/Vocational Degree, Some College, Associates Degree ( $n = 36$ , 17.2%); 2 = Bachelor's Degree ( $n = 81$ , 38.6%); and 3 = Master's Degree and Doctoral Degree ( $n = 93$ , 44.3%).

**Coping self-efficacy.** A test of moderated moderation was conducted to explore if coping self-efficacy moderated the relationship between heterosexist workplace environments and subjective career success and if the moderation differed for lesbian and gay individuals compared to bisexual individuals. The model was significant,  $F(8, 201) = 13.60, p < .001, R^2 = .35$ ; education level, workplace heterosexism, coping self-efficacy, and the three-way interaction were significant predictors of variance in subjective career success. While the analysis did not indicate a simple moderating effect for coping self-efficacy (Hypothesis 1a), there was a significant three-way interaction indicating that the coping self-efficacy did moderate the relationship between workplace heterosexism and subjective career success, but that the

moderated relationship differed by sexual orientation ( $b = -.01, p < .05$  for the three-way interaction). Hypothesis 1b regarding moderated moderation was supported. When workplace heterosexism is high and coping self-efficacy is low, subjective career success is low, but this relationship is stronger for gay and lesbian individuals in comparison to the bisexual participants. Thus, coping self-efficacy buffers the negative effect of workplace heterosexism more strongly for gay and lesbian individuals. Results of the regression analysis are displayed in Table 2; the three-way interaction is shown in Figure 2.

Table 2  
Regression Results for Coping Self-Efficacy (*N* = 210)

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Constant	3.66	.09	39.49***	.35
Heterosexist Experiences at Work	-.29	.08	-3.76***	
Sexual Orientation	-.09	.06	-1.61	
HSE x SO	.09	.16	.54	
Coping Self-Efficacy	.01	.00	6.41***	
HSE x CSE	.00	.00	-.55	
SO x CSE	.00	.00	1.35	
HSE x SO x CSE	-.01	.04	-2.29*	
Educational Level	.11	.04	2.83**	

*Note.* CSE = Coping Self-Efficacy; HSE = Heterosexist Experiences at work; SO = Sexual Orientation.

\*  $p < 0.05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

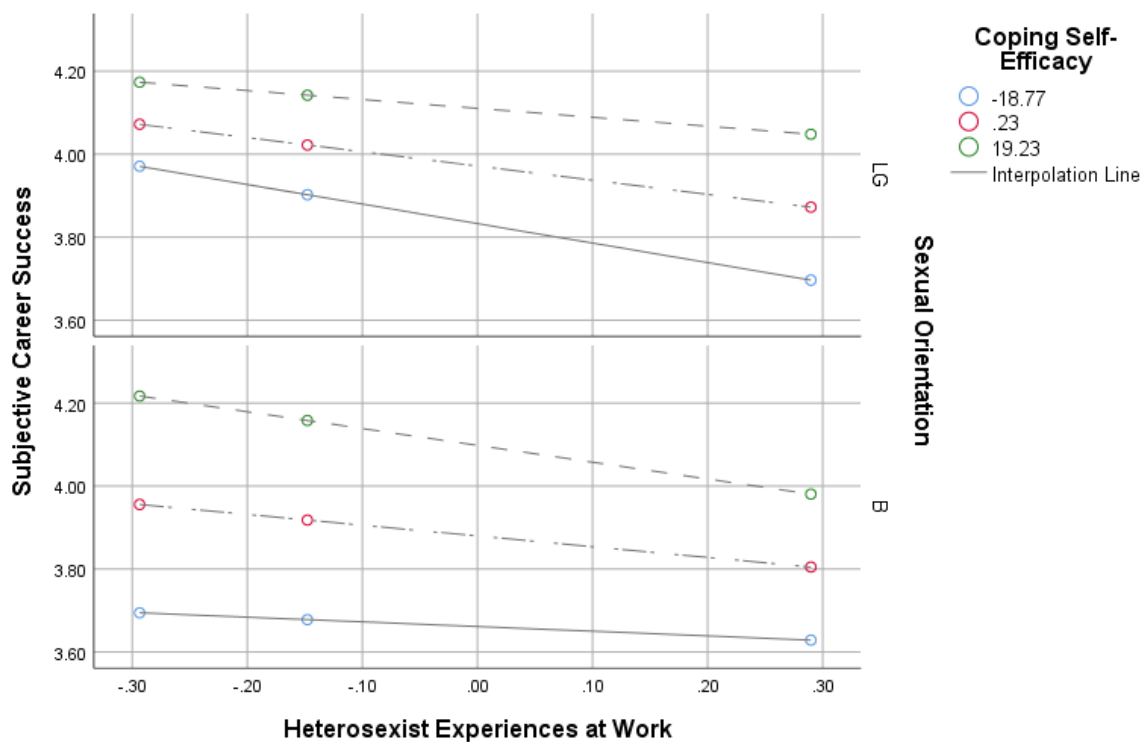


Figure 2. Three-way interaction illustrating coping self-efficacy moderating the relationship between workplace heterosexism and subjective career success, and the moderated relationship differed by sexual orientation.

**Career adaptability.** A test of moderated moderation was conducted to explore if career adaptability moderated the relationship between heterosexist workplace environments and subjective career success and if the moderation differed for lesbian and gay individuals compared to bisexual individuals. The model was significant,  $F(8, 201) = 13.55, p < .001, R^2 = .35$ ; heterosexist experiences at work, career adaptability, and education level were significant predictors. The model indicated that career adaptability did not moderate the relationship between workplace heterosexism and subjective career success, and there was no significant

three-way interaction. Neither Hypothesis 2a nor 2b were supported. Results of the regression analysis are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

*Regression Results for Career Adaptability (N = 210)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Constant	3.62	.09	39.44***	.35
Heterosexist Experiences at Work	-.37	.07	-5.16***	
Sexual Orientation	-.08	.06	-1.50	
HSE x SO	.24	.15	1.66	
Career Adaptability	.38	.05	7.03***	
HSE x CAAS	.06	.13	.50	
SO x CAAS	.00	.11	.04	
HSE x SO x CAAS	-.26	.29	-.91	
Education Level	.12	.04	3.22**	

*Note.* CAAS = Career Adaptability; HSE = Heterosexist Experiences at work; SO = Sexual Orientation.

\*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.

**Connectedness to the LGBT community.** A moderated moderation was conducted to explore if community connection moderated the relationship between heterosexist workplace environments and subjective career success and if the moderated relationship differed for lesbian and gay individuals as compared to bisexual individuals. The model was significant,  $F(8, 201) = 6.58, p < .001, R^2 = .21$ . Education level and workplace heterosexism were significant predictors of variance in subjective career success. There was no significant interaction between heterosexist workplace environments and community connection so Hypothesis 3a was not supported. The three-way interaction of moderated moderation was not significant although it approached significance,  $b = -.06, t(201) = -1.70, p = .09$ . Examination of the three-way interaction suggests that the moderating effect of community connection on the relationship between workplace heterosexism and subjective career success might be stronger for gay and

lesbian individuals, particularly at low levels of community connection. Although this effect was not strong enough to be significant and support Hypothesis 3b, it is suggestive of how the utility of community connection might differ by orientation. Results of the regression analysis are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4  
*Regression Results for Community Connection (N = 210)*

Variable	B	SE	t	R <sup>2</sup>
Constant	6.36	.10	34.98***	.21
Heterosexist Experiences at Work	-.30	.08	-3.62***	
Sexual Orientation	.10	.06	-1.55	
HSE x SO	.22	.17	1.27	
Community Connection	-.01	.01	-.85	
HSE x CC	.01	.02	.67	
SO x CC	-.01	.01	-.42	
HSE x SO x CC	-.06	.03	-1.70	
Education Level	.15	.04	3.58***	

*Note.* CC = Community Connection; HSE = Heterosexist Experiences at work; SO = Sexual Orientation.

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

**Outness at work.** A moderated moderation was conducted to explore if outness at work moderated the relationship between heterosexist workplace environments and subjective career success and if the moderated relationship differed for lesbian and gay individuals when compared to bisexual individuals. The model was significant,  $F(8, 201) = 7.51, p < .001, R^2 = .23$  and educational level, heterosexist workplace environments, and outness at work were significantly related to subjective career success. There was not a significant interaction between heterosexist workplace environments and levels of outness,  $b = .07, t(201) = 1.58, p > .05$  so Hypothesis 4a was not supported. There was a significant interaction between heterosexist workplace environments and sexual orientation,  $b = .38, t(201) = 2.03, p < .05$ , indicating that the negative relationship between heterosexist workplace environments and subjective career

success was stronger for lesbian and gay workers. Although the three-way interaction of moderated moderation was not significant,  $b = -.17$ ,  $t(201) = -1.72$ ,  $p = .09$ , the findings suggest that outness might be a significant buffer of heterosexist workplace environments on subjective career success, but that this buffering effect could be stronger for LG individuals than for bisexual individuals. The effect was not powerful enough to reach significance so Hypothesis 4b was not supported. Results of the regression analysis are displayed in Table 5, the two-way interaction of heterosexist workplace environments and outness at work is shown in Figure 3.

Table 5.  
*Regression Results for Outness at Work (N = 210)*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
Constant	3.58	.10	35.44***	.23
Heterosexist Experiences at work	-.38	.09	-4.12***	
Sexual Orientation	-.02	.07	-.30	
HSE x SO	.38	.19	2.03*	
Outness at Work	.04	.02	2.50*	
HSE x OW	.07	.05	1.58	
SO x OW	-.06	.03	-1.70	
HSE x SO x OW	-.17	.10	-1.72	
Education level	.14	.04	3.22**	

*Note.* OW = Outness at Work; HSE = Heterosexist Experiences at work; SO = Sexual Orientation.

\*  $p < 0.05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .



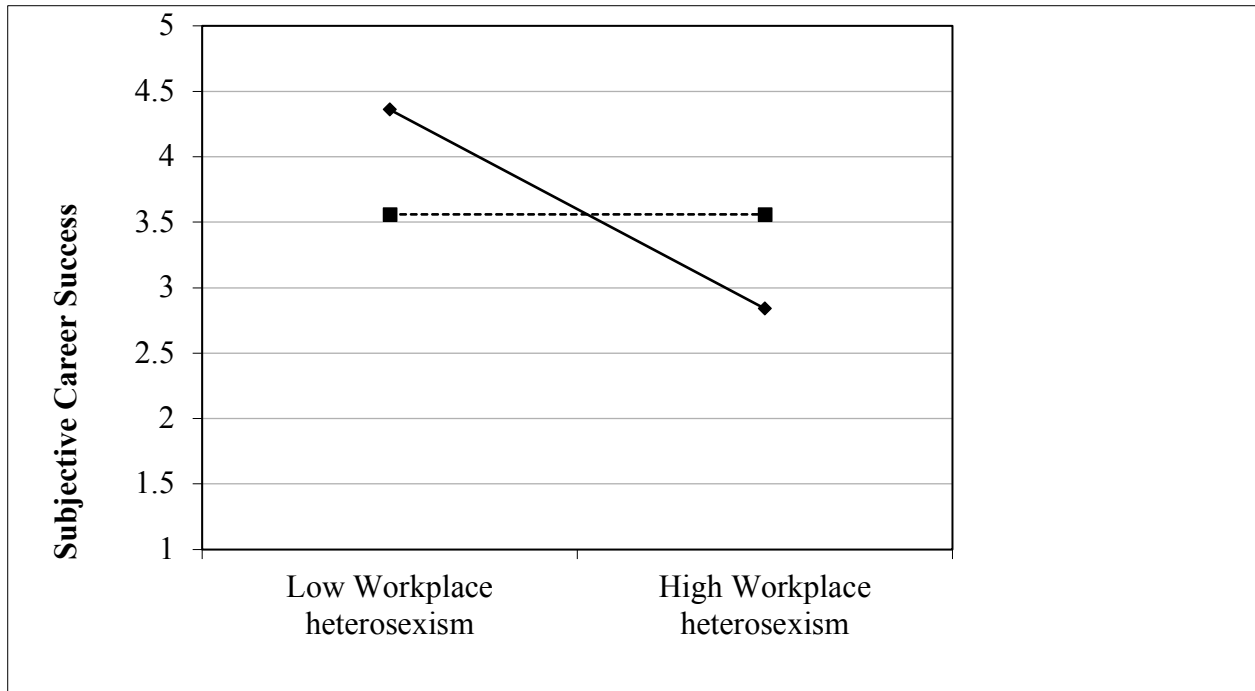


Figure 3. Two-way interaction of heterosexist workplace environments and sexual orientation.

### Discussion

The findings from this study extend the understanding of LGB individual's experiences of heterosexism at work, the impact of heterosexist experiences at work on subjective career success, and the extent to which coping self-efficacy, career adaptability, connectedness to the LGBT community, and outness at work moderate the impact of heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success. Further, this study adds to the understanding of how bisexual individuals differ from GL individuals on all of these dimensions.

Previous literature on the workplace experiences of LGB people has suggested that LGB individuals experience heterosexism in the workplace (Chung, Williams, & Dispenza, 2009; Lyons, Brenner, & Lipman, 2010) and that those adverse experiences at work result in negative work outcomes (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Prati & Pietrantoni, 2014; Waldo, 1999). The data from the present study confirms that when heterosexist experiences at work are high, levels of subjective career success are lower. Given that LGB individuals are commonly subjected to

heterosexist experiences at work and those experiences are shown to negatively impact how LGB people experience their sense of success at work, investigating potential buffers to this interaction is crucial. Although it is often assumed that bisexual individuals experience less heterosexism at work, results indicated that bisexual participants experienced similar levels of heterosexism at work as LG individuals do. Results also confirmed that bisexual individuals were less likely to be out at work than their LG colleagues and showed lower levels of subjective career success.

While the finding that bisexual individuals were less likely to be out at work supported previous studies (Balsam & Mohr, 2007; Legate, Ryan, & Weinstein, 2012), the finding that they were significantly lower in subjective career success is troubling. One possible explanation is that the sample of bisexual individuals ( $N = 124$ ) was predominantly female and it is possible that women might endorse subjective career success differently than men (Herrbach & Mignonac, 2012; Stuges, 1999). However, male and female participants did not differ on the measure of subjective career success. If the experience of lower subjective career success was due to a bisexual orientation rather than gender, then one might expect that bisexual women would endorse lower levels of success than lesbians. A post-hoc analysis indicated no significant difference on subjective career success for bisexual women ( $M = 3.88, SD = .46$ ) and lesbians ( $M = 3.95, SD = .53$ ),  $F(1,137) = .69, p > .05$ . Thus, it is unclear how robust the finding of lower subjective career success for bisexual participants is. Interestingly, the mean for subjective career success for bisexual men ( $M = 3.75, SD = .52$ ) was lower than that for bisexual women although not significantly so,  $F(1,122) = 1.59, p > .05$ .

Results of this study indicated that there was no significant difference between LG individuals and bisexual individuals on the reported levels of heterosexist experiences at work.

Literature suggests that due to biphobia and bi-erasure, bisexual individuals are assumed to experience less heterosexism in general than their LG peers (Israel & Mohr, 2004). Tweedy and Yescavage (2015) found that bisexuals reported high levels of discrimination and heterosexism at work. Therefore, it is both validating and discouraging that bisexual individuals do indeed report similar levels of heterosexism at work. Interestingly, results also showed that bisexual individuals were less out at work than their LG peers. Ragins and Cornwell (2001) posited that outness at work could moderate heterosexist experiences and subjective career success. It is possible that higher levels of identity concealment prevent bisexual individuals from benefiting as greatly from any potential positive effects of being out at work.

The first hypothesis addressed the role of coping self-efficacy. As expected, coping self-efficacy was a significant predictor of higher levels of subjective career success. For hypothesis 1a, coping self-efficacy was not a significant simple moderator of heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success, so the hypothesis was not supported. The moderated moderation showed that coping self-efficacy buffered the negative effect of workplace heterosexism more strongly for gay and lesbian individuals compared to bisexual individuals. This effect was especially evident for LG individuals when coping self-efficacy was low and heterosexist experiences at work were high. In this condition, their subjective career success was much lower than it had been when heterosexist work experiences were low. Conversely, the subjective career success of LG individuals with high coping self-efficacy was relatively unaffected by increases of heterosexist experiences at work, but high coping self-efficacy was not as protective for bisexual individuals. This finding is curious. No directional hypothesis had been specified for coping self-efficacy, primarily because there was nothing to suggest that coping self-efficacy would differ by sexual orientation in its functioning as a buffer against

heterosexism at work. It is possible the finding is an artifact of the lower scores on the subjective career success measure for the bisexual participants, but this requires further study. Higher levels of coping self-efficacy have been found to be related to lower emotional distress and posttraumatic stress disorder, as well as better psychological adjustment and physical health (Benight et al., 2015). Further, Denton, Rotosky and Danner (2014) found that discrimination and expectations of rejection for LGB people were associated with lower coping self-efficacy and physical health symptomology. Because the coping self-efficacy measure assessed participants' beliefs in their ability to cope effectively with stressors and predicted levels of subjective career success, coping self-efficacy appears to be an important aspect of an LGB individual's work experience and overall psychological wellbeing.

Career adaptability was not a significant moderator of the relationship between heterosexism at work and subjective career success, thus, hypothesis 2a was not supported. For hypothesis 2b, no difference was found for career adaptability moderating differently for LG versus bisexual participants. Career adaptability was a significant predictor of higher levels of subjective career success. Because the career adaptability measure assessed participant's ability to change to fit new or altered circumstances and predicted levels of subjective careers success, career adaptability appears to have a positive impact on work and career outcomes. Although Dispenza, Brown, and Chastain (2016) suggested that career adaptability might serve to help LGB individuals cope with their various work stressors, this was not the case with the current sample. Perhaps the characteristics of this sample (relatively well-educated, established in their current positions) decreased the role that career adaptability had in helping negotiate heterosexist experiences at work or career adaptability has a stronger focus on overall career development, but less on adapting to the work context.

Community connection did not buffer the relationship between workplace heterosexism and subjective career success across sexual orientation nor was there a moderating effect that differed by orientation. Interestingly, although the moderated moderation analysis was not strong enough to be statistically significant, it did suggest that the absence of community connection was more detrimental to the subjective career success of LG people than bisexual individuals. Prior research has suggested that bisexual individuals may not feel as connected to the LGBT community as their LG colleagues. In the current study, bisexual participants reported similar levels of connectedness to the LGBT community as LG participants. However, the near-significance of the three-way interaction suggests that continued exploration on the role of community connection for bisexual versus LG individuals is needed.

Outness at work was a significant predictor of subjective career success, but did not function as a buffer between heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success. Hypothesis 4a was not supported. There was, however, an interaction between sexual orientation and heterosexist experiences at work such that the relationship between heterosexist experiences at work and lower career success was stronger for LG individuals than bisexual colleagues. Although the model only approached significance for hypothesis 4b, examination of the 3-way interaction showed that outness came closer to buffering heterosexist workplace environments for LG individuals than for bisexual individuals. We had speculated that, due to combined experiences of bi-phobia and bi-erasure from both straight identified individuals as well as LG individuals, and internalized experiences of minority stress, bisexual individuals would be less likely to be out at work than their LG peers. This was true for bisexual individuals in the current sample. This is significant, as prior research has indicated that outness at work has been positively associated with increased job satisfaction (Valez et al., 2013) and, even when

heterosexism is high, LGB individuals who were out had better mental health than those who are closeted (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Brenner, Lyons, & Fassinger, 2010). It is plausible that increased outness and visibility could be beneficial to LGB people, and specifically for bisexual people since they were less likely to be out to individuals at work.

### **Implications**

A person's career is often an important aspect of identity and levels of success in career are correlated with overall psychological wellness. Given that we know that workplace experiences for LGB individuals are often compromised by heterosexist experiences at work (Badgett, Lau, Sears, & Ho, 2007), being attentive to how we might help clients protect against those experiences could have a positive impact on clients' levels of subjective career success. Further, explicitly acknowledging that bisexual individuals experience heterosexist experiences at work at the same frequency as their LG peers may be an important action for mental health care providers. It may be empowering for bisexual individuals to feel understood and seen, as bisexual individuals often experience bi-erasure and might not benefit from protective factors at the same levels as their LG peers. Assessing all GLB clients' heterosexist experiences at work and being aware of how those experiences influence them is worthwhile. Intentionally focusing counseling to address specific areas that could be most beneficial would have a positive impact on a person's subjective career success. Since coping self-efficacy was found to be a significant buffer between heterosexist experiences at work and subjective career success, especially for lesbian and gay individuals, it stands to reason that working in counseling to improve their coping self-efficacy to address heterosexism at work could help LGB individuals have more positive career outcomes. Further, addressing the implications of being out at work and being connected to the LGBT community might be a factor that would be helpful in reducing the

impact of heterosexist experiences at work. Career adaptability may be another aspect of working with LGB individuals that is worth focusing on in counseling. Even though their roles as moderators were not clear, outness and career adaptability were significant predictors of subjective career success. Working with clients on their readiness to cope with and adjust to unpredictable changes in work and work settings can help clients have planful attitudes, be informed decision-makers, and engage in self-related and environmental explorations regarding their career and career path.

Further, seeing as heterosexist experiences at work contribute to lower levels of subjective career success, it behooves employers to ensure employees have welcoming and affirming workplaces. Mental health professionals can advocate for workplaces to put policies in place to prevent heterosexist experiences from happening in the first place. Discrimination in the workplace is an existing barrier that affects LGB persons, and researchers have suggested that work discrimination has a profound effect on the well-being of this population (i.e., Croteau, 1996; Driscoll, Kelley, & Eassinger, 1996; Elliott, 1993; Fassinger, 1995, 1996; Hetherington, Hildebrand, & Etringer, 1989; Levine & Leonard, 1984; Orzek, 1992; Pope, 1995, 1996; Worthington, McCrary, & Howard, 1998). Workplace discrimination can be in the form of formal discrimination, informal discrimination, or even perceived discrimination (Chung et al., 2009), and counselors can validate LGB individuals' experiences of heterosexist workplace environments and explore various buffers to those experiences. Currently, 21 states prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, 8 states prohibit discrimination against public employees based on sexual orientation and gender identity, and 4 states prohibit discriminations against public employees based on sexual orientation, but not gender identity. (Human Rights Campaign, 2019). Though less than half of states have laws protecting LGBT

individuals, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear three cases in the summer of 2019 regarding whether Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bars employers from discriminating against employees based on sexual orientation and gender expression (de Vogue, 2019). Regardless of the outcomes of these cases, and given the current lack of federal protections for LGB employees, counselors can be involved in social justice advocacy promoting equitable working conditions for LGB people.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Limitations of this study include the demographic homogeneity of the participants and the sampling method. First, most of the participants were White and had obtained advanced degrees. Since data were collected via internet groups and message boards, this data collection approach may tend to attract higher socio-economic status members. Educational level was a significant predictor of subjective career success and higher education often is associated with higher income, both of which might also be related to possessing other resources that allow one to cope with work stressors. Recruitment for this study occurred through LGB internet social media groups and message boards, creating a sample that was already engaged in the LGBT community, at least online. The sample may not be generalizable to broader populations that are not already out or connected to the LGBT community. Individuals who are active on online community social media and message boards may have experiences that differ from those who do not. Additionally, this sample had a disproportionate number of women, especially bisexual women as compared to bisexual men.

Future studies should strive to include a more diverse sample of participants that varies in race, level of education, and outness. Due to intersectionality of race, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation, experiences of bias at work and community connection might be quite



different for LGB people of color or with lower socioeconomic standing. Future studies may also want to consider perceptions of gender conformity, such as the extent to which an individual conforms to gender norms because it is possible that individuals who experience lower levels of gender conformity are subjected to higher levels of heterosexism at work. It may also be beneficial to examine variations within the LGB community based on occupation, workplace culture, and work setting. Lastly, future studies may include more qualitative study of the impact and process of how LGB individuals, especially bisexual individuals, experience heterosexist experiences at work and clarify the impact that various buffers may have on their satisfaction with their careers.

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## APPENDIX A

Participants selected from a list of occupations. They reported the occupation that most closely described their type of work.

Occupation	Frequency	Percent
Management Occupations	20	9.5
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	11	5.2
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	11	5.2
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	4	1.9
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	14	6.7
Community and Social Service Occupations	28	13.3
Legal Occupations	11	5.2
Education, Training and Library Occupations	38	18.1
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	14	6.7
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	17	8.1
Healthcare Support Occupations	4	1.9
Protective Service Occupations	1	.5
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	4	1.9
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	1	.5
Personal Care and Service Occupations	4	1.9
Sales and Related Occupations	12	5.7
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	10	4.8
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	0	0
Construction and Extraction Occupations	0	0
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	2	1.0
Production Occupations	1	.5
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	2	1.0
Military Specific Occupations	1	.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>100</b>