

Differences in Relationship and Sexual Satisfaction and Social Support Between Only Lesbian, Mostly Lesbian, and Bisexual Women

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BACKGROUND

- Relationship and sexual satisfaction and social support are correlated with anxiety, depression, and physical health.^{1,2}
- Differences in relationship and sexual satisfaction and social support have been identified between sexual minority women (SMW; i.e., lesbian and bisexual) and heterosexual women.^{3,4,5}
- Classifying SMW into a single group may mask important differences between subgroups in relationship functioning.⁶

The aim of the present study was to examine differences in relationship and sexual satisfaction and social support between women who identify as only lesbian, mostly lesbian, and bisexual.

METHODS

Participants

- $N = 427$ Partnered SMW
 - Sexual Identity: 46.8% only lesbian; 34.2% mostly lesbian; 19% bisexual
 - Average age = 24.66
 - Racial Identity: 84.8% White; 9.3% Multiracial

Materials

Sexual Satisfaction

- Global Measure of Sexual Satisfaction (GMSEX)⁷
 - Summed sexual satisfaction with a partner across 5 spectrums (e.g., 1=*bad*, 7=*good*; 1=*unsatisfying*, 7=*satisfying*)

Relationship Satisfaction and Social Support

- Gay and Lesbian Relationship Satisfaction Scale (GLRSS)⁸
 - 16-item relationship satisfaction subscale
 - 8-item social support subscale

Analyses

- One-way ANOVAs were conducted for each relationship functioning outcome variable, with planned post-hoc pairwise comparisons across groups.

Relationship and sexual satisfaction and social support are different for subgroups of sexual minority women.

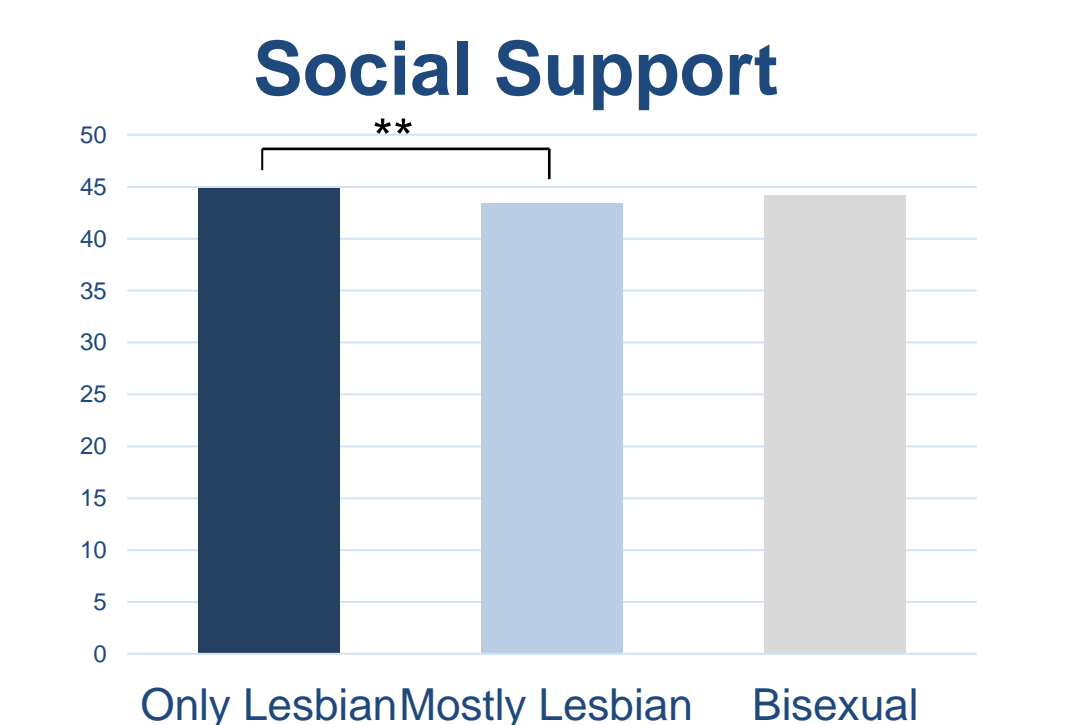
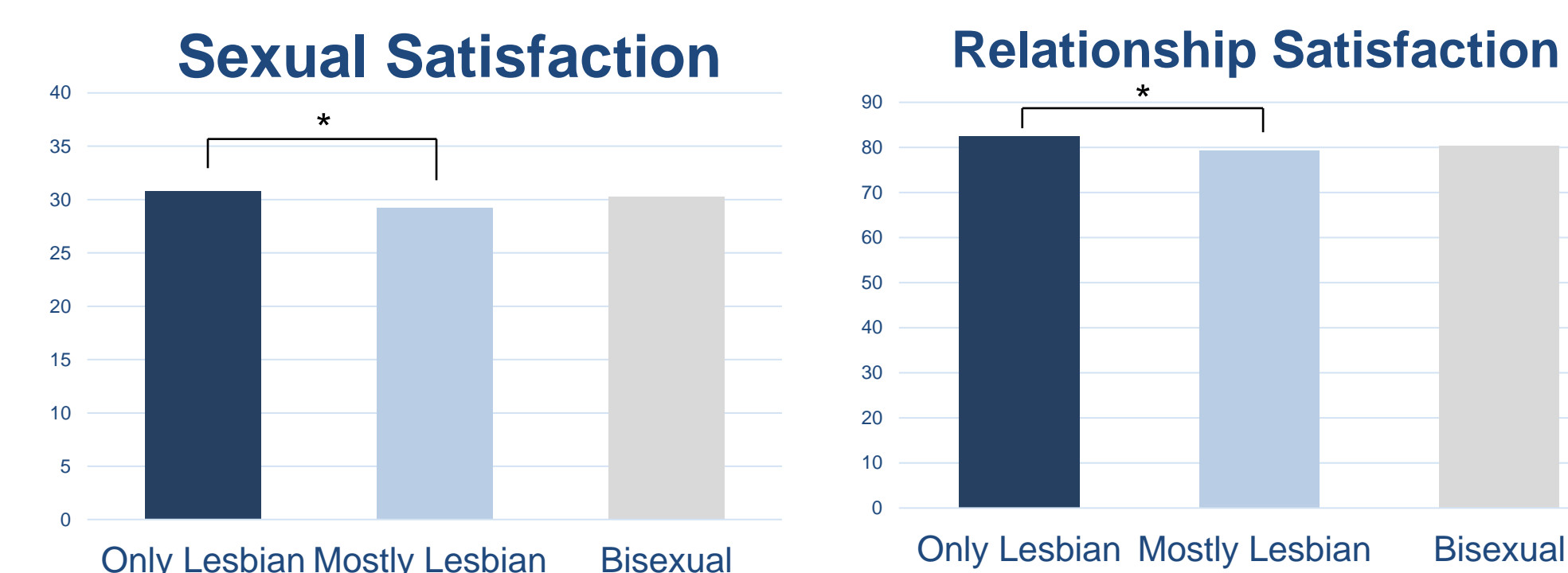


References and contact information



RESULTS

- There were significant differences between groups in relationship satisfaction ($p=.021$), sexual satisfaction ($p=.049$), and social support ($p=.034$)
- Women who identified as only lesbian reported better relationship satisfaction ($p=.007$), sexual satisfaction ($p=.015$), and social support ($p=.010$) than women who identified as mostly lesbian; see figures below.
- There were no differences between bisexual women and women who identified as either only lesbian or mostly lesbian; see figures below.



*Significant at the .05 level **Significant at the .01 level

CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Women who identify as mostly lesbian may experience lower relationship and sexual satisfaction and social support than other sexual minority women
- Collapsing across identities within SMW may mask meaningful subgroup differences
- Future studies are needed to further explore disparities in well-being among subsections of SMW