

Spring 4-20-2011

# Minority Stress and Life Role Saliency among Sexual Minorities

Franco Dispenza  
*Georgia State University*

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## ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, MINORITY STRESS AND LIFE ROLE SALIENCY AMONG SEXUAL MINORITIES, by FRANCO DISPENZA, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department Chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

---

Gregory L. Brack, Ph.D.  
Committee Chair

---

Kenneth B. Matheny, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

---

JoAnna F. White, Ed.D.  
Committee Member

---

Catherine J. Brack, Ph.D.  
Committee Member

---

Date

---

JoAnna F. White, Ed.D.  
Chair, Department of Counseling and Psychological Services

---

R. W. Kamphaus, Ph.D.  
Dean and Distinguished Research Professor  
College of Education

## AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

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Franco Dispenza

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Franco Dispenza  
2124 Cheshire Bridge Road, NE  
Apartment 1010  
Atlanta, GA 30324

The director of this dissertation is:

Dr. Gregory L. Brack  
Department of Counseling and Psychological Services  
College of Education  
Georgia State University  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3083

## CURRICULUM VITA

Franco Dispenza

ADDRESS: 2124 Cheshire Bridge Road, NE  
Apartment 1010  
Atlanta, GA 30324

EDUCATION:

|        |      |   |
|--------|------|---|
| Ph.D.  | 2012 | Georgia State University<br>Counseling Psychology (APA Accredited)                                |
| C.A.S. | 2012 | Georgia State University<br>Quantitative Research   |
| M.S.   | 2006 | University at Albany, State University of New York<br>Rehabilitation Counseling (CORE Accredited) |
| B.A.   | 2005 | University at Albany, State University of New York<br>Psychology and English Literature           |

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 2011-2012 | Pre-Doctoral Psychology Internship (APA Accredited)<br>Georgia Institute of Technology Counseling Center, Atlanta, GA        |
| 2010-2011 | Advanced College Counseling Practicum<br>Georgia Institute of Technology Counseling Center, Atlanta, GA                      |
| 2009-2011 | Coordinator of CPS Undergraduate Courses<br>Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA  |
| 2008-2011 | Balint Facilitator for Family Medicine<br>Department of Graduate Education, Atlanta Medical, Atlanta, GA                     |
| 2008-2011 | Instructor of Counseling/Marriage and Family Therapy Program<br>Community Counseling Program, Argosy University, Atlanta, GA |
| 2007-2011 | Instructor for CPS Department (Undergraduate and Graduate)<br>Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA                          |
| 2009-2010 | Assessment, Testing, and Diagnostic Practicum<br>Rock Bridge Psychological Associates, Lilburn, GA                           |
| 2007-2009 | Psychotherapy and Traumatology Counseling Practicum<br>Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA                                 |
| 2006-2007 | University Residence Hall Director<br>University at Albany, State University of New York, Albany, NY                         |
| 2006-2007 | Counselor (Individual Psychotherapy and Group)<br>Counseling Care and Services, Cohoes, NY                                   |

### PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS:

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 2011 | Student Affiliate of Division 5 (Society of Evaluation,<br>Measurement, and Statistics)                                    |
| 2010 | Student Affiliate of Division 44 (Society for the Psychological<br>Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues) |
| 2008 | Student Affiliate of Division 17 (Counseling Psychology)<br>Counseling Psychology Student Organization, GSU                |
| 2007 | American Psychological Association, Graduate Student Affiliate   |

## PUBLICATIONS:

- Dispenza, F., Watson, L.B., Chung, Y.B., & Brack, G. (In Press). Experience of Career-Related Discrimination for Female-to-Male (FTM) Transgender Persons: A Qualitative Study. *Career Development Quarterly*.
- Chung, Y.-B., Williams, W., Dispenza, F. (2009). Validating Work Discrimination and Coping Strategy Models for Sexual Minorities. *Career Development Quarterly*, 58, 162-170.
- Hughes, S.M., Dispenza, F., & Gallup, G. G., (2004). Ratings of voice attractiveness predict sexual behavior and body configuration. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 25, 295-304.

## PRESENTATIONS:

- Dispenza, F. & Chung, Y.B. (2010, August). *The intersection between transgender identity, childhood/adolescent development, and career development*. Paper presented as part of a symposium during the 118<sup>th</sup> APA Convention, San Diego, CA.
- White, N., Watson, L.B., Dispenza, F., & Matheny, K. (2010, August). *The Relationships Among Coping Resources, Perceived Stress, and Satisfaction with Life: A Comparison of American and Mexican College Students*. Poster presented during the 118<sup>th</sup> APA Convention, San Diego, CA.
- Brack, C.J., Brack, G. L., Blood, R., & Dispenza, F. (2010, August) *Assisting College Counseling Centers to Address Veteran Students' Needs*. Poster presented during the 118<sup>th</sup> APA Convention, San Diego, CA.
- Dispenza, F., Chung, Y.B., Watson, L.B., Smiley, J., & Brack, G.L. (2009, August). *Career Development of Female-to-Male (FTM) Transgender Persons: A Preliminary Analysis*. Poster presented during the 117<sup>th</sup> APA Convention, Toronto, Canada.
- Chung, Y.B., & Dispenza, F. (2008, March). *Using a narrative approach to address contextual factors in career development*. Paper presented as part of a symposium at the 2008 International Counseling Psychology Conference, Chicago, IL.
- Dispenza, F., Ribeiro, D., Page, M.L, Watson, L., White, N., Davis, T. (2008, March). *Attachment Theory and Intimate Partner Violence with the Latino Population*. Presented at the 2008 International Counseling Psychology Conference, Chicago, IL.

## ABSTRACT

### MINORITY STRESS AND LIFE ROLE SALIENCY AMONG SEXUAL MINORITIES

by  
Franco Dispenza

The purpose of this study was to explore how minority stress influenced the career and life-space developmental trajectory (Super, 1980, 1990) with a sample of gay, bisexual, and queer men. Approximately 202 self-identifying sexual minority males were recruited across the United States of America via the internet. The study proposed and tested a model in which dyadic adjustment and career satisfaction mediated the relationship between three specific minority stressors (internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity) and four specific life roles (partner, occupational, homemaker, and parental life roles). A measured variable path analysis (MVPA) was conducted with the following measures: the Internalized Homophobia Scale (Martin & Dean, 1987); Stigma Sensitivity Scale (Mohr & Kendra, 2011); Concealment Motivation Scale (Mohr & Kendra, 2011) Dyadic Adjustment Scale-7 (Sharpley & Rogers, 1984); Career Satisfaction Scale (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990); and the Life Role Saliency Scales (Amatea, Cross, Clark, & Bobby, 1986). Results partially supported the projected hypotheses. The data fit the proposed model well. Internalized homophobia and stigma sensitivity significantly contributed to dyadic adjustment, while dyadic adjustment significantly contributed to partner role saliency. Dyadic adjustment partially mediated the relationship between internalized homophobia and partner role saliency, as internalized homophobia directly contributed to ratings of partner role saliency and parental role saliency. Dyadic adjustment fully

mediated the relationship between stigma sensitivity and partner role saliency. None of the minority stressors significantly contributed to ratings of career satisfaction, nor did career satisfaction mediate the relationship between minority and the life role saliency measures. Implication for practitioners, recommendations for social justice, as well as limitation and directions for future research were provided.



MINORITY STRESS AND LIFE ROLE SALIENCY  
AMONG SEXUAL MINORITIES

by  
Franco Dispenza

A Dissertation  
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the  
Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
in  
Counseling Psychology  
in  
the Department of Counseling and Psychological Services  
in  
the College of Education  
Georgia State University

Gregory L. Brack, Ph.D.  
Advisor and Dissertation Chair

Atlanta, Georgia  
2011

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to extend a sincere appreciation to all of the participants who volunteered to take part in this dissertation. Although your identities will always be anonymous, I hope that your voices are heard, and will forever be heard.

It would not have been possible to complete this dissertation (and all of my graduate training) without the generous personal and academic support I received from a number of individuals. First, I am grateful for my advisor and chair, Dr. Greg Brack. Thank you for your support, generosity, and your willingness to let me grow. Your belief in me has been a significant part of my success, and I cannot thank you enough. Secondly, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my committee members, Dr. Cathy J. Brack, Dr. JoAnna White, and Dr. Kenneth Matheny. Your advice, knowledge, and support are inestimable. Third, I wish to extend my appreciation to Drs. Julie Ancis, Y. Barry Chung, Jeff Ashby, Catharina Chang, Joseph Hill, Arlene Noriega, and Ruperto Perez. Your guidance and care have helped shape me into a counseling psychologist. I can never thank you enough.

To my mother and father, who came to the United States with only fifth grade educations, your unconditional love and encouragement have helped me surpass your hopes and dreams. To my brother, who taught me to read when I was a child, your support throughout my education is irreplaceable. I love you all, always, and a thousand times over.

To my family of choice: Sherman and Sreela Stovall, Laurel B. Watson, Jonathan P. Gaspard, Timothy Jason McFall, Tony Jackson, Azor Allyn, G. Scott Raffield, Stephanie Eberts, Sara Berger, Kim Martin, Marissa Harrison, Susan Hughes, Matthew Brooks, Maggie Walsh, Amanda Wolfe, Rebecca A. C. Blood, Philip Gnilka, Nick White, Douglas Ribeiro, Melinda Paige, Tomina Schwenke, Christina Noble and Ronald Herndon. My life here in Atlanta, Georgia would not have been the same without you.

Lastly, to all my friends, supervisees, students, clinical supervisors, colleagues, and professors living in Atlanta and New York: Thank you!

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CHAPTER ONE  
MINORITY STRESS AND SUPER'S LIFE-SPACE THEORY:  
A FRAMEWORK OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT FOR GAY, LESBIAN, AND  
BISEXUAL PERSONS

Stress experienced for being lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) is theoretically classified as *minority stress* (Meyer, 1995). Considered a form of psychosocial stress, the values of the marginalized individual are in a state of conflict with the values of the dominant culture, which leads to significant life strains and burdens (Meyer, 2003). Sexual minority stress has been associated with significant psychiatric and health morbidities (Hatzenbuehler, 2009), and has also been implicated to affect the developmental life-span (Chen, Androsiglio, & Ng, 2010). Career development is one particular component of the life-span that can be influenced by minority stress, and yet has received varying attention in the literature. The more recent vocational research has focused on coping with discrimination and workplace identity management among sexual minorities (Chung, Williams, & Dispenza, 2009; Lidderdale, Croteau, Anderson, Tovar-Murray, & Davis, 2007), but there has been little advancement with regards to career development theory with LGB persons.

One current career theory that could benefit from the integration of a minority stress conceptualization is Donald E. Super's (1953, 1957, 1980, 1990) Life-Span, Life-Space theory. In particular, the degree to which minority stress may intersect with the

life-space aspect of career development is not well understood in the vocational psychology literature. One of the most socially stigmatized groups in the United States, LGB persons are likely to experience minority stress because of an overall lack of support within the social environment (Szymanski & Chung, 2003). Prejudice toward this group is substantiated by overt bigotry and the acceptance of discrimination by social and government institutions (Fassinger, 2008; Gonsiorek, 1993). The career development trajectory can be influenced by the lack of support and discrimination, thus exposing the various life roles (child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker, spouse, and homemaker) to succumb to the influences of minority stress. If minority stress is a common aspect to career and life-span development, it is likely that one's self-concept (Super, 1990) will also be affected.

To date, the literature has approached the topic of minority stress throughout various segments of sexual minorities life-span development (for a review, refer to Chen et al., 2010) but has yet to fully conceptualize it along the career development life-space trajectory. This is not surprising given that many career counseling texts do not even thoroughly discuss the choice and career development processes of LGB persons (Ritter & Terndrup, 2002). Dunkle (1996) integrated Cass's sexual identity model with Super's Life-Span theory, but did not fully explore the function of life roles for sexual minorities. Although he discussed barriers and stressors that may be encountered throughout the developmental life-span for LGB persons, Dunkle did not take into account the influence that minority stress would have on the career development trajectory.

This paper will review the existing empirical, theoretical, and conceptual literature, and discuss ways that minority stress could potentially influence the career and



life-space development of LGB persons. First, a more thorough explanation of minority stress will be given, with movement towards its integration with life-space (particular emphasis on life roles). Implications for counseling, advocacy, and research then will also be provided.

### **Minority Stress**

Stress often is conceptualized as the mind and body's reaction to a variety of environmental demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984); however stress for sexual minorities can be further exacerbated because of interaction with the *social* environment.

According to Meyer (2003), the underlying assumptions of minority stress include: (a) unique and additive adaptations beyond general stressors and coping resources; (b) stressors that are experienced as chronic in a given social space or setting; and (c) stressors that are related to social processes, institutions, and situations. Meyer further indicated that tension emerges when attempting to manage a sexual minority identity in a heteronormative environment, further rendering minority stress as a form of psychosocial stress.

Minority stress manifests in several different processes: internalized heterosexism, concealment of one's sexual identity, expectation of rejection, and discrimination (Meyer, 1995, 2003). Connolly (2004) highlighted heterosexism as an oppressive force that many LGB persons endure throughout their lifetime, but the pervasive nature of heterosexism also possesses the propensity to be internalized. Initially coined internalized homophobia, there has been a shift to classify the phenomenon as internalized heterosexism (Szymanski & Chung, 2003). Internalized heterosexism not only accounts for the degree that gender has on the oppression of sexual

minorities, but positions prejudice in the broader context of the social, cultural, and political domain (Szymanski, Kashubeck-West, & Meyer, 2008). Research has demonstrated that internalized heterosexism can contribute to difficulties in sexual identity formation, identity management, self-esteem, and reports of psychological distress (Reynolds & Hanjorgiris, 2000; Szymanski et al., 2008).

Anxiety and depleted coping resources also have been implicated as a result of anticipating and experiencing sexual minority stress (Meyer, 2003). One way that members of an invisible stigmatized group go about managing this type of stress, and avoiding prejudice and discrimination associated with one's identity, is to conceal or keep private that aspect of their identity. Sexual orientation is not a visible identity, and sexual minorities often go out of their way to conceal their identity to some degree (Herek, 2007). However, consistently having to conceal one's sexual identity can result in its own unique stress (Smart & Wegner, 2000). Iwasaki and Ristock (2007) were interested in understanding the nature of stress in lesbians and gay men and found that sources of stress included the coming out process, family relations, intimate relationships, work and finances, as well as homophobia and heterosexist attitudes towards lesbians and gay men.

Like other minority groups, sexual minority person encounter a variety of prejudice, discrimination, and stigma related experiences that are unique to them. Not a new concept in the psychological literature, Allport (1958) initially reported a variety of negative responses to experiencing stigma, including feelings of insecurity, anxiety, suspicion, denial from group membership, withdrawal, and aggression towards one's own minority group. Herek, Gillis, and Cogan (1999) specifically coined the term "sexual

stigma,” which is used to “refer broadly to the negative regard, inferior status, and relative powerlessness that society collectively accords anyone associated with nonheterosexual behaviors, identity, relationships or communities” (p. 33).

Sexual stigma occurs because of the heteronormative ideals that are firmly rooted in history, culture, and politics. Ecologically, sexual stigma occurs in a variety of environmental domains (Appleby, 2001). Heterosexism becomes the norm, and is the appropriate identification, when interacting in social structures embedded in religion, community, education, and government. To delineate more explicitly, an individual who does not identify as heterosexual is going to encounter heteronormative messages at home, school, church, public transportation, community businesses, health and human service establishments, and recreational spaces. The list continues, but the underlying message is that environment can serve as a consistent reminder for the potential to be stigmatized, due to a sexual identity that is not heterosexual. Violations of heterosexual normality, or heteronormativity, either leads to direct violence (e.g., physical or sexual assault) against LGB persons, or having to manage consistently the fear and anxiety associated with being a sexual minority (Herek, Gillis, Cogan, & Glunt, 1997; Herek et al., 1999; Meyer, 1995).

### **Minority Stress and Life-space**

Chojnacki and Gelberg (1994) stated that sexual identity formation must be integrated into career counseling theory. One of the core components of career counseling is the importance of the match between the individual and the career of choice. The process of matching occurs mostly through the identification of values, interests, and abilities belonging to the individual occupational environment. However,

Super (1963, 1990) maintained that the implementation of the self also is at the center of career choice. Counseling psychologists operating from Super's theory need to help sexual minority persons integrate both objective and subjective constructions of themselves through the exploration and amalgamation of values, interests, skills, and abilities. This process also must consider the inclusion of sexual identity in the career exploration and decision making processes, as well as the identification of a work environment that one could fulfill his or her self-concept.

Although there are multiple definitions of self-concept, it is often viewed as one's own self portrayal or understanding, along with a composition of constructed meanings regarding the self. Since meaning is not derived from absolute nothingness, Super (1963) contends that the self is one's image in some role, enactment of a role, a situation, or system of relationships. The life-space is integral to the development of the self-concept, especially since the life-space is concerned with the enactment of life roles within particular life theatres (Super, 1990). The life theatre can be the actual location or space in which a role is enacted. For example, one's role as a son or daughter is most likely to be most salient in the home surrounded by one's parents or guardians. The sociological, political, and ecological contexts can set the stage, so to speak, when factoring in life roles, directly influencing one's interaction with his or her family, neighborhood, school, and work environments. This also means that one's life roles can be directly and indirectly compromised when the sociological, political, and ecological environments foster prejudice, discrimination, and hostility.

Yet, how else can minority stress alter life roles, and compromise the life-span and career developmental trajectory for LGB persons? Super's role concept considers

multiple aspects, such as *role choice*, *role performance*, and *role demands*. According to Gouws (1995), role choice, or the decision making process to engage in a role, consists of four different conditions: (1) one can decide whether and how to become involved in a particular role; (2) if already in a role, one can choose to evaluate the importance or saliency of that role; (3) one can determine the degree of negotiation or adjustment one must make in order to fulfill a role; and (4) one has to choose how to enact a particular role. Role choice becomes limited, because minority stressors potentially deprive LGB persons from even having the opportunity to make a choice. For example, perceived and/or actual discrimination may dissuade someone from making decisions regarding education or place of employment. The inability to go to school or to attend work limits someone's role as a student or worker, which further affects one's self-concept. In addition, someone may only have access to poor educational facilities and little to no access to community resources (e.g., healthcare, housing, transportation) due to sexual identity. Not having access to these resources means not having the potential to fulfill a variety of life roles, thus leading to an unfulfilled self-concept. Gouws stated that the power of choice presupposes self-knowledge and knowledge of the particular role. However, if someone is experiencing sexual identity confusion, or managing the stigma of a sexual minority identity by concealment, then LGB persons may not have the opportunity to fully explore and come to know the self.

In addition, minority stress could interfere with role performance, or the actual behavior and enactment associated with the role. Effectiveness often is regarded as the evaluation criterion of role performance, and Gouws (1995) suggested that effectiveness is influenced by one's perceived ability to be valuable in a particular life role. Take the

role of being a partner, or significant other. Civil partnership or same-sex marriage is not available across the United States, and most state governments discriminate against providing the legal recognition needed for same sex couples to legitimize their partnerships (Patterson, 2007). Maintaining a romantic relationship may be further difficult given the lack of same sex coupled role models for LGB persons to aspire or emulate. Support from family of origin also may influence the partner role. Peretz (2001) found that gay male couples who reported greater social support from their family of origins, experienced greater relationship satisfaction than couples without familial support. The inverse could be expected, with less family support contributing to lower perceived value or effectiveness as a partner.

Thoits (1999) suggested that the more saliency one places in their identity, and the more stress that is present to agitate that identity, the more likely one will endure negative consequences to their self-concept. Minority stress may have direct influence on role demands or role conflict. Role conflict is likely to occur if there are excessive time investments in one role over another, or role ambiguity. Perrone, Webb, and Blalock (2005) reported a negative indirect relationship between role demands (or congruence between participation, commitment, and values) and life satisfaction. Another critical feature of role strain is that it could occur when different roles have contradictory values (Gouws, 1995). For example, someone who has an LGB identity, has a same sex partner, and is employed with the United States military may exhibit a significant amount of role conflict given the different value systems. Minority stressors such as concealment, stigma sensitivity, and discrimination may not interfere only with the role and values of being a partner, but also those of a worker and of a citizen.

To further illustrate the potential influence that minority stress may have on various life roles, a more thorough integration of the two frameworks is provided.

### **Minority Stress on the Child and Student Roles**

Super (1957) believed the career development trajectory began as early as three to four years of age, with the primary life roles being someone's child and a student. For LGB youth, the progression through the initial phases of the career development process may be complicated due to difficulties in integrating sexual identity into one's overall self-concept (Belz, 1993). It is probable that minority stress begins as soon as the individual recognizes that their sexuality is not heterosexual, especially if development takes place within the context of stigma and shame (Fassinger, 2000). LGB youth have to deal with coming out to their families, which could lead to a considerable amount of stress and anxiety. LGB youth also have to contend with the fear of parental harassment or rejection and a lack of family support if they reveal their sexual orientation (D'Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2005). LGB youth also have to cope with being ostracized and verbally, physically, or sexually victimized by parents and family members (D'Augelli, Grossman, & Starks, 2006; Pilkington & D'Augelli, 1995), placing a considerable amount of strain in the role of a child.

One of the primary roles played by LGB youth is that of the student role. Performance in school may be affected, especially since the literature has clearly indicated that LGB youth endure a great deal of psychological and behavioral issues when compared to their heterosexual counterparts (Ferguson, Horwood, & Beautrais, 1999). There also is a higher rate of alcohol, tobacco use, and substance use (Russell, Driscoll, & Truong, 2002; Ziyadeh et al., 2007), and Hatzenbuehler (2009) suggests that

minority stress may mediate these problems. However, while LGB youth may be endorsing particular issues within a school environment, it is also clear in the literature that schools present their own set of environmental stressors. LGB youth experience verbal and physical harassment, and this has been linked to decreased academic achievement and college attendance, and increased truancy rates (Kosicow, 2004). Thus, the first phase of career development already may be compromised for LGB youth because of minority stress.

Early aspects of career development among LGB youth also may be affected by sexual identity development. In an effort to further understand the perspective of sexual identity development and career in adolescence, Schmidt and Nilsson (2006) proposed that difficulty with career decisions would be most evident during early youth development for LGB persons. Schmidt and Nilsson found empirical support for what has been termed in the literature as the “bottleneck hypothesis.” The bottleneck hypothesis states that “lesbian, gay, and bisexual adolescents may be coping with the career tasks of their development at a slower pace than individuals who are not negotiating a marginalized sexual identity” (Schmidt & Nilsson, 2006, p. 25). Based on a sample of 102 LGB youth, “higher levels of inner sexual identity conflict and lower levels of social support revealed lower scores on career maturity and higher scores on vocational indecision” (p. 31). Internalized heterosexism was one of the constructs used to measure sexual identity conflict, but it was unclear what unique variance it contributed to career maturity and vocational indecisiveness. At best, these results suggest that minority stress shapes LGB youth’s early career development experiences.



### **Minority Stress on the Worker and Homemaker Roles**

Two important life roles that occur for LGB people during adulthood are the roles of work and homemaker (including partner and parent). Attempting to balance both the roles of the worker and homemaker definitely contributes its own set of stressors (Perrone et al., 2005), but the literature strongly suggests that minority stress may be significantly associated with these roles. With regards to work, the vocational psychology literature has focused recently on disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace, discrimination, and workplace sexual identity management (Lidderdale et al., 2007). Riggins (2004) argued that disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace is one of the most difficult challenges that LGB persons face in the workplace. Part of this difficulty is due to the invisibility of sexual orientation and the attached stigma. Herrschaft and Mills (2002) stated that disclosure of sexual orientation is a challenge because of the greater chance for discrimination. Although western culture places a tremendous amount of importance on the world of work, the world of work is not equally accessed by all groups of people. There exist a myriad of barriers from freely accessing work, and LGB persons continue to endure discrimination in the workplace. LGB persons have been terminated from work, harassed at work for being LGB, turned down for promotions, and have even endured violence for being LGB (Trau & Härtel, 2007).

Further support of minority stress was generated when Trau and Härtel (2007) hypothesized that disclosure would function as a moderator between independent variables such as support, fair treatment, and gay diversity. After testing this hypothesis, Trau and Härtel found that disclosure was not a significant moderator, and that disclosure did not necessarily promote greater support, fair treatment, or diversity. Riggins, Singh,

and Cornwell (2007) also studied disclosure in the workplace, and they found that those who reported more fear of disclosure had less positive job career attitudes, received fewer job promotions, and reported more physical stress-related symptoms than those who reported less fear of disclosure. Waldo (1999) reported that minority stress factors have been associated with lower job satisfaction, increased psychological distress, and more health problems. Griffin (1992) posited four strategies for managing sexual identity in the workplace: passing, covering, implicitly out, and explicitly out, and Lidderdale et al. (2007) averred that workplace sexual identity management is a core issue in understanding the career related experiences of LGB people. Therefore, LGB adults have to contend with minority stressors in their role as a worker.

The other predominant role during the adulthood phase of life-span development is the partner role, or significant other. Connolly (2004) described several stage-related issues for gay couples: partner differences in coming out, differing generational factors, and discrepancies in couple stage development. Drawing from McWhirter and Mattison's model, Connolly described six particular stages that a couple may be in: blending, nesting, maintaining, building, releasing, and renewing. LGB couples may have different presenting issues depending on which stage of their relationship they are in, and minority stress could potentially alter each of these stages. Since sexual minorities bring patterns of managing sex related stigma into their romantic relationships (Mohr & Fassinger, 2006), one's perceptions on how to be an adequate partner or spouse may become skewed by minority stress. Furthermore, research has shown that minority stressors, such as internalized heterosexism, have direct effects on relationship quality

and satisfaction (Frost & Meyer, 2009; Mohr & Daly, 2008). One may disengage from the partner role, altogether if patterns of coping with minority stress are not established.

Factors that increase relationship satisfaction in LGB persons include establishing an honest and open communication style, spending significant amounts of time together, sharing of resources, and offering one another support (Burton, 2001). It is likely that minority stress may decrease the aforementioned factors that contribute to relationships satisfaction. The empirical literature already has reported a decrease in relationship satisfaction as a result of minority stress. Rostosky, Riggle, Gray, and Hatton (2007) described that as lesbian and gay couples interacted with family members, coworkers, and communities, there was a higher chance of experiencing minority stress. Frost and Meyer (2009) indicated that internalized heterosexism was associated with greater relationship problem among LGB persons in relationship, while Mohr and Daly (2008) reported an inverse relationship between internalized heterosexism and relationship quality. Otis, Rostosky, Riggle, and Hamrin (2006) found very similar results, in which internalized heterosexism and discrimination predicted lower ratings of relationship quality.

Minority stress also has been implicated with parenting, but there is much less research in this area. Gender may influence parenting, along with minority stress, as the extant literature has found some differences between gay men and lesbian women. Szymanski et al. (2008) cited Sbardone's (1993) study as having found that gay men with lower levels of internalized heterosexism were more likely to want to raise children. A different study found that internalized heterosexism was not related to the choice to be a

parent among lesbian women (Bos, van Balen, van den Boom, & Sandfort, 2004). More research is needed in this area.

### **Minority Stress on the Leisurite and Citizen Roles**

As adults transition into older adulthood, the citizen and leisurite life roles will continue to influence the life-space. According to Super's (1990) Life-Career Rainbow, the roles of leisurite and citizen are expected to become more salient as one passes the age of 65, although they have been present the entire life-span. Past the age of 65, many (not all) individuals consider disengaging from work, and potentially retiring out of the work force. As this occurs, there is evidence to suggest that older LGB persons expand their social roles and take on positions in parenting, teaching, and community agencies (Grossman, 2008). According to Super, the role of homemaker also becomes more salient as one gets older, because of transitioning into the role of grandparent.

Older LGB persons have to cope with not only the stigmatization of belonging to a minority sexual status, but they also have to contend with ageism (Chen et al., 2010). Grossman, D'Augelli, and O'Connell (2001) studied health related factors of LGB person between the ages of 60 to 91 living across North America. They found that ratings of loneliness were high in the sample, and that internalized heterosexism and suicidal ideation was higher among men than women. There also is some cross-cultural validity to this phenomenon, as one study conducted in the Netherlands found that internalized heterosexism, concealment of one's identity, stress, and expectations of stress also contributed to ratings of loneliness among older LGB adults (Kuyper & Fokkema, 2009).

Schope (2005) conducted a study and found that gay men, when compared to lesbian respondents, indicated more negative views of how gay society views growing

older. Schope found that gay men were more ageist, placed more importance on physical attractiveness, and placed greater emphasis on being perceived more negatively. It is evident that self-esteem may be playing a role, and it is possible that minority stress may be informing one's self esteem. In addition, older gay and bisexual men tend to be stereotyped as being lonely, sexless, or sexually inappropriate (Berger, 1996). Race also has been implicated to affect the roles of ageism and perceptions of homonegativity. David and Knight (2008) reported that Black gay and bisexual men were more likely to experience the roles of ageism than their White counterparts. They also mentioned that older Black gay men were likely to report more homonegativity than younger black gay men and White men.

Lastly, some research has looked at retirement facilities for aging LGB persons. Johnson, Jackson, Arnette, & Koffman (2005) surveyed over one hundred LGB older adults and found that they perceived retirement facilities as a source of discrimination. This further indicates that minority stress is an issue that continues to influence the later portion of the developmental life-span and could permeate the life-space of older LGB adults. However, in the context of minority stress and career development trajectory, not much is known about this population. Given the pervasive nature of minority stress, and its correlates with physical and mental health, interpersonal relationships, and overall quality of life, it could be speculated that the citizen and leisurite life roles also are seriously shaped by minority stress.

### **Implications for Training, Counseling, and Social Justice**

Given that a career can be a lifelong developmental process (Super, 1980, 1990), it is apparent that the self-concept is always in a state of reconstruction. Minority stress

has the capability to influence an LGB person throughout the life-span (Chen et al., 2010), and thus one's self-concept. Therefore counseling, interventions, and attempts at social justice must be situated within the developmental context. Educational programs for counseling psychologists should continue to address components related to career counseling, life-span development, human sexuality, social justice, and multiculturalism. To supplement training, one should seek out specialized focus groups, school and community outreach presentations, and visit with local gay and feminist book stores in order to better increase their knowledge around LGB and gender issues.

### **LGB Youth**

Given that the student role will be one of the more salient life roles in development, and the school environment the more salient of life theatres or space, there are considerable implications for school based counseling and intervention with LGB youth. School counselors, social workers, and psychologists possess the knowledge and skill sets that should allow them to be the primary responders if needed to help facilitate the coming out process for students. They also possess the capability to educate and counsel the larger school community with regards to sexual identity development. It also is encouraged that school counselors, social workers, and psychologists educate LGB youth about minority stress and issues that may occur as a result of sexual identity development. They could provide psychoeducation around minority stress, and utilize age appropriate language based on their assessment of developmental maturity.

Traditional career testing, occupational information exploration, and self-exploration methods should be continued with LGB youth (Sharf, 2002). However, it is encouraged that innovative career related interventions also be explored with LGB youth.

This author believes that possibly infusing career development theory with play, sand tray, and art therapy may prove effective with younger LGB youth and adolescents. In addition, using gay straight alliance (GSA) advisors to help advocate in the context of career also may be helpful. GSA advisors could encourage community involvement (e.g., big brother/big sister program, visiting colleges, establishing mentors) with LGB youth and adolescents, and ensure strong relationships between schools and LGB community youth clubs.

### **LGB Adults**

Along with sexual identity development, discrimination and minority stress also should be evaluated during assessment and counseling. Perceptions and experiences of discrimination, such as particular environments and individuals, should be explored. Discrimination in the workplace is multifaceted, and Chung (2001) proposed a three dimensional model of work discrimination that consists of (a) formal versus informal acts of discrimination, (b) perceived versus real discriminatory episodes, and (c) potential versus encountered experiences. Chung also proposed a model of coping based on workplace discrimination. A validation study of the discrimination and coping model found that sexual minorities utilized a variety of coping responses, such as the use of social supports and confronting offenders (Chung et al., 2009). Enhancing coping strategies and support may prove helpful and should be integrated in the contexts of career counseling and intervention. In addition, counseling psychologists are encouraged to advocate and help facilitate affirmative practices in business organizations and places of work, either by directly educating, or by closely informing or consulting with human resources.

Working with LGB couples in the context of career requires counselors to examine LGB couples in relation to the work-family interface. Schultheiss (1999) asserts that work and family issues are not distinct and should be viewed in conjunction with one another. This requires the integration of career and couples counseling modalities, which further strengthens the validity of Super's approach to career and life-span development. Perrone (2005) highlighted the importance of communication and decision making strategies in same sex couples and helping couples communicate how they will navigate their sexual orientation identities through a variety of personal and work-related environments. This may have further implications for lesbian, gay, and bisexual couples who have children, and also need to communicate with other members of their families as to how to navigate minority stress and discrimination.

Other factors that may contribute to both career and relationship satisfaction among lesbian and gay couples are having role models, community, and family support (Perrone, 2005). Belonging to the LGB community may further help individuals increase their level of satisfaction in work and in their relationship, especially since belonging to an LGB community is associated with the adoption of more positive attitudes regarding a sexual minority identity (Haldeman, 2007; Firestein, 2007). Carrington (1999) interviewed same sex, dual career families and found that individuals who worked primarily with gay and lesbian communities reported greater "ease" at both work and family. Carrington also reported that those who did not work within the LGBT community reported an increased likelihood of hiding their sexual identity, while fearing discrimination. Awareness of these issues should be raised within counseling as well as within LGB communities. Raising awareness would help foster a sense of



encouragement and empowerment, while advocating for the civil treatment of same sex persons.

### **LGB Older Adults**

Developmentally, older adults are expected to engage in retirement, but that may not always be true. In some cases, LGB older adults may decide to re-engage in the workforce, therefore counselors should continue to explore the intersection of minority stress, occupational choice, and work adjustment. Should someone desire to disengage from work, counselors should explore issues regarding retirement, such as leisure activities, health care, finances, caretaking plans, and other relevant support systems. Careful consideration should also be paid to locating affirmative retirement homes and assisted living facilities for LGB older adults. Given the potential for loneliness (Grossman et al., 2001; Kuyper & Fokkema, 2009), counselors are encouraged to help older adults identify and engage with social support networks.

Encouraging other social and avocational activities also may be beneficial with older adults. An interesting role includes mentorship or volunteerism with younger LGB youth, particularly if mentorship involves trans-generational education with younger groups. Kertzner, Meyer, Frost, and Stirratt (2009) found that 18-29 year old LGB persons reported lower levels of social well-being, when compared to other age cohorts. This suggests that young LGB adults do not achieve a measure of social fit comparable to older LGB persons, but that older LGB adults could be a resource in helping to facilitate more social fit and adjustment.

### **Implications for Future Research**

Future quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method research should continue to examine the influence of minority stress on the career trajectory, while attempting to validate current theories of career development with LGB persons. An area that may be helpful is to explore how LGB youth perceive minority stress as part of their development, and how they believe minority stressors might coincide with their life's ambitions (i.e., education, career, family). The same also should be considered with regards to older LGB adults, and their perceptions of minority stress when disengaging from work or entering retirement.

Counseling psychologists are encouraged to continue evaluating career counseling. There has not been much in the way of counseling outcome studies, and more is needed in order to assess the efficacy of career and life plan counseling with LGB youth, adults, and older adults. Program evaluation also is necessary in this area. For example, specialized career interventions or outreach programs in schools and colleges should be evaluated for their effectiveness in the reduction of minority stress and facilitating more optimal career exploration and placement. Lastly, it is recommended that the effectiveness of advocacy efforts be assessed. One area of needed exploration is in the area of workplace organizational policy changes for LGB persons and its influence on the social perceptions of LGB rights and social justice.

### **Conclusions**

Internalized heterosexism, identity concealment, discrimination, and sensitivity to stigma are some specific forms of minority stress that LGB persons endure in the United States. The vocational, counseling, sociological, and psychological literature support the

notion that minority stress could directly shape the life roles and life-space components of Super's (1980, 1990) theory of career development. The research discussed in this paper suggests that there exists a life-long developmental process of experiencing minority stress, and that it could affect the quality of life, satisfaction, and happiness of LGB persons. Therefore, it makes sense that counseling psychologists incorporate minority stress theory into their interventions and advocacy efforts when working with LGB persons.

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CHAPTER TWO  
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MINORITY STRESS, DYADIC ADJUSTMENT,  
CAREER SATISFACTION, AND LIFE ROLE SALIENCY AMONG GAY,  
BISEXUAL, AND QUEER MEN

Donald E. Super (1980) defined career as the “combination and sequence of roles played by a person during the course of a life-time” (p. 282), while emphasizing the interaction of life roles in order to implement one’s self-concept. Niles and Harris-Bowlsbey (2005) further conceptualized career as a series of patterns, decision making styles, value expression, and the integration of life roles. Given the emphasis on life roles, value’s expression, and self-concept, this definition of career incorporates aspects of the *personal life*. One’s personal life and career cannot necessarily be separated, and therefore matters of the personal life must be considered in the career development process. Sexual orientation is one particular aspect of the personal life worth examining. Within the past twenty years, the vocational psychology literature has witnessed a steady increase in the amount of attention given to the career development of sexual minorities (see Lidderdale, Croteau, Anderson, Tovar-Murray, & Davis, 2007); however there is still much to be explored. An aspect of career development that is in need of further exploration is how sexual minorities navigate the life-space component of Super’s (1953, 1957, 1990) career theory.

Career development is a broadly defined concept. However, Donald E. Super believed that vocational development and career related choices were formed in the context of life roles (Super, 1980; Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996). Life roles have the potential to interact in such dynamic ways. A particular job may command different meanings for two different people. Super (1990) postulated several relationships among the various roles one plays in his/her life (i.e., homemaker, worker, citizen, leisurite, student, child), the influence they have on career, and the importance of life roles when implementing one's self-concept. In his seminal work, Super (1953) stated that work,

is a way of life, and that adequate vocational and personal adjustment are most likely to result when both the nature of the work itself and the way of life that goes with this (the kind of community, home, leisure-time activities, friends, etc.) are congenial to the aptitudes, interests, and values of the person in question (p. 189).

The values, expectations, and level of investment that one assigns to the various life roles is known as *role saliency* (Super, 1990). Since there are a variety of life roles, and differing degrees of saliency for each role, one can endure different amounts of stress when attempting to balance the various life roles (Perrone, Webb, & Blalock, 2005). Previous research has shown that conflict within these roles can affect one's well-being and life satisfaction (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001). Two particular roles produce significant levels of stress are the worker and spouse, or partner, roles (Barnett & Gareis, 2000). Perrone et al. (2005) inferred that "satisfaction in individual life roles, specifically marriage and work roles is crucial to overall life satisfaction" (p. 237). The relationship between the worker and partner roles (also considered part of the work-family interface) has been examined in the vocational psychology literature, but has primarily focused on heterosexual persons (Betz, 2005; Gysbers, Heppner, & Johnston, 2003; Perrone 2005).



In a time where gays and lesbians have no constitutional right to legal partnerships (Fassinger, 2008), it is important to understand the work-family interface for sexual minorities. Although some would state that the political climate is becoming more accepting of sexual minorities, most sexual minority individuals do not live in jurisdictions that provide any form of legal recognition for same sex relationships, or even adopted families (Patterson, 2007). In addition to the discrimination that same-sex couples face, sexual minorities are presented with many prejudices in the world of work (Smith & Ingram, 2004). Thus, lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) persons are left marginalized and oppressed in various life domains. Despite the experienced adversities, LGB persons continue to have careers, romantic relationships, families, and homes, but the association among these domains are not well understood in the context of Super's (1980, 1990) life-space.

Due to the paucity of information in the current literature, the purpose of this study is to further explore the relationship between being in a same-sex romantic relationship and one's career development and life-space experiences. Trau and Härtel (2007) reviewed the literature regarding contextual issues facing gay men in the workplace, and they asserted that most of the published research that examined sexual identity and career development focused on lesbian women and not gay men. It is assumed that gay men encounter fewer problems or issues in the workplace, because they are the dominant gender; however this assumption is questionable given other research that report career related issues with gay men. The proposed study will concentrate on the experiences of gay, bisexual, and queer males, balancing a romantic relationship while simultaneously involved in a career. Adult men also are being exclusively studied, since

adult women may have other unique factors that need to be explored as part of the career development process (Sharf, 2002). The agenda of this research is to test further the validity of Super's (1980, 1990) Life Space theory, with particular emphasis on better understanding life roles

### **Sexual Minority Men, Their Romantic Relationships and Careers**

Same sex couples steer a similar life course as many heterosexual couples (Badgett, 2008), and must navigate issues of work, sexuality, power, and social networks (Patterson, 2007). However, gay male couples differ from heterosexual couples in that they have to contend with the lack of civil and legal recognition of same sex relationship, have fewer gay coupled role models, and are shaped by socialization processes that prohibit men against forming emotionally intimate relationships with other men (Tunnell & Greenan, 2004). To date, there have been very few studies that have attempted to understand the career development of gay men in same sex relationships. Two influential studies have been dissertations, but neither study has been published at this time.

In the first study, Hodnett (1991) examined the correlates of relationship satisfaction in dual career gay male couples, and looked at both personal and relational factors that contributed to relationship satisfaction. Through a series of stepwise multiple regressions, he found that intimacy, self-esteem, and dyadic attachment were the best personal factors that contributed to 54% of the variance in relationship satisfaction. Relational factors that contributed to relationship satisfaction were combined couple income, differences on intimacy, personal autonomy, and partner versus role conflict. These variables accounted for approximately 19% of the variance. Hodnett explored very important factors in relationship satisfaction, but did not directly test factors that

contributed to career satisfaction. He only studied personal and relational factors among dual career earning gay men. In addition, he made no comparison to straight men in heterosexual relationships, although the literature has extensively examined straight men in dual career families (see Gilbert, 1985).

In a later dissertation study, Manley (2006) was more interested in the integration of the work lives of gay men and their significant romantic relationships. He specifically focused on how career variables influenced both career and relationship satisfaction. Utilizing a series of multiple regressions, Manley found that discrimination was a significant predictive factor of job satisfaction. Consistent with the Hodnett's (1991) study, Manley found that income and relationship attachment were the most significant predictors of relationship satisfaction. In attempting to further understand the relationship, he utilized career satisfaction as a predictor of relationship satisfaction; however career satisfaction did not significantly contribute to relationship satisfaction. Although he found that some of his variables significantly contributed to the model, there are several issues. The first issue is that the use of career satisfaction as a predictor of relationship satisfaction did not adequately tap into Super's initial theoretical proposition of role saliency. Secondly, only 13% of the variance was explained by the predictors. If an association between career and romantic relationships is theoretically plausible, and suggested by the proposed model by Manley, what else might account for 87% of the variance? There may be other predictive factors that contribute to the interaction between career and relationship satisfaction that is specific to male same-sex couples.

In a conceptual piece examining the work-family interface for same sex, dual-earning couples, Perrone (2005) highlighted that the current economic trends and

sociopolitical issues facing lesbian and gay couples might increase difficulty in the workplace. She stated that lesbian and gay individuals may experience more financial difficulties and continue to be strained by the discrimination due to the lack of support in the work environment. Perrone also mentioned factors that may contribute to satisfaction in both career and relationship among lesbian and gay couples are having role models, community, and family support. It is possible that belonging to the gay community may help individuals increase their level of satisfaction in work and in their relationship. Carrington (1999) interviewed same sex, dual career family and found that individuals who worked primarily with gay and lesbian communities reported greater ease at both work and family. Carrington also reported that those who did not work with LGBT community reported the increased likelihood of hiding their sexual identity, while fearing discrimination.

O’Ryan and McFarland (2010) published a qualitative study that utilized phenomenological theory and analysis to explore the experiences of dual-career lesbian and gay couples. They attempted to explore the intersection between sexual orientation and being in a dual career relationship. The three major themes that emerged from their analysis included planfulness, creating positive social networks, and shifting from marginalization to consolidation and integration. These three themes also included elements of coping and stress. Lesbian and gay couples also were adjusting and learning ways of navigating oppression and stress around sexual orientation and career, while simultaneously involved in a relationship. The stress and oppression endured by LGB persons is commonly referred in the literature as *minority stress* (Meyer, 1995, 2003), a

pervasive phenomenon that has profound effects on the quality of life for many sexual minorities.

### **Minority stress**

Minority stress for LGB persons is conceptualized as the accumulation of discrimination, expectation or anxiety of rejection (also known as stigma sensitivity), concealment of sexual identity, and internalized homophobia (Meyer, 1995, 2003). An oppressive force that sexual minorities endure on a daily and consistent basis (Connolly, 2004), homophobia is often legitimized by discriminating sexual minorities on both state and federal institutional levels (Bigner, 2000). Homophobia also is the belief that a same-sex relationship is inferior to an opposite-sex relationship, and this is most notable in the lack of representation of same-sex couples in popular culture, media, and communities. The pervasive nature of homophobia has strong and negative consequences for sexual minorities. It can be internalized, and foster the development of self-hatred among those who identify as LGB. However, it is not the sheer presence of homophobia, but the social stigmatization of belonging to a minority group that leads to its internalization.

Stigma is not a new concept in the psychological literature, but has been present since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Allport (1958) reported a variety of negative responses to stigmatization, including feelings of insecurity, anxiety, suspicion, denial from group membership, withdrawal, and aggression towards one's own minority group. Herek, Gillis, and Cogan (1999) specifically coined the term *sexual stigma*, which is used to "refer broadly to the negative regard, inferior status, and relative powerlessness that society collectively accords anyone associated with nonheterosexual behaviors, identity, relationships or communities" (p. 33). Stigma can lead to the internalization of

homophobia, and internalized homophobia can contribute to difficulties in sexual identity formation and management (Reynolds & Hanjorgiris, 2000), as well as the coming out process (Cabaj & Klinger, 1996).

Anxiety, stress, and depleted coping resources, have been implicated as a result of anticipating stigma and oppression over one's sexual orientation (Meyer, 2003). Meyer's (1995) framework of minority stress in gay men explains that "stigma, prejudice, and discrimination create a hostile and stressful social environment that causes mental health problems" (p. 674). One way that members of an invisible stigmatized group go about managing this type of stress, and avoid prejudice and discrimination associated with one's identity, is to conceal or keep private that aspect of their identity (Goffman, 1963). However, consistently having to conceal one's sexual identity can result in its own stress (Smart & Wegner, 2000). Iwasaki and Ristock (2007) were interested in understanding the nature of stress in lesbians and gay men and found that sources of stress included the coming out process, family relations, and dealing with homophobic and heterosexist attitudes. Being parents, maintaining romantic relationships, and managing employment also contribute to stress (Chung, 2001; Connolly, 2004). But what is the relationship between minority stress, career, romantic relationships, and life roles among gay, bisexual, and queer men?

### **Minority Stress, Career Development, and the World of Work**

Sexual minority males (as well as lesbian/bisexual women and transgender persons) have to deal with unique issues when navigating their career development trajectory and the world of work. Dunkle (1996) integrated gay and lesbian identity development according to Super's (1990) Life-Span approach, and asserted that "an

appropriate and satisfying career is one in which an individual has thoroughly explored the self and has identified a career and work environment into which he or she can infuse his and her self-concept” (p. 151). For gay, bisexual, and queer men, the progression through the career development process may be complicated due to the difficulties in integrating their sexual identity into their overall self-concept (Belz, 1993).

In a sample of lesbian women, internalized homophobia was found to impact the career trajectory, negatively impact self-esteem, and confidence, while increasing the likelihood of concealing one’s sexual identity (Boatwright, Gilbert, Forrest, & Ketzenberger, 1996). In another study that sampled lesbians, internalized heterosexism also was considered a barrier to the career trajectory of lesbians (House, 2004).

Szymanski, Kashubek-West, and Meyer (2008) reviewed the literature on the effects that internalized heterosexism would have on the career development of LGB persons, but found that the already scant literature focused more exclusively on lesbians. Szymanski et al. actually called for the need for more research on the influence that internalized homophobia has on the career development trajectory of sexual minorities. Although western culture places a tremendous amount of importance on work, the world of work is not equally accessed by all groups of people. There exist a myriad of barriers from freely accessing the world of work, and LGB persons continue to endure discrimination in the workplace. LGB persons have been terminated from work, harassed at work for being LGB, turned down for promotions, and have even endured violence for being LGB (Trau & Härtel, 2007).

Bluestein (2006) commented on the barriers that LGB people endure and reported that LGB persons often have to “learn to live two types of lives, one within an accepting

community of peers and loved ones and a second within a workplace that may be homophobic or even physically threatening” (p. 187). Discrimination in the workplace is a pervasive issue, and Croteau (1996) reported that 25-66% of gay respondents indicated experiencing some form of discrimination in the workplace. LGB persons also endure a great deal of health and psychological health issues as a result of discrimination in the workplace, such as depression, anxiety, and other stress related issues (Croteau, 1996). According to Fassinger (2008), LGBT persons can be fired in 31 states on the basis of sexual orientation and in 39 states can be fired on the basis of gender identity and expression. Furthermore, in a review of the literature, Fassinger reported that there exist wage disparities between LGBT and heterosexual persons, with gay men presenting more of the disparity than lesbian women. In addition, LGBT persons do not have access to the same benefit packages (health insurance, family medical leave, federal tax leave, immigration allowances).

Unfortunately, we live in a society in which LGB persons need to manage their identity in the workplace, and that also results in concealing identity. Lidderdale et al. (2007) averred that workplace sexual identity management is a core issue in understanding the career related experiences of LGB people. The literature most often cites Griffin’s (1992) qualitative study on identity management, which posits four strategies for managing sexual identity in the workplace: passing, covering, implicitly out, and explicitly out. These strategies reinforce the utilization of concealment as a coping strategy, and further attest to the level of anxiety and stress that one may endure as they navigate whether or not to be out at work.



The vocational psychology literature also points to disclosure as a source anxiety for sexual minorities. Ragins (2004) argued that disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace is one of the most difficult challenges that LGB persons face in the workplace. Part of this difficulty is due to the invisibility of sexual orientation, the attached stigma, and the greater fear of discrimination (Herrschafft & Mills, 2002). With regards to actual disclosure at work, Huebner and Davis (2005) reported that disclosing sexual orientation at work was associated with higher workday levels of salivary cortisol and more reports of negative affect. In that same study, Huebner and Davis did not find any significant correlation between disclosure and job satisfaction. In another study, Ragins, Singh, and Cornwell (2007) paradoxically challenged the notion that disclosure would lead to positive outcomes in the workplace, and found that those who reported more fear of disclosure had less positive job career attitudes, received fewer job promotions, and reported more physical stress-related symptoms than those who reported less fear of disclosure. Thus, it appears that disclosure is metaphorically functioning as a double-edge sword. Disclosure may not decrease stress, but fear of disclosure also leads to negative consequences. Concealing one's identity as a means of managing sexual stigma is very much within the realm of career development for LGB persons.

### **Minority Stress, Romantic Relationships, and Parenting**

Research has examined the association between sexual minority stress and relationship quality in gay couples. There is even some data on the impact that minority stress has on parenting. Often times gay couples need to communicate with one another if it is acceptable to disclose their identity, and if doing so, they must consider if it is safe to disclose their relationship status in social, familial, and professional arenas (Connolly,

2004; Rostosky, Riggle, Gray, & Hatton, 2007). Mohr and Fassinger (2006) asserted that “LGB individuals bring patterns of managing a stigmatized identity to their relationships while simultaneously developing patterns of managing a stigmatized relationship with their romantic partners” (p. 1086). This means that sexual orientation acceptance and internalized homophobia are two other factors that could contribute to the quality of gay male relationships. Frost and Meyer (2009) revealed that internalized homophobia was associated with greater relationship problems in gay couples. However, the literature does not just state that this is a phenomenon that occurs in the United States. Elizur and Mintzer (2003) found that in a group of Israeli gay men that personal sexual orientation acceptance was positively associated with perceptions of relationship quality.

Concealment also has been implicated with relationship quality, and, according to Foster and Campbell (2005), the energy associated with hiding one’s sexual orientation and one’s relationship status may increase levels of stress and thus impact relationship quality. Concealing a relationship also may produce some anxiety about the relationship and decrease levels of relationship satisfaction (Jordan & Deluty, 2000). Green and Mitchell (2002) stated that internalized homophobia might affect relationship functioning and increase levels of depression, interpersonal withdrawal, and inhibited sexuality. Mohr and Daly (2008) reported that empirical research has yielded mixed results when attempting to understand the interaction between concealment and relationship quality.

Little information exists with regards to the interaction between minority stress and parenting, especially among gay, bisexual, and queer men. Szymanski et al. (2008) cited that Sbardone’s (1993) study found that gay fathers displayed lower levels of internalized homophobia than gay men who were not fathers. A similar pattern also was

found with regards to the desire of wanting to raise a child, further implicating the role that internalized homophobia has on the desire to be a parent. Szymanski et al. also summarized research that internalized homophobia was not related to parental stress among lesbians, but that lesbians with higher ratings of internalized homophobia felt the need to have to justify the quality of their parenting decisions.

Overcoming overt discrimination is another stressor to which sexual minorities have to respond when it comes to parenting. Adoption has been the main venue which gay couples have utilized in order to have children and raise a family. Some states provide legal provisions to make adoption possible; however, in other states, nonheterosexual adults are prohibited from adopting (Patterson, 2007). It is apparent that the social environment continues to contribute to sexual stigma, and the association between minority stress and parenting still are not entirely clear. Goldberg, Kinkler, and Hines (2011) found a negative relationship between sexual minority identity and perceptions of adoption stigma. More specifically, Goldberg et al. reported that gay and lesbian couples had fewer perceptions of stigma around adoption than heterosexual couples. It is possible that the ability to manage particular levels of sexual minority stress actually may help manage the stigma related to being an adoptive parent rather than hinder it. Future research would have to examine if this is actually the case.

### **Summary of the Literature Review**

Life role saliency is a concept that applies just as equally to gay, bisexual, and queer males as they do to heterosexual males. Furthermore, sexual minority males are likely to experience strain in their life and career roles, and they have to contend with minority stressors such as internalized homophobia, concealment, and fear of rejection

over one's sexual orientation in their various environments (such as work, school, and the community). Minority stressors have been implicated in the career development pathway of sexual minorities, and they can directly influence career satisfaction. There also is evidence to suggest that minority stress has the potential to influence relationship quality and satisfaction. There is little to no research addressing the influence of minority stress on life and career roles for gay, bisexual, and queer men.

### **Proposed Study, Model, and Hypotheses**

According to Sears, Gates, and Rubenstein (2005), people with same sex partners are more likely to be employed in the labor force market than people in heterosexual marriages. Since both persons in a same-sex relationship have the probability of being employed, both partners may have to balance a variety of life roles. The proposed study explored how gay, bisexual, and queer men evaluate their life roles. This study also explored how certain notable factors (i.e., internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, stigma sensitivity) shape the various life roles for gay, bisexual, and queer men.

Sexual minority stressors such as internalized homophobia, concealment, and anxiety of disclosure bear some affiliation to both career and romantic relationship satisfaction in gay men. Theory, as well as previous empirical studies, have implicated that there is a negative relationship associated with the various sexual minority stressors and the experiences of navigating one's sexual identity at work (Ragins, 2004; Ragins et al., 2007). The relationship between internalized homophobia and career satisfaction in gay men has not been explored, but a relationship is plausible (Szymanski et al., 2008). Concealment and anxiety over disclosure also have the capability of interacting with

one's perception of career satisfaction (Lidderdale et al., 2007). Theory and previous studies also have shown that relationships exist between minority stress and romantic relationships in LGB couples (Elizur & Mintzer, 2003; Mohr & Fassinger, 2006). In particular, overall relationship satisfaction has been shaped by internalized homophobia (Frost & Meyer, 2009), and concealment also impacts romantic quality (Foster & Campbell, 2005; Jordan & Deluty, 2000).

Although relationship quality can be assessed as a single dimensional factor, such as overall relationship satisfaction, for the purposes of this study, relationship quality is being conceptualized as a multidimensional process (Hunsley, Pinsent, Lefebvre, James-Tanner, and Vito, 1995). Studies have shown that there exists a multitude of factors (e.g., communication, intimacy, love, self-esteem) that contribute to relationship quality (Hodnett, 1991; Perrone & Worthington, 2001), and often times couples have to make adjustments to their own attitudes, beliefs, and desires in order to sustain a romantic relationship deemed personally satisfying (Greenberg, 2002). Therefore, dyadic adjustment was explored, since it was probable that minority stressors contribute to the process of sustaining intimacy, affection, communication, and satisfaction in their relationship.

It is possible that sexual minority stressors, career satisfaction, and dyadic adjustment potentially may contribute to the various life roles in gay, bisexual, and queer men. In the proposed model (as shown in Figure 1), career satisfaction and dyadic adjustment mediate the relationship between the sexual minority stressors (internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity) and the four specific life roles (parental, partner, homemaker, and occupational). Balancing the role of worker and

romantic partner may produce its own stress, but previous theories and research have averred that minority stressors may further contribute to the issues experienced by gay men who are attempting to balance these important life aspects. Therefore, career satisfaction and dyadic adjustment may potentially mediate the relationship between minority stress and life roles, since dyadic adjustment and career satisfaction could arbitrate the level of commitment, the expression of role values, and the degree of importance one imposes on the parental, partner, homemaker, and career life roles. The following hypotheses were tested:

*Hypothesis 1:* Internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity will contribute significantly to ratings of dyadic adjustment and career satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 2:* Scores on dyadic adjustment and career satisfaction will contribute significantly to ratings on the four life role saliency measures (parental, partner, homemaker, and occupational).

*Hypothesis 3:* Dyadic adjustment and careers satisfaction will mediate the relationships between internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, stigma sensitivity and the four life role saliency measures (parental, partner, homemaker, and occupational).

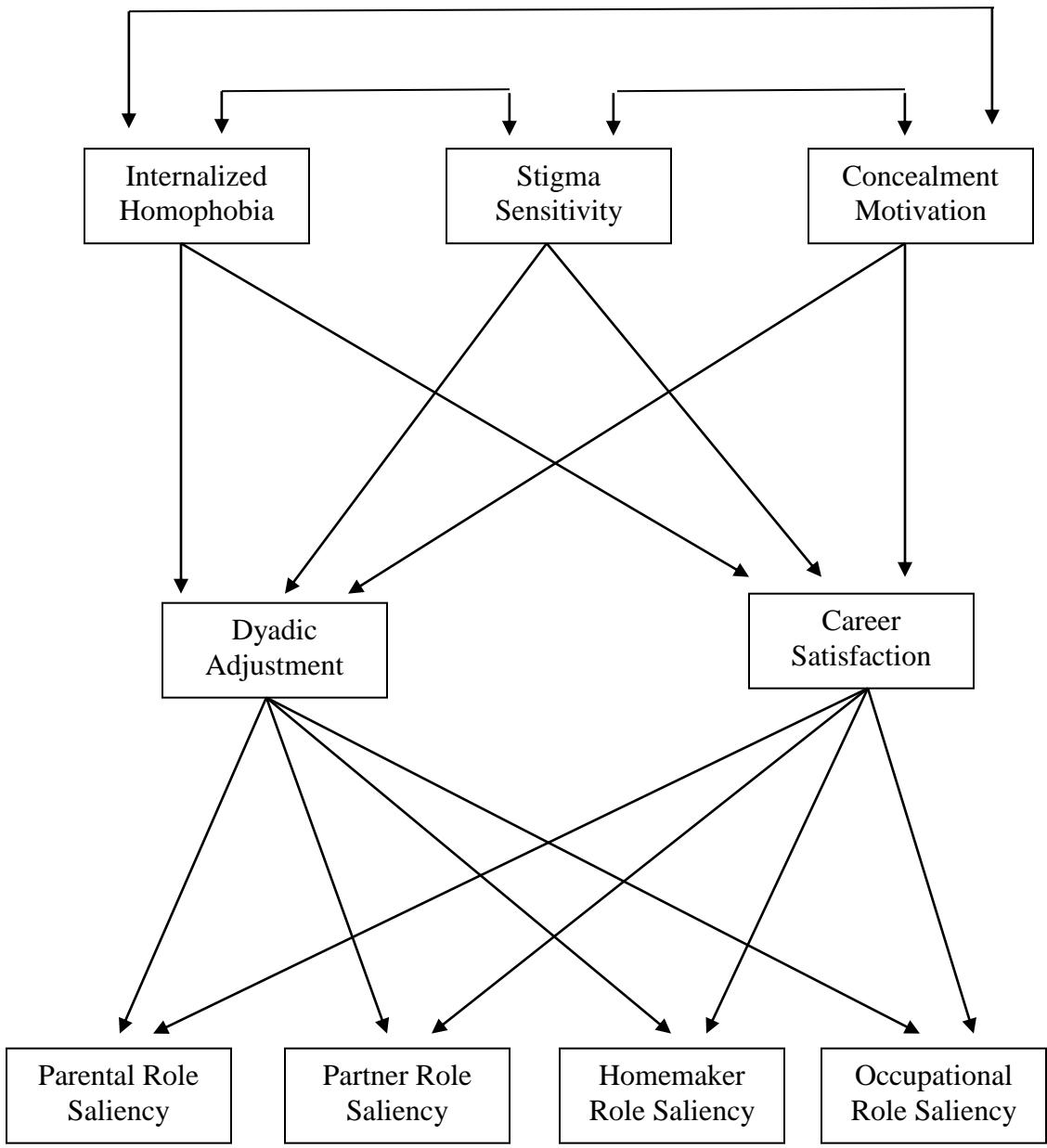


Figure 1. Proposed model of minority stress, dyadic adjustment, career satisfaction, and life role saliency among gay, bisexual, and queer men.

## Method

### Participants

The sample was comprised of 202 men who completed the online survey study. Participants ranged in age from 20 to 66, with a mean age of 38.72 years ( $SD=10.72$ ). The sample was 78.2% White/European American, 9.9% Black/African American, 5.4% Latino/Hispanic Descent, 2.5% Multiracial/Biracial, 2% Asian American/Pacific Islander, 1% Native American, and 1% reported being Other. Geographic location of the sample varied, as 45% lived in the Southeast United States (US), 30.7% lived in the Northeast US, 12.9% lived in the Southwest US, and another 11.4% reported living on the West coast of the US. In addition, data regarding type of residency location was collected. Approximately 59.7% of the sample reported living in an urban area, 27.9% reported residing in a suburban area, 8% lived in a town or village, while another 4.4% described living in a rural location. Approximately 10.6% of participants disclosed that they had biological children, and another 2.5% disclosed that their children resided in the same household as them. Seventy percent of participants lived with their same sex partners.

Other demographic variables collected consisted of endorsement of chronic illness, disability status, and spirituality, all broadly defined. Of the sample, 34.7% reported having some type of chronic illness (examples including hypertension, HIV, cancer), and 12% identified having some form of disability (with regards to hearing, seeing, psychological, learning or other). With regards to spirituality, 83.2% identified as spiritual and/or religious, and over 50% of the population identified as Christian.



With regards to sexual and gender identification, 93.6% exclusively identified as gay males, 4% identified as bisexual males, and 2.4% identified as queer males. Of the sample, approximately 17% identified belonging to a subgroup within the gay community (examples including the Bear, Leather, S&M, and Rave communities). The entire sample identified being born genetically male, and all 202 participants identified being in a romantic relationship with other males. Of the sample, 8.5% reporting that they were legally partnered by a state within the United States, and another 91.5% reporting that they were not legally partnered by any legal entity. The sample also was asked to endorse the level of monogamy between them and their partner, with 74.8% of the sample reporting exclusive monogamy. An additional 14.1% reported being in romantic relationships in which either partner was free to have romantic and/or sexual relationship with other men, and another 11.1% reported having sexual relations with other men only when together. Regarding time spent together, 22.1% of participants reported being in a relationship for twelve months or less, while another 24.1% reported being in a relationship for one to two years. Approximately 16.6% were in a relationship from eight to fifteen years, 3.5% were in their relationship for sixteen to twenty years, and 5% reported being in a romantic relationship for more than twenty-one years.

With regards to education, 1.5% of the sample had some high school but no diploma, 5% reported completing high school, 2.5% had a high school equivalency with some vocational or trade training, 17.3% had some college education but no degree, 42.1% possessed an associates or baccalaureate degree, 28.8% had a graduate degree (masters or doctorate), and another 3% reported having a professional degree (such as an MD or JD). In terms of employment, 95.5% were employed, and another 4.5% reported

they were unemployed or were on social security. Of the 4.5% who were not employed, 2.5% reported becoming unemployed in the past six months, 1% were retired, and another 1% was disabled and unable to work. Endorsed income levels and types of careers/occupation experiences from the past six months are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. *Participants' reported income (N=202)*

| Income Levels        | Participants Income |            |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------|
|                      | N                   | Percentage |
| 1 to 9,999           | 6                   | 3.0        |
| 10,000 to 19,999     | 17                  | 8.4        |
| 20,000 to 29,999     | 19                  | 9.4        |
| 30,000 to 39,999     | 35                  | 17.3       |
| 40,000 to 49,999     | 19                  | 9.4        |
| 50,000 to 59,999     | 22                  | 10.9       |
| 60,000 to 69,999     | 22                  | 10.9       |
| 70,000 to 79,999     | 21                  | 10.4       |
| 80,000 to 89,999     | 10                  | 5.0        |
| 90,000 to 99,999     | 9                   | 4.5        |
| 1000,000 or more     | 22                  | 10.9       |
| Unknown/Not Reported | 0                   | 0          |

Table 2. *Participants' career/occupational experiences in the past six months (N=202)*

| Careers/Occupations                   | N  | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|----|------------|
| Business                              | 34 | 16.9       |
| Human Services                        | 27 | 13.5       |
| Education/Academia                    | 23 | 11.5       |
| Other (Not on List)                   | 22 | 10.8       |
| Computer Science/Technology           | 17 | 8.4        |
| Arts                                  | 12 | 5.9        |
| Medicine                              | 11 | 5.5        |
| Government (Federal/State)            | 11 | 5.5        |
| Architecture/Construction/Real Estate | 9  | 4.5        |
| Trade                                 | 8  | 3.9        |
| Restaurant/Food Industry              | 7  | 3.5        |
| Flight Industry                       | 6  | 2.9        |
| Government (Military)                 | 4  | 1.9        |
| Media/Entertainment                   | 4  | 1.9        |
| Beauty                                | 4  | 1.9        |
| Legal                                 | 3  | 1.5        |

Participants also were asked to disclose demographic information regarding their same-sex partners. The average age of participants' same sex partners was 40.13 ( $SD=18.45$ ). Approximately 78% of participants reported that their partners were White/European American, 11.1% reported their partners were Black/African Descent, 6.8% reported their partners were Latino/Hispanic descent, 2.5% reported their partners were Pacific Islander/Asian descent, and 1.6% reported their partners were Native American/Alaskan Natives. Approximately 8.7% of participants disclosed that their partners had biological children, and another 5% disclosed that their partners' children resided in the same household as them. An additional 29.5% reported that their partners had some form of chronic illness (broadly defined), and an additional 8.2% reported that that their partners had some form of disability (again, broadly defined). The income levels and career/work experiences of the participants' partners are shown in Table 3 and 4.

Table 3. *Partners Income as Reported by this study's participants*

| Income               | Partners Income |            |
|----------------------|-----------------|------------|
|                      | N               | Percentage |
| 1 to 9,999           | 12              | 5.9        |
| 10,000 to 19,999     | 10              | 4.9        |
| 20,000 to 29,999     | 17              | 8.4        |
| 30,000 to 39,999     | 22              | 10.8       |
| 40,000 to 49,999     | 32              | 15.8       |
| 50,000 to 59,999     | 17              | 8.4        |
| 60,000 to 69,999     | 18              | 8.9        |
| 70,000 to 79,999     | 21              | 10.4       |
| 80,000 to 89,999     | 10              | 4.9        |
| 90,000 to 99,999     | 5               | 2.5        |
| 1000,000 or more     | 17              | 8.4        |
| Unknown/Not Reported | 21              | 10.7       |

*Table 4.* Partners career/occupational experiences in the past six months, as reported by the participants of this study.

| <b>Careers/Occupations</b>            | <b>N</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Business                              | 46       | 22.8              |
| Other (Not on List)                   | 33       | 16.3              |
| Education/Academia                    | 22       | 10.7              |
| Medicine                              | 15       | 7.4               |
| Computer Science/Technology           | 11       | 5.5               |
| Architecture/Construction/Real Estate | 11       | 5.5               |
| Restaurant/Food Industry              | 9        | 4.4               |
| Human Services                        | 8        | 3.9               |
| Arts                                  | 8        | 3.9               |
| Engineering                           | 6        | 2.9               |
| Government (Military)                 | 6        | 2.9               |
| Trade                                 | 5        | 2.5               |
| Media/Entertainment                   | 5        | 2.5               |
| Flight Industry                       | 5        | 2.5               |
| Government (Federal, State)           | 5        | 2.5               |
| Legal                                 | 4        | 1.9               |
| Beauty                                | 4        | 1.9               |

### **Sampling**

Careful detail to sampling issues is warranted when studying sexual minority persons (Moradi, Mohr, Worthington, & Fassinger, 2009). Meyer and Wilson (2009) discussed both probability and nonprobability sampling methods; however they also mentioned that probability sampling can be expensive and difficult with sexual minorities. LGB persons make up only one to four percent of the general population, and often times LGB persons are subsets of larger studies employing probabilistic sampling that were not necessarily interested in exploring the specific experiences of LGB persons (Meyer & Wilson). Instead, Meyer and Wilson proposed nonprobability sampling, in which the probability of a person being selected in a population is unknown. The population of interest must be clearly demarcated, and there are a variety of nonprobability sampling techniques that can be utilized to help achieve reliable results.

Having followed their recommendations on weighing the advantages and disadvantages of both sampling methods, nonprobability sampling methods were considered to work best for the purposes of this study. In particular, a web-based sampling procedure was used. Riggle, Rostosky, and Reedy (2005) stated that sexual minorities make greater than average use of the internet. In addition, research on web-based data collection has informed researchers that they can assess diverse samples, and that results are not very much different from the results that are collected from other sampling procedures (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & Reedy, 2004). Using a web-based sampling procedure allows access to gay men who have been overlooked in sexual minority research, such as those who live in rural areas, small towns, and villages around the United States (Meyer & Wilson, 2009).

Another relevant issue with gay men that affects research is the level of “outness” that they identify for themselves (Longborg & Phillips, 1996). Longborg and Phillips reported that it could be assumed that most gay men in same-sex relationships are “out;” however it may be that some gay men who are in same sex relationships may be “out” to only a select group of people. Thus, web based sampling procedures may allow for the collection of a dispersed groups of men, while providing anonymity and safety to participants.

### **Sample Size and Power**

With respect to sample size, Kline (2005) contended that a large sample size is any number above 200 participants, but this is contingent on the complexity of the proposed model. Kline stated here are no definite rules on sample size when utilizing Structural Equations Modeling (SEM), and there are no agreed upon guidelines that can

be used to determine a model's level of complexity. Martens (2005) claimed that there should be approximately 200 cases when utilizing SEM, but Dilalla (2000) and Klem (2000) reported that a sample size of 150 should be adequate. Kline (2005) stated that a desirable goal is to have a 10 to 1 or 20 to 1 ratio of participants to free parameters. Since 13 free parameters were estimated with the hypothesized model, the minimal estimated number of participants needed for the study would be 130.

Following the recommendations of Kline (2005), one way to estimate the power of the statistical test for path analysis is to utilize the method of power calculation in multiple regression. A priori analysis, using G\*POWER version 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009), revealed that if statistical power is estimated at .95 with an alpha level of .05, a sample size of 138 participants would be needed in order to detect a medium sized effect. Thus, combining the sample size recommendations for SEM and multiple regression, 140 participants was determined to be the minimal amount needed be collected for the purposes of the study.

## **Measures**

**Demographic questionnaire.** Information regarding age, level of education, environmental location, income, spiritual identity, gender assigned at birth, racial/ethnic diversity identity, ability status, language preference, and other personal and career related demographics were collected. Information regarding partner demographics also was collected.

**Internalized Homophobia Scale (IHS;** Martin & Dean, 1987) is a nine-item scale for gay males that measures internalized homophobia, and is widely used in research examining internalized homophobia (Szymanski et al., 2008). The measure

assesses the “extent in which LGB individuals reject their sexual orientation, are uneasy about their same-sex desires, and seek to avoid some sex attraction and sexual feelings” (Frost & Meyer, 2009, p. 100). Each statement is rated on a five point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree), and an example item is “I wish I weren’t gay.” Higher scores on this measure indicate higher levels of internalized homophobia. The internal consistency for scores on the IHP is .85 for gay men (Herek & Glunt, 1995), but has ranged from .79 (Meyer & Dean, 1998) to .88 (Hamilton & Mahalik, 2009). In a recent study published by Frost and Meyer, internal consistency of .86 was observed, and they reported that convergent validity was demonstrated through significant correlations with the five item IHP (Herek et al., 1998), individual and collective self-esteem, perceived stigma related to one’s sexual orientation, and depression (as cited by Herek et al., 1998). No test-retest reliability coefficients have been observed with this measure. The Cronbach Alpha for this sample was .87.

**Stigma Sensitivity.** The three item Stigma Sensitivity (SS) subscale from the revised Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Identity Scale (LGBIS; Mohr & Fassinger, 2000; Mohr & Kendra, 2011) was used in order to assess stigma sensitivity, as well as the stress associated with anticipating rejection of sexual orientation identity. Each question will ask participants to respond on a seven point Likert scale (1 = Disagree Strongly to 7=Agree Strongly), and includes questions such as “I often wonder whether others judge me for my sexual orientation.” The original Need for Acceptance Subscale has been used in previous research (Mohr & Fassinger, 2006; Moradi, van den Berg, & Epting, 2009), and convergent validity has been significantly demonstrated with the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale ( $r = -0.33$ ) “suggesting that a risk factor for low self-esteem among lesbian

and gay individuals is preoccupation with the degree to which their sexual orientation is accepted by others” (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000, p. 85). Internal consistency on the original construction of the measure was observed to be .75. In a sample of 102 gay men and lesbians, Moradi et al. obtained an internal consistency coefficient of .81.

A confirmatory factor analysis on the revised scale yielded an alpha coefficient of .76, and a six week test-retest coefficient of .83 on this measure. In a series of validity analyses, the Stigma Sensitivity scale was negatively associated with self-esteem, level of outness, life satisfaction, and self-assurance. In addition, it was positively associated with depression, guilt, fear, hostility, sadness, attached anxiety, attachment avoidance, and self-concealment. This is one of the very few measures that directly assess stigma sensitivity as a minority stressor for LGB persons, while significantly correlating with other related constructs. The Cronbach Alpha for the Stigma Sensitivity Scale with this sample was .81.

**Concealment Motivation.** Renamed the Concealment Motivation subscale in the Revised Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Identity Scale (CM; Revised LGBIS; Mohr & Kendra, 2011), this four item measure was originally the six-item Need for Privacy (NP Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). The Concealment Motivation subscale was used in order to assess motivation and efforts taken to conceal one’s sexual orientation. This subscale also taps into the extent in which one views their sexual orientation as private information, and the extent in which one controls other’s knowledge over one’s own sexual orientation in order to manage any fear of negative consequences from revealing one’s sexual orientation. Used in previous research as a measure of minority stress (Mohr & Daly, 2008), each question will ask participants to respond on a seven point Likert scale (1 =



Disagree Strongly to 7 = Agree Strongly), and includes sample question “My private sexual behavior is nobody’s business.” Internal consistency on the original construction of the measure was observed at .81, and Mohr and Daly reported internal consistency of .78 in another study.

A confirmatory factor analysis on the new scale yielded an alpha coefficient of .75, and a six week test-retest coefficient of .71 on this measure. According to Mohr and Kendra, Concealment Motivation was strongly negatively related to the degree of outness in everyday life and attachment avoidance during the validity analyses. It also was found to be negatively associated with measures of one’s commitment to LGB cultural identity and identity salience. The Cronbach Alpha for the Concealment Motivation Scale with this sample was .80.

**Dyadic Adjustment Scale-7 (DAS-7; Sharpley & Rogers, 1984)** is a seven item short form of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale originally created by Spanier (1976). The DAS-7 is known to measure the process of relationship adjustment, and not solely relationship satisfaction. With the DAS-7, participants rate each item on either a 6 point or 7 point Likert scale. A summary score of all four subscales is calculated and used as an index of the entire DAS-7. Previous studies have reported that the reliability of the measure ranges from .75 to .80, that it possesses good internal consistency, and that it maintains the reliability and validity of the DAS (Hunsely, Best, Lefebvre, & Vito, 2001). Hunsely et al. also reported that the DAS-7 maintains good construct validity when correlated with other measures of marital quality (satisfaction, adaptability, cohesion, conflict resolution, and emotional self-disclosure), reports of daily marital events, and couple communication patterns. The DAS-7 is particularly good at discriminating

between marital distressed and non-distressed couples, as well as changes occurring as a result of marital therapy (as cited by Hunsley et al., 1995).

No known studies have examined the DAS-7 with gay men; however the DAS has been previously used with sexual minorities. Previous studies have found internal consistency for the DAS to be .90 or greater for both men and women in heterosexual or gay relationships (Kurdek, 1992). Test-retest reliability over an 11-week period for married couples was found to be .96 (Stein, Girdo, & Dotzenroth, 1982), and Kurdek (1992) reported a test-retest reliability coefficient of .48 over a four year interval for heterosexual, gay, and lesbian couples. The DAS also has been used in a variety of studies to assess dyadic adjustment and relationship quality in gay male couples (Kurdek, 1988, 1992; Kurdek & Schmitt, 1985). Kurdek (2004) used a portion of the DAS to assess if cohabitating gay and lesbian couples differed from cohabitating heterosexual couples. Wagner, Remien, and Carballo-Dieguez, (2000) used it to understand the prevalence of extra-dyadic sex in males of mixed HIV status, and its connection to relationship quality. In a study comparing monogamous and non-monogamous gay male couples, LaSala (2004) found no statistically significant difference in the two groups on the DAS. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the DAS-7 with this sample was .80.

**Career Satisfaction Scale** (CSS; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990) is a widely used measure of overall career satisfaction. According to Hoffmans, Dries, and Pepermans (2008) the CSS has been used in over 240 studies, and is considered “the best measure available in the literature” (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995, p. 497). The measure has five items, and each item is rated on a five point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). The internal consistency on these item have been observed at

.88 (Greenhaus et al., 1990), and in a recent study on a gender validation study, internal consistency was observed at .74 (Hofmans et al., 2008). Judge et al. (1995) reported that the CSS has had repeatedly high internal consistency scores in other studies. Test-retest reliability is not noted for this measure. The Cronbach Alpha for the Career Satisfaction Scale with this sample was .91.

**Life Role Salience Scales** (LRSS; Amatea, Cross, Clark, & Bobby, 1986) were used as the endogenous variables. The LRSS was designed to better understand how individuals who are both anticipating and currently committed in work and family life roles, and consists of 40 questions that will require participants to respond on a five point Likert scale (1=disagree to 5=agree). The LRSS was also created to better comprehend the “variability in the style in which present day couples involve themselves in marital, parental, and homecare roles” (Amatea et al., p. 832). There are no known studies that have attempted to validate any measure of role salience with LGB persons, and therefore the language on this measure was modified in order to make it applicable to LGB persons. For example, any language that referred to “marriage or marital” was changed to “partner or partnership” throughout the measure. There are eight subscales to this measure, and based on a sample of married couples, the internal consistency for each scale is as follows: Occupation Role Reward Value ( $\alpha=.86$ ), Occupational Role Commitment ( $\alpha=.83$ ), Parental Role Reward Value ( $\alpha=.84$ ), Parental Role Commitment ( $\alpha=.80$ ), Marital Reward Value ( $\alpha=.86$ ), Marital Role Commitment ( $\alpha=.81$ ), Homecare Role Reward Value ( $\alpha=.82$ ), and Homecare Role Commitment ( $\alpha=.79$ ).

The role reward value and role commitment subscales were combined for each life role, rendering four saliency scales: Occupational or Career Life Role Salience,

Parental Life Role Saliency, Marital or Partner Life Role Saliency, and Homecare Life Role Saliency. The Cronbach Alpha coefficients for each life role with this sample were: Occupation Role Saliency ( $\alpha=.83$ ), Parental Role Saliency ( $\alpha=.61$ ), Marital or Partner Role Saliency ( $\alpha=.80$ ), and Homecare Role Saliency ( $\alpha=.78$ ). Kline (2005) asserted that it is critical in measured variable path analysis that measures have appropriate psychometric properties, especially score reliability. The internal consistency of the Parental Role Saliency Scale was assessed using item total analysis (Cronk, 2006), and two questions (“The whole idea of having children and raising them is not attractive to me” and “I do not expect to be very involved in childrearing”) on the scale had negative correlations after two subsequent analyses. The questions were removed from the scale, making the final Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the Parental Role Saliency with this sample .91.

### **Procedure**

A criterion procedure was used, requiring that participants have experienced and can reflect on the phenomena being studied (Minke & Haynes, 2003). Participants recruited and selected for this study were required to be adult individuals who identified as gay, bisexual, or queer males, and who were of legal consenting age (18 years or older). There were three other specific requirements necessary for the completion of this study. The first required that a participant identified having a career, or related work experiences. The second requirement was that the participant was in a committed, romantic, same-sex relationship. The third requirement was that participants identify their sexual orientation as a gay, bisexual male, or queer male and was someone who was born biologically male.

Participants were recruited through gay-affirming internet listservs, electronic mail lists, and advertisements (electronic and paper) in gay relevant literature across various regions of the United States. Via the advertisements, participants who were interested in completing the study were provided access to an internet link through Survey Monkey Pro, which directed participants to complete the study. Upon accessing the webpage, participants were provided an electronic informed consent form. Participants were informed that the online survey was confidential, that encryption of data was used, and no IP addresses were collected. All data was stored on a password and firewall-protected computer. Participants proceeded in completing the demographic questionnaires, and the aforementioned measures. Participants were then compensated with a \$5.00 gift certificate to one of two online retail stores after the completing the study. All administered procedures were approved by the Georgia State University Institutional Review Board prior to data collection.

## **Results**

### **Preliminary Analyses**

Data were initially inspected for missing values, deviations from normality, outliers, and multicollinearity. Only participants who reported being employed at the time of the study were selected, thus nine participants were not included in any of the analyses. In addition, six participants were excluded for having incomplete data. Seven participants were dropped for being outliers in the study, as a means of having a normal multivariate distribution (Kline, 2005). They all possessed mean scores on one or more of the study's variables that were more than three standard deviations above or below the mean. Assessing univariate distributions for normality revealed that two of the variables

(IHS and DAS-7) had skewness and/or kurtosis. A distribution is considered normal if skewness and kurtosis values are closer to zero; however it is expected that values should be between plus or minus one (Leech, Barrett, & Morgan, 2005). In order to approximate normally distributed values, composite scales of IHS and DAS-7 were transformed following the recommendations and guidelines of Mertler and Vannatta (2005) and Osborne (2002). Square root, reflection, and inverse transformations were employed in the transformation process, resulting in acceptable values for skewness and kurtosis for IHS and DAS-7. In order to further assess multivariate normality, bivariate matrix scatterplots were utilized (Kline, 2005), revealing approximations of multivariate normality.

A total of 22 participants were dropped, rendering a final sample of 180 participants. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among all continuous variables assessed in this study are shown in Table 5. Intercorrelations of .85 or higher are indicative of pairwise multicollinearity (Kline, 2005) and were not present in this study. The highest correlations were among the model's exogenous variables. Internalized homophobia significantly correlated with stigma sensitivity ( $r = .397, p = .001$ ) and concealment motivation ( $r = .369, p = .001$ ), while concealment motivation and stigma sensitivity significantly correlated ( $r = .303, p = .001$ ).

Bivariate, Spearman, and Point Biserial correlational analyses were conducted to see if any of the demographic variables (i.e., age, education, income, race/ethnicity [coded as Caucasian/White or Non-Caucasian/White], type of partnership [coded as legally recognized or not legally recognized], type of monogamy [coded as exclusively monogamous or not exclusively monogamous], disability status, chronic illness

endorsement, gay community identification, spirituality [coded as Spiritual or not Spiritual], and length of partnership) were associated with any of the study's main variables. In order to reduce the threat of a Type I error given the large number of correlations (99), a  $p$  value of .001 was utilized (Kashubeck-West & Szymanski, 2008). Two demographic variables, age and education were associated with career salience ( $r = -.275$  and  $r = .233$ , respectively) which are small correlations. As age increased, one's scores on career saliency decreased, and this makes sense from a developmental perspective (Super, 1990). One is more likely to report less career saliency as they disengage from the work trajectory and head towards retirement. With regards to education, it has long been established that educational aspirations are a significant correlate of career saliency in men (Greenhaus, 1971). None of the partner demographics collected in the study correlated with the study's variables.

Table 5. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for all study variables.

| Variables                  | Mean  | SD   | 1     | 2      | 3     | 4     | 5      | 6      | 7     | 8     | 9  |
|----------------------------|-------|------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|--------|-------|-------|----|
| Occupational Role Salience | 34.87 | 7.03 | --    |        |       |       |        |        |       |       |    |
| Partner Role Salience      | 34.98 | 6.74 | -.065 | --     |       |       |        |        |       |       |    |
| Parental Role Salience     | 23.42 | 9.32 | .027  | .115   | --    |       |        |        |       |       |    |
| Homemaker Role Salience    | 40.74 | 5.50 | .216* | .132   | .220* | --    |        |        |       |       |    |
| Internalized Homophobia    | 0.91  | 0.02 | .095  | -.106  | .212* | -.070 | --     |        |       |       |    |
| Concealment Motivation     | 16.07 | 6.29 | .110  | -.081  | .028  | .031  | .369** | --     |       |       |    |
| Stigma Sensitivity         | 8.02  | 4.52 | .023  | .016   | .140  | .121  | .397** | .303** | --    |       |    |
| Dyadic Adjustment          | 3.30  | 0.72 | -.075 | -.321* | .045  | .003  | -.106  | -.019  | .116  | --    |    |
| Career Satisfaction        | 17.57 | 5.36 | -.029 | -.013  | .016  | -.145 | -.021  | .003   | -.124 | -.032 | -- |

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



A 4 x 4 between-subjects factorial MANOVA was calculated examining the effect of geography and residency locations on IHS, SS, CM, DAS-7, CSS, Homemaker, Partner, Occupation, and Parental Role Saliencies. The main effect for residency location was not significant (Wilks'  $\lambda = .80$ ,  $F(27, 465.243) = 1.342$ ,  $p = .119$ ). The main effect for geographic location was not significant (Wilks'  $\lambda = .829$ ,  $F(27, 465.243) = 1.123$ ,  $p = .307$ ). Finally, the interaction between geography and residency locations also was not significant Wilks'  $\lambda = .585$ ,  $F(81, 1,017.124) = 1.087$   $p = .287$ . Neither geography nor residency location significantly influenced IHS, SS, CM, DAS-7, CSS, Homemaker, Partner, Occupational, and Parental Role Saliencies. All data were deemed appropriate for continued analysis.

### **Model Analyses**

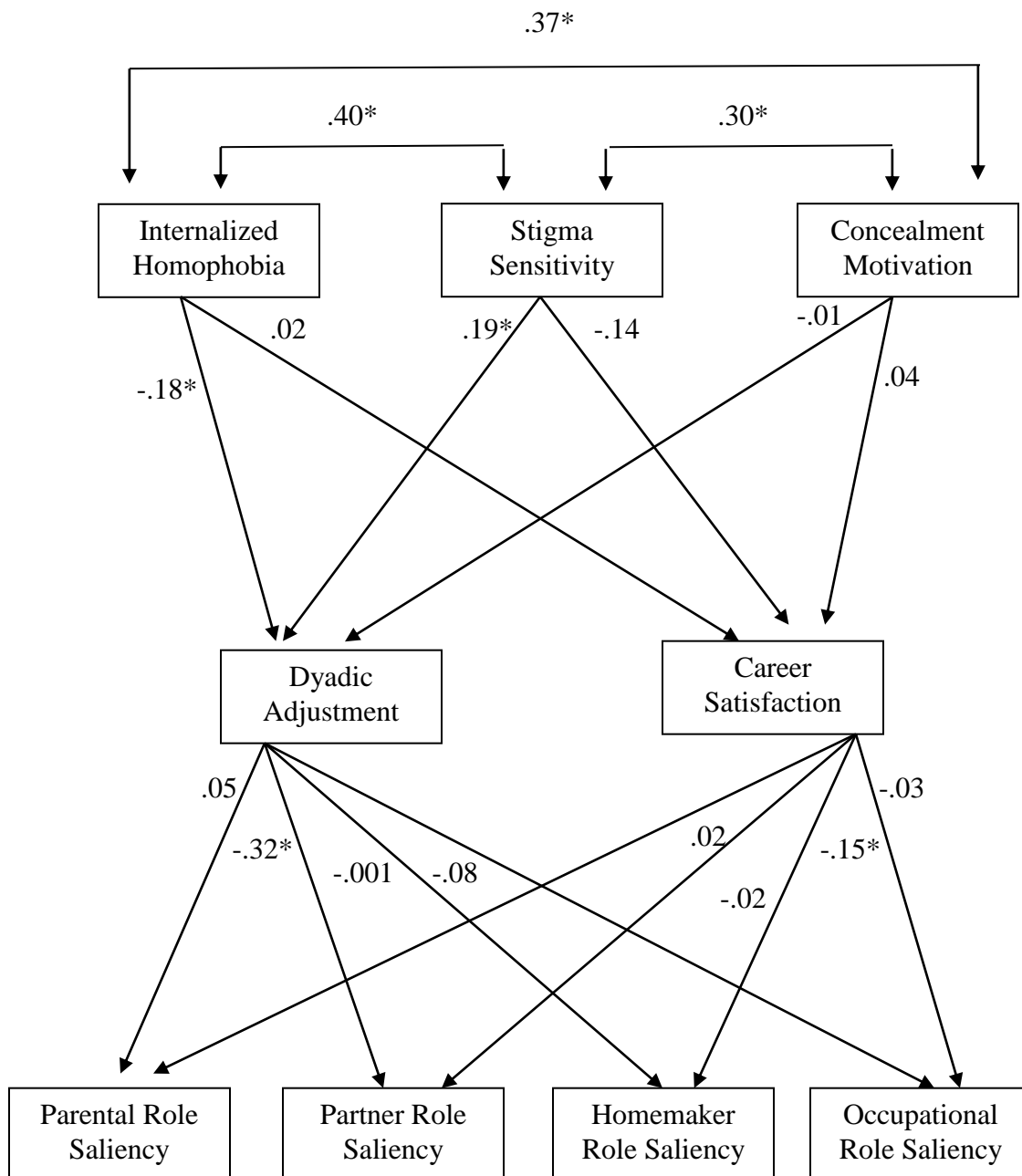
A measured variable path analysis (MVPA; Kline, 2005) was conducted in order to examine the relationship between the variables and test the overall model's fit (Figure 1). MVPA hypothesizes causal relationships among observed variables and then tests the causal model with a linear equations system. LISREL 8.80 (Linear Structural Relationships, version 8.80, student version; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993) was the software used to analyze the model, and maximum likelihood estimation was selected to assess the model's parameters. This is a statistical procedure that is popularly used to ensure that the observed values likely were drawn from a specific population (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006). In conjunction with a sample size of over 100, parameter estimates and model fit indexes are fairly robust to nonnormality when using maximum likelihood estimation (Klem, 2000; Lei & Lomax, 2005).

Although it is not a gold standard, using chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) will provide information regarding model fit (Kline, 2005). A statistically significant chi-square reveals that there is a level of misfit between the model and the data; therefore the goal is not to necessarily have a significant chi-square. In addition, because the model chi-square is sensitive to sample size, the normed chi-square was used to further assess the model fit. The normed chi-square is equivalent to the chi-square statistic divided by its degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ), and Kline reported that values less than 3 are minimally acceptable. The RMSEA will yield a 90% confidence interval, and if .05 is within the confidence interval, then the model is known not to fit poorly. Lastly, SRMR scores below .05 reveal that the data fits the model well. Martens (2005) also encouraged using the comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Nonnormed fit index (NNFI), and incremental fit index (IFI) to assess model fit. Furthermore, Martens encouraged that the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) and Normed Fit Index (NFI) not be used to determine adequate fit, since they do not generalize well across samples and potentially are affected by sample size. While a particular standard is that any CFI, NNFI, and IFI above .90 indicate a good fit, Hu and Bentler (1999) recommended values of .95 or greater.

For the hypothesized model in Figure 1,  $\chi^2(13) = 27.36, p = 0.011$ , the normed chi-square was equal to 2.105. RMSEA = 0.079 (90% Confidence Interval [CI] for the RMSEA lower bound = 0.036 and upper bound = 0.119), and SRMR was equal to .054. The CFI = .88, NNFI = .61, and IFI was equal to .86. Results of the estimated model are shown in Figure 2. The exogenous variables (IHS, SS, and CM) significantly correlated with one another, but there were only three statistically significant pathways in the

model. The path from IHS to DAS-7 was significant ( $z = -2.13, p = .03$ ) as well as the path from SS to DAS-7 ( $z = 2.34, p = .01$ ). The pathway from DAS-7 to Partner Role Saliency also was significant ( $z = -4.55, p = .000$ ) and so was the path from the Career Satisfaction Scale and Homemaker Role Saliency Measure ( $z = -1.96, p = .05$ ). The remaining pathways were not significant at the .05 level. The significant chi-square result indicated that there was a level of misfit between the data and the model, and the high standardized root mean square residual suggested that the observed values were slightly larger than expected. The poor values on the other remaining indices were indicative of the model needing further refinement.

Kline (2005) recommended making specifications to a model in order to improve its fit. LISREL provides a conservative approach when making specifications to a model by offering a modification index. A modification index reveals how much a proposed model's chi-square is expected to decrease if a particular parameter were changed to estimate another observed variable (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996). Raykov and Marcoulides (2006) reported that modification indexes greater than 5 should be carefully considered, while also recommending that any change must first be theoretically justified, before making changes to statistically optimize the model-data fit. LISREL proposed adding a path from IHS to Parental Role Saliency, with a modification index of 12.01. This path suggests the minority scores of internalized homophobia are not mediated by dyadic adjustment or career satisfaction, but rather has a direct influence on parental role saliency.



*Figure 2.* Tested proposed model. Displayed coefficients are standardized, and the significant paths are marked with an asterisk.

The path from IHS to Parental Role Saliency was subsequently added, and a post-hoc model was analyzed. Model fit indexes yielded a  $\chi^2(12) = 15.31, p = 0.225$ , and a normed chi-square value of 1.28. RMSEA = 0.039 (90% CI lower bound=0.0 and upper bound = 0.09), and SRMR was equal to .042. The CFI = .97, NNFI = .90, and IFI was equal to .97. Results of this post-hoc model are illustrated in Figure 3 (Post-hoc Model 1). The statistically non-significant chi-square and other fit indices revealed that the data better fit the specified model. The exogenous variables (IHS, SS, CM) significantly correlated, and pathways from IHS and SS to DAS-7 still were significant ( $z = -2.13, p = .03$ ;  $z = 2.34, p = .01$ , respectively). The pathway from DAS-7 to Partner Role Saliency also remained significant ( $z = -4.55, p = .000$ ), while the pathway from IHS to Parental Role Saliency was significant at  $z = 3.72, p = .001$ . The path from CSS and Homemaker Role Saliency also remained significant ( $z = -1.96, p = .05$ ). The remaining paths remained non-significant, and no other modification indexes were provided by LISREL 8.80.

Further analysis was needed in order to assess the difference between the original proposed model and the post-hoc model. First, a chi-square difference test was used between the two models (Dilalla, 2000; Kline, 2005), yielding a significant difference between them,  $\chi^2(1) = 12.05, p < .05$ . This indicated that there was a difference with regards to how well the data fit the model. In addition, the Akaike Information Criteria (AIC) was considered, since it is a widely used statistic when comparing models (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2006). Models with lower AIC values indicate a better fitting model (Weston & Gore, 2006). The original hypothesized model had an AIC value of 91.35, while the post-hoc model possessed an AIC value of 81.31.

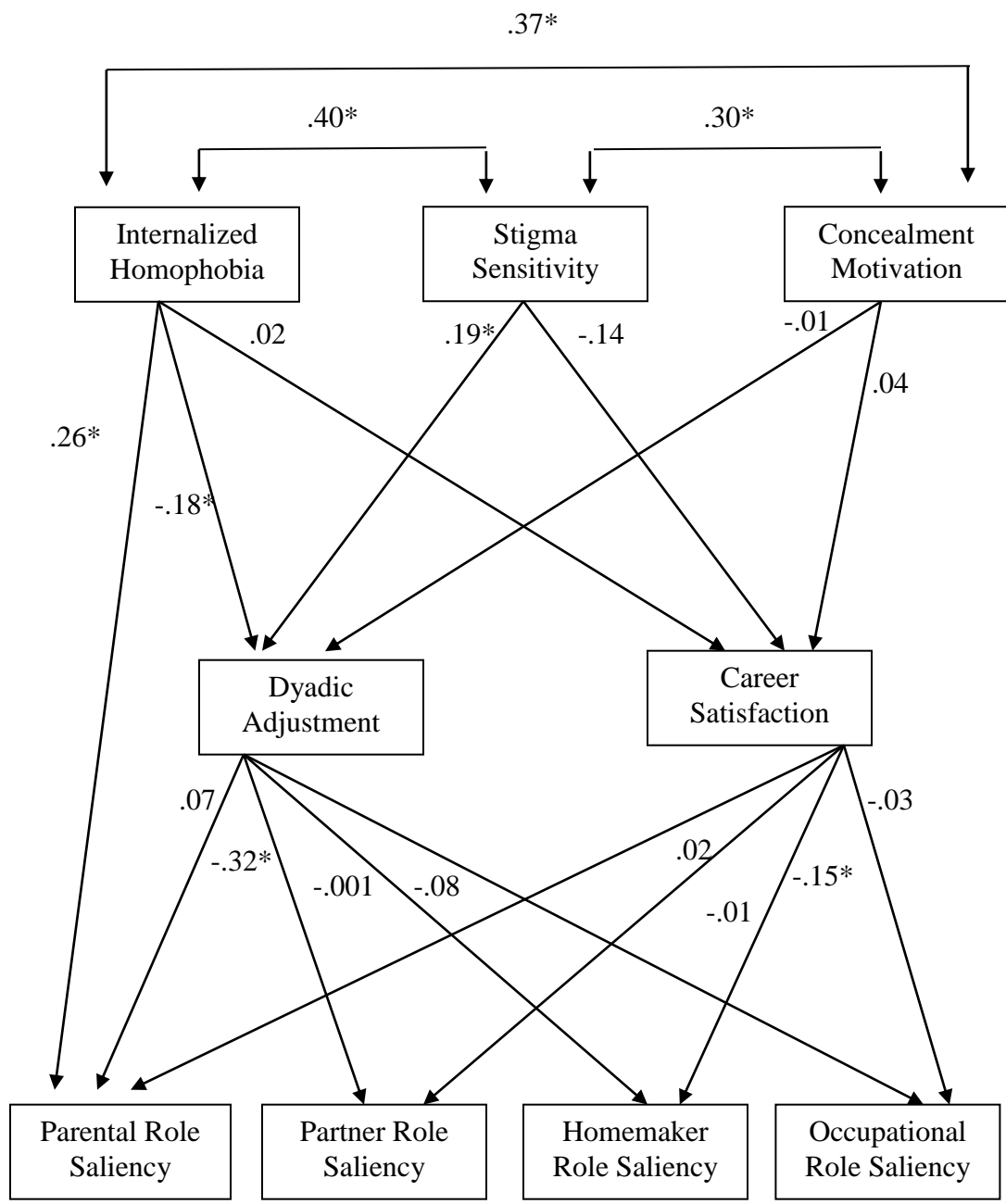


Figure 3. Post-hoc Model 1. Displayed coefficients are standardized, and the significant paths are marked with an asterisk.

Based on the model fit indices and statistical differences between the models, the post-hoc model (Figure 3 with standardized solutions) was kept as the better fit for the data between the two.

### **Mediation and Direct Effects**

The three exogenous variables (internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity) significantly and positively correlated with one another. For instance, as ratings of internalized homophobia increased, ratings of concealment motivation and stigma sensitivity also increased. Standardized effect show the relationship between internalized homophobia and concealment motivation was  $\beta = 0.37$ ; concealment motivation and stigma sensitivity  $\beta = 0.30$ ; and internalized homophobia and stigma sensitivity was  $\beta = 0.40$ .

It was hypothesized initially that dyadic adjustment would mediate the relationship between internalized homophobia and partner role saliency. It also was hypothesized that dyadic adjustment would mediate the relationship between stigma sensitivity and partner role saliency. The post-hoc model in Figure 3 shows a direct effect between dyadic adjustment and partner role saliency, indicating that a unit change in dyadic adjustment would lead to .32 decrease in partner role saliency. The presence of a statistically significant pathway between dyadic adjustment and partner role saliency suggests potential mediation with internalized homophobia and stigma sensitivity as the independent variables. Following the guidelines described by Frazier, Tix, and Barron (2004), the presence of significant pathways among IHS, SS, DAS, and Partner Role saliency suggests that the initial hypotheses regarding mediation may be supported.

However, the presence of significant paths does not immediately infer full mediation, and thus, mediation needed to be further assessed.

Following the example set by Szymanski and Kashubeck-West (2008), a partial mediation model was estimated, rendering a second post-hoc model (Figure 4). Again, this was done in order to determine whether dyadic adjustment would fully or partially mediate between internalized homophobia, stigma sensitivity, and partner role saliency. Two direct paths were added to partner role saliency from internalized homophobia and stigma sensitivity. Model fit indexes for the second post-hoc model yielded a  $\chi^2(10) = 10.57, p = 0.394$ , and a normed chi-square value of 1.06. RMSEA = 0.018 (90% CI lower bound=0.0 and upper bound = 0.084), and SRMR was equal to .033. The CFI = .99, NNFI = .97, and IFI was equal to .99. Results of this model are showcased in Figure 4 (Post-hoc model 2). The path from internalized homophobia to partner role salience was statistically significant ( $z = -2.22, p = .03$ ), while the path from stigma sensitivity to partner role saliency was not significant ( $z = 1.45, p = .15$ ). The path from internalized homophobia to parental role saliency and dyadic adjustment remained significant ( $z = 3.42, p = .000, z = -2.13, p = .03$ , respectively). In addition, the path from stigma sensitivity and dyadic adjustment ( $z = 2.34, p = .01$ ), the path from dyadic adjustment to partner role salience ( $z = -4.97, p = .000$ ), and the path from career satisfaction to homemaker role salience ( $z = -1.96, p = .05$ ) were significant.

In order to see if the mediation occurring among internalized homophobia, stigma sensitivity, dyadic adjustment, and partner role saliency were statistically significant, the Sobel  $z$  statistic (Sobel, 1982) was calculated for the two hypothesized sets of relationships. The Sobel  $z$  test helps determine if the indirect effects of the mediator are



statistically significant (Iacobucci, 2008). The Sobel test is often criticized for being overly conservative, and requires that the study's sample approximate a normal distribution (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007). Preacher et al. suggest the use of bootstrapping in order to test mediation; however Kline (2005) reported that bootstrapping can enlarge unusual features which could compromise external validity. Given that this study was attempting to validate Super's theory, and the study's variables were normally distributed, it was deemed suitable to use the Sobel statistic to test for mediation.

With regards to the relationship between stigma sensitivity, dyadic adjustment, and partner role saliency, a statistically significant mediation effect was observed ( $z = -2.04, p = .04$ ). This suggests that dyadic adjustment fully mediated the relationship between stigma sensitivity and partner role saliency. A one unit change in stigma sensitivity, leads to a .067 unit decrease in partner role saliency through dyadic adjustment. With regards to the relationship between internalized homophobia, dyadic adjustment, and partner role saliency, a non-statistically significant mediation effect was observed ( $z = -1.55, p = .12$ ). This suggests that dyadic adjustment partially mediates the relationship between internalized homophobia and partner role saliency. A unit change in internalized homophobia would then lead to a 0.063 unit decrease in partner role saliency through dyadic adjustment. A unit change in internalized homophobia also directly leads to a .17 unit decrease in partner role saliency. In other words, as internalized homophobia increased, partner role saliency decreased.

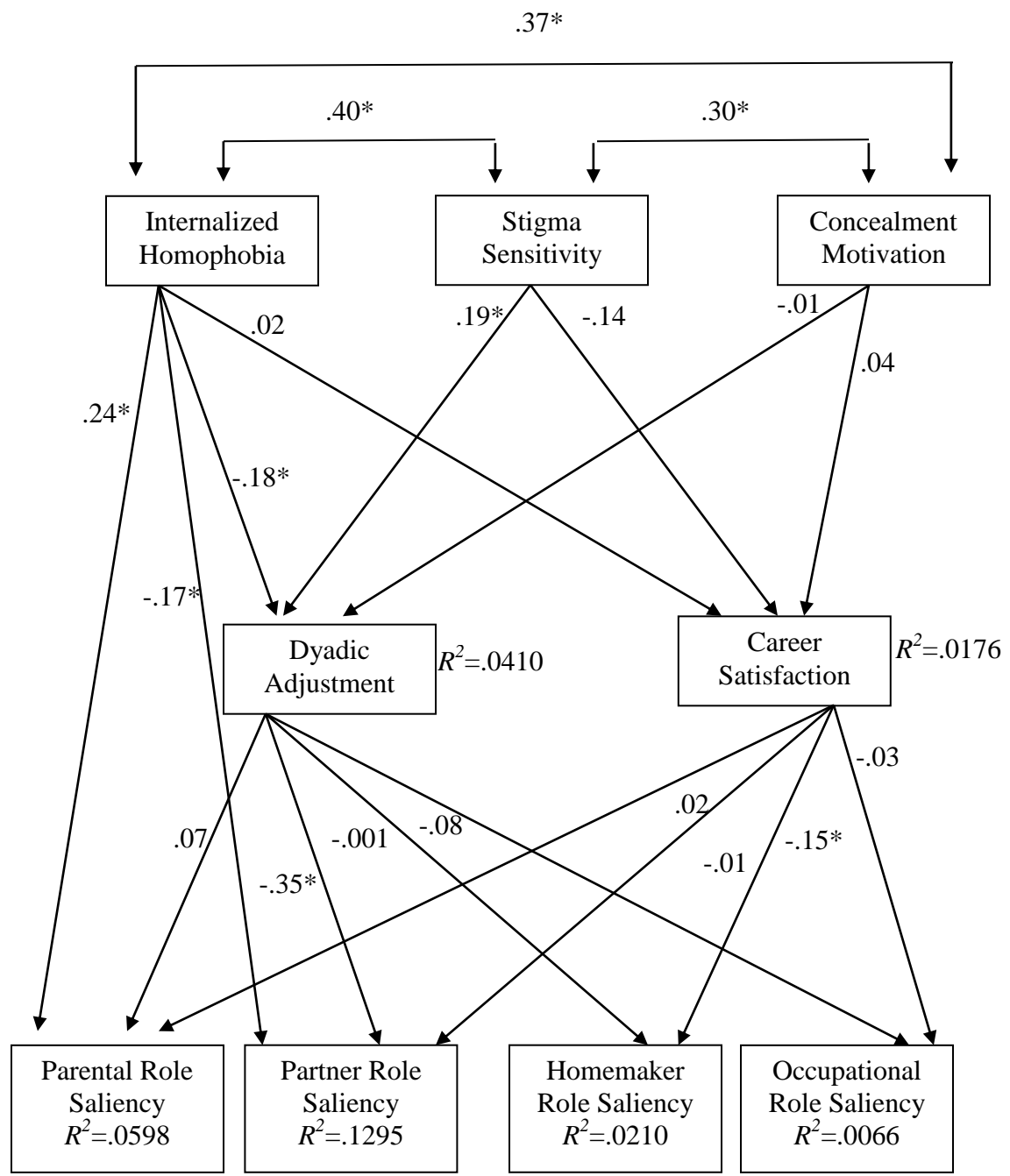


Figure 4. Post-hoc Model 2. Displayed coefficients are standardized, and the significant paths are marked with an asterisk.

With regards to the Post-hoc Model 2, the statistically non-significant chi-square and other fit indices revealed that the data fit the specified model well. All the previous paths that were statistically significant remained statistically significant, with the additional path of internalized homophobia to partner role salience. In comparing the initial post-hoc model in Figure 3 with the subsequent post-hoc model in Figure 4, a chi-square difference test was calculated. The difference test was not statistically significant ( $\chi^2(2) = 4.76, p = .093$ ). The model AIC values were then compared. The AIC value from the model in Figure 4 was 80.55, while the AIC value from Figure 3 was 81.31. Based on the fit indices and the model AIC, the second post hoc model showcased in Figure 4 was retained as the final model. Figure 5 provides a view of the final model with only the statistically significant paths for better readability. Table 6 provides a summary of all of the fit indexes and statistics among the three models from Figures 2, 3, and 4.

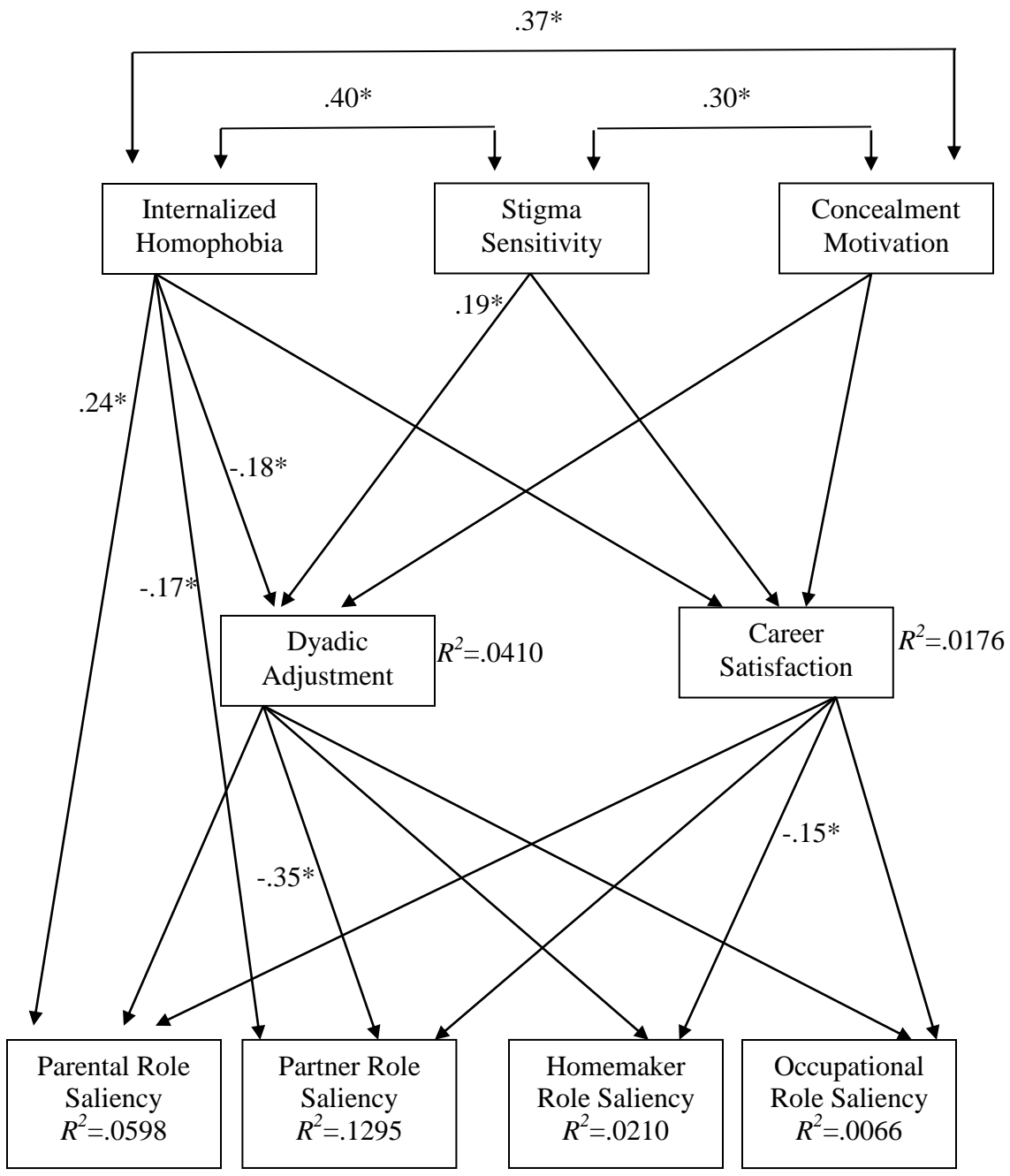


Figure 5. Post-hoc Model 2, displaying only significant standardized coefficients and paths.

Table 6. Summary of fit indexes across models.

| Model                  | $\chi^2$ | df | $\chi^2/df$ | RMSEA | SRMR | CFI | IFI | NNFI | Model AIC |
|------------------------|----------|----|-------------|-------|------|-----|-----|------|-----------|
| Initial Proposed Model | 27.36*   | 13 | 2.11        | .079  | .054 | .88 | .88 | .61  | 91.35     |
| Post-Hoc Model 1       | 15.31    | 12 | 1.28        | .039  | .042 | .97 | .97 | .90  | 81.31     |
| Post-Hoc Model 2       | 10.57    | 10 | 1.06        | .018  | .033 | .99 | .99 | .97  | 80.55     |

\*Significant at  $p < .05$

RMSEA=Root Mean Error of Approximation; SRM=Standardized Root Mean Square Residual; CFI=Bentler's Comparative Fit Index; IFI=Incremental Fit Index; NNFI=Non-Normed Fit Index; Model AIC=Akaike Information Criterion

When controlling for concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity, internalized homophobia directly related to dyadic adjustment, parental role saliency, and partner role saliency. Ratings of dyadic adjustment were negatively related to partner role saliency. When controlling for internalized homophobia and concealment motivation, stigma sensitivity was positively related to dyadic adjustment. Dyadic adjustment then mediated the relationship between stigma sensitivity and partner role saliency. Concealment motivation did not relate to either dyadic adjustment or career satisfaction. Dyadic adjustment and career satisfaction did not significantly mediate the relationship between any of the other life role saliency measures (parental, homemaker, or occupational).

Career satisfaction did not significantly function as a mediator among any of the minority stressors and the various life role saliency measures. However, there was a significant path between the career satisfaction scale and home saliency scale, revealing that a unit change in career satisfaction would lead to .15 unit decrease in homemaker saliency. Lastly, Figure 4 shows the squared multiple correlations for dyadic adjustment, career satisfaction, as well as parental, partner, homemaker, and occupational role saliency measures. The variance explained by the model and paths ranged from .66% to 12.95%.

## **Discussion**

This research explored the scope that internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity influenced the career and life role development of gay, bisexual, and queer men according to Donald E. Super's (1953, 1957, 1980 1990) Life-Span, Life-Space theory. Consistent with previous research and existing theory (Fassinger & Mohr, 2006; Herek et al., 1999; Meyer, 1993, 2003), the three minority

stressors significantly and positively correlated with one another. This finding continues to validate the degree of variance that is shared among internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity. The relative association between these three minority stressors also may signal the extent in which all three stressors may be simultaneously experienced by gay men. For instance, if an individual endorses one minority stressor, there is a chance that the individual also may experience the other related minority stressors. However, it must be noted that the intensity or degree in which one experiences each minority stressor may differ from person to person.

Although it was initially hypothesized that internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity would significantly contribute to ratings of career satisfaction and dyadic adjustment, this hypothesis was only partially supported. The negative relationship between internalized homophobia and dyadic adjustment was consistent with other research that found negative relationships between internalized homophobia and relationship satisfaction and quality (Elizur & Mintzer, 2003; Mohr & Fassinger, 2006; Mohr & Daly, 2008; Otis, Rostosky, Riggle, & Hamrin, 2006). Intimacy, sexual functioning, and satisfaction all serve as negative correlates with internalized homophobia (Szymanski et al., 2008), but this is one of the first studies to indicate that dyadic adjustment among gay men also was affected by internalized homophobia. This study's sample mean (prior to the variable transformation was 25.73,  $SD = 4.69$ ) was comparable to the adjusted (non-distressed) group in Hunsley et al.'s (2001) previous research with the DAS-7 (mean adjustment score for men in the study was 25.5,  $SD = 4.2$ ). On average, the men in this study were well adjusted in their romantic relationships and compare with heterosexual community samples. Despite

being well adjusted, internalized homophobia negatively contributed to the process in which couples agreed on important matters, sought overall satisfaction in their relationship, shared common interests, and expressed affection.

There also was a direct path from dyadic adjustment and partner role saliency. This infers a direct association between the level of relationship adjustment and the degree in which values, expectations, and commitments are maintained when in the partner role. Given that internalized homophobia was only partially mediated through dyadic adjustment, a direct negative path also was observed from internalized homophobia and partner role saliency. As a source of stress for gay men, internalized homophobia can directly shape the values, commitments, and the degree in which the partner role is enacted. Mohr and Daly (2008) proposed that the mechanisms in which internalized homophobia contribute to the deterioration of relationship satisfaction and quality be examined. Although this study did not explore the specific mechanisms involved, it is possible that internalized homophobia directly contributes to the beliefs, emotions, and thought systems related to the partner role.

The positive relationship between internalized homophobia and parental role saliency was unexpected. Although it initially did not make sense, given that higher scores on internalized homophobia would lead to higher scores on parental role saliency, further analysis on respondents choices on the individual items on the parental role saliency scale provided some insight. Of all the life roles saliency measures, parental role saliency had the lowest scores, and on average, most participants reported that having or rearing children was not important to them. Unlike Perrone, Webb, and Blalock's (2005) report that men found parenting rewarding, the men in this sample reported neither



agreeing or disagreeing with thoughts about regret or feeling like their lives would be empty if they did not have children. It is probable that the positive association between internalized homophobia and parental role saliency is actually indicating the level of indifference that some gay, bisexual, or queer men have with regards to having children. Thus, higher ratings of internalized homophobia may lead to higher ratings of indifference with regards to the parental role.

The hypotheses regarding the extent that dyadic adjustment would mediate the relationship between minority stress and life role saliency measures also were partially supported. Dyadic adjustment fully mediated the relationship between stigma sensitivity and partner role saliency. Stigma sensitivity positively contributed to dyadic adjustment and is contrary to the results reported by Mohr and Fassinger (2006), who observed a negative association between stigma sensitivity and relationship quality. However, the finding in this study is not entirely unexplainable. Since dyadic adjustment is concerned with the relationship process rather than the perceived quality of the romantic relationship, it is likely that sensitivity to stigma, or anticipating rejection, may positively facilitate the dyadic process. For instance, one could utilize his relationship as a means to cope with stigma. However, eventually stigma sensitivity could negatively affect partner role saliency. Rostosky et al. (2007) reported that stigma sensitivity, or the anticipation of rejection, was something that the couples in their study experienced as a disadvantage to their interpersonal relationship. The findings from this study suggest that one will have difficulty enacting the role of being a partner, when they are consistently having to anticipate stigma related to their sexual identity. Although it may contribute to the dyadic process, stigma sensitivity eventually contributes to role conflict. There may be

lower perceptions of relationship quality, cohesion, and satisfaction due to stigma sensitivity, which then contributes to significant strain as one's role as a partner.

Even though concealment motivation significantly correlated with internalized homophobia and stigma sensitivity, it did not significantly contribute to dyadic adjustment. Again, this finding is not surprising, since Mohr and Daly (2008) reported similar results in their study. In line with Mohr and Daly's explanation on the lack of statistical significance with concealment motivation, this study narrowed in on the motivation to conceal one's sexual orientation, not necessarily conceal the romantic relationship. Given that the study required participants to identify as a gay, bisexual, or queer male, and to be in a romantic relationship with other males, the degree in which concealment contributed to dyadic adjustment or career satisfaction may not have been detected. Future research should consider this as a factor to better understand the association between concealment and relationship quality, adjustment, and career satisfaction. Lastly, the results of this study also revealed that dyadic adjustment only mediated the relationship to partner role saliency. Occupational, homemaker, and parental role saliency were not mediated via dyadic adjustment, potentially suggesting that the processes in relationship adjustment do not extend to the other measured life roles.

None of the minority stressors contributed to ratings of career satisfaction. This is one of the first studies to directly examine the associations among these variables with males, revealing that perceptions of career satisfaction may not be influenced by internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity. These results slightly diverge from previous research that reported internalized homophobia and

concealment motivation as barriers to the career trajectory for lesbian women (Boatwright et al., 1996; House, 2004). It is probable that the observed difference in this study from previous studies may be gender, since this study relied exclusively on males. In addition, career satisfaction did not mediate the relationships between the minority stressors and the life role saliency measures, further suggesting that career satisfaction may not be functioning as a mediator. However, there was a significant negative path from career satisfaction to homemaker role saliency. As one reported more satisfaction in his career, the less salience one expressed in the homemaker role. This significant path also may suggest the presence of strain in the homemaker role as a result of career satisfaction for gay men. The more energy that is attributed to increasing career satisfaction, the less one is able to maintain one's participation, commitment, and values in the role of a homemaker.

Another surprising result was the lack of statistical significance between career satisfaction and occupational role saliency. Caution should always be observed when attempting to understand non-significant results, but this finding was contrary to Greenhaus's (1971) study that set a precedent that career salience, occupational satisfaction, and role congruence were all significantly correlated to one another. In addition, he observed that men who scored higher on career saliency were more likely to be involved in occupations that were more ideal and congruent with their interest, skills, roles, and values. It could be argued that career satisfaction did not relate to occupational role saliency with this sample. However, it also is probable that one's minority status as a gay, bisexual, or queer male has interfered with occupational choice, and therefore men in this sample were not in careers or occupations that were more ideal to their self-

concept. Therefore, future research looking into occupational role saliency also should explore the influence of occupational choice with sexual minorities.

### **Implications for Practitioners**

It is imperative that practitioners remain perceptive to minority stressors, such as internalized homophobia, concealment motivation, and stigma sensitivity. Professional practitioners also should be aware of perceptions and actual experiences of discrimination, and appropriately assess for minority stressors with gay, bisexual, and queer men. Regular presenting issues could be interpreted or conceptualized within a minority stress framework (Rostosky et al., 2007), even though not all gay, bisexual, and queer men may be conscious of these stressors and the influence in their daily lives. Practitioners also may find themselves having to educate potential clients and organizations about minority stressors, and its correlates.

When working in the context of career development with gay, bisexual, and queer men, it is recommended that practitioners explore how identities have shaped career and life roles, making sure to explore both negative and positive influences. Practitioners working in schools and colleges also may want to reach out to their student populations and educate them regarding the influence of minority stress on the career development trajectory. For example, college counseling center psychologists may want to reach out to LGB student organizations on college campuses and conduct specialized focus groups about career and life planning. High school counselors may want to reach out to gay-straight alliance clubs and begin facilitating dialogue about sexual identity, work, and educational goals in order to help LGB youth better navigate their trajectory.

Should career related assessment be considered, it is recommended that practitioners continue to use culturally valid objective assessments with sexual minorities. Increased attention has been given to the interaction between the person and the socio-cultural environment in career based intervention (Fouad, 2007). Contextual factors that involve complex integrated processes are not captured easily in career assessments; therefore more innovative assessment and counseling modalities should be utilized. Practitioners are encouraged to use qualitative-based or non-objectives measures. For instance, career genograms are very helpful when assessing family systemic influences on career (Sharf, 2002); however in order to remain affirmative, it is recommended that both family of origin and family of choice be explored when using the career genogram.

Utilizing post-modernist approaches also can be helpful to individuals from various cultural backgrounds, and could help foster better self-understanding (Vondracek & Kawasaki, 1995). The *Career Style Interview* (Savickas, 2002, 2005) is one such qualitative assessment and career counseling tool that has been developed to better capture contextual issues. Based on the integration of post-modern constructivist theories and Super's Life-Span, Life-Space theories, the interview has been found promising with racially, ethnically, and sexually diverse persons (Chung & Dispenza, 2008).

One final recommendation for practitioners is to recognize that career interventions do not exclusively occur in the traditional model of career counseling. In line with the focus of this study, the most significant implication for practice is that career development for adult gay, bisexual, and queer men also occurs within the work-family interface paradigm. Therefore, it is recommended that career-based interventions also

take place within the context of couples and family counseling. In maintaining affirmative counseling practices with coupled gay, bisexual, and queer men, it is important to explore sexual identity formation, lifestyle roles, social supports, and community involvement. Rostosky et al. (2007) also encouraged practitioners to attend to the dilemma of disclosure, and mobilize coping resources (emotional and problem-focused) and strengths for same-sex couples.

### **Implications for Social Justice**

Unfortunately, sexual orientation still is not an entirely protected class in the United States, and GLB persons could lose their jobs because of their sexual orientation or gender identity if transgender (Fassinger, 2008). The results of this study could help further promote social justice and advocacy for sexual minorities in the United States. Badgett (2008) offered a unique solution to help further the cause of civil rights for GLB workers and families. She stated that

Most of the debate in and outside of workplaces sees sexual orientation inequality as a civil rights issue that is “solved” by granting marriage rights and is limited to same-sex couples. Instead of relying on civil rights framework for gay family issues, I would argue that placing gay family issues inside the work-family rubric would expand the potential for change (p. 145).

Badgett advocated for change not by forcing the individual to conform. In addition, she did not suggest forcing change at the federal and state level, which could take years in order to ensure the legal rights and civil liberties for sexual minorities. Rather, she emphasized change directly in the work and family environment, rather than the legal sector. Badgett’s solution could help GLB persons improve the quality of their life, while gaining potential momentum toward civil rights. Furthermore she focused on the basic principles that all people are entitled to have a fulfilled life of work, family, and home. If

advocacy efforts are taken to change the quality of life for GLB persons in the work and home sectors, it is possible that the legal sector may follow.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The present findings provide some useful information with regards to advancing the understanding of career development experiences among sexual minorities. However, as with any study, there were a number of limitations that could potentially contribute to the interpretation of these results. First, the study relied exclusively on self-report measures that required persons to have access to a computer and the internet. There are always limitations with regards to who self-selects to participate with online research and how one identifies his sexual identity. In addition, participants who volunteered to take part of a longer survey may have been motivated and maybe even more secure in their sexual identity. A correlational and cross-sectional research design also was used, which could be argued as a limitation. Although the data fit the proposed model, the data may have fit another similar model with different specified relationships.

In addition, the extent in which some of the used measures were valid with the sexual minority males comes into question. The Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976) has been used extensively with male sexual minorities, but the shorter form, the DAS-7, has not been used very much with sexual minorities. In addition, at the time that data collection began for this study, the Life Role Saliency Scales had not been previously used with sexual minorities, and future research would have to assess the level of cultural validity with sexual minorities. Another limitation pertained to racial and ethnic diversity. The sample was overwhelmingly White/European American with only 22% of the sample reporting a non-White/European American identity.

Future research should consider directly exploring coping and resiliency in context of career development with sexual minorities. Perceptions of work environment were not assessed in this study, and they could have contributed to career satisfaction and occupational role saliency. It is possible that more variance may have been explained in the model if coping and perceptions of workplace environment were included as potential mediators or moderators between minority stress and the life role salience measures. It also is recommended that perceived and actual experiences of discrimination be included in order to understand the full range of minority stressors on the career development trajectory. Of course, the degree to which minority stress affects the career and life-space trajectory also should be assessed with other sexual minorities (e.g., lesbians and bisexual women). Super's (1980, 1990) Life-Span and Life-Space theory also should be applied to transgender persons, since gender may have a considerable influence on career and life role saliency. Lastly, racial and ethnic cultural variables should be further assessed to see how they might interact with sexual minority stress in the context of career and life roles.

### **Conclusion**

Given the dynamic intricacies of the life-span and life-space, vocational scholars, researchers, and practitioners always must factor sensitively in the sociological, psychological, cultural, and economic contexts that surround the lives for sexual minorities. Career development continues to coincide and intertwine with one's life roles, and this study further implicates the infusion of minority stress in the career and life development of gay, bisexual, and queer men. This has direct bearing on the meaning that one constructs in life, the happiness that one is able to express in their



relationships and the joy that one is entitled to in their existence. It is therefore, the whole-hearted belief of this writer that psychologists, counselors, and social workers devote to the eradication of the injustices that pervade people's life, so we could all begin to live to our greatest fulfillment.

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## APPENDIXES

## APPENDIX A

## Recruitment Flyer/Announcement

**Georgia State University  
Career and Relationship Experiences of Gay Men****Gay, Bisexual, or Queer Male Volunteers Wanted for Short Online Survey Study!!!**

Researchers from Georgia State University are exploring the experiences of gay men who are currently balancing both work and a romantic relationship with another gay male. In order to participate, you must be:

- 18 years or older
- Identify as a gay, bisexual, or queer male
- Be in a romantic relationship with another male
- Be currently involved with some type of work or career experience

You do not need your significant other to take the study, and the study is entirely online.

**You will be compensated with a \$5.00 gift certificate to Amazon.com or Borders.com for taking the online survey.**

The research is being conducted under the direction of Franco Dispenza and Dr. Gregory L. Brack from the Department of Counseling and Psychological Services at Georgia State University. If you have any questions please email Franco Dispenza at [FDispenza1@student.gsu.edu](mailto:FDispenza1@student.gsu.edu).

To access the survey, please log on to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/gaymenscareer>

## APPENDIX B

**Georgia State University**  
**Department of Counseling and Psychological Services**  
**Informed Consent**

**Title:** Career and Relationship Experiences of Gay Men  
**Principal Investigators:** Gregory L. Brack, Ph.D.  
**Principal Student Investigator:** Franco Dispenza, MS

I. Purpose:

You are invited to participate in a research study that will require you to take an online survey. The purpose of the study is to explore the experience of gay men who are balancing both work/career and a romantic relationship with another gay male. A total of 250-300 gay men will be used for this study. It will take about 30-45 minutes to complete the online survey. Participation in this research study is *voluntary*.

II. Procedures:

If you decide to volunteer in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey. The survey will take about 30-45 minutes to complete. Because this is an online survey, you may take it at any time of the day. You will be asked to complete an on-line survey that asks about your experiences of being a gay male, being involved in a relationship, as well as your work/career experiences.

The first 250-300 participants who volunteer will receive a \$5.00 gift certificate from either *Borders.com* or *Amazon.com* for participating in the study. You will be asked to provide an email address during the study. The student principal investigator will then email you a \$5.00 gift certificate from either *Borders.com* or *Amazon.com*. This procedure is being done to keep your identity confidential. You can select either *Borders.com* or *Amazon.com*. Receiving the gift certificate may take between 7 and 14 business days. In addition, *Borders.com* and *Amazon.com* are not sponsoring this study.

III. Risks:

In this study, you will not have any more risks than you typically would in a normal day of life. Should you become upset, you may choose to take a break. You could start the study again after you have taken a break. You may also choose to stop participating at any time.

IV. Benefits:

Participation in this study may not benefit you personally. Overall, we hope to gain information about gay men, and how they balance work/career and romantic relationships in their everyday lives. As a result of your participation, you may learn more about yourself. Your answers may also help us understand how to improve the lives of gay men in the future.

V. Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in this study is voluntary. You do not have to be in this study. If you decide to be in the study and change your mind, you can drop out at any time. You may skip questions or stop participating at any time. Whatever you decide, you will not lose any benefits.

VI. Confidentiality:

We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. Franco Dispenza and Gregory L. Brack will have all access to the information you provide. Information may also be shared with those who make sure the study is done correctly (GSU Institutional Review Board, the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP)). Since this is a confidential online survey, we will be using encryption and will not be collecting names or IP addresses. However, an email address will be collected in order to email you a gift certificate for your participation in the study. Once the study is complete, your email address information will be destroyed. All data will be stored on a password and firewall-protected computer. Any facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish the results. We will not collect any names for this study. The information you provide will be given a special study number. No specific information about you will be presented or published. You will not be identified personally.

VII. Contact Persons:

Contact Gregory L. Brack at 404-413-8165 or at [gbrack@gsu.edu](mailto:gbrack@gsu.edu) if you have questions about this study. You may also wish to contact Franco Dispenza at 404-413-8165 or at [FDispenza1@student.gsu.edu](mailto:FDispenza1@student.gsu.edu). If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Susan Vogtner in the Office of Research Integrity at 404-413-3513 or [svogtner1@gsu.edu](mailto:svogtner1@gsu.edu).

VIII. Copy of Consent Form to Subject:

You may print a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you agree to participate in this research, please click the “Next Page” button.

## APPENDIX C

**Internalized Homophobia Scale (IHP)**

(Martin &amp; Dean, 1987)

**1=Strongly Disagree****2=Disagree to Some Extent****3=Uncertain****4=Agree to Some Extent****5=Strongly Agree**

1. I have tried to stop being attracted to men in general.
2. If someone offered me the chance to be completely heterosexual, I would accept the chance.
3. I wish I weren't gay/bisexual.
4. I feel that being gay/bisexual is a personal shortcoming for me.
5. I would like to get professional help in order to change my sexual orientation from gay/bisexual to straight.
6. I have tried to become more sexually attracted to women.
7. I often feel it best to avoid personal or social involvement with other gay/bisexual men.
8. I feel alienated from myself because of being gay/bisexual.
9. I wish that I could develop more erotic feelings about women.

## APPENDIX D

**Stigma Sensitivity Scale**

Revised Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identity Scale  
(Mohr & Kendra, 2011; Mohr & Fassinger, 2000)

For each of the following statements, mark the response that best indicates your experience as a lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) person. Please be as honest as possible in your responses.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7  
Disagree Strongly Agree Strongly

1. I often wonder whether others judge me for my sexual orientation.
2. I can't feel comfortable knowing that others judge me negatively for my sexual orientation.
3. I think a lot about how my sexual orientation affects the way people see me.

## APPENDIX E

**Concealment Motivation Scale**  
 Revised Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identity Scale  
 (Mohr & Kendra, 2011; Mohr & Fassinger, 2000)

For each of the following statements, mark the response that best indicates your experience as a lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) person. Please be as honest as possible in your responses.

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7  
 Disagree Strongly Agree Strongly

1. I prefer to keep my same-sex romantic relationships rather private.
2. I keep careful control over who knows about my same-sex romantic relationships.
3. My private sexual behavior is nobody's business.
4. My sexual orientation is a very personal and private matter.

## APPENDIX F

**Dyadic Adjustment Scale-7**

(Sharpley &amp; Rogers, 1984)

(Short form of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale; Spanier, 1976)

**Most persons have disagreements in their relationships. Please indicate below the approximate extent of agreement or disagreement between you and your partner for each item on the following list.**

## 1. Philosophy of life

|              |                     |                       |                     |                        |                 |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 5            | 4                   | 3                     | 2                   | 1                      | 0               |
| Always Agree | Almost Always Agree | Occasionally Disagree | Frequently Disagree | Almost Always Disagree | Always Disagree |

## 2. Aims, goals, and things believed important

|              |                     |                       |                     |                        |                 |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 5            | 4                   | 3                     | 2                   | 1                      | 0               |
| Always Agree | Almost Always Agree | Occasionally Disagree | Frequently Disagree | Almost Always Disagree | Always Disagree |

## 3. Amount of time spent together

|              |                     |                       |                     |                        |                 |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| 5            | 4                   | 3                     | 2                   | 1                      | 0               |
| Always Agree | Almost Always Agree | Occasionally Disagree | Frequently Disagree | Almost Always Disagree | Always Disagree |

**How often would you say the following events occur between you and your mate?**

## 4. Have a stimulating exchange of ideas

|       |                        |                       |                     |            |            |
|-------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------|------------|
| 0     | 1                      | 2                     | 3                   | 4          | 5          |
| Never | Less than once a Month | Once or twice a month | Once or twice a wee | Once a day | More often |

## 5. Calmly discuss something together

|       |                        |                       |                     |            |            |
|-------|------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------|------------|
| 0     | 1                      | 2                     | 3                   | 4          | 5          |
| Never | Less than once a Month | Once or twice a month | Once or twice a wee | Once a day | More often |

6. Work together on a project

|            |                                   |                                  |                                |                 |                 |
|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 0<br>Never | 1<br>Less than<br>once a<br>Month | 2<br>Once or<br>twice a<br>month | 3<br>Once or<br>twice a<br>wee | 4<br>Once a day | 5<br>More often |
|------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|

7. The dots on the following line represent different degrees of happiness in your relationship. The middle point, "happy," represents the degree of happiness of most relationships. Please circle the dot which best describes the degree of happiness, all things considered, of your relationship.

|                           |                        |                          |            |                    |                         |              |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| 0<br>Extremely<br>Unhappy | 1<br>Fairly<br>Unhappy | 2<br>A little<br>Unhappy | 3<br>Happy | 4<br>Very<br>Happy | 5<br>Extremely<br>Happy | 6<br>Perfect |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------|



## APPENDIX G

**Career Satisfaction Scale**

(CSS; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990)

**1=Strongly Disagree**

**2=Disagree to Some Extent**

**3=Uncertain**

**4=Agree to Some Extent**

**5=Strongly Agree**

1. I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career.
2. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.
3. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for income.
4. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for advancement.
5. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my goals for the development of new skills.

## APPENDIX H

**Life Role Salience Scale**

(Amatea, Cross, Clark, &amp; Bobby, 1986)

**1=Disagree****2=Somewhat Disagree****3=Neither Agree/Disagree****4=Somewhat Agree****5=Agree****I. Occupation Role Reward Value**

1. Having work/a career that is interesting and exciting to me is my most important life goal.
2. I expect my job/career to give me more real satisfaction than anything else I do.
3. Building a name and reputation for myself through work/a career is not one of my life goals.
4. It is important to me that I have a job/career in which I can achieve something of importance.
5. It is important to me to feel successful in my work/career.

**II. Occupational Role Commitment**

1. I want to work, but I do not want to have a demanding career.
2. I expect to make as many sacrifices as are necessary in order to advance in my work / career.
3. I value being involved in a career and expect to devote the time and effort needed to develop it.
4. I expect to devote a significant amount of my time to building my career and developing the skills necessary to advance in my career.
5. I expect to devote whatever time and energy it takes to move up in my job/career field.

**III. Parental Role Reward Value**

1. Although parenthood requires many sacrifices, the love and enjoyment of children of one's own are worth it all.
2. If I chose not to have children, I would regret it.
3. It is important to me to feel I am (will be) an effective parent.
4. The whole idea of having children and raising them is not attractive to me.
5. My life would be empty if I never had children.

**IV. Parental Role Commitment**

1. It is important to me to have some time for myself and my own development rather than have children and be responsible for their care.
2. I expect to devote a significant amount of my time and energy to the rearing of
3. I expect to be very involved in the day-to-day matters of rearing children of my own.

4. Becoming involved in the day-to-day details of rearing children involves costs in other areas of my life which I am unwilling to make.
5. I do not expect to be very involved in childrearing.

#### **V. Marital Role Reward Value**

1. My life would seem empty if I was never in a committed relationship with my partner.
2. Having a successful partnership is the most important thing in life to me.
3. I expect being partnered to give me more real personal satisfaction than anything else in which I am involved.
4. Being partnered to a person I love is more important to me than anything else.
5. I expect the major satisfactions in my life to come from my relationship with my partner.

#### **VI. Marital Role Commitment**

1. I expect to commit whatever time is necessary to making my partner feel loved, supported, and cared for.
2. Devoting a significant amount of my time to being with or doing things with a partner is not something I expect to do.
3. I expect to put a lot of time and effort into building and maintaining a romantic relationship.
4. Really involving myself in a romantic relationship involves costs in other areas of my life which I am unwilling to accept.
5. I expect to work hard to build a good relationship even if it means limiting my opportunities to pursue other personal goals.

#### **VII. Homecare Role Reward Value**

1. It is important to me to have a home of which I can be proud.
2. Having a comfortable and attractive home is of great importance to me.
3. To have a well-run home is one of my life goals.
4. Having a nice home is something to which I am very committed.
5. I want a place to live, but I do not really care how it looks.

#### **VIII. Homecare Role Commitment**

1. I expect to leave most of the day-to-day details of running a home to someone else.
2. I expect to devote the necessary time and attention to having a neat and attractive home.
3. I expect to be very much involved in caring for a home and making it attractive.
4. I expect to assume the responsibility for seeing that my home is well kept and well run.
5. Devoting a significant amount of my time to managing and caring for a home is not

## APPENDIX I

**Demographics Form**  
(Dispenza, 2010)

1. Age in Years: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Please Identify your Biological Sex Assigned at Birth:
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
3. Please Identify your Sexual and Gender Orientation:
  - a. Gay Male
  - b. Bisexual Male
  - c. Gay Female-to-Male
  - d. Bisexual Female-to-Male
  - e. Queer Male
  - f. Queer Female-to-Male
4. Please Indicate Your Highest Level of Education Achieved
  - a. Some High School/No Diploma
  - b. High School Diploma
  - c. GED
  - d. Vocational or Trade School
  - e. Some College/No Degree
  - f. Associates Degree
  - g. Bachelor's Degree (Ex: BA, BS, AB, BSW)
  - h. Master's Degree (Ex: MA, MS, MSW, MPH, MEd)
  - i. Doctorate Degree (Ex: Ph.D., Ed.D., Sc.D., DA, DB, DSW)
  - j. Professional Degree (Ex: JD, MD, DO, DDS, DVM, PsyD)

5. Please Identify your Race/Ethnicity/Cultural Identity
  - a. Biracial
  - b. Native American
  - c. Hawai'ian Native American
  - d. Alaskan Native American
  - e. Latino/a American
  - f. Black/African American
  - g. Jewish/American
  - h. Chinese/American
  - i. Japanese/American
  - j. Korean/American
  - k. Indian/American
  - l. Pacific Islander/American
  - m. Arab/American
  - n. White/European American
  - o. Multiracial
  - p. Middle Eastern
  - q. Other. \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Is English your Primary language used for Oral, Reading, and Written Communication?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
7. What is your primary source of financial support?
  - a. Employment
  - b. Parents or family
  - c. Partner/lover
  - d. Friends

- e. Social Security or general assistance
- f. Unemployment insurance
- g. Loans
- h. Other

8. Please Identify your Personal Annual Income:
- a. 0-9,999
  - b. 10,000-19,999
  - c. 20,000-29,999
  - d. 30,000-39,999
  - e. 40,000-49,999
  - f. 50,000-59,999
  - g. 60,000-69,999
  - h. 70,000-79,999
  - i. 80,000-89,999
  - j. 90,000-99,999
  - k. 100,000 or more
9. Please indicate how long you have been currently involved in a romantic relationship with the same person?
- a. 12 months or less
  - b. 1-2 years
  - c. 3-4 years
  - d. 5-7 years
  - e. 8-10 years
  - f. 11-15 years
  - g. 16-20 years
  - h. 21 or more years

10. Please indicate the type of relationship you have with your current romantic partner.
- a. Exclusively Monogamous (Only having romantic and sexual relations with committed partner)
  - b. Open Relationship (Either partner is free to have romantic and/or sexual relations with other men)
  - c. Committed, but Play Together (Only have sexual relations with other men when together)
11. Are you and your partner
- a. Legally partnered (union or married) from another state within the United States of America.
  - b. Legally partnered (union or married) from a country outside of the United States
  - c. Not legally partnered (union or married) from any state in the United States or from another country.
12. For the Past Six Months, Please Indicate if You Reside in a Predominantly
- a. Urban/Metropolitan/City Location
  - b. Suburban Location Outside of a Metropolitan Location
  - c. Town or Village Location
  - d. Rural Location
13. For the Past Six Months, Please Indicate which area in the United States You Live in
- a. Northeast
  - b. Southeast
  - c. Northwest
  - d. Southwest
  - e. West Coast
  - f. Hawaii/Alaska

14. Do You Have a Chronic Illness (for example such as Hypertension, Cancer, HIV)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

15. Do you Have a Disability (with regards to Hearing, Seeing, Moving, Medical, Psychological, Learning, or Other)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. Please indicate if you are a member of the

- a. Bear Community
- b. S&M Community
- c. Leather Community
- d. Drag Community
- e. Rave Community
- f. Chubby Community
- g. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- h. I do not identify with belonging to any community

17. Are you currently Unemployed?

- a. Yes, I am **Unemployed**
- b. No, I am **Employed**
- c. Yes, and Collecting Unemployment
- d. Yes, and Actively Seeking New Employment

18. Do you have children?

- a. Yes
- b. No



19. Do your children currently reside with you in the same household?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. N/A
20. Do you and your romantic partner reside in the same residence?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
21. Please indicate how long you and your partner have lived in the same residence?
- a. 12 months or less
  - b. 1-2 years
  - c. 3-4 years
  - d. 5-7 years
  - e. 8-10 years
  - f. 11-15 years
  - g. 16-20 years
  - h. 21 or more years
22. Below is a list of general themes one could use to classify their primary career or job. Please select the one that most closely resembles the career or job that you have been in for the past six months.
- a. Business (Ex: Sales, Clerical, Administrative, Management, Finance, Accounting, Business owner, Small Business Owner, etc.)
  - b. Education/Academics/Scientist (Ex: Teacher, Professor, Curriculum Designer, Testing, Research, Administration, etc.)
  - c. Medicine (Ex: Nurse, Hospice, Doctor, Technician, Dentist, Radiologist, EMT, Paramedic etc.)
  - d. Human Services (Ex: Psychologist, Counselor, Social Worker, Non Profit, Massage Therapy, Physical Therapy, Public Health, etc.)

- e. Computer Science/Information Technology (Ex: IT, Tech Assistant, IT business, computer repair, etc)
- f. Engineering (Ex: Mechanical, Chemical, Environmental, Civil, Aerospace, etc)
- g. Architecture/Construction/Real Estate (Ex: Developer, agent, builder, designer, etc.)
- h. Legal (Ex: Attorney, Paralegal, Court System)
- i. Government (Federal/State/Local)/Military (Ex: Officer, Active Duty, Police Officer, Fire Department, Politician, Elected Official, Department of Defense, etc.)
- j. Government (Federal/State) (Ex: Department of Labor, Motor Vehicles, Other, etc.)
- k. Trade (Ex: Welding, Mechanical Repair, Plumbing, Electrical, Mason, Construction Worker, Sanitation, Factory Work, Transportation etc)
- l. Farming/Agriculture
- m. Media/Entertainment (Ex: Public Relations, News, Journalism, Publishing, Planning, etc)
- n. Art (Ex: Art, Writing, Literature, Theatre, Music, Stage, Sound, Acting, Disc Jockey)
- o. Restaurant/Bar/Food and Beverage (Ex: Owner, Server, Baker, Bartender, etc)
- p. Flight Industry (Ex: Flight Attendant, Pilot, Air traffic control, etc.)
- q. Beauty (Ex: Beautician, Barber, Barbershop/Salon Owner, Make-Up Artist, Cosmetics, etc.)
- r. Other

23. How often is your income a source of conflict between you and your partner?

- a. All the time
  - b. Much of the time
  - c. Some of the time
  - d. Occasionally
  - e. Not much at all
-

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**The Following Questions are in Regards to your Partner or Significant Other in which you are currently engaged in a romantic relationship. Please answer accordingly.**

1. What is your Partner's Age in Years \_\_\_\_\_
2. Please Identify your partner's Race/Ethnicity/Cultural Background:
  - a. Biracial
  - b. Native American
  - c. Hawai'ian Native American
  - d. Alaskan Native American
  - e. Latino/a American
  - f. Black/African American
  - g. Jewish/American
  - h. Chinese/American
  - i. Japanese/American
  - j. Korean/American
  - k. Indian/American
  - l. Pacific Islander/American
  - m. Arab/American
  - n. White/European American
  - o. Multiracial
  - p. Middle Eastern
  - q. Other. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Below is a list of general themes one could use to classify their primary career or job. Please select the one that most closely resembles the career or job that **your partner** has been in for the past six months.
  - a. Business (Ex: Sales, Clerical, Administrative, Management, Finance, Accounting, Business owner, Small Business Owner, etc.)

- b. Education/Academics/Scientist (Ex: Teacher, Professor, Curriculum Designer, Testing, Research, Administration, etc.)
- c. Medicine (Ex: Nurse, Hospice, Doctor, Technician, Dentist, Radiologist, EMT, Paramedic etc.)
- d. Human Services (Ex: Psychologist, Counselor, Social Worker, Non Profit, Massage Therapy, Physical Therapy, Public Health, etc.)
- e. Computer Science/Information Technology (Ex: IT, Tech Assistant, IT business, computer repair, etc)
- f. Engineering (Ex: Mechanical, Chemical, Environmental, Civil, Aerospace, etc)
- g. Architecture/Construction/Real Estate (Ex: Developer, agent, builder, designer, etc.)
- h. Legal (Ex: Attorney, Paralegal, Court System)
- i. Government (Federal/State/Local)/Military (Ex: Officer, Active Duty, Police Officer, Fire Department, Politician, Elected Official, Department of Defense, etc.)
- j. Government (Federal/State) (Ex: Department of Labor, Motor Vehicles, Other, etc.)
- k. Trade (Ex: Welding, Mechanical Repair, Plumbing, Electrical, Mason, Construction Worker, Sanitation, Factory Work, Transportation etc)
- l. Farming/Agriculture
- m. Media/Entertainment (Ex: Public Relations, News, Journalism, Publishing, Planning, etc)
- n. Art (Ex: Art, Literature, Theatre, Music, Stage, Sound, Acting, Disc Jockey)
- o. Restaurant/Bar/Food and Beverage (Ex: Owner, Server, Baker, Bartender, etc)
- p. Flight Industry (Ex: Flight Attendant, Pilot, Air traffic control, etc.)
- q. Beauty (Ex: Beautician, Barber, Barbershop/Salon Owner, Make-Up Artist, Cosmetics, etc.)

- r. Retired
  - s. Other
4. Does your partner have children?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
5. Does your partner's children currently reside with you and him in the same household?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. N/A
6. Please Identify your Partner's Personal Annual Income:
- a. 0-9,999
  - b. 10,000-19,999
  - c. 20,000-29,999
  - d. 30,000-39,999
  - e. 40,000-49,999
  - f. 50,000-59,999
  - g. 60,000-69,999
  - h. 70,000-79,999
  - i. 80,000-89,999
  - j. 90,000-99,999
  - k. 100,000 or more
  - l. I Do Not Know How Much My Significant Other Makes

7. Does Your Partner Have a Chronic Illness (for example such as Hypertension, Cancer, HIV)?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
8. Does your Partner Have a Disability (with regards to Hearing, Seeing, Moving, Medical, Psychological, Learning, or Other)?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No