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Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression as Predictors of SOGIE-Based Harassment

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SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER EXPRESSION AS PREDICTORS OF SOGIE-BASED HARASSMENT

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Kentucky

By

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2021

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER EXPRESSION AS PREDICTORS OF SOGIE-BASED HARASSMENT

The current study examined which individuals are most at risk for becoming targets of SOGIE-based harassment (specifically, White, male sexual minorities or White, male gender nonconforming individuals). The study also explored potential motivations behind SOGIE-based harassment (specifically, violations of normality and violations of morality) and whether these motivations are predicted by individual differences (specifically, sexual prejudice, beliefs in heteronormativity, tolerance of ambiguity, and adherence to gender norms). College students (n = 206; 67.5% female) were randomly assigned to one of four conditions, each with a different male target (straight/gender conforming, straight/gender nonconforming, gay/gender conforming, gay/gender nonconforming). Students saw a picture of target and read a short vignette describing the target. They then answered questions about their feelings towards the target, as well as questions about themselves. Contrary to hypotheses, participants rated gay targets more positively than straight targets, and gender nonconforming targets more positively than gender conforming targets. It was also found that for gay, gender nonconforming targets, female participants gave more positive ratings than male participants and that heteronormativity negatively predicted positive ratings.

KEYWORDS: Sexual Orientation, Gender Expression, SOGIE, Late Adolescence

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Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression as Predictors of SOGIE-Based Harassment

Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity (or SOGIE-based harassment) has been widely documented and studied. SOGIE-based harassment targets sexual and gender minorities, as well as gender nonconforming individuals, and research has robustly shown that this harassment is associated with a variety of negative health outcomes (Kosciw et al., 2017). However, little research has examined who is at most at risk for SOGIE-based harassment, and no studies have yet explored *why* these individuals are targeted. Thus, the current study will employ an experimental method to examine which individuals are most at risk for becoming targets of SOGIE-based harassment (specifically, White, male sexual minorities or White, male gender nonconforming individuals). The study will also explore potential motivations behind SOGIE-based harassment (specifically, violations of normality and violations of morality) and whether these motivations are predicted by individual differences (specifically, sexual prejudice, beliefs in heteronormativity, tolerance of ambiguity, and adherence to gender norms).

Components of SOGIE Identity

SOGIE is a commonly used acronym that stands for sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (GLSEN, 2014). Sexual orientation is defined as an individual's pattern of sexual, romantic, and/or emotional attraction. "Straight," "gay/lesbian," "bisexual," "asexual," or "queer" are common ways that an individual may choose to identify their sexual orientation. Gender identity is an individual's internalized sense of being male, female, both, or neither. Individuals whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth (determined by chromosomes and genitalia) are referred to as

cisgender. Individuals whose gender identity does not match their sex assigned at birth are referred to as transgender. More recent research has moved past the gender binary, and non-binary identities include "genderqueer," "demiboy," or "assigned female at birth (AFAB)" (e.g., GLSEN, 2014; Hammack et al., 2021; Watson et al., 2020). Next, gender expression refers to the way individuals chooses to communicate or express their gender to others. This can be done through their appearance, activities, or mannerisms. Individuals whose gender expression adheres to stereotypical gender norms are often referred to as "gender conforming." Individuals whose gender expression does not adhere to stereotypical gender norms are often referred to as "gender nonconforming" (APA, n.d.). Lastly, while not a part of the acronym SOGIE, another important term to note when discussing SOGIE identity is gender typicality (Brown et al., 2020). Gender typicality, first conceptualized by Egan and Perry (2001) describes how similar an individual feels to others of their gender. More recent work has labeled this construct specifically as "same-gender typicality" and has noted that one may also have feelings of similarity to the other gender, called "other-gender typicality" (Martin et al., 2017).

SOGIE-Based Harassment

SOGIE-based harassment is an umbrella term that refers to harassment targeting sexual minorities, transgender individuals, or gender nonconforming individuals. It is estimated that 10.5% of 13-18 year olds and 5.6% of adults in the United States identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, and these individuals face a wide spectrum of discrimination (Atteberry-Ash et al., 2019; Green et al., 2019; Jones, 2021; Kosciw et al., 2020). This is especially true for adolescents, as SOGIE-based harassment tends to peak at this age before declining in later adolescence and early adulthood (Horn, 2019).

SOGIE-based harassment often takes the form of verbal harassment, and more than half of LGBTQ students report hearing homophobic slurs or epithets such as “fag” or “dyke” often or frequently at school (Kosciw et al, 2020; Rinehart & Espelage, 2016). Over two-fifths of LGBTQ students report hearing transphobic remarks such as “tranny” or “he-she” often or frequently at school (Kosciw et al, 2020). Additionally, more than half of LGBTQ students report hearing negative comments about gender at school (Kosciw et al., 2020). This harassment is perpetrated by adults, as well as students, and more than half of LGBTQ students report hearing teachers or staff make homophobic remarks or negative comments about gender nonconformity (Buston & Hart, 2001; Kosciw et al., 2013; Kosciw et al., 2020).

SOGIE-based harassment can also be physical, and one-third of LGBTQ students report being pushed or shoved at school because of their sexual orientation or gender identity (Earnshaw et al., 2020; Kosciw et al., 2020). Over one-fifth of LGBTQ students report being physically harassed because of their gender expression at least once during the school year (Kosciw et al., 2020; Myers et al., 2020). Furthermore, over ten percent of LGBTQ students report being physically assaulted (e.g., being kicked or punched, or attacked with a weapon) because of their sexual orientation at least once in the last school year, and nearly ten percent say they have been physically assaulted because of their gender expression at least once in the last school year (Kosciw et al., 2020).

Lastly, SOGIE-based harassment can be relational. Relational aggression is the most common form of SOGIE-based harassment, and over 90% of LGBTQ students report feeling purposefully left out or excluded by their peers (Kosciw et al., 2020). Furthermore, almost three quarters of LGBTQ students say that they have had rumors or

lies about them spread at school (Kosciw et al., 2020). Relational harassment may be particularly prevalent in adolescence, as adolescents rate excluding others (e.g., on the basis of gender conformity or sexual orientation) as less wrong than children do (Horn & Nucci, 2003; Killen, 2007; Underwood, 2004).

SOGIE-based harassment is associated with a variety of negative outcomes for LGBTQ youth. Approximately three in five LGBTQ students say they will not or are unsure if they will graduate high school due to hostile school climate (Kosciw et al., 2020). Youth who experience high rates of SOGIE-based harassment are twice as likely to be absent from school than those who experience less victimization (Kosciw et al., 2020). Targets of SOGIE-based harassment report higher rates of depression and anxiety and lower levels of self-esteem compared to their non-harassed peers (Espelage et al., 2008; Kosciw et al., 2020; Poteat & Espelage, 2007; Rivers & Cowie, 2006; Wang et al., 2018), and they also report a variety of somatic symptoms such as headaches, dizziness and fainting, sleep problems, and eating disorders (Arikawa et al., 2020; Goldhammer et al., 2018; Pace et al., 2020; Perron et al., 2017).

Intersectionality in SOGIE-Based Harassment

It is important to note that factors such as race and sex may also play a role in SOGIE-based harassment. For example, boys are targets of SOGIE-based harassment more frequently than girls, likely because gender norms are often stricter for boys than girls, and violations of these norms are more harshly sanctioned for boys vs. girls (Corby et al., 2007; Egan & Perry, 2001; Fagot, 1977; Lee & Troop-Gordon, 2011; Martin et al., 2017; Pauletti et al., 2017; Sandberg et al., 1993; Young & Sweeting, 2004; Zosuls et al., 2016). Furthermore, prior research has consistently shown that Black boys are

consistently viewed as older, more aggressive, and more dangerous than White boys, while Asian boys are often viewed as more feminine than White boys (Galinsky et al., 2013; Goff et al., 2014; Todd et al., 2016; Wilkins et al., 2011). This may make ethnic minority individuals more or less likely to experience SOGIE-based harassment than White individuals. Research examining SOGIE-based harassment must be careful to acknowledge the identities of their targets/stimuli and avoid overgeneralization of results. In the current study, we used only white, male targets. White targets were selected, because they are often seen as a neutral reference group for other races (e.g., Black boys are seen as more dangerous *than White boys*, and Asian boys are viewed as more feminine *than White boys*). Men were chosen, as gender norm violations are often seen as more egregious for them than they are for women (Bartini, 2006; Spinner et al., 2018; Wilkey, 2010).

It is also important to examine the role of these identities when predicting who perpetrates SOGIE-based harassment. For example, girls are often more tolerant of violations of gender norms and express more positive attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals than boys (Bartini, 2006; Buston & Hart, 2001; Lehavot & Lambert, 2007; Martin et al., 2017; Poteat, 2015; Poteat et al., 2009). Similarly, girls are less likely to perpetrate SOGIE-based harassment than boys (Hooghe et al., 2010). Race is another important factor; for example, the cultural construct of "machismo" in Latin/x/e culture is often associated with hypermasculine and heteronormative beliefs (Arciniega et al., 2008), and it is possible that Latin/x/e individuals may view violations of gender stereotypes as more egregious than individuals of other ethnicities. Lastly, political beliefs may also play a role. Individuals who identify as socially liberal are more likely to

support gay and trans rights as well as express positive attitudes towards LGBTQ people than those who are more socially conservative (Doyle et al., 2015; Flores et al., 2020; Shepherd et al., 2021; Woodford et al., 2012). Research examining SOGIE-based harassment must be careful to acknowledge the identities of their participants. In the current study, we examine the role that gender, race, and political orientation play in determining participants' attitudes towards targets, as well as discuss the implications of having a predominantly White, female sample.

Targets of SOGIE-Based Harassment

While research has robustly documented the negative effects of SOGIE-based harassment, little work has been done to examine which individuals are most at risk for becoming targets of SOGIE-based harassment. More specifically, it is not yet clear what is most salient to potential perpetrators of SOGIE-based harassment – sexual orientation or gender expression. Sexual orientation and gender expression are separate constructs; however, they are closely related. Prior research has found that sexual orientation is often conflated with gender expression, with individuals assuming a target's sexual orientation on the basis of stereotypical gender cues (e.g., voice, dress, hair; Blashill & Powlishta, 2009; Cox et al., 2016; Kachel et al., 2019; Miller, 2018; Rieger et al., 2008). For example, in a study of Dutch youth and young adults, Baams and colleagues (2013) found that the relationship between gender nonconformity and psychological well-being was mediated by experiences of stigmatization on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation. Specifically, it was found that gender nonconformity positively predicted perceived experiences of stigmatization, which in turn negatively predicted psychological well-being. In other words, gender nonconforming students experienced negative

psychological consequences after being harassed by peers who assumed they were gay on the basis of their gender expression. Additionally, several studies have found that gender nonconformity is negatively associated with psychological well-being, above and beyond the effects of sexual orientation (Gordon et al., 2017; Li et al., 2016; Rieger & Savin-Williams, 2012; Roberts et al., 2012). These studies demonstrate the confound between sexual orientation and gender expression; however, it does not answer the question of which attributes are most salient to perpetrators of SOGIE-based harassment.

To our knowledge, only two studies have used an experimental design to look at how sexual orientation and gender expression may uniquely influence individuals' attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals. Horn (2007) found that gender expression may be as or more important than sexual orientation when determining adolescents' acceptability ratings of hypothetical targets. Horn (2007) used a 2 (straight vs. gay) x 3 (gender conforming, appearance gender nonconforming, activity gender nonconforming) research design when giving adolescents a series of vignettes describing hypothetical peers that were either gay (male participants)/lesbian (female participants) or straight, as well as gender conforming or gender nonconforming in appearance or choice of activity. Results showed that female participants rated lesbian gender-conforming targets as equally acceptable to straight appearance gender nonconforming targets, as well as straight activity gender nonconforming targets. In other words, female participants rated lesbian peers who were stereotypically feminine just as acceptable as straight peers who played football or dressed like boys. Similarly, male participants rated gay gender-conforming targets as equally acceptable to straight activity gender nonconforming targets; however, they also rated gay gender-conforming targets as *more* acceptable than straight

appearance gender nonconforming targets. (Horn, 2007). In other words, male participants rated gay peers who were stereotypically masculine equally as acceptable as straight peers who did ballet and more acceptable than straight peers who wore makeup. The current study aimed to further explore this finding and also measured participants' ratings of target acceptability.

Further work by Heinze and Horn (2014) showed that adolescents also said it was less acceptable to exclude straight activity gender nonconforming targets than gay activity gender nonconforming targets; however, adolescents also said that it was equally acceptable to exclude straight appearance gender nonconforming targets as it was gay appearance nonconforming-targets. In other words, when a target was activity gender nonconforming (e.g., a girl playing football or a boy doing ballet), participants said it was more acceptable to exclude a gay target than a straight target; however, when a target was appearance gender nonconforming (e.g., a girl wearing stereotypically masculine clothes or a boy wearing makeup), participants said it was just as acceptable to exclude a straight target as it was to exclude a gay target. The current study aimed to further explore this finding and also measured participants' attitudes about target exclusion/inclusion.

Heinze and Horn (2014) also examined eleven justifications for exclusion, including fairness, God's law, religious human equality, and "unnatural/disgusting." It was found that participants who failed to exclude straight gender nonconforming targets used moral justifications such as fairness or human equality; however, participants who excluded gay targets used stereotypical justifications such as "he might hit on me." These studies represent an important first step towards understanding 1) who may be most at risk of being the target of SOGIE-based harassment as well as 2) perpetrators'

justifications for SOGIE-based harassment; however, we do not yet know whether individual differences can predict those justifications. The current study thus looks at two potential motives for SOGIE-based harassment (i.e., violations of normality and violations of morality) as well as whether endorsement of these reasons is predicted by individual differences.

Motives for SOGIE-Based Harassment

In addition to understanding who is most at risk for SOGIE-based harassment, it is also important to understand what motivates this harassment, as a better understanding of these motives could aid in the development of specific, focused interventions. Furthermore, it is also important to understand what personal traits are predictive of endorsement of those motives. Thus, the current study examines two potential reasons for harassment targeting sexual minorities and gender nonconforming individuals: the belief that these individuals represent violations of normality or violations of morality. The current study also examines four individual differences as predictors of ratings of normality and morality: sexual prejudice, beliefs in heteronormativity, tolerance of ambiguity, and adherence to gender norms.

Violations of Morality and Violations of Normality

Morality may be particularly important for understanding attitudes towards sexual and gender minorities. Both popular and academic literature are rife with works debating and detailing the morality of being LGBTQ (Bidell, 2016; Cheng et al. , 2016; Corvino, 2013; Eliason et al., 2011; Macedo, 1995; Mapayi et al., 2016; Rowan et al., 2019; Ungar, 2000; Van den Akker et al., 2013). Bidell (2016) writes, “As part of the religious, legal, and scientific triumvirate, we [applied psychologists] played a central part in

developing discriminatory, biased, and stereotypic perspectives castigating LGBTQ individuals as immoral, deviant, disordered, and even dangerous." (Bidell, 2016, pg. 67). This view of LGBTQ individuals as immoral is a global phenomenon (Cheng et al., 2016; Mapayi et al., 2016; Stevens, 2012; Ungar, 2000; Van den Akker et al., 2013), and being LGBTQ is still illegal in seventy countries and punishable by death in twelve (Wareham, 2020). This literature suggests that a key component of disapproval of LGBTQ individuals is based on the presumption of immorality; thus, the current study examines how a target's sexual orientation and gender expression impact individuals' ratings of their morality.

In addition to morality, normality is an important concept when discussing attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals. LGBTQ individuals have historically been considered "different" or "other," and have even been classified as mentally ill and diseased. The term "homosexuality" was first coined by Karoly Maria Benkert in the late 19th century, but it wasn't commonly used until the mid-20th century, when it first appeared in translations of the Bible (Human Rights Campaign, n.d.; Pickett, 2021). Medicine followed shortly after Christianity in adopting of the word, and "homosexuality" was included as a diagnosis in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) until 1973. Indeed, the first DSM published in 1952 classified "homosexuality" as a "sociopathic personality disturbance." The DSM-II labeled "homosexuality" as a "sexual orientation disturbance," and the DSM-III labeled it "ego-dystonic homosexuality" (Cabaj, n.d.). "Homosexuality" was recognized as a psychiatric disorder until 1973, and not until 1987 was the final vestige removed completely from the DSM, replaced by "sexual disorder, not otherwise specified" (Cabaj, n.d.). Similarly,

transgender individuals and gender nonconforming individuals are also seen as non-normal. For example, being transgender has been classified under "sexual deviations," "psychosexual disorders," and "sexual and gender identity disorders" in earlier versions of the DSM (Love, 2016); however, the newest version of the DSM, the DSM-V (published in 2013) does not label it a diagnosis. It is only in recent history that LGBT individuals been considered typical, or normal; this suggests that normality is a key component of disapproval of LGBTQ individuals. Thus, the current study examines how a target's sexual orientation and gender expression impact individuals' ratings of their normality.

Individual Differences in Ratings of Morality and Normality

There are likely individual differences in how people rate the morality and normality of LGBTQ and gender nonconforming individuals. The current study addresses four possible attitudes and beliefs people hold that may contribute to their ratings: sexual prejudice, beliefs in heteronormativity, felt pressure to conform to gender norms, and tolerance of ambiguity.

Sexual prejudice. Sexual prejudice has historically been defined as negative attitudes towards an individual because of their sexual orientation (Habarth, 2015; Herek, 2000). More recent work, however, has begun to conceptualize it as a multifaceted construct that includes beliefs (e.g., sexual minorities are acceptable/not acceptable), social interaction (e.g., attitudes about interpersonal discrimination), and rights (e.g., attitudes about institutional discrimination; Horn, 2019). These three factors are related, but not identical. For example, it is possible for someone to believe that being a sexual

minority is wrong or unacceptable (i.e., beliefs), but also think that discrimination towards sexual minorities is wrong (i.e., social interaction/rights).

Endorsement of sexual prejudice is associated with several factors. Age is a robust correlate of sexual prejudice, and prior work has found that social interaction prejudice increases from early to middle adolescence, declines from middle to late adolescence, and continues to decline into early adulthood (Heinze & Horn, 2014; Horn et al., 2008; Poteat et al. , 2009; Poteat et al., 2012). Gender is also an important predictor of sexual prejudice, and prior work has found boys score higher than girls in all three facets of sexual prejudice (Collier et al., 2012; Horn, 2006; Horn, 2007; Mata et al., 2010; Poteat & Anderson, 2012). For example, adolescent boys are more likely to say that being gay/lesbian is wrong or unacceptable than adolescent girls (Horn, 2006; Horn et al., 2008). Male adolescents are also more likely to condone both interpersonal and institutional discrimination against sexual minorities than female adolescents (Heinze & Horn, 2014; Poteat et al., 2017).

In addition to age and gender, morality is an important correlate of endorsement of sexual prejudice. For example, prior work has found that increased moral elevation – the emotion primed by witnessing acts of moral beauty (e.g., charity, loyalty, gratitude) – when making judgements about sexuality is associated with lower endorsement of sexual prejudice (Lai et al., 2014). A study by Vezzali and colleagues (2017) also found that beliefs about morality mediate the relationship between contact with gay and lesbian individuals, and attitudes towards those individuals. More specifically, participants who had more contact with gay/lesbian individuals then viewed those gay/lesbian individuals as more moral, which in turn, then predicted more positive attitudes towards those

gay/lesbian individuals. These studies emphasize the idea of morality playing an important role in attitudes about sexuality. Thus, the current study explores sexual prejudice as a negative predictor of individuals' ratings of morality for gay and straight targets.

Heteronormativity. Heteronormativity is the belief that heterosexual attraction and relationships are "natural" and "normal" (Barker, 2014; Habarth, 2015; Warner, 1991). It is often rooted in a binary understanding of sex and gender (Barker, 2014), and implies cisnormativity (i.e., assumes that all individuals have a gender identity that matches their sex assigned at birth). Heteronormativity implies that there are only men and women, and often involves the endorsement of socially defined roles for men and women (Habarth, 2015). This can be seen in the idealization of the nuclear family in Western society and in continued efforts to deny same-sex couples access to key social institutions like marriage and adoption (Hudak & Giammattei, 2014; Kitzinger, 2005; Oswald et al., 2005; Ward & Schneider, 2009).

Institutional heteronormativity also affects youth, as can be seen in school health and sex education courses. Greytak and Kosciw (2013) categorized sex education courses' approach to LGBTQ topics into five types: truly LGBTQ-inclusive approach, ignoring approach, stigmatizing approach, demonizing approach, and transgender-excluding approach. First, the truly inclusive approach says that classes must discuss sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in a positive, bias-free way. Unfortunately, only nine states currently require inclusive sex education (Kosciw et al., 2017). The ignoring approach centers on the presumption of heteronormativity, and roughly 80% of LGBTQ students report no inclusion of LGBTQ topics in their sex

education courses (Gowen & Winges-Yanez, 2014; Kosciw et al., 2017). In fact, seven states have "No Promo Homo" laws that prevent schools from "promotion of homosexuality" (GLSEN, 2018). The transgender-excluding approach includes discussions about sexual orientation, but not gender identity (Kosciw et al., 2017). These two approaches emphasize the idea of heterosexuality and gender conformity as the normal or correct thing. The stigmatizing approach centers on discussing LGBTQ topics but only as they pertain to things like HIV and AIDS (Frost, 2017; GLSEN, 2018; Gowen & Winges-Yanez, 2014). The demonizing approach teaches that being LGBTQ is wrong or immoral. For example, Alabama requires that health courses teach that same-sex attraction is not acceptable and that "homosexual conduct" is a criminal offense (even though it is not), and Arizona says that health courses must not "promote homosexuality" or portray it in a positive way (GLSEN, 2018). These two approaches emphasize the idea of heterosexuality and gender conformity as moral. Thus, the current study examines heteronormativity as a negative predictor of individuals' ratings of both normality and morality for targets that vary in sexual orientation and gender expression.

Pressure to conform to gender norms. Gender is a particularly salient social group for children. Starting at birth, children are named, dressed, and treated differently based on gender (see Brown & Tam, 2019, for a review). According to developmental intergroup theory (Bigler & Liben, 2007), this ubiquitous use of gender leads children to perceive gender as an important social marker, be highly attentive to gender norms, and eventually develop stereotypes about what traits, activities, skills, and interests are appropriate for each gender (Bigler & Liben, 2007; Hill & Flom, 2007; Martin et al., 1990; Plant et al., 2000; Poulin-Dubois et al.2002). Subjective group dynamics theory

then states that children are motivated to maintain these group norms by enforcing conformity (Abrams et al., 2017; Abrams & Rutland, 2008). More specifically, individuals who do not adhere to stereotypical gender norms often experience harassment in the form of verbal teasing, physical bullying, and social rejection from their peers (D'Augelli et al., 2002; Fagot, 1977; Horn, 2007; Jewell & Brown, 2014; Kochel et al., 2012; Toomey et al., 2013; Zosuls et al., 2016). Prior research has found that perpetrators of this harassment often themselves feel high pressure to conform to stereotypical gender norms (Pauletti et al., 2014; Tam et al., 2019). This may be because these individuals view gender nonconforming peers as violating the gender norms they themselves consider to be so important. Thus, the current study examines pressure to conform to gender norms as a predictor of individuals' ratings of normality for targets that vary in sexual orientation and gender expression.

Tolerance of ambiguity. Tolerance of ambiguity, a concept originally developed by Frenkel-Brusnwik (1948), is defined as the way an individual "perceives and processes information about ambiguous situations or stimuli when confronted by an array of unfamiliar, complex, or incongruent clues" (Furnham & Ribchester, 1995, pg. 179). Individuals high in tolerance of ambiguity tend to perceive ambiguous situations to be desirable and challenging, while individuals low in tolerance of ambiguity are characterized by desire for rigid dichotomization and fixed categories (Frenkel-Brunswik, 1951; Furnham & Ribchester, 1995). Individuals low in tolerance of ambiguity experience stress and anxiety when presented with ambiguous stimuli and may try to relieve these negative feelings by avoiding those ambiguous stimuli (Smock, 1955). This may be particularly relevant when examining tolerance of ambiguity in social contexts.

Prior research has found that tolerance of ambiguity is negatively associated with racism and stereotyping (Friedland et al., 1999; Kulik, 2005; Pawlicki & Almquist, 1973; Rotter & O'Connell, 1982; Sidanius, 1978; Valutis, 2015). For example, Kulik (2005) found that individuals who were higher in tolerance of ambiguity were more accepting of violations of traditional gender norms (i.e., dichotomous, fixed categories) than those lower in tolerance of ambiguity. Several studies have found that *in*tolerance of ambiguity and need for structure are positively associated with transphobia and prejudice against gender nonconforming individuals, as these individuals do not adhere to the binary norms of gender (Aguirre-Sánchez-Beato, 2020; Garelick et al., 2017; Platt, & Szoka, 2019). This may be because by failing to adhere to stereotypical gender norms, gender nonconforming individuals violate the rigid dichotomization those high in tolerance of ambiguity desire. Thus, the current study examines tolerance of ambiguity as a predictor of individuals' ratings of normality for targets that vary in sexual orientation and gender expression.

The Current Study

In the current study, participants gave ratings of acceptability and inclusion/exclusion, as well as ratings of morality and normality for White, male targets that differ in sexual orientation and gender expression. The first aim of the study was to determine who is most at risk for SOGIE-based harassment. It was hypothesized that there would be a main effect of sexual orientation. Specifically, we predicted that participants would rate straight targets as more normal, more moral, and more acceptable than gay targets and would desire to be closer to straight targets than gay targets (Hypothesis 1a). It was also hypothesized that there would be a main effect of gender

expression. Specifically, it was predicted that participants would rate gender conforming targets as more normal, more moral, and more acceptable than gender nonconforming targets and would desire to be closer to gender conforming targets than gender nonconforming targets (Hypothesis 1b). It was further hypothesized that there would be an interaction between sexual orientation and gender expression (Hypothesis 1c). Specifically, based on Horn (2007) and Heinze and Horn (2014), it was predicted that participants would rate as most moral/normal/acceptable and desire to be closest towards straight/conforming targets, followed by gay/conforming targets, followed by straight/nonconforming targets, and lastly followed by gay/nonconforming targets.

The second aim of the study was to determine whether or not participants' ratings of target normality, morality, acceptability, and desire for closeness were predicted by individual differences (i.e., sexual prejudice, beliefs in heteronormativity, pressure to conform to gender norms, and tolerance of ambiguity). First, it was predicted that ratings of normality, morality, acceptability, and desire for closeness would be positively predicted by tolerance of ambiguity and negatively predicted by felt pressure to conform, sexual prejudice, and beliefs in heteronormativity (Hypothesis 2).

Methods

Participants

The participants in this study were 233 college students (power analyses indicated a required 208 participants to detect a small effect with 80% power). Of the 215 students who completed the survey, nine indicated they did not want their data to be used, resulting in a final sample size of 206. Participants were enrolled in introductory psychology courses at a public university in the Southeastern United States and ranged in

age from 18-33 years (M = 19.58 years, SD = 1.67 years). The majority of participants self-identified as female (67.5%), 31.6% identified as male, .5% identified as non-binary, and .5% identified as genderfluid. The majority of participants self-identified as White/Caucasian (74.8%), 10.7% identified as Black/African American, 5.8% identified as Latino/Hispanic, 1.9% identified as Middle Eastern, 1.0% identified as Asian, 0.5% identified as Indigenous American/American Indian, and 5.3% identified as other or bi/multiracial. Lastly, 80.1% of participants self-identified as heterosexual, 6.8% as bisexual, 2.9% as gay or lesbian, 4.4% as asexual, 1.9% as pansexual, 1.0% as queer, and 2.9% as bicurious or unsure. Students received course credit for participating in the study.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from the University's psychology subject pool and received 1 credit for participating. After registering, participants were emailed a Qualtrics link. Qualtrics then randomly assigned each participant to one of four conditions, each with a different male target (straight/gender conforming, straight/gender nonconforming, gay/gender conforming, gay/gender nonconforming). Students first saw a picture of a hypothetical peer and read a short vignette describing that peer (who was either gay/straight and gender conforming/gender nonconforming, depending on condition). Following the vignette, students took an online survey created using Qualtrics to assess their attitudes towards the hypothetical peer. Measures of individual differences and demographic questions were administered at the end of the survey.

Measures

Vignettes Measures

Vignettes. Students read one of two vignettes loosely based on those used by Horn (2007). The vignettes described a male target (Ben) that was either straight ("This is Ben. Today is Valentine's Day, and he's getting ready for a date with his girlfriend Kate.") or gay ("This is Ben. Today is Valentine's Day, and he's getting ready for a date with his boyfriend Mark."). (See Figure 1 for all vignettes.)

Figure 1. Vignettes and target images

Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his girlfriend Kate. Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his boyfriend Mark.		
Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his girlfriend Kate. Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his boyfriend Mark.		
Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his girlfriend Kate. Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his boyfriend Mark.		

Figure 1 (continued)

Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his girlfriend Kate. Today is Valentine's Day, and Ben is getting ready for a date with his boyfriend Mark.	

Stimuli. Accompanying each vignette was a picture of the target. Pictures were taken from a public search engine. To begin, ten photos of White, appearance gender conforming men (e.g., stereotypically masculine clothes and features, such as muscular stature or strong jawline) and ten photos of appearance gender nonconforming men (e.g., stereotypically feminine clothes and features, such as softer jawline or slimmer frame) were chosen. Twelve individual raters then gave each man a score from 1-10 for attractiveness, happiness, friendliness, and gender typicality. Raters were a mixture of graduate students and research assistants in the lab. Raters were sexually and racially diverse; there were two self-identified men and ten self-identified women.

Two sets of stimuli – each including one gender conforming and gender nonconforming picture – were chosen from the original twenty photos. The photos in each pair were matched for attractiveness, happiness, and friendliness, but differed significantly in gender typicality. (See Figure 1 for all target images.) Again, it should be noted that all stimuli were white men, and that results may not be generalizable to stimuli of other races and sexes.

Gender typicality. Students' ratings of targets' gender typicality were assessed using a modified version of the same-gender (5 items) and other-gender (5 items) similarity scale (adapted by Martin et al., 2017, from Egan and Perry, 2001). Students were asked to rate how similar they felt each target is to both men and women in general and across several domains (e.g., "Ben acts like other men." or "Ben likes to do the same things as women do.") on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Internal consistency for same-gender typicality was good ($\alpha = .83$), but only acceptable for other-gender typicality ($\alpha = .74$). The question, "How much do you like to spend time with other boys/girls?" was the only question that did not directly address the construct of gender typicality (i.e., a person could be dissimilar to those of the other gender but still enjoy spending time with them). Furthermore, many heterosexual adolescents show increasing interest in cross-sex peers during this time, and it is possible this question is a better measure of sexual identity than gender identity; thus, this item was deleted from the scale, improving the internal consistency ($\alpha = .81$). For consistency across scales, the same question was also dropped from same-gender typicality ($\alpha = .84$). Means of the remaining 4 items were calculated for each scale, with higher scores indicating more similarity to either same or other gender.

Likelihood of harassment. Students answered three questions about how likely they believe each target is to be harassed by peers. They were asked how likely each target is to be 1) verbally teased or made fun of, 2) physically bullied, or 3) socially excluded/rejected. Answers were scored on a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (very likely). Internal consistency was good ($\alpha = .85$). Items were then averaged to create a single score, with higher scores indicating greater likelihood of harassment.

Normality. Students were asked how normal they feel each target is using a single item (i.e., "How normal is Michael?"). Answers were scored on a scale of 1 (not at all normal) to 5 (totally normal), with higher scores indicating greater normality.

Morality. Students were asked how moral they feel each target is using a single item (i.e., "How moral is Michael?"). Answers were scored on a scale of 1 (not at all moral) to 5 (totally moral), with higher scores indicating greater morality.

Acceptability. Similar to Horn (2007), students were asked how acceptable they felt each target was using a single item (i.e., "How acceptable is Michael?"). Answers were scored on a scale of 1 (not at all acceptable) to 5 (totally acceptable), with higher scores indicating greater acceptability.

Desire for closeness. Similar to Heinze and Horn (2014), the current study examined participants' feelings of inclusion/exclusion towards targets; however, rather than a single-item measure, the current study used seven items that first described situations of varying intimacy before asking participants how much they would want to be in each situation with the target. They were asked how much they want each target to: be American, live in their city, go to their school, hang out with them at a party, be their friend, be their roommate, and come to their home. Answers were scored on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). Internal consistency was excellent ($\alpha = .92$). Items were averaged to create a single score, with higher scores indicating greater desire for closeness.

Participant Measures

Demographics. Students reported their ethnicity, age, self-identified gender, sexual orientation, and social political orientation.

Self-perceived gender typicality. Students' gender typicality was assessed using a modified version of the same-gender (5 items) and other-gender (5 items) similarity scale (adapted by Martin et al., 2017, from Egan and Perry, 2001). Students were asked to rate how similar they feel to both men and women in general and across several domains (e.g., "How much do you like to do the same things as women?" or "How much do you like to spend time with men?"), on a scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot). As with the gender typicality of targets, internal consistency was good for same-gender typicality ($\alpha = .83$) but poor for other-gender typicality ($\alpha = .65$). The item, "How much do you like to spend time with other boys/girls?" was subsequently dropped. Internal consistency remained the same for same-gender typicality ($\alpha = .83$) and improved for other-gender typicality ($\alpha = .75$). The remaining four items from each scale were then averaged to create a single score for that scale, with higher scores indicating greater similarity.

Felt pressure to conform. The pressure students feel to conform to traditional gender roles was assessed using the felt pressure to conform subscale (8 items) of the gender identity scale (adapted by Carver et al., 2003, from Egan & Perry, 2001). Students were asked to rate how much they feel that parents and peers expect them to conform to gender norms (e.g., "I think my parents would be upset if I wanted to learn an activity that only boys usually do.") on a 1 (not at all) to 4 (a lot) scale. Internal consistency was excellent ($\alpha = .93$). Items were averaged to create a single score, with higher scores indicating greater felt pressure.

Sexual prejudice. Students' attitudes towards gay and lesbian individuals was assessed using a five-item measure by Vonofakou and colleagues (2007). Students were asked, "When you think about gay and lesbian individuals as a group, how would you

describe your feelings?" They were then presented with five scales, each ranging from 1 to 9. The anchors for each scale are as follows: respect/disapprove, friendly/hostile, negative/positive, admire/dislike, and suspicious/trusting. Internal consistency was good ($\alpha = .84$). Items were averaged to create a single score, with higher scores indicating greater sexual prejudice.

Tolerance of ambiguity. Students' tolerance of ambiguity was assessed using the Multiple Stimulus Types Ambiguity Tolerance Scale-II (MSTAT-II; McLain, 2009). Students were asked to rate how they feel about ambiguous situations (e.g., "Problems that cannot be considered from just one point of view are a little threatening.) on a 1 (not at all true) to 4 (very true) scale. Internal consistency was good ($\alpha = .82$). Items were averaged to create a single score, with higher scores indicating less tolerance of ambiguity.

Heteronormativity. Students' beliefs about heteronormativity were assessed using the Heteronormative Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (HABS; Habarth, 2015). Students were asked to rate how much they agree with a series of 16 statements (e.g., "All people are either male or female." and "The best way to raise a child is to have a mother and a father raise the child together.") on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Internal consistency was excellent ($\alpha = .94$). Items were averaged to create a single score, with higher scores indicating greater heteronormativity.

Results

Preliminary Analyses and Overview

Means and standard deviations for all variables are in Table 1. Hypotheses 1 and 2 both examined four different variables: normality, morality, acceptability, and desire

for closeness. Examination of a correlation table (see Table 2) revealed that these four variables were significantly related to each other. Subsequently, a principal components analysis was conducted to determine whether any of the responses could be explained by the same underlying component in order to lower the familywise error rate of subsequent analyses. Examination of a scree plot indicated a one-factor solution, with an eigenvalue of 2.92 and explaining 72.91% of the variance. The second factor had an eigenvalue of .47 and only accounted for 11.85% of the variance, and the one-factor model was retained. The first and only component was composed of normality, morality, acceptability, and desire for closeness and was named positive rating.

Table 1. Means and standard deviations for outcome variables

Variable	Straight/ conforming	Gay/ conforming	Straight/ nonconforming	Gay/ nonconforming
Target Variables				
Normality	3.15 (.70)	3.62 (.63)	3.33 (.83)	3.50 (.70)
Morality	3.08 (.74)	3.60 (.60)	3.43 (.76)	3.71 (.54)
Acceptability	3.42 (.67)	3.79 (.45)	3.51 (.71)	3.77 (.43)
Desire for closeness	2.90 (.61)	3.27 (.59)	3.15 (.70)	3.45 (.56)
Participant Variables				
Sexual prejudice	2.47 (2.11)	2.34 (1.68)	2.24 (1.89)	2.29 (2.00)
Heteronormativity	2.04 (.79)	2.18 (.70)	1.92 (.76)	2.09 (.79)
Felt pressure	1.89 (.74)	1.94 (.79)	1.74 (.71)	1.89 (.94)
Tolerance of ambiguity	2.89 (.46)	2.85 (.43)	2.88 (.48)	2.91 (.47)

Means are listed first, with standard deviations in parentheses.

Table 2. Correlations between outcome variables.

	1	2	3	4
Normal	1	.64**	63**	.55**
Acceptable		1	.72**	.60**
Moral			1	.64**
Desire for Closeness				1

Note: all values are Pearson Correlations; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Hypothesis 1 was assessed using a 2 (sexual orientation: straight, gay) X 2 (gender expression: conforming vs. nonconforming) analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). The outcome measure was positive rating. Covariates included participant gender, race, sexual orientation, and social political beliefs. (Note: There was no significant difference between normality ratings for targets who were gender conforming vs gender nonconforming, $t(203) = -.29$, $p = .78$. This suggests that tautology is not an issue, and that gender expression [e.g., typical expression vs. atypical expression] was not confounded with the outcome variable of normality.)

Hypothesis 2 was analyzed with a hierarchical multiple regression with positive rating as the outcome measure. To remove the influence of condition, analyses were split by condition (4 groups). Step 1 included participant gender, race, sexual orientation, social political affiliation, same-gender, and other-gender typicality. Step 2 included target same-gender and other-gender typicality. Step 3 included measures related to sexual orientation: heteronormativity and sexual prejudice. Step 4 added measures related to gender expression: felt pressure to conform and tolerance of ambiguity.

Hypothesis 1

There were no significant effects of the covariates participant gender, participant race, participant sexual orientation, and participant social political beliefs on participants' positive ratings.

The main effect of target orientation on positive rating was significant, $F(1, 187) = 21.77$, $p < .001$ (see Figure 2). Contrary to our hypotheses, straight targets received *lower* positive ratings than gay targets (straight: $M = 3.25$, $SE = .05$; gay: $M = 3.60$, $SE = .05$). The main effect of target gender expression on positive rating was significant, $F(1,187) = 4.53$, $p = .04$ (see Figure 3). Contrary to our hypothesis, conforming gender expression targets received *lower* positive ratings than nonconforming targets (conforming: $M = 3.34$, $SE = .05$; nonconforming: $M = 3.51$, $SE = .06$). There was also no significant interaction between target orientation and target typicality.

Figure 2. Positive ratings of targets based on sexual orientation.

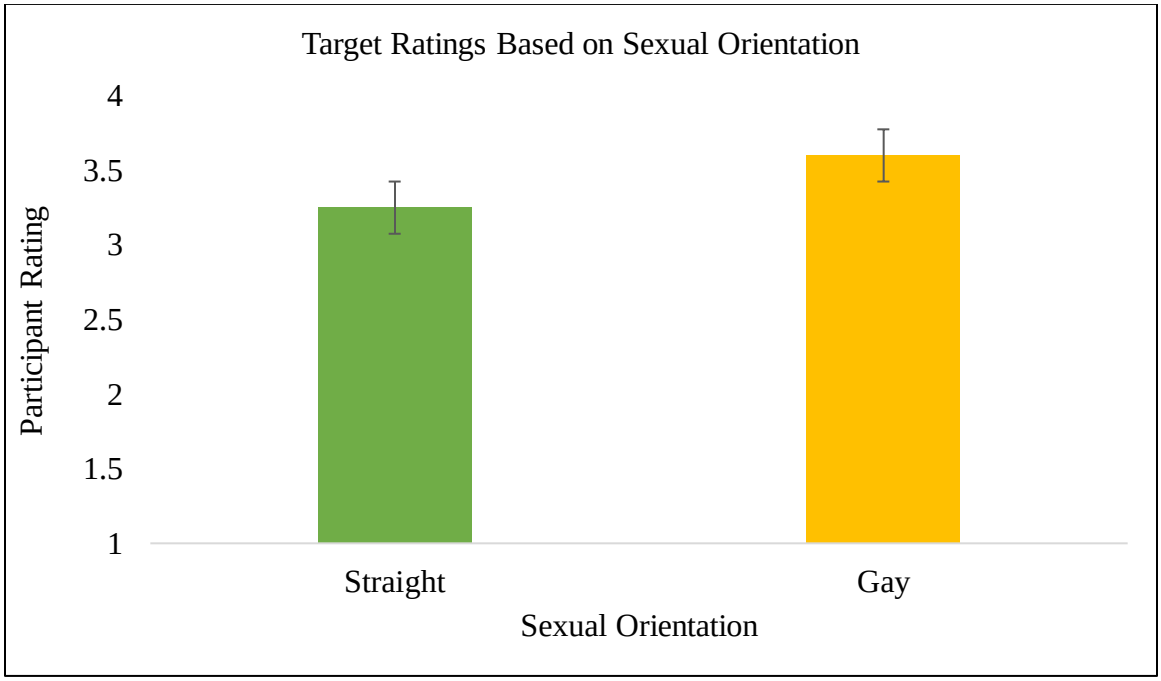
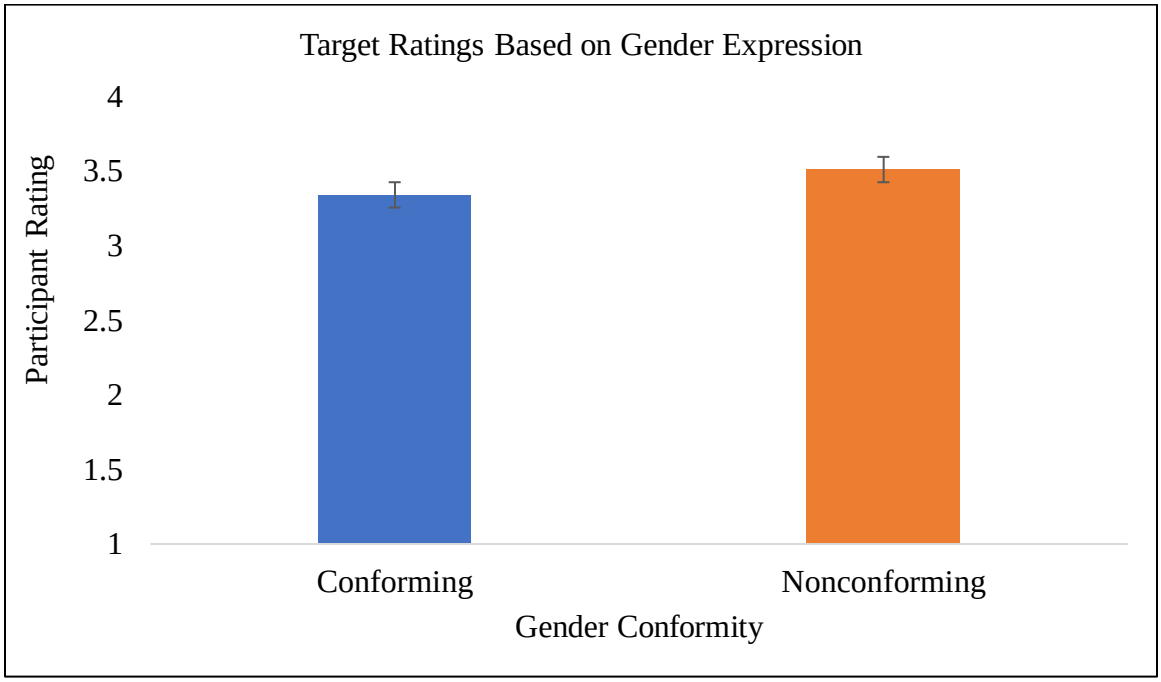


Figure 3. Positive ratings of targets based on gender expression.



Hypothesis 2

Straight/ Gender Conforming, Gay/Gender Conforming, and Straight/Gender nonconforming Targets

There were no significant effects for straight/gender conforming targets, gay/gender conforming targets, or straight/gender nonconforming targets.

Gay/Gender nonconforming Targets

The only target that was rated differently among participants was gay/gender nonconforming targets. Specifically, there was a significant effect on positive rating of participant gender, $\beta = .34$, $t(40) = 2.49$, $p = .02$ (see Table 3). Female-identified participants rated the gay/gender nonconforming target more positively than male-identified participants. This gender difference accounted for 40% of the variance. There was also a significant effect of participant same-gender typicality, $\beta = .30$, $t(36) = 2.23$, p

= .03. Participants who were higher in same-gender typicality rated the gay/gender nonconforming target more positively than participants who were lower in same-gender typicality. Lastly, there was also a significant effect of heteronormativity, β = -.77, t(36) = -3.48, p < .01. As predicted, participants who were high in heteronormativity rated the gay/gender nonconforming target less positively than participants who were low in heteronormativity. Together, participant gender typicality and heteronormativity accounted for an additional and significant 19% of the variance. No other predictors were significant.

Table 3. Hierarchical regression predicting positive ratings for gay/nonconforming targets

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Gender (Female)	.34*	.34*	.26*	.26
Race (White)	.14	.10	.07	.06
Sexual orientation (Heterosexual)	-.13	-.15	-.02	.03
Social political beliefs (Liberal)	.30*	.23	-.10	-.11
Participant SG typicality	.21	.19	.30*	.31*
Participant OG typicality	.28	.22	.10	.10
Target SG typicality	–	.17	-.09	-.11
Target OG typicality	–	-.11	.05	.05
Sexual prejudice	–	–	-.05	-.05
Heteronormativity	–	–	-.77**	-.78**
Felt pressure	–	–	–	-.01
Tolerance of ambiguity	–	–	–	.18

R^2	.30**	.32	.49**	.50
F_{model}	4.26**	3.71**	5.44**	4.82**

Note: SG: same-gender, OG: other-gender; *p<.05, **p<.01; all values are β-values.

Discussion

SOGIE-based harassment has been widely documented and studied, and research has robustly shown that this harassment is associated with a variety of negative health outcomes (Kosciw et al., 2017). However, little research has examined who is at most at risk for SOGIE-based harassment, and no studies have yet explored *why* these individuals are targeted. Thus, the current study examined which individuals are most at risk for becoming targets of SOGIE-based harassment (specifically, White, male sexual minorities or White, male gender nonconforming individuals). The study also explored violations or normality and violations of morality as potential motivations behind SOGIE-based harassment, and whether these motivations are predicted by individual differences (specifically, sexual prejudice, beliefs in heteronormativity, tolerance of ambiguity, and adherence to gender norms).

First, it was hypothesized that there would be a main effect of sexual orientation. Specifically, we predicted that participants would give higher positive ratings (i.e., normality, morality, acceptability, and desire for closeness) to straight targets than gay targets (Hypothesis 1a). Contrary to our hypotheses, participants gave straight targets *less* positive ratings than they did gay targets. One potential explanation for this finding is overcompensation. Research examining racial attitudes and discrimination has found that

motivation to control prejudiced reactions may lead participants to "correct" their attitudes (Mendes & Koslov, 2013; Olson & Fazio, 2004; Tetlock et al., 2008). In fact, this overcompensation can sometimes be mistaken for "reverse discrimination" (Morrel-Samuels, 2009). It is possible that participants were motivated to appear as positive as possible when presented with either a gay or gender nonconforming stimuli, leading to the more positive ratings of gay and gender nonconforming targets. Another possible explanation is that the manipulation was too simple. There were no descriptions of Ben, other than his appearance and his sexual orientation. It is possible that this alerted participants to the true nature of the study (examining the effects of sexual orientation and gender expression on participant attitudes), thus priming them to answer in socially desirable ways. Future research should control for social desirability and should further examine the role it plays in determining attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals. Additionally, research in intergroup contact theory has shown that continued exposure to a certain group can help reduce stereotypes and prejudice (Christ & Kauff, 2019; Pettigrew, 2008; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Many of the students at the university the study was conducted at come from rural communities, and many of them have their first interactions with the LGBTQ community in college. This exposure may have reduced any pre-held stereotypes or prejudice and increased positive ratings of the targets. Future research should control for amount of exposure to the LGBTQ community.

Second, it was hypothesized that there would be a main effect of gender expression. Specifically, it was predicted that participants would give gender conforming targets more positive ratings than gender nonconforming targets (Hypothesis 1b). Contrary to our hypotheses, participants gave gender conforming targets *less* positive

ratings than gender nonconforming targets. As with the effect of sexual orientation, it is possible that participants 1) were motivated to appear as positive as possible when presented with a gender nonconforming target and overcompensated, 2) detected the manipulation and answered in socially desirable ways, or 3) had increased exposure to the LGBTQ community during the transition to college, which led to more positive ratings for the nonconforming vs. conforming target.

Next, it was hypothesized that there would be an interaction between sexual orientation and gender expression (Hypothesis 1c). Specifically, based on Horn (2007) and Heinze and Horn (2014), it was predicted that participants would rate as most moral/normal/acceptable and desire to be closest towards straight/conforming targets, followed by gay/conforming targets, followed by straight/nonconforming targets, and lastly followed by gay/nonconforming targets. There was no support found for this interaction. It is possible that the current study was underpowered to detect an interaction. Future research should conduct similar analyses using a larger sample.

The second aim of the study was to determine whether or not participants' attitudes towards targets were predicted by individual differences. It was predicted that positive ratings would be positively predicted by tolerance of ambiguity and negatively predicted by felt pressure to conform, sexual prejudice, and beliefs in heteronormativity (Hypothesis 2).

First, it was found that no individual differences were significant predictors of positive ratings for straight/conforming, gay/conforming, and straight/nonconforming targets. One possible explanation for this is that there is currently record-high support for LGBTQ individuals in the United States (McCarthy, 2019; McCarthy, 2021), and it is

possible that it is only for doubly-stigmatized targets (i.e., gay *and* gender nonconforming) that individual differences start to play a factor. For gay/nonconforming targets, it was found that female-identified participants rated the target as more normal than male-identified participants. This is consistent with prior work that shows women tend to hold more positive attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals than men (Hooghe et al., 2010; Poteat et al., 2011; Poteat & Rivers, 2010). This may be because gender norms are less strict for women vs. men, and women tend to have more flexible attitudes about gender and gender roles than men (Bartini, 2006; Spinner et al., 2018; Wilkey, 2010). Next, it was found that same-gender typicality was a significant predictor of positive ratings. Specifically, participants higher in same-gender typicality rated targets more positively than participants lower in same-gender typicality. There were no hypotheses associated with this finding; however, this is consistent with prior work that suggests individuals low in gender typicality may feel more negatively towards other low gender typicality individuals than their peers who are higher in gender typicality (Pauletti et al., 2014; Tam et al, 2019). Lastly, it was found that heteronormativity significantly predicted positive ratings. As predicted, participants who scored lower on heteronormativity rated the target more positively than participants who scored higher on heteronormativity. This is consistent with the idea of heteronormativity emphasizing both being heterosexual and conforming to traditional gender roles as the normal or correct thing to do (Barker, 2014; Habarth, 2015; Warner, 1991).

As with all research, there were some limitations in the present study. First, the study used only White, male targets. This was done to limit variability; however, caution should be taken when generalizing these results to targets of other races or sexes, and

future research should utilize gender and race-diverse targets. Secondly, the current study examined heteronormativity, but not cisnormativity. It is possible that cisnormativity plays an important role in the interaction between sexual orientation and gender expression. For example, an individual who is high in cisnormativity may rate a straight gender nonconforming individual less positively than a gay gender nonconforming individual. They may believe that it is more acceptable for gay individuals to be gender nonconforming or trans than it is for straight individuals, because this does not violate their cisnormative stereotypes. Thus, future work should take care to examine both cisnormativity as well as heteronormativity. Additionally, this study used single-item measures of normality and morality. Some older research has found no empirical difference between multi-item and single-item measures (Gardner et al., 1998), but newer research suggests that multi-item measures outperform single-item measures (Sarstedt & Wilczynski, 2009); thus, future research may consider maintaining the single-item questions of normality and morality while also including multi-item scales for these constructs. It is also important to note that ratings of targets may not translate into real-life behaviors (e.g., belief sexual prejudice vs. social interaction sexual prejudice). For example, a participant may have rated the gay or gender nonconforming target poorly (beliefs), but would not have treated that target poorly in a face-to-face interaction (social interaction). In addition, the need to split analyses by condition severely lowered power, and future research should take care to increase sample size. Lastly, this research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are still many unknown psychological effects of the pandemic (Goldman, 2020; Pillay & Barnes, 2020), which may have influenced the results of this study.

Despite these limitations, this research represents important steps towards 1) understanding the targets of SOGIE-based harassment and 2) the motivation of individuals who perpetrate SOGIE-based harassment. These findings suggest that, similar to studies examining race, individuals presented with gay and gender nonconforming targets may overcompensate in an attempt to appear unbiased and subsequently rate these targets more positively than straight and gender conforming targets. However, it is imperative to note that the researchers are not implying that gender nonconforming individuals are choosing to be harassed or that they should aim to be more gender conforming in order to avoid harassment. Rather, the authors suggest that this be support for the discussion of gender conformity and trans identities in health and sex education. Research from the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN) has shown that the majority of sex and health education classes in the United States do not discuss LGBTQ topics and that those who do often discuss sexual orientation only and ignore gender expression and gender identity (Greytak & Kosciw, 2013). The current study supports previous research that shows gender expression plays a role in determining who is the target of SOGIE-based harassment (Heinze, & Horn, 2014; Horn, 2007. The authors thus recommend that all schools should be required to discuss the diversity of gender expression as well as discuss sexual orientation when teaching health classes. This inclusive approach may further improve attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals and thus improve the experiences and health outcomes of LGBTQ youth.

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Curriculum Vitae

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EDUCATION

PhD in Experimental Psychology Expected 2021
University of Kentucky, summa cum laude Lexington, KY
Sexual orientation and gender expression as predictors of SOGIE-based harassment.

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University of Kentucky, summa cum laude Lexington, KY
Gender-based harassment in early adolescence: Group and individual predictors of perpetration.

B.A. in Psychology
2017
University of Kentucky, summa cum laude
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WORK EXPERIENCE

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Manager, Cincinnati Public Schools 2021-Present

HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Outstanding Teaching Award, University of Kentucky 2020

Gunto-Berger Social Psychology Award, University of Kentucky 2019
· the strongest social psychology graduate student in the department is selected

Royster Special Distinction Award, University of Kentucky ($15,000) 2017-2019
· the ten strongest incoming graduate students university-wide are selected

Travel Grant, National Conference on Undergraduate Research 2017

Psychology Fellowship, University of Kentucky ($40,300) 2017
· the strongest incoming graduate student in the department is selected

James Miller Award, University of Kentucky 2017
· the strongest senior research thesis in the department is selected

Patterson Scholarship, University of Kentucky ($145,000) 2014
· full scholarship awarded to incoming National Merit Scholars

National Merit Scholarship, National Merit Scholarship Corp. ($2,500) 2014

Georgia Scholar, Georgia Department of Education 2014

· honors high school seniors who have achieved excellence in school and community life

PUBLICATIONS

Brown, C.S., **Tam, M.J.**, Kahng, D., & Midkiff, J. (under review). Latinx parents' perception of discrimination and ethnic-racial socialization predict their elementary school children's perceptions of discrimination. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*.

Biefeld, S., **Tam, M.J.**, & Brown, C.S. (under review). Gendered harassment in adolescence. In T.W. Miller (Ed.), School violence and primary prevention. (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Springer.

Brown, C.S., & **Tam, M.J.** (2021). Gender-based discrimination in childhood and adolescence. In D. P. VanderLaan & W. I. Wong (Eds.), *Gender and sexuality development: Contemporary theory and research.* New York, NY: Springer.

Brown, C.S., Biefeld, S., & **Tam, M.J.** (2020). Gender in childhood. In M. Bornstein (Ed.), E*lements of gender development*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tam, M. J., & Brown, C. S. (2020). Early adolescents' responses to witnessing gender-based harassment differ by their perceived school belonging and gender typicality. *Sex Roles,* 1-14. doi.org/10.1007/s11199-020-01126-0

Brown, C. S., & **Tam, M.J.** (2019). Ethnic discrimination predicting academic attitudes for Latinx students in middle childhood. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 65*, 1-11. doi:10.1016/j.appdev.2019.101061

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Brown, C.S., & **Tam, M.J.** (2019). Parenting girls and boys. In M.H. Bornstein (Ed.), *Handbook of parenting* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Brown, C.S., **Tam, M.J.**, & Aboud, F.E. (2018). Ethnic prejudice in young children in Indonesia: Intervention attempts using multicultural friendship stories. *International Journal of Early Childhood 50*(1), 67-84. doi.org/10.1007/s13158-018-0214-z.

PRESENTATIONS

Tam, M.J. & Brown, C.S. (2021, April). *Sexualized gender stereotypes in early adolescence: A bioecological approach.* Poster presented at Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Child Development, Virtual.

Tam, M.J. & Brown, C.S. (2020, April). *Confront or get help: Early adolescents' responses to witnessing gender-based harassment*. Poster accepted to Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Adolescence, San Diego, CA.

Thompson, D., **Tam, M.J.**, & Brown, C.S., (2019, April). *Gender identity and mental health in early adolescence*. Poster presented at National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Kennesaw, GA.

Browning, L., **Tam, M.J.**, & Brown, C.S. (2019, April). *Academic motivation and attitudes in middle school.* Poster presented at University of Kentucky Showcase of Undergraduate Scholars, Lexington, KY.

Tam, M.J., & Brown, C.S. (2019, March). *Confront, get help, or ignore: Witnesses of gender-based harassment in early adolescence.* Poster presented at Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Child Development, Baltimore, MD.

Tam, M.J. & Brown, C.S. (2018, October). *Gender-based harassment in early adolescence: Group and individual predictors of perpetration*. Poster presented at Gender Development Research Conference, San Francisco, CA.

Tam, M.J. & Brown, C.S. (2018, April). *Gender typicality and gender-based harassment in early adolescence: Typicality characteristics of bullies, victims, and bystanders*. Poster presented at Biennial Meeting of Society for Research in Adolescence, Minneapolis, MN.

Patel, A., **Tam, M. J.**, & Brown, C. S. (2018, April). *The effect of sexualized girl stereotypes on attitudes about sexual harassment*. Poster presented at National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Edmond, OK.

Garrison, D.A., **Tam, M.J.** & Brown, C.S. (2018, April). *Ethnic discrimination in middle childhood: Impacts on children's social, academic, and psychological well-being*. Poster presented at University of Kentucky Showcase of Undergraduate Scholars, Lexington, KY.

Tam, M.J., White, H.B., Hock, A.J., Jubran, R.L., Heck, A. R., & Bhatt, R.S. (2017, April). *Inequality in early social development: The effects of income on infants' processing of emotion in bodies.* Poster presented at National Conference on Undergraduate Research, Memphis, TN.