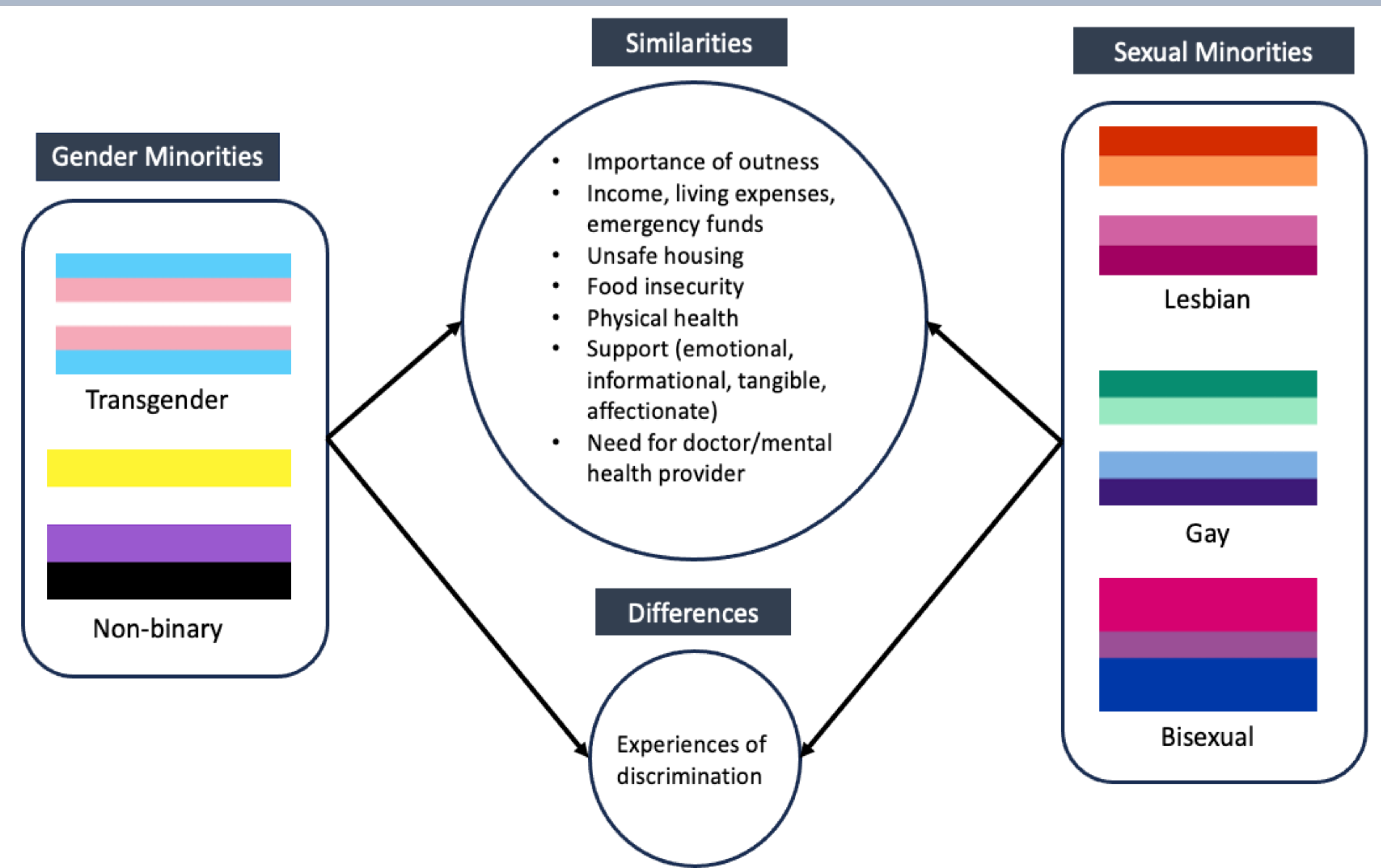


Does Your Letter Matter?: Distinctions Between Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation in Health Outcomes and Healthcare System Experiences

Cassandra Everly, B.S., University of Arizona College of Medicine Phoenix and College of Public Health
 Beth E. Meyerson, M.Div., Ph.D., Harm Reduction Research Lab, University of Arizona College of Medicine-Tucson

Visual abstract



In healthcare settings, older transgender and non-binary individuals experienced **higher rates of discrimination** compared to cisgender lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals.

Introduction

Problem Statement: Transgender and nonbinary (TNB) populations in the U.S. experience high rates of discrimination, report disproportionate social stressors, and are more likely to experience depression and suicide attempts compared to cisgender lesbian, gay and bisexual (cis-LGB) populations.

Background information: Many published studies comparing TNB populations with other populations do not control for important confounding factors such as socio-demographics and economics, which would allow the examination of intersectional impacts.

Methods

A secondary analysis of survey data among TNB and LGB older populations in Pima County, Arizona was conducted.

Survey data were collected in 2020-2021 among 462 older (50+ years) adults who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+).

A sample of 126 participants were matched at a ratio of 2:1 (cis-LGB:TNB) based on age (+/- 3 years), race (White, Hispanic, White + other, Hispanic + other), and income (0-34,999, 35,000-74,999 and 75,000+).

Survey items were compared using Pearson Chi-Square tests and T-tests.

Results

	TNB N (%)	Cis LGB N (%)
Gender*		
Female	13 (31.0%)	44 (52.4%)
Male	6 (14.3%)	40 (47.6%)
Transgender	23 (54.8%)	1 (1.2%)
Nonbinary	15 (35.7%)	0 (0.0%)
Queer	6 (14.3%)	7 (8.3%)
Intersex	2 (4.8%)	0 (0.0%)
Other	1 (4.8%)	1 (1.2%)
Race/Ethnicity		
White	39 (92.9%)	78 (92.9%)
Hispanic	1 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)
White and Other	1 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)
Hispanic and Other	1 (2.4%)	2 (2.4%)
Income		
\$0-19,999	9 (21.4%)	16 (19.0%)
\$20,000-34,999	5 (11.9%)	13 (15.5%)
\$35,000-53,999	9 (21.4%)	18 (21.4%)
\$54,000-74,999	7 (16.7%)	13 (15.5%)
\$75,000-99,999	5 (11.9%)	12 (14.3%)
\$100,000 or more	7 (16.7%)	12 (14.3%)

Table 1: Sample characteristics including gender, race and ethnicity

Future Directions

To our knowledge, this was the first matching study between TNB and cis-LGB of its kind. This proof of concept of the method application demonstrates that it can effectively be used to examine differences in experiences within the larger LGBTQI+ community for application to policy and programming. Future studies should employ similar matching methods with a much larger comparison sample. The strength of this matching study is that the matching sampling was drawn from the same larger sample. Thus, the comparison was as equivalent as possible in situation and time.

Limitations

The vast majority identified as Caucasian/White and living in an urban environment. The findings of the study cannot be generalized to rural populations as well as populations comprised varied races and ethnicities.

Acknowledgements

Funding for the survey study was provided by the Jack Challum Fund.

We wish to thank the members of the Aging Successfully coalition and the University of Arizona LGBTQ+ Institute.

Survey Item	Pearson Chi-square	p value
Importance of Outness	5.272	0.384
Household income	0.578	0.989
Living expenses	4.45	0.108
Emergency funds	14.839	0.062
Living companions	0.661	0.882
Unsafe housing	0	1
Food insecurity	0.267	0.605
Physical health	9.148	0.058
Need for doctor	2.275	0.685
Need for mental health provider	7.351	0.118
Experience discrimination	8.473	0.037

Table 2: Observed associations between key categories among TNB and cis LGB