College Sexual Violence in Context:

Vulnerable Populations and Campus Climate

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Abstract

Using the 2016 Diverse Learning Environments Survey, this study explores the prevalence of sexual violence among lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and other (LGBQO) and transgender students who experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault while in college, as well as perceptions of campus climate indicators among LGBQO and transgender students. LGBQO and transgender students report higher rates of sexual violence compared to their heterosexual counterparts. Additionally, LGBQO and transgender students who experienced sexual violence had higher measures of constructs that we conceptualize as "practices of resilience". Greater insight into the prevalence of SV for LGBQO and transgender students, exploration of SV within the context of campus climate, and an anti-deficit approach to understanding minoritized students who have experienced SV in college can inform the efforts of campus professionals, faculty, and Title IX administrators, to better support vulnerable populations in postsecondary institutions.

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In recent years, efforts to address campus sexual violence have become top priorities for institutions of higher education (Not Alone Report, 2014). Increased visibility exists in part, due to White House initiatives (Somander, 2014), guidance from the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (Department of Education, 2014), and heightened media scrutiny of colleges and universities, most recently at Stanford University and Baylor University (Samuels & Pollock, 2017; Stack, 2016). While many White House initiatives are being eroded under the current presidential administration, awareness on college campuses is still high. Indeed, research on the prevalence and specific nature of sexual violence in the college context is beginning to be explored in further detail. For example, in 2015, the Association of American Universities (AAU) released a report to understand attitudes and experiences of college students with respect to campus sexual violence. The survey found that 23% of undergraduate women and 5% of undergraduate men reported experiences of sexual violence (Cantor et al., 2015). Another study found that one in five women is sexually assaulted while in college (Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007).

Researchers that focus on campus sexual violence frequently foreground the experiences of women (Harris & Linder, 2017; Tillapaugh, 2017), often resulting in the erasure and invisibility of marginalized groups within the campus sexual violence discourse. Campus sexual violence programs and policies often focus on heterosexual relationships and cisgender students, and cisgender women are often centered as the main focus of campus sexual violence research. Yet, further examination of national sexual violence victimization data indicates an overrepresentation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, pansexual, asexual, and

transgender individuals (Edwards et al., 2015), which we refer to in this study as "vulnerable populations" as a result of their higher rates of victimization and invisibility in research and public awareness. For example, one study found that 46.4% of lesbian women and 74.9% of bisexual women reported sexual violence other than rape during their lifetimes compared to 43.3% of their heterosexual counterparts, and 40.2% of gay and 47.4% of bisexual men reported sexual violence other than rape during their lifetimes compared to 20.8% of heterosexual men (Walters, Chen, & Breiding, 2013).

Current research about vulnerable populations with respect to campus sexual violence remains markedly understudied, particularly for lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer (LGBQO), and transgender students (Edwards et al., 2015). For the purposes of this study, we separate sexual orientation and gender identity in our discussion of vulnerable populations. Among LGBQO college students, 43.5% reported dating violence perpetration within the past 12 months (Jones & Raghavan, 2012) and as many as one in four transgender students experience some form of sexual violence in college (Cantor et al., 2015; New, 2015), indicating that rates of campus sexual violence are also higher for LGBQO and transgender students compared to their counterparts. Thus, this study seeks to expand our lens of campus sexual violence discourse and center vulnerable populations that experience dramatically high rates of assault at colleges and universities.

While campus sexual violence literature has primarily focused on examining its prevalence as well as psychological effects on individual students, there is much can be gained from understanding the effects that college sexual violence may have on the institution as an organization. Specifically, the current environment of an institution, or climate, might be perceived differently for groups of individuals due to their experiences with sexual violence and

their social identities. For this study, we define climate as, "the current attitudes, behaviors, and standards and practices of employees and students of an institution" (Rankin & Reason, 2008, p. 264). The extent to which sexual violence and campus climate are connected is even more of an urgent question for vulnerable populations, as research has shown the important relationship between campus climate and academic and social outcomes for LGBQO and transgender students (Garvey, Sanders, & Flint, 2017). For example, transgender students report experiencing a more negative campus climate compared to cisgender students (Beemyn, 2005; Bilodeau, 2005, 2009; Garvey & Rankin, 2015; Pryor, 2015), and even compared to their cisgender LGBQO counterparts (Dugan, Kusel, & Simounet, 2012). It is likely that experiencing higher rates of campus sexual violence can contribute to experiencing a more negative campus climate, ultimately affecting social and academic outcomes for LGBQO and transgender students at higher levels compared to heterosexual and/or cisgender students. Controlling for sexual orientation, gender identity, race/ethnicity, and year in school, Coulter & Rankin (2017) found an association between greater perceived inclusion of sexual and gender minorities and significantly lower odds of experiencing sexual assault, suggesting that "one possible mechanism for reducing college sexual assault among sexual- and gender-minority individuals is increasing inclusion of these vulnerable and marginalized populations" (Coulter & Rankin, 2017, p. 9).

While the literature on campus climate for vulnerable populations indicates negative outcomes, the picture for LGBQO and transgender students is not all bleak. Encouragingly, Garvey and Rankin (2015) found that although perceptions of a hostile climate meant transgender students were less likely than their cisgender LGBQO peers to be "out" about being transgender, they were most likely to access campus support resources. Edwards and colleagues (2015) found generally low levels of internalized markers of minority stressors in LGBQO and

transgender students who were victims of college sexual violence, suggesting that many LGBTQ college youths display resilience and do not necessarily internalize these negative experiences. Despite battling hegemonic views of gender, transgender college students continue to "practice resilience," the process by which students actively engage in strategies that allow them to navigate college (Nicolazzo, 2016, p. 88). Similarly, Renn (2007) found that LGBTQ college student leaders engaged in an involvement-identity cycle whereby increased leadership led to a merged gender/sexual orientation and leadership identity. Some of these student leaders developed a "transgenderformational" approach to leadership via their desire to transgenderform structures of power and privilege. Thus, it is possible that LGBQO and transgender students may display their agency despite oppressive systems that allow sexual violence to continue to exist. Students may display signals of agency in the form of attitudes, such as an increased consciousness of critical issues, or as behaviors like increased civic engagement, underscoring the history of organizing and activism for LGBQO and transgender college students (Garvey et al., 2017). Looking at the history of activism, marginalized communities often organized off campus to call attention to the intersection of different aspects of identity (Bevacqua, 2000). Further, students who work for social change based on aspects of their identity may not consider themselves campus activists; rather they consider their engagement a duty or survival strategy that serves their community as a whole as opposed to solely impacting campus climate (Linder & Rodriguez, 2012; Rhoads, 1997).

In this study, we expand upon Coulter & Rankin (2017) to provide data on campus sexual violence for LGBQO and transgender college students across the nation. Specifically, we examine differences between students who experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault while in college with respect to gender identity and sexual orientation. Our study is

unique in that these groups are analyzed separately since sexual orientation and gender identity are not mutually exclusive. Additionally, we provide a subset analysis of differences between LGBQO and transgender students' experiences with, and perceptions of, discrimination and bias, which serve as additional indicators of campus climate. Lastly, we looked at levels of critical consciousness, social agency, and civic engagement as proxies for practices of resilience for LGBQO and transgender students who reported experiencing sexual violence. While current studies of college sexual violence aim to inform prevention and response efforts (Cantor et al., 2015), we aim to expand the literature with a better understanding of the unique experiences and needs of vulnerable populations, as well as how college sexual violence is related to campus climate. Findings not only can inform prevention and response efforts uniquely tailored for LGBQO and transgender students, but can glean insight into ways that sexual violence might affect campus climate and, ultimately, academic and social outcomes. The following questions guide this study:

1. How prevalent is college sexual violence for LGBQO and transgender students?
2. What are LGBQO and transgender students' experiences with discrimination and bias?
3. How do goals, behaviors, and self-reflection with respect to "practices of resilience" compare for LGBQO and transgender students who reported experiencing campus sexual violence?

This study does not seek to prove the existence of a direct relationship between rates of campus sexual violence for vulnerable populations and their perceptions of campus climate. Rather, we do aim to begin this conversation through an initial exploration of descriptive data on sexual violence prevalence and perceptions of campus climate. Greater insight into the prevalence of college sexual violence, experiences with discrimination and bias, perceptions of

campus climate, and civic engagement of LGBQO and transgender students will inform higher education stakeholders who address Title IX and sexual violence at public postsecondary institutions. Further, our anti-deficit approach to examining these questions refocuses efforts of campus professionals, faculty, and administrators to also consider asset-based approaches to supporting vulnerable populations.

Conceptual Framework and Review of Literature

The Multi-Contextual Model for Diverse Learning Environments (MMDLE) is a useful framework for this study. Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, and Arellano (2012) developed the model to determine how characteristics of an institution, including campus climate, contribute to students' development along a set of critical outcomes. Historical, organizational, compositional, psychological, and behavioral factors intersect to create a campus climate that influences student outcomes, including habits of mind for lifelong learning, competencies for a multicultural world, and academic achievement. Ultimately, these three critical student outcomes lead to individual and societal benefits (Hurtado et al., 2012), including a more engaged citizenry and personal development of critical thinking skills. The MMDLE is "intended to reflect inclusion of the developing scholarship on multiple social identity groups" (Hurtado et al., 2012, p. 48). Applied to this study, we aim to examine student outcomes, particularly for LGBQO and transgender students, to understand experiences of college sexual violence and perceptions of campus climate.

The Diverse Learning Environments Survey (DLE) was developed to link climate (i.e. students' perceptions and behaviors) and institutional practices (what institutions do) with student outcomes. Using the DLE, we examined LGBQO and transgender students' perceptions of campus climate, as well as their critical consciousness and action, civic engagement, and

social agency, which serve as intermediate outcomes of their undergraduate education. We are intentional in our anti-deficit approach to understanding LGBQO and transgender students. Specifically, an anti-deficit approach focuses on understanding how students from lower-resourced or marginalized backgrounds manage to overcome such disadvantages (Harper, 2010; Valencia, 2010). For example, sexual assault survivors and organizations have mobilized grassroots efforts to end sexual and dating violence in schools (Know Your IX, n.d.; End Rape on Campus, n.d.; SAFER, n.d.) and many college students have been involved in this activism (Kingcade, 2015). Applied to this study, it is important to keep in mind that while LGBQO and transgender students face subtle to extreme forms of discrimination on college campuses (Hoban & Ward, 2003; Rankin, et al., 2010), they often must and do actually find ways to persist. For example, transgender students are "forced to develop skills and strategies for navigating an environment that continues to be shaped without them in mind. These strategies are referred to as practices of resilience and provide possibilities for transgender* student liberation alongside forms of exhaustion" (Nicolazzo, 2017, p. 4). As a result, we have the unique opportunity to understand the historically unrecorded experiences and perceptions of marginalized students who have experienced sexual violence in college by learning about their views of campus climate, as well as their resiliency and agency seen through outcomes such as critical consciousness and action, propensity for civic engagement, and social agency, which we conceptualize as proxies for practices of resilience.

Data Source and Sample

We drew the data for this study from the 2016 Diverse Learning Environments Survey (DLE) which is administered by the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) at the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at the University of California, Los Angeles. The

survey is "designed to assess campus climate, educational practices, and a set of outcomes focused on retention and citizenship in a multicultural society" (Hurtado & Guillermo-Wann, 2013, p. 6). The recent versions of the DLE asked students to self-identify as transgender and included additional questions about their experiences with sexual violence. The data included 35,115 total respondents from 25 four-year colleges and universities and 5 community colleges.

In 2016 when the gender identity question was first introduced, students were simply asked to respond "yes" or "no" as to whether they identify as transgender. The sample includes 272 transgender students, less than 1% of survey participants for the 2016 DLE. More than 3,000 students (n = 3,184), approximately 9% of the sample, identify as a sexual orientation other than heterosexual/straight, including gay (n = 469), lesbian (n = 336), bisexual (n = 1,348), queer (n = 299), and other (n = 732). To provide data on the unique experiences of sexual minority students, the subgroups are reported in the study whenever possible. In our analysis, transgender and LGBQO are not mutually exclusive. In other words, a student may belong to both the LGBQO group which gets compared to heterosexual/straight peers, and might also belong to the transgender group. The referent group for the analyses by gender identity is non-transgender students while the referent group for the analyses by sexual orientation is heterosexual/straight students.

Variables

Two separate survey questions about sexual violence make up the primary variables of interest. Students reported whether they had experienced unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault since they have been at their current institution (definitions are provided on the survey instrument). Since it is not known whether students are referring to multiple incidents or just one incident, we created mutually-exclusive categories for experiencing unwanted sexual contact and

sexual assault so as to not artificially inflate the rate of these occurrences. If an individual reported that they experienced both unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault, we included them in the sexual assault totals only.

For our second research question, perceptions of discrimination and bias are examined since they serve as indicators of campus climate. We used survey items measuring perceptions and actions related to discrimination and bias, such as measures of satisfaction with administrative response to discrimination and sexual assault and perceptions of institutional diversity efforts. Students reported the frequency with which they challenged others on discrimination and discussed issues related to sexism, gender differences, or gender equity. Items from two other factors 1) discrimination and bias, and 2) harassment, are the key variables for understanding campus climate. The harassment factor (α =0.879) measures the frequency with which students experience threats or harassment, including physical assault or injury, threats of physical violence, and damage to personal property. The discrimination and bias factor (α = 0.876) measures the frequency with which students experience subtler forms of discrimination, such as hearing disparaging remarks, witnessing discrimination, or exclusion.

To answer our third research question, we explored three factors from the DLE. Critical consciousness and action (α =0.814) measures how often students critically examine and challenge their own and others' biases. Civic engagement (α = 0.816) measures the extent to which students are involved in civic, electoral, and political activities. Finally, social agency (α = 0.821) measures the extent to which students value political and social involvement as personal goals. A sub-analysis looks at these measures for both LGBQO and transgender students who reported experiencing campus sexual violence (unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault).

Analysis

Given that the research on sexual violence in college among LGBQO and transgender students has been nearly non-existent, we seek to offer demographic characteristics, provide a breakdown of students' experiences with college sexual violence by sexual orientation and gender identity, and examine students' goals, behaviors, and self-reflection with respect to critical consciousness and action, social agency, and civic engagement. The untapped nature of these data call for the preliminary analyses to be descriptive in nature. We ran frequencies, crosstabs, and mean comparisons and we utilized T-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test for group differences.

Limitations

There are a number of challenges to understanding campus sexual violence in context for LGBQO and transgender students. First, the data are cross-sectional, which limits our ability to attribute temporal order to items we examined in our study. For example, we can only draw a correlation between students who report experiences of sexual violence and their views on campus climate, but this study does not aim to provide statistical evidence that negative views of campus climate cause higher rates of sexual violence or practices of resilience, and/or vice versa. Another limitation is the small cell sizes for identity categories (i.e. sexual orientation, gender identity, reporting "yes" to experiences, of sexual violence), which limits statistical power even if we were to develop a regression model, and also limited statistical power in t-tests and simple statistical analyses used to check for significance of differences in this study. Countless studies delete the voices of marginalized groups, due to small cell sizes and analysis limitations; Thus, we still chose to report some descriptive results despite not having statistical significance because we believe these data still hold practical significance and give voice to sexual minorities. Next, authors have cautioned about the challenges of empirical research to study sexual minority

populations and seem to stabilize these identity categories, while other forms of research (mainly qualitative) seek to destabilize these categories (Mayo, 2017). Finally, overestimating or underestimating LGBQO and transgender students in the survey can lead to a concern of data validity, especially considering the use of survey data for this study. Mainly, "if the data collected and processed on sexual minority youths (and more generally, youths at large) are inaccurate, then our impressions of risk and deviance—and likewise, resilience and protective factors—for these groups may well be innacurate too" (Cimbian, 2017, p. 518). However, despite these limitations, we believe this study offers a vital contribution to the literature base by providing an initial exploration at national college data, given the dearth of literature on sexual minorities and college sexual violence.

Results

We present the findings by discussing results to the study's three research questions for transgender students first, followed by LGBQO students.

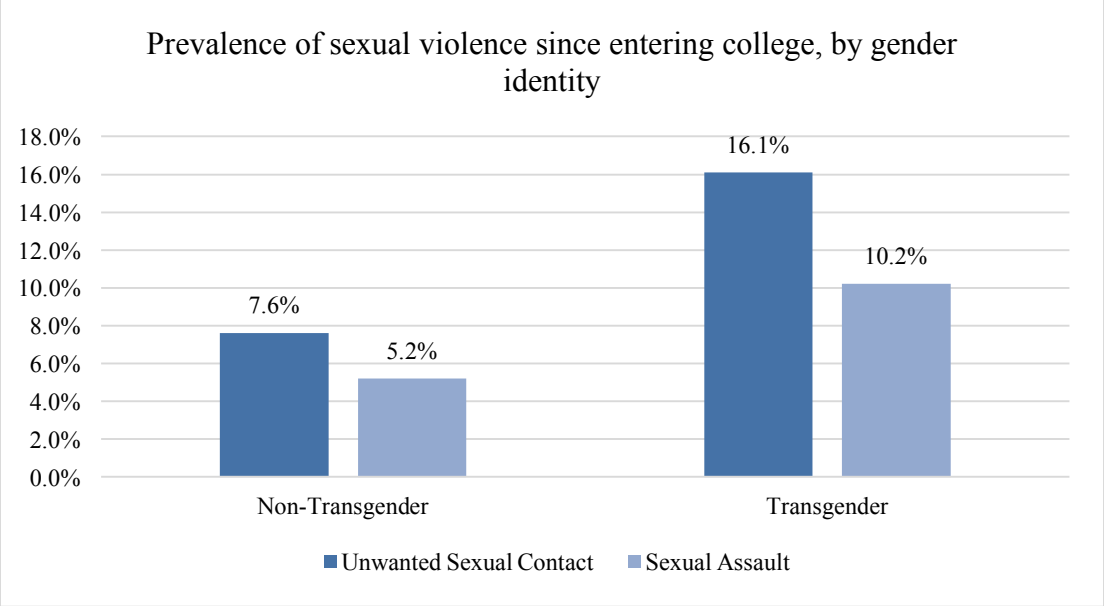
Transgender Students

Prevalence of sexual violence. Students reported whether they had experienced unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault since they have been at their current institution. If they answered yes, they were prompted to answer a series of follow-up questions regarding whom they told about the incident(s), whether physical force was used, whether they were incapacitated at the time of the incident(s), among others. While the questions regarding unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault are separate on the survey, for the purposes of these analyses we created three mutually exclusive groups: those who have experienced sexual assault, those who have experienced unwanted sexual contact, and those who have experienced neither. We do not know whether the respondents are referring to the same incident if they respond yes to

both the unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault questions. To avoid double counting, students who selected "yes" to both questions were included in the group who had experienced sexual assault (since there were fewer respondents in this group).

Figure 1 displays the prevalence of unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault by gender identity. Transgender students are more likely to experience unwanted sexual contact (16.1%) than their non-transgender peers (7.6%). Specifically, transgender students were more likely to report experiencing nonverbal behavior of a sexual nature (65.9%), compared to non-transgender students (57.4%).

Figure 1. Proportion of students who reported experiencing unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault, by gender identity



With respect to sexual assault, 10.2% of transgender students reported experiencing sexual assault while in college, twice the proportion (5.2%) of their non-transgender counterparts. In further examination of the nature of sexual assault, 52% of transgender students reported that the person who assaulted them used or threatened to use physical force, compared to only 29.8% of non-transgender students. Fewer transgender students reported they were

unable to provide consent because of being passed out, drunk, or otherwise incapacitated (32%) compared to 44.8% of their non-transgender peers.

Students also provided information about individuals they told about the incident of sexual assault (i.e., professor, campus administrator, campus police, local law enforcement, therapist, medical professional, friend, parents, or other family members). The most common response marked was reporting that they told a friend about the incident with 57.7% for transgender and 74.9% for non-transgender students. The second most common response marked for both groups was "no one," with 23.1% of transgender students and 21.2% of non-transgender students not telling anyone about their experience with sexual assault. In fact, transgender students were less likely to disclose their sexual assault with all individuals, compared to the proportion of non-transgender students who disclosed their sexual assault. Interestingly, while transgender students overall did not tell others about their assault, they did file a formal complaint with their institution at higher proportions compared to their non-transgender peers (16.0% compared to 8.2%).

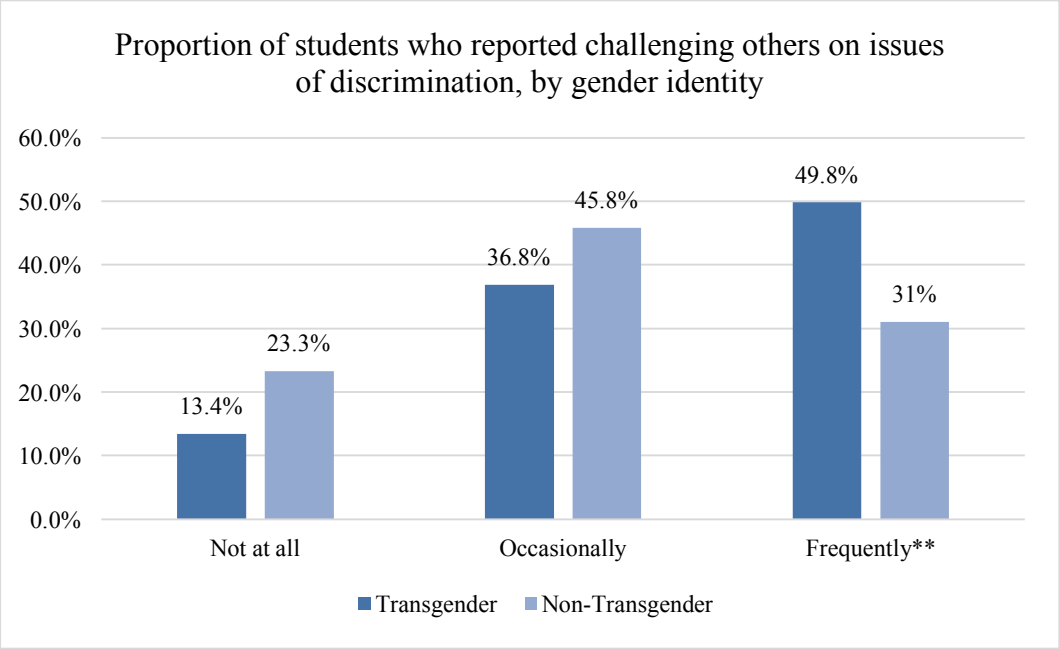
Experiences with discrimination and bias and perceptions of campus climate. This section discusses the differences in reports of discrimination and bias for transgender students compared to non-transgender students, regardless of whether they reported experiencing unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault. We explore reports for all transgender and LGBQO students to paint a broad picture of the overall perceptions of discrimination and bias, which we conceptualize as indicators of a positive or negative campus climate. We calculated factors on the DLE with a mean of 50 and standard deviation of 10. Once we calculated raw scores, we created group variables for each factor based on the mean and standard deviation for the whole population of survey respondents in a given year. The low group includes

those whose raw score is more than half a standard deviation below the mean. The average group includes those who score within half a standard deviation above or below the mean. Finally, the high group includes those who score more than half a standard deviation above the mean. Grouping students in low, average, and high groups relative to the sample mean provides a practical way to discuss and understand the findings.

Overall, findings show that transgender students experienced discrimination and bias differently compared to non-transgender students. We examined perceptions of 1) discrimination and bias, and 2) harassment, broken down by "low", "average", and "high" scores for both constructs. Overall, a greater proportion of transgender students fell into the "high" groups (66.7% for discrimination and bias, and 50% for harassment), compared to non-transgender students (56.1% for discrimination and bias, and 39% for harassment). Additionally, transgender students reported experiencing gender discrimination (52.4%) and discrimination based on sexual orientation (36.9%), compared to their non-transgender counterparts (18.1% and 5.8%), respectively, ($p < .01$).

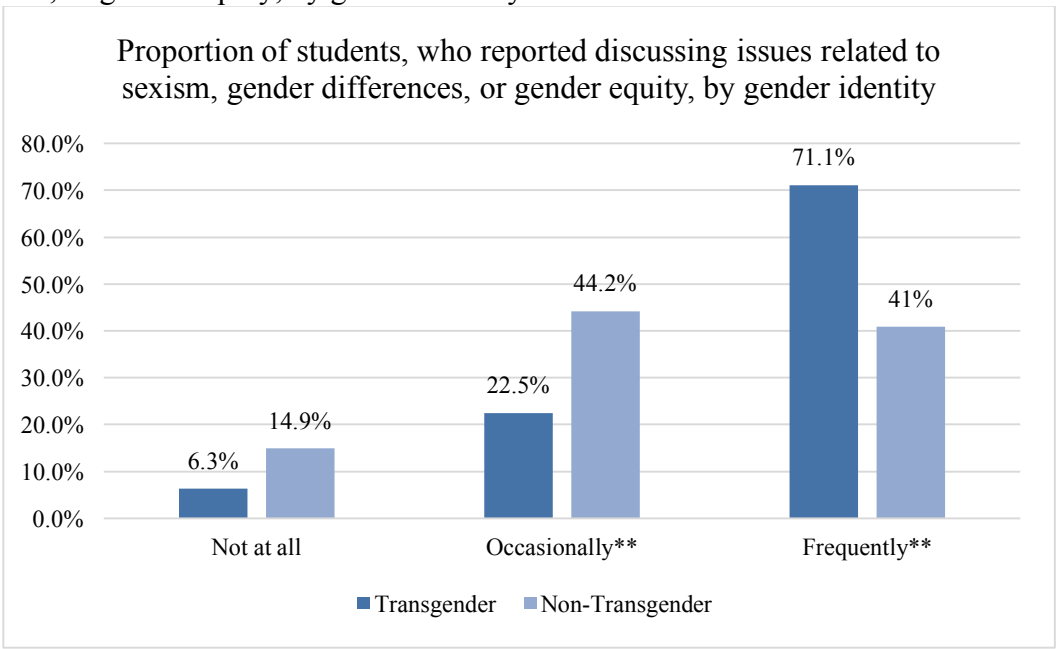
While transgender students' overall perceptions of diversity efforts were lower, they frequently challenged others on issues of discrimination (49.8%), compared to only 31% of non-transgender students ($p < .01$) (see Figure 2). Additionally, transgender students are significantly more likely to discuss issues related to sexism, gender differences, or gender equity (71.1%) compared to their non-transgender peers (40.9%), ($p < .01$) (see Figure 3). Transgender students also reported incidents of discrimination to a campus authority often or very often at higher rates (7.6%) compared to non-transgender students (1.4%).

Figure 2. Proportion of students who reported challenging others on issues of discrimination, by gender identity.



** p < .01

Figure 3. Proportion of students, who reported discussing issues related to sexism, gender differences, or gender equity, by gender identity.



** p < .01

Regarding perceptions of whether the university has a long-standing commitment to diversity, 26.1% of transgender students disagreed or strongly disagreed, compared to only 14.2% of non-transgender students. Almost a third of transgender students (31.3%) also

disagreed or strongly disagreed that campus administrators regularly speak about the value of diversity compared to only 24.7% of their non-transgender peers.

Since aspects of campus climate have been found to be related to academic and social outcomes (Garvey, et al., 2017), a measure of whether students consider dropping out of college can be used as an indirect measure of students' perceptions of the inclusiveness of their campus environment. transgender students are significantly more likely than their non-transgender peers to have considered dropping out of college, with 39.9% of transgender students who have considered dropping out to some or to a great extent compared to only 18.7% of non-transgender students ($p < .001$).

Students reported on their satisfaction with various aspects of the campus atmosphere. Transgender students reported being very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the campus atmosphere for differences in sexual orientation (23.4%) at a significantly higher rate compared to the proportion of non-transgender students who felt similarly (6.3%), ($p < .001$). Similarly, regarding respect for the expression of diverse beliefs, 17.6% of transgender students reported being very dissatisfied or dissatisfied compared to non-transgender students (8%), although there was no statistically significant difference. The DLE also measures students' satisfaction with administrative responses to discrimination and sexual assault. While we found no significant differences between transgender students and their non-transgender peers for being very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with respect to administrative responses to discrimination (27.2% and 11.4%) respectively, ($p < .05$), transgender students were significantly more dissatisfied with administrative responses to sexual assaults compared to non-transgender students (26% and 11.7%, respectively), ($p < .05$).

Goals, behaviors and self-reflection with respect to "practices of resilience."

Table 1 shows which survey items comprise each of the three factors. Similar to the constructs for discrimination and harassment in the previous section, we created “low”, “medium”, and “high” groups to make sense of student scores on each factor. Overall, transgender students scored significantly higher than non-transgender students on the critical consciousness and action, civic engagement, and social agency factors.

Table 1

Goals, Behaviors, and Self-Reflection Factors

Critical Consciousness and Action (α = 0.814)
How often in the past year did you:
* Make an effort to educate others about social issues
* Critically evaluated your own position on an issue
* Recognize the biases that affect your own thinking
* Challenge others on issues of discrimination
* Feel challenged to think more broadly about an issue
* Make an effort to get to know people from diverse backgrounds
Civic Engagement (α=0.816)
Since entering this college, how often have you:
* Demonstrated for a cause (e.g., boycott, rally, protest)
* Publicly communicated your opinion about a cause
(e.g., blog, email, petition)
* Discussed politics
* Performed community service

Social Agency (α=0.821)

Please indicate the importance to you personally of each of the following:

* Participating in a community action program

* Helping others who are in difficulty

* Becoming a community leader

* Influencing social values

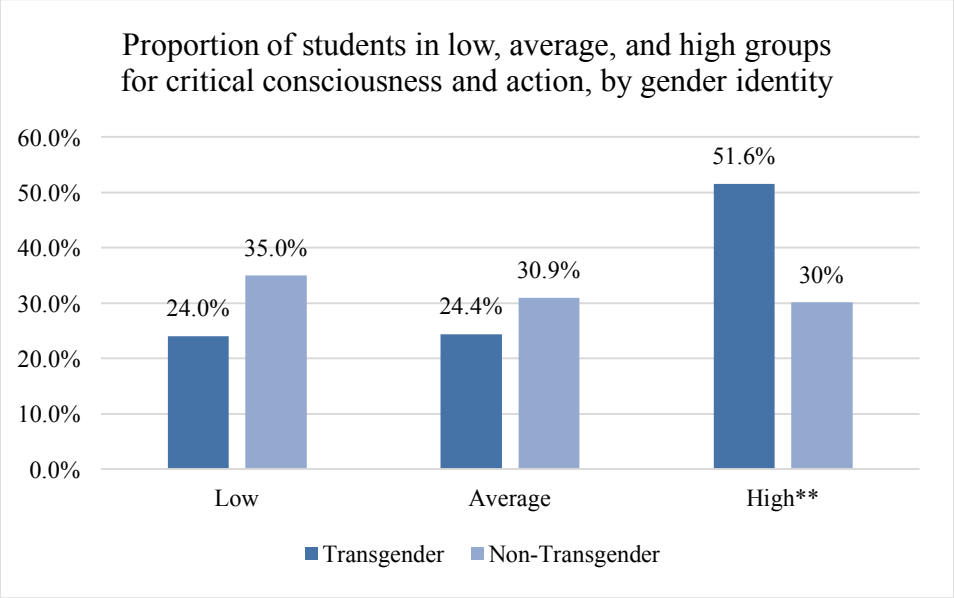
* Helping to promote racial understanding

* Keeping up to date with political affairs

Critical consciousness and action. Critical consciousness and action is a unified measure of how often students critically examine and challenge their own and others' biases. Transgender students had an average score of 53.3, significantly higher (p <.001) than non-transgender students (49.95). The majority of transgender students (51.6%) scored at least half a standard deviation above the mean on the critical consciousness and action factor, showing heightened self-reflection and the willingness to challenge themselves and others on issues of discrimination and bias. By contrast, just over one-third (34.1%) of the non-transgender group scored in the high group.

While it is unclear if students may have already been socially and politically engaged before their experience with sexual violence, it is interesting to note that for transgender students, those who have experienced either unwanted sexual contact or sexual assault scored higher on the critical consciousness and action factor than transgender students who have not experienced any sexual violence or their heterosexual counterparts (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Proportion of students in low, average, and high groups for critical consciousness and action, by gender identity.



**p < .01

Civic engagement. Civic engagement measures the extent to which students are involved in civic, electoral, and political activities. In other words, this factor reflects transgender students' inclination to be active and vocal socially and politically. Transgender students had an average score of 53.85, significantly higher ($p < 0.01$) than non-transgender students (49.94). A larger proportion of non-transgender students appeared in the low group for this factor compared to the proportion of their transgender classmates (35.5% and 22.1%, respectively). About two-fifths of the transgender students (42.9%) scored at least half a standard deviation above the mean, putting them in the high group. By contrast, less than one-third (28.0%) of non-transgender students are in the high group. While the sample sizes are quite small and it is unclear if students may have already been socially and politically engaged, it is interesting to note that for transgender students, those who have experienced sexual assault are more civically engaged than those who have not (*Ms*= 61.96 and 53.28, respectively). For non-transgender students, those who have experienced sexual assault are more civically engaged than those who

have experienced unwanted sexual contact or neither (*Ms*= 56.41, 54.67, and 50.68, respectively).

Social agency. Social agency measures the extent to which students value political and social involvement as personal goals. While the civic engagement factor measures behaviors, this factor shows that transgender students are also more likely to value political and social engagement as personal goals than their non-transgender peers. Transgender students, regardless of reporting sexual violence experiences, had an average score of 52.22, significantly higher ($p<.05$) than non-transgender students (49.94). Similar to the other factors mentioned above, about half of the transgender students (49.3%) were in the high group, compared to under a third of the non-transgender students (31.6%). Another third of non-transgender students (31.0%) were in the low group, compared to 19.6% of transgender students. In examining students who experienced unwanted sexual contact and sexual violence, a greater proportion of transgender students fell into the top third, or "high" group for displaying social agency compared to the proportion of non-transgender students.

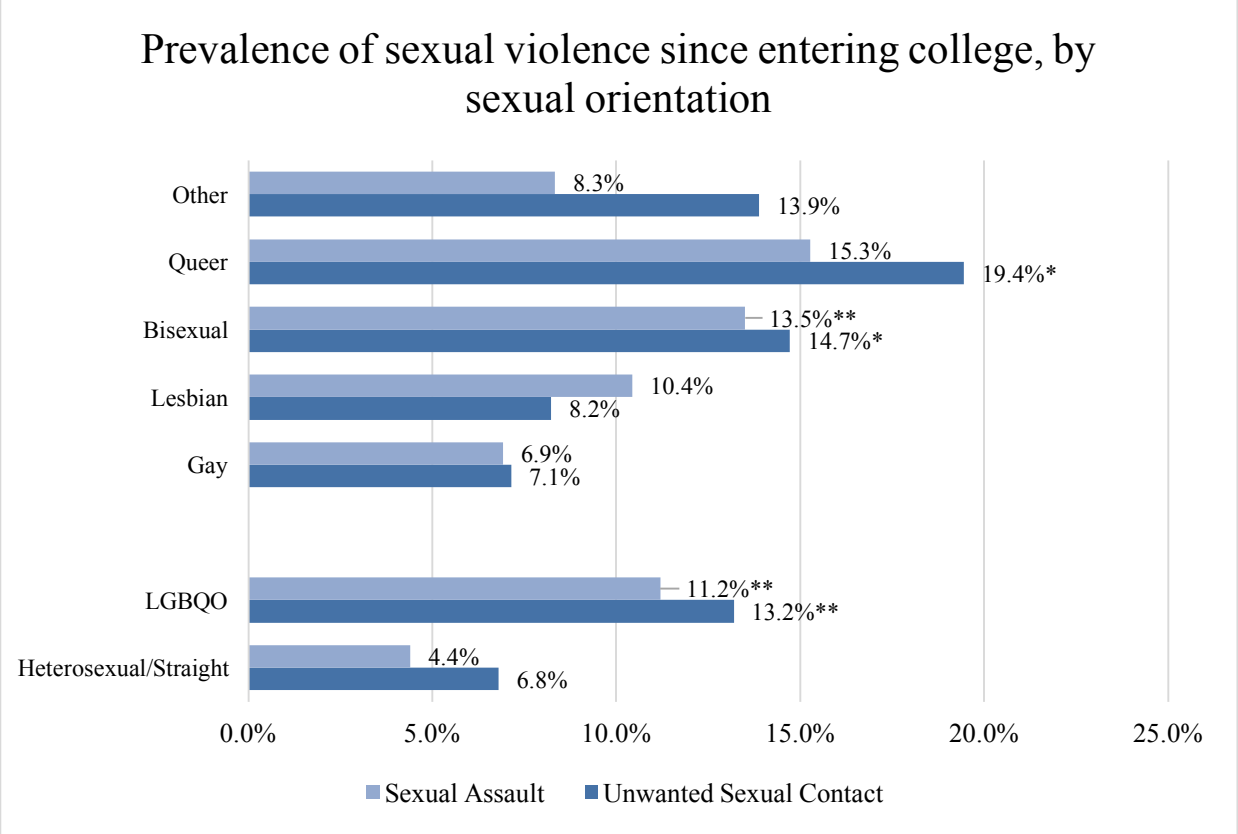
LGBQO Students

For the rest of the analysis, we will discuss findings from LGBQO students. While the small sample sizes may limit statistical analysis for this study, we believe it is important to report the prevalence for each subgroup within the larger LGBQO group to better understand the unique nature of sexual violence within the context of one's sexual orientation.

Prevalence of Sexual Violence by Sexual Orientation. Figure 5 shows the prevalence of unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault broken down by students' reported sexual orientation. Overall, LGBQO students (13.2%) were significantly more likely ($p < .01$) than their straight peers (6.8%) to have experienced unwanted sexual contact since enrolling at their current

institution. When disaggregating by sexual orientation, queer students (19.4%) and bisexual students (14.7%) were each more likely than heterosexual students to experience unwanted sexual contact ($p < .05$). With respect to sexual assault, 11.2% of LGBQO students reported experiencing it compared to 4.4% of straight students ($p < .01$). Bisexual (18.2%) students were significantly more likely to have been sexually assaulted since entering college compared to straight students ($p < .01$). While there are no significant differences for other groups, this trend of increased rates of sexual assault follow for queer (15.3%) lesbian (10.4%), other (8.3%), and gay (6.9%) students compared to straight students. Though not statistically significant, LGBQO students reported that they were unable to provide consent due to incapacitation (48.5%) compared to their heterosexual counterparts (43.0%) at slightly higher rates.

Figure 5. Proportion of students who reported unwanted sexual contact and sexual assault, by sexual orientation.

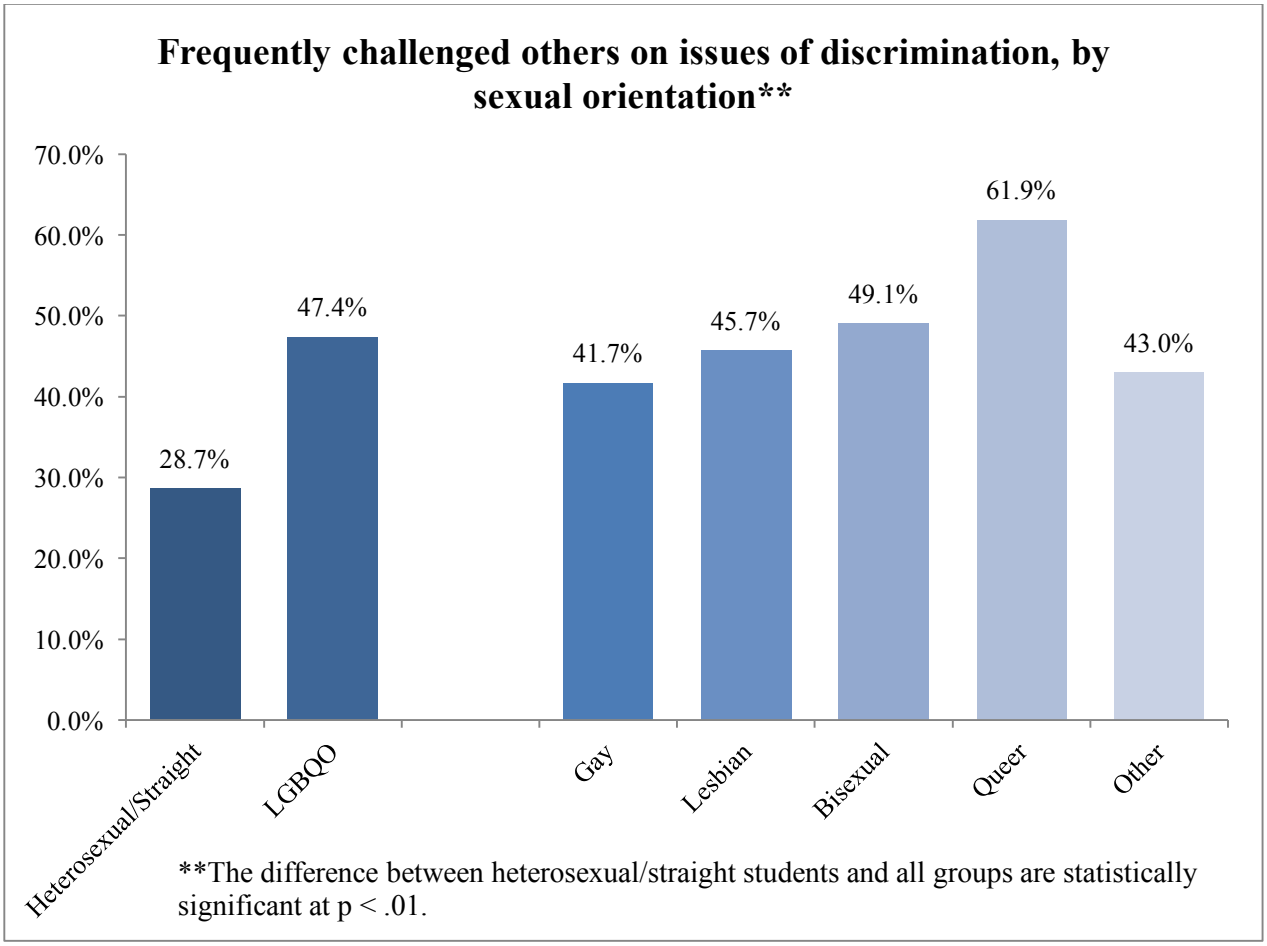


*p < .05, **p < .01

Experiences with discrimination and bias and perceptions of campus climate. We drew some of the items discussed in this section from the discrimination and bias factor and the harassment factor. As described in more detail below, LGBQO students score higher on both of these factors than their heterosexual/straight peers. The frequency with which students witnessed discrimination at their institution varied by sexual orientation. Overall, just over a quarter (26.3%) of heterosexual/straight students reported witnessing discrimination at least sometimes, compared to nearly 40% (39.8%) of LGBQO students (significant at 99% confidence level). Further, there is also variation within the LGBQO group, with proportions ranging from 34.4% of gay students to 54.4% of students who identify as queer reporting that they witnessed discrimination at least sometimes at their institution. All of the LGBQO subgroups other than gay students were significantly more likely to witness discrimination than their straight classmates ($p < .01$).

Students reported how often in the previous year they challenged others on issues of discrimination. Again there were differences by sexual orientation, with 75.4% of heterosexual/straight students and 86.9% of LGBQO students challenging others on issues of discrimination at least occasionally in the past year. Further, when solely examining those who frequently challenged others on issues of discrimination, we see a gap of nearly 20 percentage points between the two groups (see Figure 13.6). Nearly half (47.4%) of LGBQO students frequently challenged others on issues of discrimination over the past year, compared to just 28.7% of heterosexual/straight students. Breaking it down even further, 41.7% of gay students, 45.7% of lesbian students, and 49.1% of bisexual students frequently challenged others, compared to 61.9% of queer students who did so.

Figure 6. Proportion of students who reported frequently challenging others on issues of discrimination, by sexual orientation.



Not surprisingly, heterosexual/straight students (2.7%) were significantly less likely than LGBQO students (28.2%) to experience discrimination based on sexual orientation at their institution ($p < .01$). While 23.6% of bisexual students reported experiencing discrimination based on their sexual orientation, lesbian (37.5%), gay (39.9%), and queer (40.0%) students experienced this type of discrimination. Not only are LGBQO students more likely to experience discrimination, they are also more likely to report an incident of discrimination to a campus authority ($p < .01$) with 15.1% of LGBQO students doing so compared to 10.6% of straight

students. Within the LGBQO group, students who identify as queer are most likely to have reported an incident of discrimination to a campus authority (23.2%).

In addition to the aspects of personal identity that were the basis for the incidents of discrimination, students reported the type of bias, harassment, or discriminatory behavior they experienced, such as verbal comments, written comments, and exclusion from activities/events. Roughly two out of five (43.8%) of heterosexual/straight students and three out of five (58.6%) LGBQO students experienced discriminatory verbal comments since they have been enrolled at their current institution (significant at $p < .01$). Further, within the LGBQO group, nearly three-quarters of students who identify as queer (72.1%) reported experiencing these verbal comments. In fact, each of the LGBQO subgroups were significantly more likely to experience this type of discrimination than their straight peers (lesbian at 95% confidence interval and all others at 99% confidence interval): gay (57.8%), lesbian (54.7%), bisexual (58.2%), queer (72.1%), and other (56.2%).

While not as common as verbal comments, many students experienced encountering discriminatory written comments as well. Just under one-quarter of heterosexual/straight students (24.4%) experienced these written comments, significantly lower than the 34.3% of LGBQO students who did as well ($p < .01$). Students who identify as queer (45.9%) were also more likely than other students in the LGBQO group to experience discriminatory written comments (29.7% of gay students, 32.3% of lesbian students, 34.3% of bisexual students, and 33.6% of "other" students).

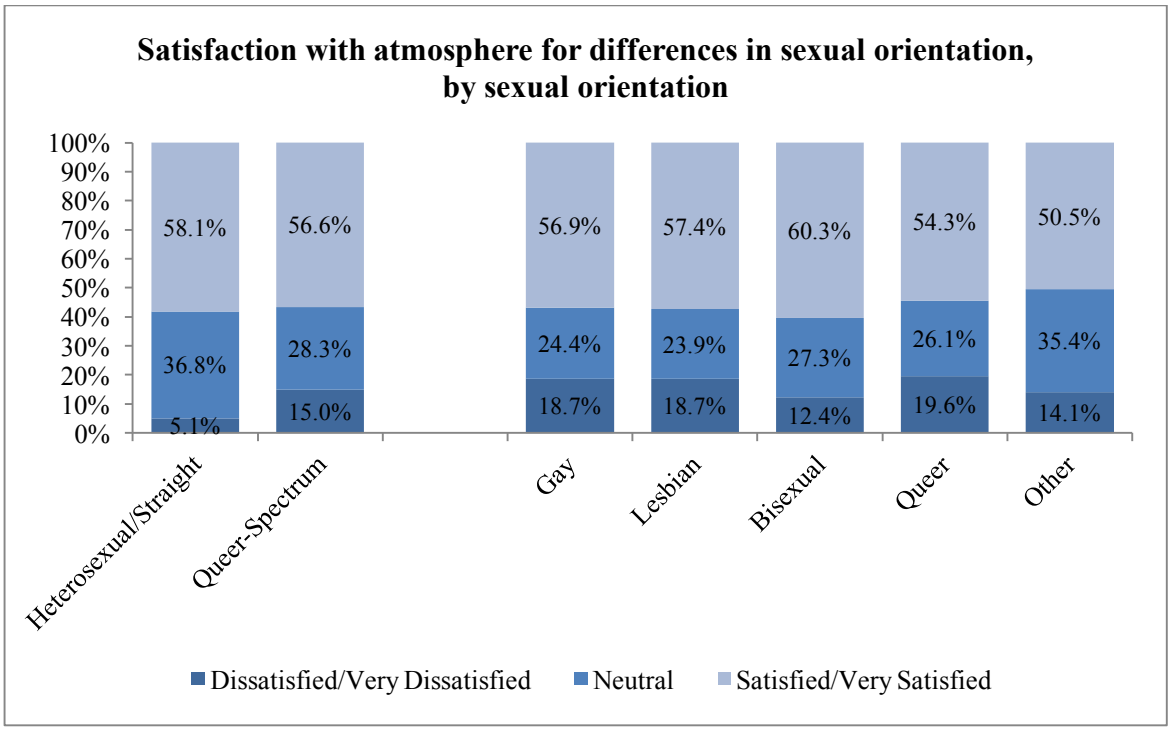
As a whole, LGBQO students (39.2%) were more likely than their heterosexual/straight peers (29.2%) to have felt excluded at some point since entering their institution ($p < .01$). Queer students were more likely to feel excluded from activities than other LGBQO peers. Nearly half

(47.5%) of queer students felt excluded compared to 34.1% of lesbian students, 35.8% of "other" students, 38.9% of gay students, and 40.7% of bisexual students.

Aspects of campus climate. Though not a direct measure of campus climate, it is important to note the differences in whether students have considered dropping out of college. LGBQO students are significantly ($p < .01$) more likely than heterosexual/straight students to have considered dropping out of college. Only 17.3% of heterosexual/straight students have considered dropping out of college, compared to about one in three (29.1%) of LGBQO students. Students who identify as queer (37.1%), bisexual (30.0%), and other (28.6%) were most likely to have considered dropping out, all significantly more likely than straight students ($p < .01$). Students reported their satisfaction with various aspects of campus climate, such as the atmosphere for differences in sexual orientation and administrative response to both incidents of discrimination and sexual assault. Interestingly, there is no difference between heterosexual/straight and LGBQO students for those who are satisfied or very satisfied with the atmosphere for differences in sexual orientation (58.1% and 56.6%, respectively). However, Figure 7 shows that LGBQO students (15.0%) are about three times as likely ($p<.01$) to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied than their heterosexual peers (5.1%). Nearly one in five gay (18.7%), lesbian (18.7%), and queer (19.6%) students report being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the atmosphere for differences in sexual orientation at their institution.

LGBQO students were significantly less satisfied ($p < .01$) with the respect for the expression of diverse beliefs on campus (56.4% satisfied/very satisfied) than straight students (61.7%).

Figure 7. Satisfaction with campus atmosphere for differences in sexual orientation, by sexual orientation.

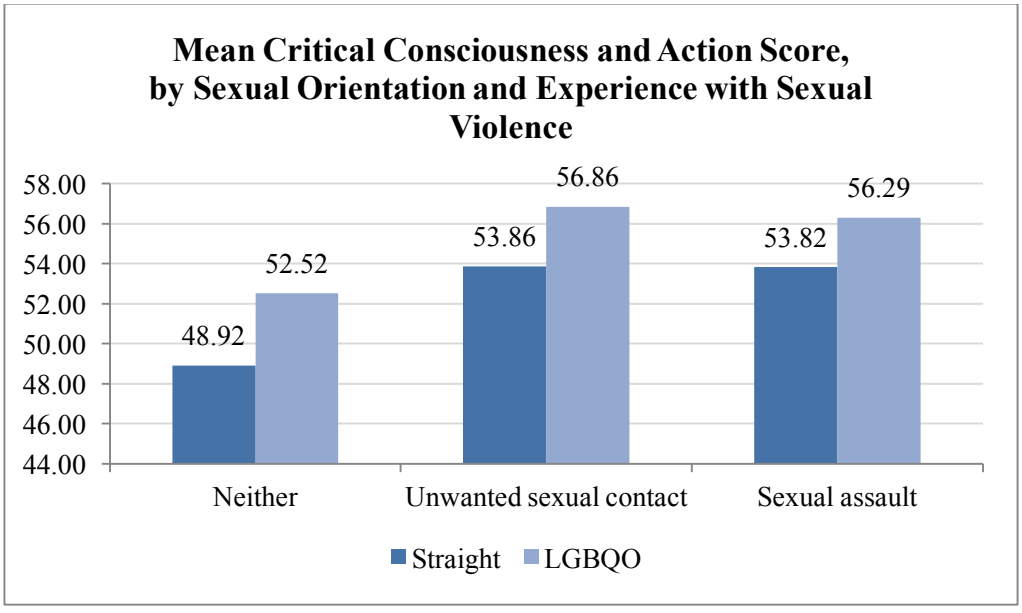


Significant differences between LGBQO and heterosexual/straight students appear at both ends of the range of satisfaction responses for satisfaction with administrative response to incidents of discrimination. Given the neutral option, LGBQO students are significantly less satisfied and significantly more dissatisfied than their heterosexual/straight peers. Overall, just over one-third (34.1%) of LGBQO students are satisfied or very satisfied with administrative response to incidents of discrimination, compared to nearly half (46.4%) of heterosexual/straight students. Further LGBQO students are twice as likely as heterosexual/straight students to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the administrative response to incidents of discrimination (21.4% and 10.0%, respectively). Once again, students who identify as queer are at the extremes for this question, with 21.0% satisfied or very satisfied and 35.1% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the administrative response to incidents of discrimination. The same relationship between and within groups exists for students' satisfaction with the administrative response to incidents of sexual assault.

Goals, behaviors and self-reflection with respect to "practices of resilience".

Critical consciousness and action. As a whole, LGBQO students (M = 53.52) scored significantly higher than heterosexual/straight (M = 49.47) students on the critical consciousness and action factor. While it is unclear if students may have already been socially and politically engaged before their experience with sexual violence, it is interesting to note that for straight students, those who have experienced either unwanted sexual contact (M=53.86) or sexual assault (M=53.82) scored significantly higher on the critical consciousness and action factor than those who have not experienced any sexual violence (M=48.92) since they've been at their current institution (Figure 8). While LGBQO students scored higher on this factor than straight students as mentioned above, the relationship between the factor and experience with sexual violence is similar. LGBQO students who experienced unwanted sexual contact (M=56.86) or sexual assault (M=56.29) had higher critical consciousness and action scores than those who experienced neither (M=52.52).

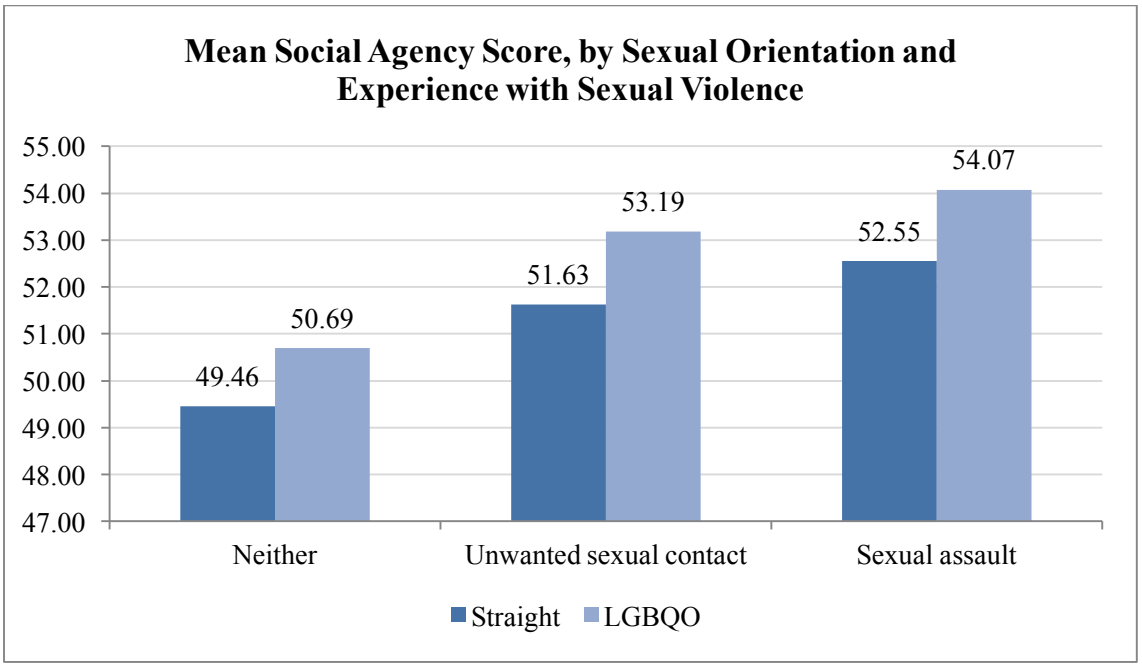
Figure 8. Mean critical consciousness and action score, by sexual orientation and experience with sexual violence.



Civic Engagement. As a whole, LGBQO students (M = 51.81) scored significantly higher than heterosexual/straight (M = 49.70) students on the civic engagement factor. Just over a quarter of heterosexual/straight students (27.1%) scored in the high group, nearly nine percentage points lower than the LGBQO students (35.8%). Students who identify as queer were most likely to be in the high group (52.4%). For straight students, civic engagement scores varied significantly by experience with sexual violence. Those who did not experience sexual violence had the lowest mean on this factor (M=49.18), followed by those who experienced unwanted sexual contact (M=53.28), and sexual assault (M=54.81). For the LGBQO students, there was no difference between civic engagement scores for those who experienced unwanted sexual contact (M=55.01) or sexual assault (M=56.24). However, those who did not experience either scored lower on civic engagement (M=50.61) than those in each of the other groups.

Social Agency. LGBQO students (M = 51.40) were more likely to consider social and political engagement as personal goals than their heterosexual/straight peers (M = 49.74). Figure 9 shows that the social agency factor also varied based on students' experiences with sexual violence. Straight students who did not experience sexual violence (M=49.46) at their current institution scored lower on this factor than those who experienced either unwanted sexual contact (M=51.63) or sexual assault (M=52.55). The same relationship between groups exists for the LGBQO students with those who did not experience sexual violence (M=50.69) scoring lower on social agency than those who experienced unwanted sexual contact (M=53.19) or sexual assault (M=54.07).

Figure 9. Mean social agency score, by sexual orientation and experience with sexual violence.



Discussion and Implications

Overall, the results suggest that transgender students and LGBQO students experience sexual violence at higher rates compared to their non-transgender and heterosexual counterparts. The experiences of these groups must be further studied, especially in light of current research predominantly focusing on sexual violence as a heterosexual, cisgender issue that mainly impacts women. Most alarming were the rates of sexual assault for LGBQO students in general, and more specifically, bisexual students. Our findings are consistent with results from Coulter and colleagues (2017), who also found higher odds of sexual assault for transgender students, bisexual students, and gays/lesbians. Gender identity and sexual orientation matter, and efforts to address campus sexual violence should be shifted to target, include, engage, and support transgender and LGBQO populations on college campuses.

Regarding this study's second research question on LGBQO and transgender students' experiences with discrimination and bias and perceptions of campus climate, much still needs to be explored to better understand how sexual violence impacts perceptions of campus climate for

these groups. The results are consistent with prior literature that shows that minoritized students are much more likely to report a negative campus climate and to suffer negative outcomes, such as being more likely to consider dropping out of college compared to their non-transgender or heterosexual peers. However, items on discrimination and bias also reveal that students are likely developing strategies of resilience and agency, as indicated by both transgender and LGBQO students' higher likelihood of addressing discrimination and bias on campus.

In our third research question, we examined goals, behaviors, and self-reflection through measures of critical consciousness, civic engagement, and social agency to understand the intersection of experiences with sexual violence and these "practices of resilience". Transgender students and LGBQO were almost always in a higher range compared to their cisgender and heterosexual peers. Scores on these constructs that represent practices of resilience are even higher for transgender and LGBQO students who reported experiencing campus sexual violence.

With transgender and LGBQO students consistently in the high range for these constructs, it is likely that a stronger connection between social identity and political identity exists for this population. Because the order in which actions, goals, behaviors, and perceptions measured on the DLE occur in college is not yet understood, a student's choice to self-identity their sexual orientation and gender identity may be conflated with other measures of social and political development. For example, students who identified as queer scored highly on several constructs. Selecting queer out of LGBQO adds complexity to sexual identity (Levy & Johnson, 2012). In contrast to gay and lesbian movements, which relied on identity to obtain political gain, queer emphasizes the 'limitations of identity categories' (Jagose, 1996, p. 77) and ultimately challenges heteronormativity. Do students who choose to use the term "queer" because they developed critical consciousness-related values prior to college entry? Or, do certain experiences

and contexts shape a student during college that either indirectly or directly contribute to the decision to self-identify as queer? What is the relationship between social and political development and one's sexual orientation choice? More qualitative approaches would be useful to unpack this trend found in our analysis.

Relatedly, the importance of language and terminology should be considered when studying gender identity and sexual orientation in higher education. The lexicon changes rapidly, which is often difficult to keep up with, especially in terms of survey design and multi-institutional administration.

Future Research and Conclusion

In our study, we contributed to the literature base in higher education and sexual violence research by providing a detailed examination that centers experiences of students who are located in the intersections of sexual orientation, gender identity and college sexual violence within the overarching context of campus climate. A descriptive analysis of this nature disaggregates demographic statistics for LGBQO and transgender students and allows their voices to be heard. While this study contributes to the literature on sexual violence by centering vulnerable populations, there are several opportunities to increase knowledge about transgender and LGBQO students.

One key component that has not been included in this discussion as of yet is dating and relationship violence. Adding more complexity to the issue of college sexual violence, studying dating and relationship violence can shed light on a serious issue facing many college-age adults. Researchers have added a follow-up question regarding dating and relationship violence to the DLE instrument. A focus on dating and relationship violence, particularly using a qualitative or mixed methods approach, can also help unpack whether LGBQO were "out" prior to, or after the

incident(s) of violence, the extent to which sexual violence occurs within dating relationships, and other details that add quality and depth to our understanding of sexual violence that would otherwise be invisible by relying on survey data.

Another key area to advance our understanding of campus climate and sexual violence is to examine campus climates by controlling for key individual and institutional variables with quantitative approaches and being thoughtful about subjectivities with qualitative approaches. For example, Mayo (2017) discusses "trans as method", meaning that much care needs to be given to crafting research questions, methods, and analysis for trans-related research given exclusionary definitions of trans subjectivity, problems that arise when researchers think they are focusing on transpeople but may be "mobilizing prejudices or purposes that they have not fully reflected on" (Mayo, 2017, p. 534). To add depth to our understanding of climate, quantitative and qualitative studies can control for, or focus on the higher education contexts, such as institutional type, geographic location, size, etc. to determine how these domains also impact and shape campus climate for vulnerable populations with respect to sexual violence.

Lastly, given the findings to our third research question, we advocate for further research to better understand the relationships between campus climate, engagement, and student activism efforts among students who have experienced campus sexual violence to better understand students' resiliency. Additionally, research must include methods that are intersectional and analyze students' unique sexual orientation identities or gender identities when possible. With more accurate knowledge about the nature of sexual violence within the context of campus climate, colleges and universities can be better-equipped to support students, particularly students who historically have been invisible and most vulnerable to sexual violence.

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