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Authors

Mallory, Christy
Sears, Brad
Flores, Andrew R.

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RESEARCH THAT MATTERS

THE ROLE OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IN WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES of Cisgender LGB Employees

SEPTEMBER 2022

Christy Mallory
Brad Sears
Andrew R. Flores

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over 8 million employees in the U.S. identify as LGBT.¹ Based on a survey of 935 LGBT adults conducted in May 2021, this report focuses on the workplace experiences of cisgender bisexual adults compared to cisgender lesbians and gay men in the workplace.²

Overall, we find that cisgender bisexual employees are significantly less likely to report experiencing discrimination and harassment in the workplace than cisgender gay and lesbian employees. However, our analysis suggests that higher rates of concealing LGB identity among bisexual employees may mask the extent to which bisexual employees experience unfair treatment at work. When we focus only on employees who are out to at least some people in the workplace, we find that cisgender bisexual employees face similar or higher rates of discrimination and harassment as cisgender gay and lesbian employees. Once we control for who is out in the workplace, our analysis also shows that in many instances workplace experiences also differ by gender, with cisgender bisexual and gay men often reporting higher rates of unfair treatment compared to lesbian and bisexual women.

These findings suggest that LGB employees should not be treated as a monolithic group when researching, understanding, and addressing their workplace experiences. They vary in the degrees to which they are out in the workplace and engage in strategies to downplay their sexual orientation. These findings suggest that they also face different types and patterns of workplace discrimination and harassment. More specifically, these findings suggest that gay and bisexual men may face unique and intersecting forms of stigma associated with their gender and sexual orientation and additional pressure to conceal their LGB identity at work.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Out at work:** Many cisgender LGB people avoid discrimination and harassment in the workplace by not being out to their supervisors and co-workers. While over three-quarters (74.6%) of gay men and lesbians reported being out to their supervisors, only about one-third (36.0%) of bisexual employees were out to their supervisors. One in five (19.0%) bisexual employees reported being out to all of their coworkers, compared to half (50.0%) of lesbians and gay men.
- **Covering:** Many cisgender LGB employees also reported engaging in “covering” behaviors in order to avoid harassment or discrimination at work. About 60% of gay men and lesbian employees and bisexual employees reported that they avoided social events or avoided talking about their lives at work in order to avoid discrimination and harassment. Additionally, bisexual men and women were more likely than gay and lesbian employees to report that they changed their appearance at work to cover their sexual orientation (26.4% v. 17.9%). Gay and bisexual men were more likely than bisexual women, in particular, to engage in several specific covering behaviors. For example, gay and bisexual men were more likely than bisexual women to say they avoided social events, hid family photos, and did not bring family to work events in order to avoid discrimination.

¹KERITH J. CONRON & SHOSHANA K. GOLDBERG, WILLIAMS INST., LGBT PEOPLE IN THE US NOT PROTECTED BY STATE NON-DISCRIMINATION STATUTES 1 (2019), <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBT-Nondiscrim-Statutes-Mar-2019.pdf>.

²As used in this report, the terms “lesbian,” “gay,” and “bisexual” refer to cisgender LGB people.

- **Discrimination:** Overall, cisgender bisexual employees were significantly less likely to report experiencing discrimination in the workplace than cisgender gay and lesbian employees. One-third (33.8%) of gay and lesbian employees reported that they had experienced at least one form of employment discrimination (being fired or not hired) because of their LGB status at some point in their lives, compared to one-quarter (24.4%) of bisexual employees.

However, this difference shrinks when looking only at LGB employees who are out (have disclosed their LGB identity) to at least some people in the workplace. Among cisgender LGB people who were out at work, bisexual employees reported similar levels of discrimination as lesbian and gay employees. About one-third of out bisexual employees (33.1%) and out lesbian and gay employees (36.7%) reported experiencing at least one form of discrimination (being fired or not hired) because of their LGB status at some point in their lives. This difference is not statistically significant.

- **Lifetime experiences:** Among those who were out in the workplace, gay and bisexual men were more likely to experience employment discrimination than lesbians and bisexual women: 46.4% of bisexual men and 42.7% of gay men reported having been fired or not being hired at some point in their careers because of their LGB status. In contrast, only one-fourth of lesbians (25.0%) and bisexual women (27.2%) reported such experiences.
 - **Experiences within the past year:** LGBT people continue to experience workplace discrimination even after the U.S. Supreme Court extended sexual orientation and gender identity employment non-discrimination protections nationwide in *Bostock v. Clayton County*. Overall, 11.2% of cisgender gay and lesbian employees and 6.6% of cisgender bisexual employees reported that they were fired or not hired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in the past year. Among those who were out in the workplace, these experiences differed by gender and sexual orientation. One in five out gay men (19.5%) and 12.7% of out bisexual men reported these experiences in the past year, as compared to 3.7% of out bisexual women and 10.9% of out lesbians. Gay men who were out in the workplace were significantly more likely to experience recent discrimination than out bisexual women and lesbian employees.
- **Harassment:** Overall, cisgender bisexual employees were less likely to report experiencing harassment in the workplace than cisgender gay and lesbian employees. About 40% (41.8%) of gay and lesbian employees reported experiencing at least one type of harassment (verbal, physical, or sexual) in the workplace at some point in their lives, compared to about one-third (34.1%) of bisexual employees.

However, among only cisgender LGB employees who are out in the workplace, we find that bisexual men experience particularly high rates of workplace harassment and bisexual women experience similar levels of harassment as lesbians. Among cisgender LGB people who were out in the workplace, bisexual men (60.3%) were significantly more likely to experience at least one form of harassment (verbal, physical, or sexual) than out bisexual women (38.3%) and out lesbians (32.9%). Though out bisexual men reported a slightly higher rate of harassment compared to out gay men (48.4%), the difference was not statistically significant.

- **Verbal harassment:** Over half of out bisexual men (57.7%) reported experiencing verbal harassment at work at some point in their lives compared to 26.8% of out bisexual women and 29.5% of out lesbians. Out bisexual men were slightly more likely to report verbal harassment than gay men (41.6%), but the difference was not statistically significant.
- **Physical harassment:** Out bisexual men were twice as likely to report experiencing physical harassment at work at some point in their lives compared to out lesbian employees (33.3% compared to 16.7%). Out bisexual men were slightly more likely to report physical harassment than gay men (23.7%), but the difference was not statistically significant.
- **Sexual harassment:** Out lesbian employees (17.4%) were the least likely to report experiencing sexual harassment at work at some point in their lives. By comparison, 29.2% of out bisexual women, 33.6% of out gay men, and 34.8% of out bisexual men reported experiencing sexual harassment at work.
- **Religious motivation for unfair treatment:** Among LGB employees who were out in the workplace and had been treated unfairly, over 60% of bisexual men (64.5%) and gay men (60.9%) reported that the unfair treatment was motivated by the religious beliefs of their supervisor or coworkers. Slightly lower percentages of lesbians (46.5%) and bisexual women (53.3%) reported religious motivation for unfair treatment, though the differences are not statistically significant. For many, such experiences included being quoted to from the Bible, told to pray that they weren't LGBT, and told that they would "go to hell" or were "an abomination."
- **Retention:** Among those who were out in the workplace, gay and bisexual men were more likely to say that they had left a job because of how they were treated by their employer based on their sexual orientation. Nearly 60% of out bisexual men (57.5%) and 50.0% of out gay men said they had left a job because of unfair treatment compared to 34.8% of out lesbians and 29.0% of out bisexual women.

Our analysis examines ways in which both coping mechanisms and workplace experiences differ for cisgender LGB employees by gender and sexual orientation, and the role of disclosure of LGB identity in these experiences. When combined with our previous report finding higher levels of discrimination and harassment among LGBT people of color and transgender employees, our findings make clear that policymakers, businesses, and researchers need to take a nuanced approach to understanding and addressing sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in the workplace.

INTRODUCTION

Based on a survey of 935 LGBT adults conducted in May 2021, this report focuses on the workplace experiences of cisgender bisexual adults compared to cisgender lesbians and gay men in the workplace.³ Workplace experiences of transgender employees were analyzed in a separate report, which found that transgender employees were more likely to experience several forms of discrimination and harassment than cisgender LGB employees.

Overall, we find that cisgender bisexual employees are significantly less likely to report experiencing discrimination and harassment in the workplace than cisgender gay and lesbian employees. However, our analysis suggests that higher rates of concealing LGB identity among bisexual employees may mask the extent to which bisexual employees experience unfair treatment at work.

Below, we present survey findings related to the degree to which LGB people are in the workplace; the extent to which they engage in behaviors in the workplace to downplay their sexual orientation; and for those who are out to at least some in the workplace, their experiences of discrimination and harassment. We compare four groups: lesbians, gay men, bisexual women, and bisexual men.

In making these comparisons, it is important to note some key underlying differences among these four groups. For example, in our sample, bisexual women were younger than gay men. Since the survey asked about lifetime experiences of discrimination, it could be expected that bisexual women, with fewer years in the workforce on average, would report lower rates of discrimination and harassment than gay men.

Further research should explore the extent to which the differences observed are the result of differences in age, race/ethnicity, education, employment sector, and occupation. For example, being younger could mean less time in the workforce to have encountered discrimination or harassment, or more recent, and therefore more supportive, environment than those whose careers stretch back over several decades. On the other hand, those in lower-paying and/or entry jobs may be currently more vulnerable to adverse workplace experiences.

The survey also included two open-ended questions to gather information about the respondent's worst experience of discrimination or harassment at work because of their sexual orientation. In addition to presenting data, this report includes several quotes from bisexual respondents to illustrate their experiences of mistreatment in the workplace. Quotes from responses submitted by cisgender LBQ, non-binary, and transgender employees are included in a separate report.

³As used in this report, the terms "lesbian," "gay," and "bisexual" refer to cisgender LGB people.

FINDINGS

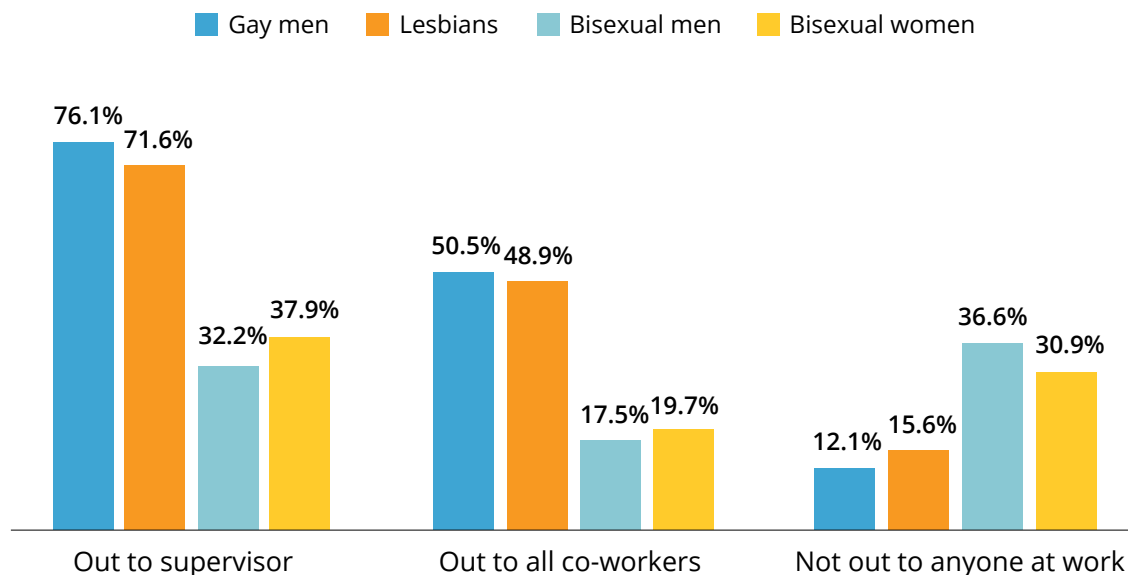
CONCEALING SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND “COVERING” AT WORK

LGBT employees often take steps to avoid experiencing discrimination and harassment.⁴ For example, LGBT employees may conceal their sexual orientation or gender identity at work, avoid talking about their personal lives with co-workers, and change their appearance to conform to gender norms. Engaging in these behaviors, sometimes referred to as “covering,” can be a source of stress for LGBT people that negatively impacts their health and well-being.⁵

Cisgender bisexual employees were significantly more likely to report concealing their sexual orientation at work compared to cisgender gay men and lesbians. Only 36.0% of bisexual employees said that they were out to their supervisors compared to three-quarters of lesbian and gay employees (74.6%). Less than one in five bisexual employees reported being out to all of their coworkers (19.0%), compared to half of lesbian and gay employees (50.0%). Bisexual employees were three times as likely as lesbian and gay employees to say they were not out to anyone at work (30.8% of bisexual employees compared to 10.8% of lesbian and gay employees).

This pattern is consistent across cisgender LGB men and women. Bisexual women were significantly less likely to be out to their supervisors and co-workers than lesbians, and bisexual men were less likely to be out to their supervisors and co-workers than gay men.

Figure 1. Openness about being LGB at work among cisgender LGB employees



Bold text indicates statistically significant difference between bisexual and gay and lesbian employees

⁴See Christy Mallory & Brad Sears, *LGBT Discrimination, Subnational Public Policy, and Law in the United States*, in OXFORD RES. ENCYC. POL. (2020), doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.1200.

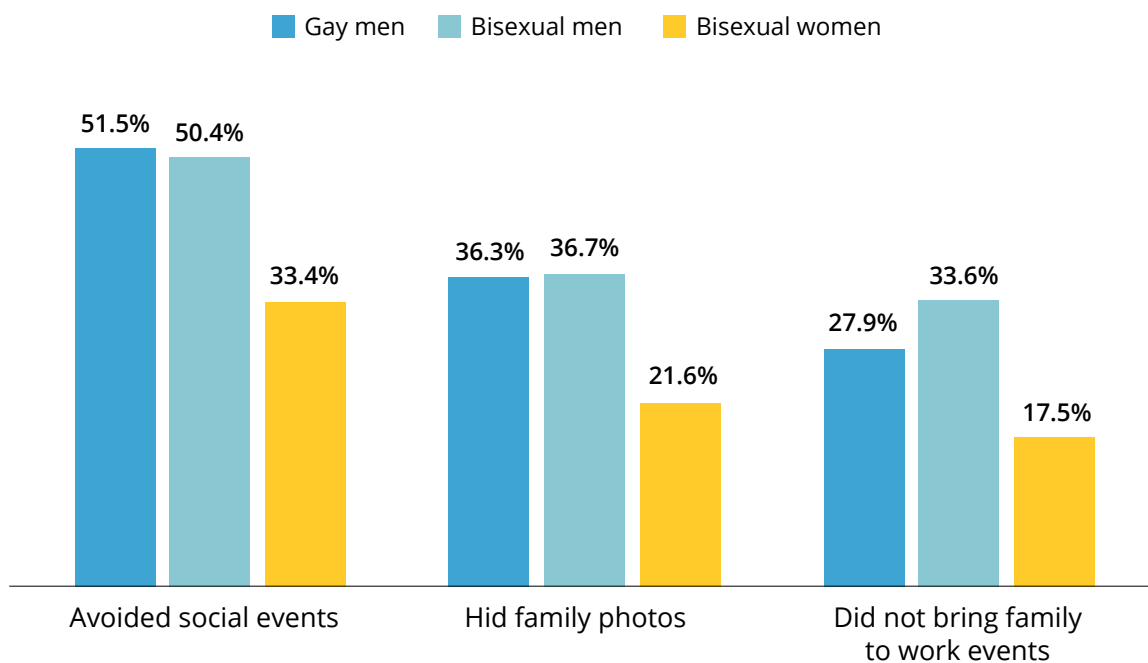
⁵Ilan H. Meyer, *Prejudice, Social Stress, and Mental Health in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations: Conceptual Issues and Research Evidence*, 129 PSYCH. BULL. 674 (2003), doi:10.1037/0033-2909.129.5.674; Kenji Yoshino, *Covering*, 111 YALE L.J. 769 (2001), <https://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/yylj/vol111/iss4/1>.

In addition to concealing their sexual orientation or gender identity, LGBT people and others with marginalized identities often adjust their behavior and conduct in order to avoid bringing attention to a stigmatized trait—a process that has been called “covering.”⁶ Covering is not necessarily the same as concealing LGBT status.⁷ LGBT people who are open about their sexual orientation and gender identity may still engage in covering behaviors in order to minimize their LGBT identity.⁸

Many cisgender LGB employees reported engaging in covering behaviors at their current jobs in order to avoid discrimination or harassment. About 60% of gay men and lesbian employees (63.0%) and bisexual employees (60.9%) reported that they avoided social events or avoided talking about their families and lives at work in order to avoid discrimination and harassment.

Gay and bisexual men were more likely than bisexual women, in particular, to engage in several specific covering behaviors. For example, gay and bisexual men were more likely than bisexual women to say they avoided social events at work, hid family photos, and did not bring family to work events in order to avoid discrimination.

Figure 2. Covering behaviors at work among cisgender LGB employees



Bold text indicates statistically significant difference between gay and bisexual men compared to bisexual women

In addition, around 40% of bisexual (39.9%) and gay and lesbian employees (37.3%) reported that they took steps to change the way they present themselves at work (including changing their physical appearance, the way they dress, and their voice or mannerisms) or when, where, or how frequently they used the bathroom. However, bisexual men and women were more likely than gay and lesbian

⁶Yoshino, *supra* note 3, at 837.

⁷*Id.*

⁸*Id.* at 838.

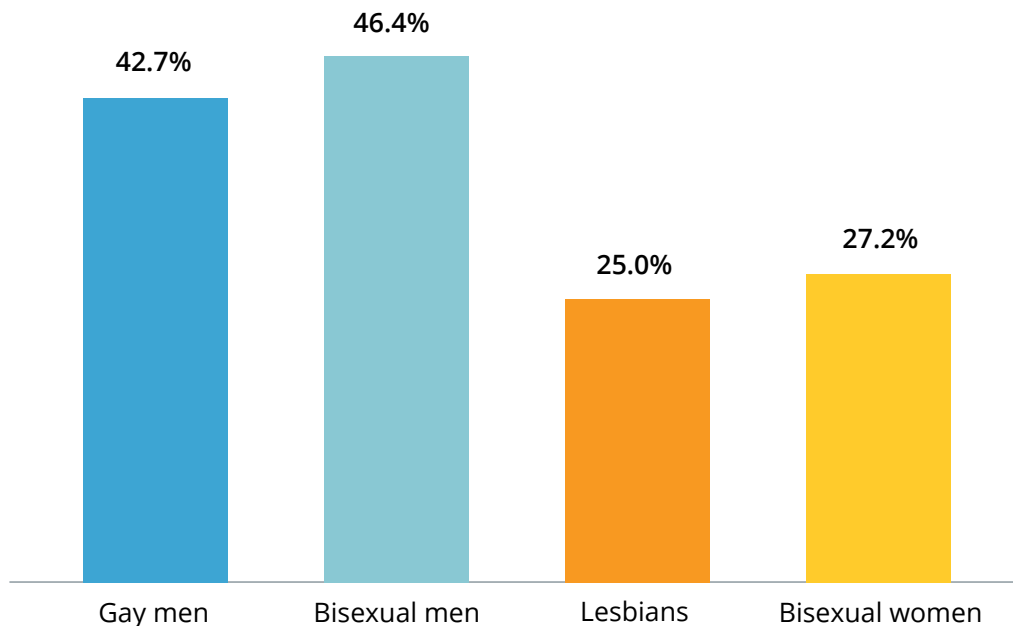
employees to report that they changed their appearance at work to cover their sexual orientation (26.4% v. 17.9%). Bisexual men were almost twice as likely to say they changed their voice or mannerisms (33.9%) to avoid discrimination compared to lesbian employees (17.6%).

EXPERIENCES OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Among all cisgender LGB employees, bisexual employees were significantly less likely to report being fired or not hired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity than gay and lesbian employees. One-third (33.8%) of gay and lesbian employees reported that they had experienced at least one form of employment discrimination (being fired or not hired) because of their LGB status at some point in their lives, compared to one-quarter (24.4%) of bisexual employees.

However, this difference shrinks when looking only at LGB employees who are out to at least some people in the workplace. Among cisgender LGB people who were out in the workplace, about one-third of bisexual employees (33.1%) and lesbian and gay employees (36.7%) reported experiencing at least one form of discrimination (being fired or not hired) because of their sexual orientation at some point in their lives. Men were more likely to report experiencing discrimination than women. Over 40% of out bisexual men (46.4%) and out gay men (42.7%) reported that they had experienced at least one form of discrimination (being fired or not hired) because of their sexual orientation at some point in their lives, compared to about one-fourth of out lesbians (25.0%) and out bisexual women (27.2%).

Figure 3. Fired or not hired because of sexual orientation among cisgender LGB employees who are out at work



Bold text indicates statistically significant difference between men and women

LGBT employees continue to experience discrimination even after the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Bostock v. Clayton County* that discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity

are forms of sex discrimination prohibited by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.⁹ The decision extended non-discrimination protections to LGBT employees nationwide as of June 2020. Among all cisgender LGB employees, 11.2% of gay and lesbian employees and 6.6% of bisexual employees reported that they were fired or not hired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity in the past year. Among those who were out in the workplace, these experiences differed by gender and sexual orientation. One in five out gay men (19.5%) and 12.7% of out bisexual men reported these experiences in the past year, along with 3.7% out bisexual women and 10.9% of out lesbians. Gay men who were out in the workplace were significantly more likely to experience recent discrimination than out bisexual women and lesbian employees.

In response to the open-ended survey questions, cisgender bisexual employees from across the country described several forms of workplace discrimination and mistreatment based on their sexual orientation. Examples illustrating these experiences include:

"I was . . . working for a small-town local insurance company. The woman I worked with and I were having a casual conversation and she made a discriminatory remark about homosexuals. I told her that I was bisexual, and she cut the conversation off instantly. Within two days, the owner fired me because he said he was 'looking to go in a different direction.'"

White cisgender bisexual woman from Kentucky

"I was harassed, and when I finally complained, I was fired."

Latinx cisgender bisexual man from Utah

"[I was] fired from my favorite job because my boss disagreed with my sexual orientation . . . [it] was the worst experience in my life. Not only did I lose the job I loved, but I lost all the friends and long-lasting relationships I created with this job."

White cisgender bisexual woman from Maine

Beyond being fired or not hired, respondents also reported other types of unfair treatment based on their sexual orientation, including not being promoted, not receiving raises, being assigned to less favorable shifts, and being excluded from company events. Examples of these experiences include:

"I was called the f-slur and often referenced as 'fruity' or 'soy boy' as a grown man. I was not promoted because I did not have a female partner."

Black cisgender bisexual man from Virginia

"This guy deadnamed my trans-male friend in security and told me I should make out with him because it's 'the best of both worlds for me because I'm bisexual.' When I reported this as discrimination, they had my friend and I transferred to another site. Nothing happened to him."

Latinx cisgender bisexual woman from Colorado

⁹140 S. Ct. 1731 (2020).

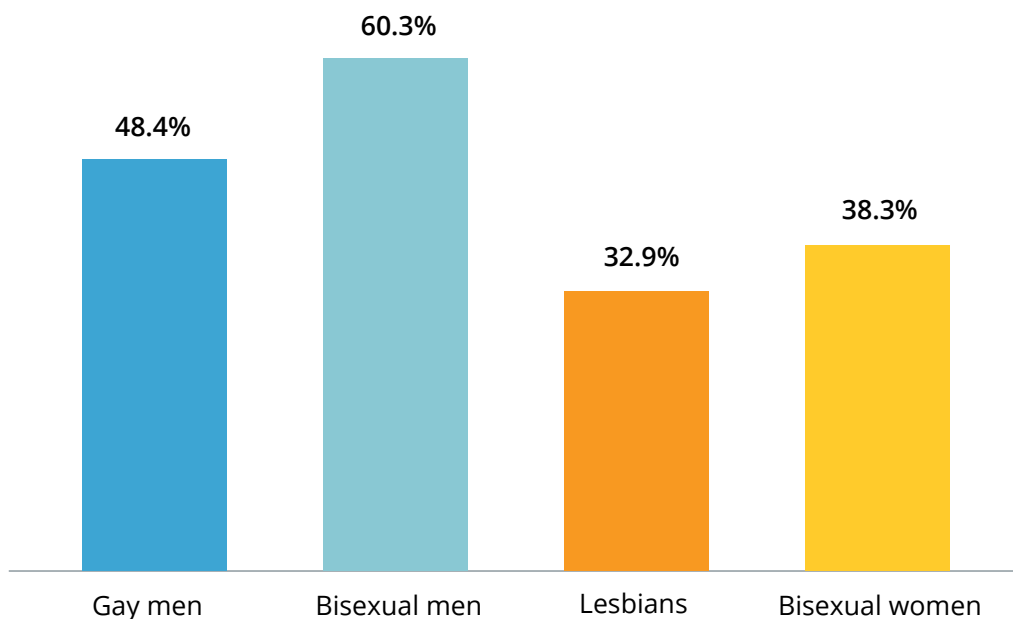
"My boss threatened to tell my coworkers I was bi if I didn't work weekends."
Latinx cisgender bisexual man from New Hampshire

Similar to our findings on discrimination, we found that among all cisgender LGB employees, bisexual employees were less likely to report experiencing harassment in the workplace than gay and lesbian employees. About 40% (41.8%) of gay and lesbian employees reported experiencing at least one type of harassment (verbal, physical, or sexual) in the workplace at some point in their lives, compared to about one-third (34.1%) of bisexual employees.

However, among only cisgender LGB employees who are out in the workplace, we find that bisexual men experience particularly high rates of workplace harassment, and bisexual women experience similar levels of harassment as lesbians. Out bisexual men (60.3%) were significantly more likely to experience at least one form of harassment (verbal, physical, or sexual) than out bisexual women (38.3%) and out lesbians (32.9%). In general, out bisexual men reported a slightly higher rate of harassment compared to out gay men (48.4%), but the difference was not statistically significant.

In terms of specific types of workplace harassment, over half of out bisexual men (57.7%) reported experiencing verbal harassment at work at some point in their lives compared to 26.8% of out bisexual women and 29.5% of out lesbians. Out bisexual men were also twice as likely to report experiencing physical harassment at work at some point in their lives compared to out lesbian employees (33.3% compared to 16.7%). In addition, out lesbian employees (17.4%) were the least likely to report experiencing sexual harassment at work at some point in their lives. By comparison, 29.2% of out bisexual women, 33.6% of out gay men, and 34.8% of out bisexual men reported experiencing sexual harassment at work.

Figure 4. Verbal, physical, or sexual harassment against cisgender LGB employees who are out at work



Examples of harassment described by cisgender bisexual employees include:

"I had a manager pin me into a freezer at [a national fast-food chain] while I was working and demand sex."

White cisgender bisexual woman from Arkansas

"My boss would consistently ask me to participate in threesomes with him and his wife just because I'm bisexual."

Black cisgender bisexual woman from Oklahoma

"I was often referred to as a slut because of being bisexual. It was the assumption that meant I was promiscuous because I'm attracted to all genders."

White cisgender bisexual woman from Louisiana

"Once another woman slapped me on my butt at work and I reported it as sexual harassment. My supervisor swept it under the rug because 'since I'm bisexual I may have enjoyed it.' The coworker who slapped me then laughed about it with all my coworkers. I became a walking joke, and after the incident other female coworkers started slapping my butt."

American Indian cisgender bisexual woman from Michigan

"At my old job I used to get called slurs fairly often. Most of it occurred behind my back, but I always found out about it in some way. The worst was probably just hearing the whole, 'just pick one' argument. I know that's not nearly as bad as slurs and threats, but I've heard that argument ever since I was 13, and it's really been damaging to my self-esteem and has made me question if I really am bisexual or not. Bisexual erasure is so normalized, and it has taken a toll on how I view myself."

White cisgender bisexual woman from Michigan

Over half of cisgender bisexual (57.8%) and cisgender lesbian and gay employees (56.5%) who were out at work and experienced discrimination or harassment said the unfair treatment was motivated by religious beliefs. Among LGB employees who were out at work and experienced discrimination or harassment, over 60% of bisexual (64.5%) and gay men (60.9%) reported that the unfair treatment was motivated by religious beliefs. Slightly lower percentages of out lesbians (46.5%) and out bisexual women (53.3%) reported religious motivation for unfair treatment, though the differences are not statistically significant. For many, such experiences included being quoted to from the Bible, told to pray that they weren't LGBT, and told that they would "go to hell" or were "an abomination."

Examples of these experiences described by cisgender bisexual respondents include:

"I was told I was going to hell during a job interview for liking women."

White cisgender bisexual woman from Michigan

"I worked for [a national craft store] as a cashier and was repeatedly overlooked for promotions within the store because I was not married and living with my partner. The company is very religious The only people getting promoted were Christians I was openly not. Jokes were made about me 'living in sin' on a regular basis."

White cisgender bisexual woman from Nevada

"A co-worker said this during my worst harassment: 'God doesn't love gay people; change yourself before it's too late!'"

Asian American cisgender bisexual man from Missouri

IMPACT OF DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Discrimination and harassment, or fear of those experiences, negatively affect the well-being of employees, which, in turn, can negatively impact employers. Decades of research have linked unsupportive workplace environments for LGBT people to poorer health, decreased job satisfaction, and decreased job commitment, among other negative outcomes.¹⁰ These employee outcomes can have economic consequences for employers.¹¹

Among those who were out in the workplace, gay and bisexual men were more likely to say that they had left a job because of how they were treated by their employer based on their sexual orientation. Nearly 60% of bisexual men (57.5%) and 50.0% of gay men said they had left a job because of unfair treatment, compared to 34.8% of lesbians and 29.0% of bisexual women.

¹⁰See, e.g., M.V. LEE BADGETT ET AL., WILLIAMS INST., THE BUSINESS IMPACT OF LGBT-SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE POLICIES (2013), <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Impact-LGBT-Support-Workplace-May-2013.pdf>.

¹¹*Id.*

CONCLUSION

In general, cisgender bisexual employees report lower rates of workplace discrimination than cisgender gay and lesbian employees. However, this comparison does not take into account the role of concealing and “covering” LGB identity in workplace experiences. When we focus only on employees who are out to at least some people in the workplace, we find that cisgender bisexual employees face similar or higher rates of discrimination and harassment as cisgender gay and lesbian employees. Among those who are out at work, experiences of discrimination and harassment also differ by gender and sexual orientation. Overall, we find that bisexual employees were more likely to be in the closet and engage in “covering” behaviors to downplay their sexual orientation at work. In particular, compared to other groups, bisexual men were the most likely to be in the closet, engage in certain types of covering, and report higher levels of some types of discrimination and harassment when compared to lesbians, gay men, and bisexual women.

Our findings suggest that higher rates of concealing LGB identity among bisexual employees may contribute to overall lower rates of discrimination and harassment based on sexual orientation when compared to gay and lesbian employees. Our findings also suggest that gay and bisexual men, in particular, may face unique and intersecting forms of stigma associated with their gender and sexual orientation and additional pressure to conceal their LGB identity at work.

In making these comparisons, it is important to note some key underlying differences between lesbians, gay men, bisexual women, and bisexual men. For example, in our sample, bisexual women were younger than gay men. Since the survey asked about lifetime experiences of discrimination, it could be expected that bisexual women would report lower rates of discrimination and harassment than gay men.

Further research should explore the extent to which the differences observed are the result of differences in age, race/ethnicity, education, employment sector, and occupation. For example, being younger could mean less time in the workforce to have encountered discrimination or harassment, or more recent, and therefore more supportive, environment than those whose careers stretch back over several decades. On the other hand, those in lower-paying and/or entry jobs may be currently more vulnerable to adverse workplace experiences.

When combined with our previous report finding higher levels of discrimination and harassment among LGBT people of color and transgender employees, our findings make clear that policymakers, businesses, and researchers need to take a nuanced approach to understanding and addressing sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination in the workplace.

AUTHORS

Christy Mallory, J.D., is the Renberg Scholar of Law and Legal Director at the Williams Institute.

Brad Sears, J.D., is the David Sanders Distinguished Scholar of Law and Policy and Founding Executive Director at the Williams Institute. In addition, he is the Associate Dean of Public Interest Law at UCLA Law.

Andrew R. Flores, Ph.D., is a Visiting Scholar at the Williams Institute and an Assistant Professor of Government at American University.

ABOUT THE WILLIAMS INSTITUTE

The Williams Institute is dedicated to conducting rigorous, independent research on sexual orientation and gender identity law and public policy. A think tank at UCLA Law, the Williams Institute produces high-quality research with real-world relevance and disseminates it to judges, legislators, policymakers, media, and the public. These studies can be accessed at the Williams Institute website.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law
Box 951476, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1476
williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu



APPENDIX

METHODS

The Employment Experiences Survey was an anonymous cross-sectional survey conducted between May 5th and 16th 2021 with 1,007 U.S. sexual and gender minority adults ages 18 and up who were in the workforce the week of March 1, 2020—just before COVID-19 emerged and many states and localities shut down. Participants were selected by Morning Consult from the Lucid and Pure Spectrum survey panels¹² using screening questions provided by the Williams Institute. Panelists were screened on sex assigned at birth, gender identity, sexual orientation identity, and workforce participation and job type to recruit sexual and gender minority participants in three employment groups (state or local government, private or non-profit organization, or self-employed, military, federal, unemployed and looking for work, and working in a family business or farm). Eligible panelists reviewed an information sheet before opting to participate in an online English language survey.

The Employment Experiences Survey was developed primarily to gather data about experiences of harassment and discrimination in various types of employment settings. Where possible, survey questions were modeled on prior questions used to assess employment discrimination and efforts to avoid discrimination. For example, some employment discrimination questions were informed by the Williams Major Lifetime Discrimination Scale.¹³ Some questions about concealment and avoidance are from a survey developed by the Center for American Progress.¹⁴ Questions about outness at work were informed by the 2008 General Social Survey and questions about job commitment were informed by the Human Rights Campaign's 2018 'A Workplace Divided' survey.¹⁵ Two open-ended questions were also included in the survey to gather information about the participant's worst experience of unfair treatment, harassment, or discrimination at work because of their sexual

¹²Prior to selecting the Lucid and Pure Spectrum panels for this study, and others, Morning Consult examined European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ESOMAR) documents that contain a uniform set of roughly 30 questions for survey panel providers on topics such as sample sources and recruitment, respondent profiling data, respondent privacy and data security, data quality and validation, and survey incentives. Non-probability panels are formed by recruiting panelists through loyalty and rewards programs, publisher partnerships, advertisements on mobile, tablet and desktop websites, and outreach to online gaming communities; snowball sampling or river sampling are excluded. In addition, Morning Consult examines panels for quality based on average survey completion time and correlations between dozens of variable pairs known to have high correlations (e.g., party identification and political ideology, education and income, country headed in the right direction and leader approval, vote and political party, and consumer confidence variables). In general, only panels that meet Morning Consult's quality requirements are approved as sample providers.

¹³DAVID R. WILLIAMS, MEASURING DISCRIMINATION RESOURCE (2016), https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/davidrwilliams/files/measuring_discrimination_resource_june_2016.pdf.

¹⁴Sejal Singh & Laura E. Durso, *Widespread Discrimination Continues to Shape LGBT People's Lives in Both Subtle and Significant Ways*, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS (May 2, 2017), <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbtq-rights/news/2017/05/02/429529/widespread-discrimination-continues-shape-lgbt-peoples-lives-subtle-significant-ways/>.

¹⁵*The General Social Survey – GSS Questionnaire 2008*, NORC AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, <https://gss.norc.uchicago.edu/get-documentation/questionnaires> (last accessed Oct. 29, 2021); HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUND., *A Workplace Divided: Understanding the Climate for LGBTQ Workers Nationwide* (2018), https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/AWorkplaceDivided-2018.pdf?_ga=2.193882793.502660657.1635548036-1645993985.1589816446.

orientation or gender identity, as well as experiences where the religious beliefs of others were believed to be a factor in how the respondent was treated.

A total of 935 participants who self-identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, or who were transgender (as determined by responses to questions about sex assigned at birth and current gender identity), were included in the analytic sample for this report. Participants who selected gender identity response options, including male, female, transgender, and non-binary, that differed from their sex assigned at birth, were classified as transgender. Those who selected gender identity options that were the same as their sex assigned at birth were classified as cisgender. Cisgender participants who reported “something else” as their sexual orientation identity (n=72) were excluded from empirical analyses given uncertainty about whether they were sexual minorities or not. Descriptive analyses were conducted using Stata v15.1 statistical software and include design-based F-tests (Rao-Scott chi-square tests) of differences in proportions to assess whether outcomes vary across demographic groups at an alpha of 0.05.¹⁶ Confidence intervals (95% CI) were included in Appendix tables to communicate the degree of uncertainty around an estimate due to sampling error. All analyses were weighted using sampling weights developed by Morning Consult.

To construct the sampling weights for the entire sample, Morning Consult used the 2019 Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Public Use File.¹⁷ The 2019 PATH survey was conducted with a large nationally representative sample of U.S. adults and included measures of sexual orientation and transgender status. The PATH data were subset on LGBT respondents in the workforce (full-time employed, part-time employed, self-employed, or looking for work), and this subset was used to establish weighting targets for age (5 categories), sex (2 categories), race/ethnicity (4 categories), education (3 categories), and region (4 categories). Iterative proportional fitting (or “raking”) was then used to create the weight variable. Weights were calibrated to address the oversampling of LGBT adults in state and local government by using workforce sector targets from LGBT adult respondents to the nationally representative 2016 Gallup Daily Tracking survey. Weights were trimmed at 6 to avoid over-weighting a small number of respondents, and they were normalized to sum to the sample size, which is common practice.

Calculations for the uncertainty of the results (like all other uncertainty measures for non-probability samples) assume that the weighted estimates are approximately unbiased. This approximate unbiasedness assumption is based on the assertion that any systematic differences between sample and population are corrected when the sample is adjusted via weighting to match the LGBT population in the workforce on key dimensions (age, race/ethnicity, education, region). While selection probabilities for non-probability samples are unknown, in practice probability panels face the same

¹⁶J. N. K. Rao & A. J. Scott, *On Chi-Squared Tests for Multiway Contingency Tables with Cell Proportions Estimated from Survey Data*, 12 ANN. STAT. 46 (1984), <https://projecteuclid.org/journals/annals-of-statistics/volume-12/issue-1/On-Chi-Squared-Tests-for-Multiway-Contingency-Tables-with-Cell/10.1214/aos/1176346391.full>.

¹⁷United States Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Drug Abuse, Food and Drug Administration & Center for Tobacco Products, *Population Assessment of Tobacco and Health (PATH) Study [United States] Public-Use Files (ICPSR 36498)*, NAHDAP (Oct. 21, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3886/ICPSR36498.v11>.

methodological challenges as non-probability panels¹⁸ that need to be addressed using statistical adjustment. While most non-probability panels themselves are not representative per se, statistical adjustments can be used to create unbiased and representative samples independently of the initial recruitment process.

In this report, we analyze the sub-sample of cisgender respondents by their sexual orientation and current gender. We further subdivide the analyses by those who are out to at some coworkers or to their supervisor.

The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at UCLA.

¹⁸Courtney Kennedy et al., *Evaluating Online Nonprobability Surveys*, Pew Research Center (May 2, 2016), <https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/2016/05/02/evaluating-online-nonprobability-surveys/>.

TABLES

Table A.1. Participant demographic characteristics of cisgender LGB employees (N=838), Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	LESBIANS N=138		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=438		GAY MEN N=142		BISEXUAL MEN N=120	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Age								
18-34	66	54.3, 75.9	78.3	73.4, 82.5	43.3	33.3, 53.9	61.0	50.3, 70.7
35-44	18.4	11.4, 28.4	16.5	12.9, 20.8	30.4	21.5, 41.0	20.3	13.3, 30.0
45-64	14.8	9.1, 23.2	5.0	3.4, 7.4	23.9	16.4, 33.5	16.9	11.1, 25.1
65 and up	0.8	0.2, 3.2	0.2	0.08, 0.76	2.5	1.3, 4.9	1.8	0.56, 5.4
Race/ethnicity								
White, non-Hispanic	48.4	35.9, 61.0	48.3	41.1, 55.6	55.6	44.9, 65.8	48.1	37.2, 59.2
Black, non-Hispanic	14.3	8.5, 23.2	7.7	5.3, 10.9	14.8	9.0, 23.3	8.6	4.0, 17.4
Hispanic or Latinx	32.1	18.8, 49.1	36.0	28.0, 44.8	24.2	15.3, 35.9	32.4	21.7, 45.2
All other racial/ethnic groups, non-Hispanic	5.2	2.0, 13.1	8.1	5.5, 11.8	5.5	2.3, 12.3	11.0	5.9, 19.6
Education								
Less than Bachelor's degree	72.5	65.0, 83.2	78.8	72.6, 84.0	66.5	57.2, 74.4	65.1	54.2, 74.6
Bachelor's degree	15.8	9.4, 25.4	13.2	9.1, 18.7	19.2	13.4, 26.8	20.7	13.1, 31.1
More than Bachelor's degree	9.0	5.5, 14.4	8.0	5.1, 12.3	14.2	9.1, 21.6	14.3	8.9, 22.2
Current employment								
For-profit business	49.5	36.8, 62.3	45.6	38.4, 52.9	63.6	57.2, 74.7	56.2	44.9, 66.9
Non-Profit organization	13.3	5.2, 29.9	6.3	3.2, 11.8	4.8	2.3, 9.8	4.5	1.9, 10.3
Government employee, including military	10.2	6.3, 16.2	12.1	8.7, 16.6	11.4	6.7, 18.7	13.1	6.6, 24.2
Self-employed	13.5	7.1, 24.1	19.7	14.3, 26.6	11.1	6.4, 18.5	15.1	9.2, 23.9
Unemployed/ out of workforce	13.4	6.5, 25.8	16.4	11.2, 23.2	9.1	4.5, 17.5	11.1	5.6, 20.9

	LESBIANS N=138		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=438		GAY MEN N=142		BISEXUAL MEN N=120	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Region								
Northeast	12.4	7.8, 19.1	19.3	13.8, 26.3	17.7	11.0, 27.4	19.7	12.0, 30.7
Midwest	21.0	12.6, 32.7	21.4	16.7, 27.1	13.9	8.9, 21.0	20.7	13.5, 30.3
South	43.6	31.1, 57.0	35.2	28.8, 42.3	36.2	26.8, 46.8	39.0	28.4, 50.7
West	23.0	13.5, 36.4	24.1	17.6, 32.0	32.2	22.9, 43.0	20.6	13.2, 30.8

CI: confidence interval

Table A.2. Openness about being LGBT at work among cisgender employees (N=838), by sexual orientation, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	GAY OR LESBIAN N=280		BISEXUAL N=558	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Not out to supervisor	25.5	19.4, 32.6	64.0	58.0, 69.6
Not out to any co-workers	13.3	9.0, 19.3	32.8	27.3, 38.9
Not out to supervisor or any co-workers	10.8	7.1, 16.0	30.8	25.4, 36.7
Out to a few co-workers	8.6	5.2, 13.9	19.6	15.0, 25.2
Out to some co-workers	16.1	10.7, 23.5	15.0	10.6, 20.7
Out to most co-workers	12.0	8.0, 17.6	13.7	10.3, 17.8
Out to all co-workers	50.0	41.8, 58.1	19.0	14.8, 24.1

CI: confidence interval

Table A.3. Openness about being LGBT at work among cisgender LGB employees (N=838), by sexual orientation and gender, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	LESBIANS N=138		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=438		GAY MEN N=142		BISEXUAL MEN N=120	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Not out to supervisor	28.4	19.2, 40.0	62.1	54.9, 68.9	23.9	16.5, 33.3	67.8	57.1, 76.9
Not out to any co-workers	15.6	8.4, 27.2	30.9	24.5, 38.2	12.1	7.3, 19.6	36.6	26.7, 47.7
Out to a few co-workers	7.4	4.0, 13.3	18.8	13.4, 25.6	9.2	4.7, 17.2	21.3	13.4, 32.2
Out to some co-workers	19.7	10.9, 33.0	15.5	10.5, 22.2	14.3	8.1, 23.9	13.9	6.9, 26.2
Out to most co-workers	8.3	4.8, 14.1	15.1	10.9, 20.6	13.9	8.4, 22.1	10.2	6.3, 17.7
Out to all co-workers	48.9	36.2, 61.9	19.7	14.8, 25.8	50.5	40.1, 60.8	17.5	10.4, 27.9

CI: confidence interval

Table A.4. Covering behaviors at current job among cisgender LGB employees (N=838), by sexual orientation, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	GAY OR LESBIAN N=280		BISEXUAL N=558	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Changed presentation at work (any one or more of the follow four behaviors)	37.3	29.9, 45.3	39.9	33.9, 46.2
Specific alteration of presentation				
Changed hairstyle, makeup, or appearance	17.9	12.7, 24.7	26.4	21.0, 32.5
Changed dress	21.9	16.0, 29.3	24.1	18.9, 30.2
Changed voice or mannerisms	24.6	18.1, 32.5	25.8	20.4, 32.0
Changed bathroom use	13.3	8.5, 20.3	15.8	12.1, 20.3
Hid personal life (any one or more of the following six behaviors)	63.0	54.8, 70.5	60.9	54.6, 66.7
Avoided work events/travel	26.5	20.0, 34.3	18.8	14.6, 23.9
Avoided social events with co-workers	48.3	40.1, 56.6	39.1	33.3, 45.2
Avoided talking about family	37.1	29.9, 44.9	29.8	24.4, 35.7
Avoided talking about social life	35.0	27.9, 42.9	40.6	34.7, 46.8
Hid family photos	34.9	27.8, 42.6	26.6	21.3, 32.7
Not brought family to work-related events	25.8	19.7, 33.0	22.8	18.1, 28.4

CI: confidence interval

Table A.5. Covering behaviors at current job among cisgender LGB employees (N=858), by sexual orientation and gender, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	LESBIANS N=138		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=438		GAY MEN N=142		BISEXUAL MEN N=120	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Changed presentation at work	32.4	22.7, 43.8	36.6	29.9, 44.0	39.9	30.2, 50.5	46.5	35.4, 57.9
Specific alteration of presentation								
Changed hairstyle, makeup, or appearance	19.3	12.5, 28.5	25.7	19.4, 33.1	17.2	10.5, 26.9	27.8	18.4, 39.6
Changed dress	19.2	12.4, 28.7	21.0	15.4, 28.1	23.3	15.5, 33.6	30.3	20.5, 42.3
Changed voice or mannerisms	17.6	10.7, 27.6	21.7	16.1, 28.6	28.3	19.5, 39.1	33.9	23.5, 46.1
Changed bathroom use	7.3	4.0, 12.9	15.2	10.9, 20.8	16.5	9.7, 26.6	17.0	11.0, 25.5

	LESBIANS N=138		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=438		GAY MEN N=142		BISEXUAL MEN N=120	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Hid personal life (any one or more of the following six behaviors)	57.8	44.2, 70.3	58.9	51.5, 66.0	65.7	55.6, 75	64.6	53.5, 74.3
Avoided work events/travel	18.5	11.4, 28.6	17.1	12.9, 22.3	30.8	21.9, 41.4	22.2	13.8, 33.8
Avoided social events with co-workers	42.4	30.2, 55.5	33.4	27.1, 40.2	51.5	41.0, 61.8	50.4	39.3, 61.6
Avoided talking about family	36.8	26.1, 48.9	28.5	22.4, 35.5	37.3	28.1, 47.4	32.3	22.5, 44.0
Avoided talking about social life	37.2	26.5, 49.3	41.9	34.7, 49.4	33.8	24.8, 44.2	38.0	27.9, 49.4
Hid family photos	32.0	22.3, 43.6	21.6	16.2, 28.2	36.3	27.2, 46.6	36.7	26.2, 48.7
Not brought family to work-related events	21.9	14.1, 32.4	17.5	13.2, 22.9	27.9	19.9, 37.6	33.6	23.3, 45.6

CI: confidence interval

Table A.6. Lifetime experiences of sexual orientation discrimination and harassment against cisgender LGB employees (N=838), by sexual orientation, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	GAY OR LESBIAN N=280		BISEXUAL N=558	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Any lifetime discrimination (fired or not hired)	33.8	26.6, 41.9	24.4	19.3, 30.4
Any lifetime harassment	41.8	33.9, 50.1	34.1	28.4, 40.3

CI: confidence interval

Table A.7. Lifetime experiences of sexual orientation discrimination and harassment against cisgender LGB employees who were out in the workplace (N=621), by sexual orientation and gender, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	LESBIANS N=123		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=297		GAY MEN N=125		BISEXUAL MEN N=76	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Any lifetime discrimination (fired or not hired)	25.0	15.3, 38.2	27.2	19.6, 36.5	42.7	32.2, 53.9	46.4	32.7, 60.6
Any lifetime harassment	32.9	20.8, 47.8	38.3	30.0, 47.2	48.4	37.4, 59.5	60.3	46.4, 72.8
Specific harassment type								
Verbal harassment	29.5	17.8, 44.8	26.8	19.3, 35.9	41.6	31.1, 52.9	57.7	43.8, 70.5
Physical harassment	16.7	9.3, 28.3	23.7	16.3, 33.1	23.7	15.5, 34.4	33.3	21.3, 47.9
Sexual harassment	17.4	9.9, 28.8	29.2	21.5, 38.3	33.6	23.9, 45.0	34.8	22.7, 49.3

CI: confidence interval

Table A.8. Past-year experiences of sexual orientation discrimination against cisgender LGB employees (N=858), by sexual orientation, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	GAY OR LESBIAN N=280		BISEXUAL N=558	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Any discrimination within the past year (fired or not hired)	11.2	6.8, 17.7	6.6	4.2, 10.4

CI: confidence interval

Table A.9. Past-year experiences of sexual orientation discrimination against cisgender LGB employees (N=858), by sexual orientation and gender, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	LESBIANS N=138		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=438		GAY MEN N=142		BISEXUAL MEN N=120	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Any discrimination within the past year (fired or not hired)	10.9	4.2, 25.7	3.7	1.9, 7.2	12.7	7.0, 22.0	19.5	10.4, 33.7

CI: confidence interval

Table A.10. Religion as a motivating factor for sexual orientation discrimination or harassment against cisgender LGB employees who were out in the workplace (N=343), Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	LESBIANS N=74		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=133		GAY MEN N=87		BISEXUAL MEN N=49	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Religious beliefs were a factor in discrimination or harassment	46.5	29.5, 64.4	53.3	40.4, 65.8	60.9	47.8, 72.6	64.5	46.0, 79.5

CI: confidence interval

Table A.11. Impact of sexual orientation discrimination on employee retention among cisgender LGB employees who were out in the workplace (N=621), by sexual orientation and gender, Employment Experiences Survey, May 2021

	LESBIANS N=123		BISEXUAL WOMEN N=125		GAY MEN N=297		BISEXUAL MEN N=76	
	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI	%	95% CI
Left a job due to personal treatment	34.8	23.2, 48.6	29.0	21.1, 38.4	50.0	38.9, 61.1	57.5	43.5, 70.4

CI: confidence interval

Additional analyses presented in this report are on file with the authors.