Workplace Support, Discrimination, and Person–Organization Fit: Tests of the Theory of Work Adjustment With LGB Individuals

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The present study explored the links of 2 workplace contextual variables—perceptions of workplace heterosexist discrimination and lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB)-supportive climates—with job satisfaction and turnover intentions in a sample of LGB employees. An extension of the theory of work adjustment (TWA) was used as the conceptual framework for the study; as such, perceived person–organization (P–O) fit was tested as a mediator of the relations between the workplace contextual variables and job outcomes. Data were analyzed from 326 LGB employees. Zero-order correlations indicated that perceptions of workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates were correlated in expected directions with P–O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to compare multiple alternative measurement models evaluating the discriminant validity of the 2 workplace contextual variables relative to one another, and the 3 TWA job variables relative to one another; SEM was also used to test the hypothesized mediation model. Comparisons of multiple alternative measurement models supported the construct distinctiveness of the variables of interest. The test of the hypothesized structural model revealed that only LGB-supportive climates (and not workplace heterosexist discrimination) had a unique direct positive link with P–O fit and, through the mediating role of P–O fit, had significant indirect positive and negative relations with job satisfaction and turnover intentions, respectively. Moreover, P–O fit had a significant indirect negative link with turnover intentions through job satisfaction.

Keywords: lesbian, gay, bisexual, sexual minority, workplace discrimination, workplace climate, heterosexism, theory of work adjustment

Workplace heterosexist discrimination is a common experience for lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) employees. In a review of 11 studies, Croteau (1996) surmised that 25%–66% of LGB employees across studies reported having experienced workplace discrimination, and 44%–60% anticipated experiencing future discrimination. Research with LGB employees links such workplace discrimination with poor mental health, physical health, and job outcomes, and a parallel body of research links LGB-supportive workplace climates with positive mental health and job outcomes (e.g., Huffman, Watrous-Rodriguez, & King, 2008; Liddle, Luzzo, Hauenstein, & Schuck, 2004; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Waldo, 1999). In this research, workplace heterosexist discrimination is defined as denigration, stigmatization, or harassment of nonheterosexual people, behaviors, identities, relationships, or communities in the workplace (Waldo, 1999); LGB-supportive workplace climates are defined as “formal and informal aspects of an institutional environment” that enhance LGB employees’ welfare (Liddle et al., 2004, p. 33).

One theoretical framework that may be used to understand the associations of such workplace contextual factors with job outcomes is the theory of work adjustment (TWA; Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1964). The TWA posits that the degree of fit between person factors (e.g., employees’ skills/abilities, needs/values) and environmental factors (e.g., workplaces’ required skills/abilities, needs/values) is related directly to job outcomes. This framework has been applied to studying workplace discrimination and job outcomes for LGB employees (e.g., Lyons, Brenner, & Fassinger, 2005). But, at this juncture in the applications of TWA with LGB and other marginalized populations (e.g., Lyons et al., 2005; Lyons & O’Brien, 2006), several advancements are needed to guide future research and practice. First, workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive workplace climates are conceptualized and operationalized as related but distinct constructs in the LGB vocational literature (e.g., Liddle et al., 2004; Waldo, 1999). But, because these experiences are typically examined separately, it is unclear whether these negative and positive aspects of the workplace environment are distinct from one another and in their relations to job outcomes. Second, although indicators of person–environment fit and job outcomes have been conceptualized as distinct in prior applications of the TWA to marginalized populations (e.g., Lyons et al., 2005; Lyons & O’Brien, 2006), there are some questions in the broader vocational literature about the distinctiveness of some measures of fit from some measures of job outcomes (e.g., Edwards, Cable, Williamson, Lambert, & Shipp, 2006). Third, TWA research with LGB employees has not examined turnover intentions, leaving unclear the generalizability of TWA propositions regarding this job outcome.
Clarification of these issues has implications for theoretical parsimony (e.g., for LGB employees, which of the aforementioned constructs captures unique aspects of workplace environments, job outcomes, and their relations?). Such clarification, in turn, can guide future research and practice (e.g., which constructs may be the most fruitful targets for interventions to improve the experiences of LGB employees?). To address these needs, we advanced prior literature in the present study by (a) evaluating the construct distinctiveness of workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates; (b) evaluating the construct distinctiveness of a conceptually salient measure of fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions; and (c) offering a concomitant test of the indirect relations from workplace contextual variables, through fit, to job outcome variables, as posited in extensions of the TWA with LGB employees.

The TWA and Job Outcomes

Three core tenets of the TWA (see Dawis, 2005) are that (a) the degree of correspondence (i.e., fit) between the needs or values of employees and the reinforcers available in their workplaces correlates with employees’ satisfaction with their jobs (i.e., job satisfaction); (b) the degree of correspondence between employees’ abilities and workplaces’ skills requirements correlates with workplaces’ satisfaction with their employees (i.e., satisfactoriness); and (c) job satisfaction and satisfactoriness impact tenure, often operationalized as turnover intentions. In order to elucidate workplace experiences from the perspectives of marginalized populations, adaptations of the TWA have focused on employees’ subjective perceptions of fit and satisfaction (rather than on separate assessments of person and environment factors to determine fit, or on organizations’ appraisals of fit and satisfactoriness). Furthermore, from among the various indicators of fit (see Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Tranberg, Slane, & Ekeberg, 1993), TWA studies with marginalized populations have focused on person–organization (P–O) fit, defined as the congruence between employees’ values and those of their workplace organization (Lovelace & Rosen, 1996; Lyons et al., 2005; Lyons & O’Brien, 2006). Examining P–O fit is also consistent with our focus in the present study on LGB employees’ perceptions of the values of their workplaces (as expressed through heterosexist discrimination and supportive climates).

P–O fit and job outcomes have been treated as separate constructs in TWA research with marginalized populations (e.g., Lyons et al., 2005; Lyons & O’Brien, 2006). But, in the broader vocational literature, some researchers have questioned the distinctiveness of various indicators of person–environment fit from job outcomes. For example, in examining perceived satisfaction and perceived fit across a number of specific job dimensions (e.g., autonomy, pay, prestige), Edwards et al. (2006) found an average satisfaction–fit correlation of .73. But, in a meta-analysis of the links of various forms of fit with job outcomes, Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) found that P–O fit had moderate correlations with job satisfaction (r = .44) and turnover intentions (r = .35) and that these correlations exhibited a weaker pattern than those involving person–job fit (r = .56 for satisfaction; r = .46 for turnover intentions). Thus, discriminant validity concerns may be less pronounced for P–O fit, but the issue of construct distinctiveness has not been a focus of TWA studies with marginalized populations. In fact, in such studies, construct distinctiveness has been assumed, although P–O fit evinced correlations of .67 and .74 with job satisfaction in two prior samples of LGB employees (Lyons et al., 2005). In the present study, we examined construct distinctiveness prior to tests of hypotheses.

The Role of Group-Specific Workplace Contextual Factors in the TWA

Within the individual-differences tradition of the TWA, sociocultural group membership (e.g., sexual orientation) is posited to serve as a proxy for differential experiences that shape individual differences in person–environment fit (Dawis, 1994). As such, person–environment fit is theorized to mediate the relation of group-specific workplace experiences (e.g., discrimination and supportive climate) with job outcomes (e.g., Fitzgerald & Rounds, 1993; Rounds & Hesketh, 1994), and empirical evidence has been consistent with this perspective.1 For example, Lovelace and Rosen (1996) presented data suggesting that group differences in job satisfaction and turnover intentions (specifically, differences between African American managers as a group and White male managers as a group) were mediated by differences in perceptions of P–O fit. Similarly, Lyons and O’Brien (2006) found that perceptions of supportive workplace racial climates correlated positively with P–O fit, which in turn correlated positively with job satisfaction and negatively with turnover intentions. In the most direct test of the mediation hypothesis, with two separate LGB samples, Lyons et al. (2005) found that P–O fit mediated the discrimination–job satisfaction link. In sum, these studies suggest that perceived discrimination and supportive workplace climates each are associated with job outcomes and that P–O fit may mediate these relations. However, the mediation hypothesis has not been examined with LGB-supportive climates in particular (alone or in combination with heterosexist discrimination).

Indeed, scholars have argued that a narrow focus on discrimination ignores the full spectrum of LGB employees’ workplace experiences, including potentially affirmative climates that are conceptualized to be distinct from discrimination experiences (e.g., Chojnacki & Gelberg, 1994; Liddle et al., 2004). In response to such critiques, emerging research suggests that LGB-supportive workplace climates are correlated positively with job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Huffman et al., 2008; Liddle et al., 2004). But, the parallel relations of LGB-supportive climates and workplace heterosexist discrimination with job outcomes may raise questions about the distinctiveness of these positive and negative aspects of the workplace environment. For example, Liddle et al. (2004) found that perceptions of workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive workplace climates yielded a correlation of −.52, a notable level of overlap. But, Liddle et al. (2004) did not examine whether workplace discrimination and supportive climates had unique relations with job outcomes. In another study,

1 Some scholars also speculated that group-specific experiences may moderate the relations of person–environment fit with some job outcomes (e.g., Rounds & Hesketh, 1994), but multiple empirical tests of such relations have not supported the moderating role of supportive climate or discrimination in the relation of P–O fit with job outcomes (Lyons et al., 2005; Lyons & O’Brien, 2006). Thus, the focus of the present study was on the conceptually and empirically grounded mediation hypothesis.
Ragins and Cornwell (2001) found that workplace climate indicators (e.g., nondiscrimination policy) yielded additional unique links with some workplace outcomes (e.g., turnover intentions) beyond the role of perceived workplace discrimination. Thus, across these two studies, there is some evidence of overlap and of distinctiveness between workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates. However, it is important to examine directly whether these workplace contextual variables are distinct from one another and in their relations with job outcomes.

The Present Study

In this study, we examine the links of LGB employees’ perceptions of workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates with P–O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. As a preliminary step to testing hypothesized relations within this adaptation of the TWA framework, we test the distinctiveness of the two workplace contextual variables (i.e., heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates) from one another, and the distinctiveness of the three TWA workplace mediator and outcome variables (i.e., P–O fit, job satisfaction, turnover intentions) from one another. Following procedures outlined by J. C. Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a set of alternative measurement models is used to test the hypotheses that each of the following pairs of variables is better modeled as two separate factors than as a single construct: workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates (Hypothesis 1a), P–O fit and job satisfaction (Hypothesis 1b), P–O fit and turnover intentions (Hypothesis 1c), and job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Hypothesis 1d).

Next, we examine the set of indirect relations grounded in extensions of the TWA with LGB employees. Specifically, through the mediating role of P–O fit, workplace heterosexist discrimination is predicted to have a negative indirect link with job satisfaction (Hypothesis 2), and LGB-supportive climates are predicted to have a positive indirect link with job satisfaction (Hypothesis 3); P–O fit, in turn, is predicted to have a negative indirect link, through job satisfaction, with turnover intentions (Hypothesis 4). Full and partial mediation models are compared. Also, workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates are examined concomitantly to test whether these two workplace contextual variables function uniquely or redundantly in the TWA-based model.

Method

Participants

Data from 326 participants were analyzed in this study. Participants ranged from 18 to 75 years of age (M = 38.42, SD = 12.11, Mdn = 37.00). In terms of sexual orientation, about 62% of participants identified as exclusively lesbian or gay, 22% as bisexual, 13% as mostly lesbian or gay, and 3% as other minority orientations (e.g., queer); one individual who identified as mostly heterosexual was retained because she reported moderate levels of same-sex physical and emotional attraction. About 53% of respondents identified as women, 43% as men, 2% as transgender women, 2% as other genders (e.g., genderqueer), and less than 1% as transgender men. About 80% of participants identified as White/Caucasian, 6% as African American/Black, 6% as Hispanic/Latina/o, 4% as multiracial/multiethnic, 2% as Asian American/Pacific Islander, 1% as American Indian/Native American, and 1% as other races or ethnicities.

In terms of employment status, about 79% of participants reported full-time employment, 19% reported part-time employment, and 2% reported that they were self-employed. As their highest level of education, about 50% of the sample reported a professional degree (e.g., master’s, doctoral); 33% reported a college degree; 14% reported some college education; 2% reported a high school degree; and less than 1% each reported less than a high school education, some high school education, and trade/vocational school training. Approximately 55% of the sample identified as middle class, 26% as working class, 15% as upper-middle class, 3% as lower class, and 1% as upper class. As their yearly household income, approximately 3% reported less than $10,000, 18% reported between $10,001 and $30,000, 21% reported between $30,001 and $50,000, 20% reported between $50,001 and $70,000, 13% reported between $70,001 and $90,000, 11% reported between $90,001 and $110,000, and 15% reported more than $110,001.

Measures

Workplace heterosexist discrimination. The 22-item Work Heterosexist Experiences Questionnaire (WHEQ; Waldo, 1999) was used to assess the perceived frequency of workplace heterosexist discrimination on a 5-point scale (1 = Never, 5 = Most of the time). The response stem for WHEQ items is “DURING THE PAST 24 MONTHS in your workplace, have you been in a situation where any one of your SUPERVISORS OR CO-WORKERS...” A sample item is “...told offensive jokes about lesbians, gay men, or bisexual people (e.g., “fag” or “dyke” jokes, AIDS jokes)?” Item responses were averaged to yield an overall score, with higher scores indicating more discrimination. In prior research with LGB employees, WHEQ items have yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of .93 (Waldo, 1999). Cronbach’s alpha for WHEQ items in the present sample was .94. With regard to validity, WHEQ scores were correlated positively with perceived workplace tolerance for heterosexism in a sample of LGB employees (Waldo, 1999).

LGB-supportive workplace climates. The 20-item Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Climate Inventory (LGBTCI; Liddel et al., 2004) was used to assess participants’ evaluations of the LGBT supportive-ness of their workplaces. The response stem for the LGBTCI is “At my workplace...” A sample item is “LGBT employees feel accepted by coworkers.” Items were rated on a 4-point response scale (1 = Doesn’t describe at all, 4 = Describes extremely well). Appropriate items were reverse scored, and responses were averaged to derive an overall score, with higher scores indicating perceptions of more supportive environments. LGBTCI items have yielded Cronbach’s alphas of .96 in samples of LGB and LGBT employees (Huffman et al., 2008; Liddel et al., 2004). Cronbach’s alpha for LGBTCI items in the present sample was .96. With regard to validity, LGBTCI scores correlated negatively with perceived experiences of LGBT-related workplace discrimination in a sample of LGBT employees (Liddel et al., 2004).
**P–O fit.** Participants’ perceptions of correspondence between their values and the values of their workplace organizations was measured with Saks and Ashforth’s (1997) five-item P–O fit scale. Participants responded to each item (e.g., “To what extent are the values of the organization similar to your own values?”) on a 5-point scale (1 = *a little bit of", 5 = *a large extent*). Item ratings were averaged to derive an overall score, with higher scores indicating greater perceived P–O fit. Items from this measure yielded Cronbach’s alphas of .92 in two separate samples of LGB employees (Lyons et al., 2005). Cronbach’s alpha in the present sample was .94. In terms of validity, confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the five P–O fit items assessed a separate but moderately correlated construct relative to person–job fit in a sample of business program graduates (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

**Job satisfaction.** Satisfaction with one’s job was assessed with the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire-Short Form (MSQ-SF; Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). Participants were asked to rate their satisfaction with each of 20 job dimensions (e.g., independence, compensation) using a 5-point scale (1 = *very dissatisfied, 5 Very satisfied*). A sample item is “The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job.” Item responses were averaged, with higher scores indicating greater satisfaction with one’s job. In two separate samples of LGB employees, Lyons et al. (2005) reported Cronbach’s alphas of .90 and .92 for MSQ-SF items. Cronbach’s alpha for MSQ-SF items in the present sample was .92. In terms of validity, MSQ-SF scores correlated positively with other measures of job satisfaction in a sample of predominantly White employees (e.g., Bizot & Goldman, 1993).

**Turnover intentions.** Intentions to quit one’s job were assessed with Colarelli’s (1984) three-item scale. Participants rated each item (e.g., “I frequently think of quitting my job”) on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree, 5 strongly agree*). One item was reverse scored and item ratings were averaged, with higher scores indicating greater intentions to quit. In a sample of African American employees, these items yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of .83 (Lyons & O’Brien, 2006). In the present sample, these items yielded a Cronbach’s alpha of .83. In terms of validity, scores on this measure correlated negatively with commitment to and identification with one’s workplace organization in a sample of business program graduates (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

**Procedure**

Participants were recruited using fliers posted to electronic mailing lists, discussion boards, and web communities (Yahoo or Google Groups) that catered to LGB individuals. Internet-based participant recruitment has proven to be cost-effective (Gosling, Vazire, Srivastava, & John, 2004; Hiskey & Troop, 2002) and particularly useful in recruiting LGB individuals (Mustanski, 2001; Riggle, Rostosky, & Reedy, 2005). The recruitment materials and informed consent indicated that in order to participate, individuals had to (a) be 18 years of age or older, (b) reside in North America (United States, Canada, or Mexico), (c) identify as LGB, or some other sexual minority status (e.g., queer), and (d) be currently employed. If individuals affirmed that they met these criteria and agreed to participate, they were directed to the survey. In addition to the variables described above, participants completed measures of internalized heterosexism, sexual identity management, life satisfaction, and psychological distress as part of a larger study; this is the first article produced from the larger data set. Participants did not receive compensation for their participation.

A total of 478 individuals responded to at least one survey item, though 136 participants were removed because they were missing more than 20% of the items (of these, 115 were missing more than 50% of the items; some of these individuals may have clicked a few responses to “check out” the survey and returned to complete the survey at a later time). In addition, given the focus of this study on current workplace experiences, two participants were removed because they indicated that they were unemployed. Lastly, 14 participants were removed because they responded incorrectly to more than two of four validity questions (questions interspersed throughout the survey that asked participants to select a particular response so that we could assess random or inattentive responding). These data-cleaning procedures resulted in a final sample size of 326 participants. Of these participants, 254 (78%) had complete data. Of the remaining 72 participants, 66 (92%) were missing between one and 10 items. NORM Version 2.02 (Schafer, 1997) was used to impute item-level missing data from expectation maximization parameters prior to computing the scale or subscale scores that were used in analyses.

**Results**

Intercorrelations among the variables of interest were theoretically consistent (see Table 1). That is, perceptions of workplace heterosexist discrimination were correlated negatively with P–O fit and job satisfaction and correlated positively with turnover intentions; perceptions of LGB-supportive workplace climates were correlated positively with P–O fit and job satisfaction and correlated negatively with turnover intentions; and P–O fit and job satisfaction were correlated positively with one another and correlated negatively with turnover intentions. These correlations spanned the benchmarks for medium to large effects (Cohen, 1992).

To test the hypotheses about construct distinctiveness and mediated relations, we conducted latent variable structural equation modeling (SEM), using Amos 7.0 (Arbuckle, 2006) with maximum likelihood (ML) estimation. First, we examined a measurement model to determine whether the observed variables appropriately identified the latent constructs. Next, following J. C. Anderson and Gerbing’s (1988) procedures, we compared a series of alternative measurement models to test the distinctiveness of the constructs of interest. Finally, we tested a structural model of the mediation hypotheses and compared full and partial mediation models. Upon identifying the best-fitting structural model (full or partial mediation), we performed a bootstrap procedure with 2,000 bootstrap samples from the original data to compute bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (CIs); if the 95% CI does not include 0, then the indirect effect is significant at $p < .05$ (Mallinckrodt, Abraham, Wei, & Russell, 2006).

Throughout these analyses, we evaluated model fit using the comparative fit index (CFI), root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA), and standardized root-mean-residual (SRMR). Criteria for acceptable fit have ranged from CFI ≥ .90 and RMSEA and SRMR ≤ .10 to more conservative criteria of CFI ≥ .95, RMSEA ≤ .06, and SRMR ≤ .08 (e.g., Hu & Bentler, 1999; Quintana & Maxwell, 1999). We performed chi-square difference
tests for comparisons of measurement models and of full and partial mediation models.

### Measurement Models

We used three or more indicators to model each latent construct. Following recommendations for the creation of parcel indicators for latent constructs in SEM (e.g., Weston & Gore, 2006), we created item parcels from WHEQ, LGBTCI, and MSQ-SF item sets. To create these parcels, WHEQ, LGBTCI, and MSQ-SF item sets were each subjected to exploratory factor analyses using principle axis factoring. For each of these three scales, items were rank ordered according to the magnitude of their factor loadings and assigned to three parcels in countervailing order to maximize the equality of average factor loadings across parcels. Items within each of these parcels were averaged to derive parcel scores. This procedure resulted in three parcels each for the WHEQ, LGBTCI, and MSQ-SF. Because the measures of P–O fit and turnover intentions contained five and three items, respectively, each item was used as an indicator for the corresponding latent construct. Overall, the measurement model included 17 observed indicators (three parcels each for the WHEQ, LGBTCI, MSQ-SF, and turnover intentions and five parcels for P–O fit) and five latent constructs (i.e., workplace heterosexist discrimination, LGB-supportive climates, P–O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions).

Most of the observed indicators met criteria for univariate normality (i.e., skewness ≤ 3.0 and kurtosis ≤ 10.0; Weston & Gore, 2006), with the exception of WHEQ1 (skewness = 3.64, kurtosis = 16.15) and WHEQ3 (skewness = 3.30, kurtosis = 12.31); a Mardia’s coefficient of 109.98 suggested multivariate nonnormality. ML estimation provides relatively unbiased parameter estimates even when multivariate normality is violated, but standard errors may be underestimated (Bollen, 1989). Thus, one recommended adjustment for multivariate nonnormality is to use bootstrap procedures, which adjust standard errors and offer a more conservative test of the significance of parameter estimates (Mooney & Duval, 1993). Thus, for subsequent analyses, we supplemented the ML estimation with bootstrap procedures (2,000 bootstrap samples, bias-corrected percentile method). As indicated in Table 2, fit index values for the measurement model met criteria for acceptable fit according to CFI and SRMR, but RMSEA was at the high end. According to ML and bootstrap estimates, all standardized factor loadings were significant (ps < .01), ranging from .72 to .96; latent variable intercorrelations were also significant (ps < .01) and consistent with zero-order correlations (see Table 1).

As a first test of the distinctiveness of the latent constructs in the model, we examined the 95% bias-corrected CIs for the latent factor correlations. Support for discriminant validity is indicated if the CI does not contain unity (i.e., one; Bagozzi & Phillips, 1982).

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1. Workplace heterosexist discrimination</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>−.71*</td>
<td>−.38*</td>
<td>−.37*</td>
<td>.28*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. LGB-supportive climates</td>
<td>−.69**</td>
<td>−.50*</td>
<td>.50*</td>
<td>.46*</td>
<td>−.29*</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Person–organization fit</td>
<td>−.38**</td>
<td>−.44**</td>
<td>.74**</td>
<td>−.72*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Job satisfaction</td>
<td>−.36**</td>
<td>−.30**</td>
<td>−.63**</td>
<td>−.75*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Turnover intentions</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>−.30**</td>
<td>−.63**</td>
<td>−.67**</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Possible range</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ω</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.83</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. Values below the diagonal are correlations among observed variables; values above the diagonal are correlations among latent constructs with bias-corrected percentile p values. LGB = lesbian, gay, bisexual. *p < .01. **p < .001.

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>χ²(df)</th>
<th>Δχ²(df)</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>RMSEA [90% CI]</th>
<th>SRMR</th>
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<tr>
<td>Original</td>
<td>376.55 (109)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.09 [.08, .10]</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates</td>
<td>940.51 (113)</td>
<td>563.96** (4)</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.15 [.14, .16]</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P–O fit and job satisfaction</td>
<td>782.59 (113)</td>
<td>406.05** (4)</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.14 [.13, .14]</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P–O fit and turnover intentions</td>
<td>576.90 (113)</td>
<td>200.35* (4)</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.11 [.10, .12]</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction and turnover intentions</td>
<td>539.85 (113)</td>
<td>163.30* (4)</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.10 [.10, .12]</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation; CI = confidence interval; SRMR = standardized root-mean-residual; LGB = lesbian, gay, bisexual; P–O fit = person–organization fit. **p < .001.
The latent factor correlations and CIs of interest were as follows: workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates (−.71, 95% CI [−.77, −.65]); P-O fit and job satisfaction (.78, 95% CI [.70, .84]); P-O fit and turnover intentions (−.72, 95% CI [−.79, −.65]); and job satisfaction and turnover intentions (−.75, 95% CI [−.81, −.69]). None of the CIs contained unity.

To further test construct distinctiveness, we followed J. C. Anderson and Gerbing’s (1988) procedures to compare four alternative measurement models with the original measurement model. In each alternative model, one correlation of interest (i.e., workplace heterosexism and LGB-supportive climates; P-O fit and job satisfaction; P-O fit and turnover intentions; job satisfaction and turnover intentions) was constrained to one, indicating unity between the two constructs; in addition, the correlations of these two constructs with the other constructs in the model were constrained to be identical. These constraints constitute a model in which the two constructs of interest are modeled as one construct, and this model is nested within the original measurement model, allowing for nested model comparisons. Constructs distinctiveness is suggested if the chi-square of the constrained model is significantly larger (indicating poorer fit) than that of the original measurement model. As indicated in Table 2, the fit of the original measurement model was superior to the fit of each of the constrained measurement models. Together, the latent factor correlation bootstrap bias-corrected CIs and the tests of alternative measurement models suggest highly overlapping but not fully redundant constructs (Hypothesis 1). Given these results, the subsequent analyses are based on the original measurement model.

**Structural Model and Tests of Mediation**

The full mediation model (see Figure 1) yielded acceptable fit to the data according to CFI and SRMR, but RMSEA was at the high end, \( \chi^2(114, N = 326) = 408.57, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .95, \text{RMSEA} = .09 \) (90% CI [.08, .10]), SRMR = .06. The partial mediation model (i.e., all additional direct paths freely estimated) yielded similar fit index values, \( \chi^2(110, N = 326) = 401.95, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .95, \text{RMSEA} = .09 \) (90% CI [.08, .10]), SRMR = .06. However, the full and partial mediation models did not differ significantly, \( \Delta \chi^2(4, N = 326) = 6.62, p = .16; \) thus, we retained the more parsimonious full mediation model. This model accounted for 26% of the variance in P-O fit, 63% of the variance in job satisfaction, and 59% of the variance in turnover intentions. As depicted in Figure 1, the unique link between workplace heterosexist discrimination and P-O fit was not significant. By contrast, consistent with prediction, LGB-supportive workplace climates had a significant unique positive link with P-O fit, P-O fit had a significant unique positive link with job satisfaction, and job satisfaction had a significant unique negative link with turnover intentions.

The bootstrap procedure testing indirect effects in the full mediation model indicated that, contrary to Hypothesis 2, the indirect link of workplace heterosexist discrimination, through P-O fit, with job satisfaction was not significant (\( B = -.08, 95\% \text{ CI} [-.28, .10], \beta = -.06 \times .79 = -.05 \)). The total indirect link of workplace heterosexist discrimination with turnover intentions was also nonsignificant (\( B = .13, 95\% \text{ CI} [-.14, .44], \beta = -.06 \times .79 \times -.77 = .04 \)). In contrast, consistent with Hypothesis 3, LGB-supportive climates had a significant indirect positive link with job satisfaction (\( B = .34, 95\% \text{ CI} [.22, .48], \beta = .46 \times .79 = .36 \)) through the mediating role of P-O fit. LGB-supportive climates also had a significant total indirect negative link with turnover intentions (\( B = -.53, 95\% \text{ CI} [-.73, -.35], \beta = .46 \times .79 \times -.77 = -.28 \)). Finally, consistent with Hypothesis 4, P-O fit had a significant indirect negative link with turnover intentions (\( B = -.78, 95\% \text{ CI} [-.89, -.66], \beta = .79 \times -.77 = -.61 \)) through the mediating role of job satisfaction.

**Discussion**

In the present study, we tested the distinctiveness of two key workplace contextual variables identified within the LGB vocational literature (i.e., heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates) and the distinctiveness of three TWA mediator and outcome variables (i.e., P-O fit, job satisfaction, turnover intentions). In addition, building on prior TWA research with marginalized populations (e.g., Lyons et al., 2005), we tested a set of indirect relations from the workplace contextual variables, through P-O fit, to job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

SEM analyses of multiple alternative measurement models supported the distinctiveness of perceived workplace heterosexist discrimination from LGB-supportive climates, and the distinctiveness of P-O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions from one another. That is, CIs of these latent variable correlations as well as the measurement model comparisons were consistent in suggesting that collapsing the factor pairs of interest provided poorer fit to the data than retaining separate factors. Nevertheless, it is important to
highlight that the zero-order and latent factor correlations indicated a high level of overlap (in expected directions) between heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates, and among P–O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. The amount of shared variance across these variable pairs ranged from 40% to 55% for the observed variables, and from 50% to 61% for the latent variables.

These results suggest that the two LGB workplace contextual variables and the three TWA mediator/outcome variables may reflect separate but highly overlapping constructs. The high overlap between fit and job satisfaction is consistent with evidence from the broader vocational literature (e.g., Edwards et al., 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Thus, a next step may be to evaluate construct distinctiveness using multmethod and multisource approaches to assessing the constructs of interest. For example, organizational policy statements and practices could be used as an indicator of LGB-supportive climates. Similarly, correspondence between statements of organizational values and participants’ values could be used to operationalize P–O fit. Such approaches may help to tease apart actual construct overlap from method overlap.

The present results offer some support for the extension of the TWA to LGB employees. Consistent with prior literature (e.g., Huffman et al., 2008; Liddle et al., 2004; Lyons et al., 2005; Waldo, 1999) and with the hypotheses, zero-order correlations indicated that perceptions of workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climates were related in the expected directions with P–O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions. However, when examined concomitantly, perceptions of LGB-supportive climates, but not workplace heterosexist discrimination, yielded the hypothesized indirect relations. That is, through the mediating role of P–O fit, perceptions of LGB-supportive climates had a positive indirect link with job satisfaction; through the mediating role of job satisfaction, P–O fit had a negative indirect link with turnover intentions; and through the mediating roles of P–O fit and job satisfaction, perceptions of LGB-supportive climates had a total negative indirect relation with turnover intentions.

These findings advance prior data on the separate relations of workplace discrimination and supportive climates with job outcomes (e.g., Ragins & Cornwell, 2001) by demonstrating that when heterosexist discrimination is examined along with LGB-supportive climates, the discrimination links are subsumed by the overlapping relations of LGB-supportive climates. Again, this finding must be interpreted within the context of the high correlation between the workplace heterosexist discrimination and LGB-supportive climate variables (about 50% overlap). Thus, the aforementioned point about the future need for multimethod approaches to examining discrimination and climate is relevant. In addition, a fruitful direction for future research may be to use longitudinal and experimental designs to elucidate the direction of causality, or recursive nature, of the relations between these two workplace contextual variables.

With regard to the clinical or advocacy implications of this finding, it is important to note that from a conceptual standpoint, LGB-supportive climates are first and foremost those that do not discriminate against LGB individuals. But, the absence of discrimination may not be equivalent to an LGB-supportive climate; this is consistent with the finding that LGB-supportive climates yielded unique relations with other variables in our model above and beyond the relations of heterosexist discrimination. This nuance echoes some scholars’ lament that a narrow focus on negative, discriminatory circumstances, although important, neglects the full spectrum of LGB employees’ workplace experiences (e.g., Chojnacki & Gelberg, 1994; Liddle et al., 2004). Also, the present findings do not preclude the possibility that workplace heterosexist discrimination may be related uniquely, beyond the role of LGB-supportive climates, to job outcomes not examined in the present study (e.g., pay, promotion, performance). Thus, future research could build on the present results to examine how positive and negative workplace contextual factors function together in relation to other job outcomes.

Another conclusion that may be drawn from this study is that P–O fit may link LGB employees’ perceptions of supportive workplace climates with job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Although the cross-sectional nature of this study precludes causal interpretations, the results suggest the utility of attending to associations among the contextual variables, P–O fit, and job outcomes in clinical practice and advocacy. For example, the mediating role of P–O fit in the link of LGB-supportive workplace climates with job outcomes suggests that in addition to considering career counseling staples such as vocational interests, clients may benefit from exploring the LGB supportiveness of various career fields or workplaces, exploring their own personal values, identifying workplace values, and reflecting on P–O fit. Results of this study’s construct distinctiveness analyses suggest that clients may perceive their experiences of workplace heterosexism and LGB-supportive climates, as well as their sense of P–O fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions as highly overlapping. Thus, in counseling it may be more helpful to discuss these constructs in tandem rather than in isolation.

Discussions of workplace climate, P–O fit, and job outcomes could also include exploration of strategies to improve clients’ workplace experiences. For example, clients could discuss the workplace climate with coworkers or supervisors, use sexual orientation identity management strategies (e.g., M. Z. Anderson, Croteau, Chung, & DiStefano, 2001; Button, 2001; Chrobot-Mason, Button, & DiClementi, 2001), or pursue more affirming workplace environments. In this regard, it is important to be aware of relevant policies and laws regarding LGB employees. Only 21 states and Washington, D.C. prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Human Rights Campaign, 2011). Thus, although it may seem beneficial for clients to advocate for LGB-supportive climates in their workplaces, if they are not protected by nondiscrimination policies or laws, they may face unfavorable reviews, demotion, or even termination for their actions. As always, clinicians must be cognizant of clients’ contexts when considering interventions.

The implications of the present findings should be considered in light of some additional limitations. First, Internet-based data collection facilitates recruitment of difficult-to-sample populations, but it may also have limited the generalizability of our findings to people with the resources and ability to access the Internet and those who are comfortable with navigating LGB-related online communities. The generalizability of the findings is also shaped by the sample characteristics (e.g., 80% White/Caucasian, 50% with a professional degree). Thus, testing the replicability of the present findings across diverse samples of LGB employees—for instance, in terms of race/ethnicity, educational
and socioeconomic background, and types of occupations—is important. An additional direction is to examine the intersections of workplace experiences that may be salient to different LGB subgroups (e.g., women’s experiences of sexist discrimination).

Another limitation worth repeating is that the cross-sectional nature of the data does not warrant causal interpretations of the results. For example, although the theoretical underpinnings of this study assume that workplace contextual factors affect P–O fit, which in turn affects job outcomes, these causal chains cannot be confirmed with the present data. Future experimental and longitudinal studies are needed to provide evidence of causation or temporal precedence.

In addition, the low mean and variability of the sample’s perceived discrimination scores may have attenuated relations with other variables (supportive climate also evinced a somewhat high mean but with greater variability). Low sample means for perceived discrimination are typical in the literature (e.g., Waldo, 1999), and perceptions of discrimination may be affected by factors such as affect, knowledge of prejudice, and perpetrator characteristics (e.g., Barret & Swim, 1998; Sechrist, Swim, & Mark, 2003). These limitations do not negate the value of studying targets’ perceptions; in fact, such perceptions are the primary sources of data in clinical practice. However, other indicators of workplace climates (e.g., managers’ or other employees’ reports, organizational policy statements, harassment records) can be important complements to targets’ perceptions. Similarly, to elucidate the perspectives of marginalized populations, applications of the TWAS with such populations have focused on employees’ reports of fit, satisfaction, and turnover intentions. But, future attention to organizations’ appraisal of fit and satisfactoriness (e.g., performance), as well as employee’s actual turnover behavior, is important.

Despite these limitations, the present results suggest that workplace contextual factors are associated with LGB employees’ job functioning. One important caveat is that LGB-supportive workplace climates may subsume the links of perceived heterosexist discrimination with P–O fit and job outcomes, although this point must be qualified by the high level of overlap within these sets of variables. The present findings also call for attention to conditions that bolster, rather than compromise, LGB employees’ experiences. That is, understanding and improving LGB employees’ work experiences cannot focus only on reducing discrimination, but should also involve creating climates that are supportive of such employees.

References


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