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Do Sexual Minorities Face Greater Risk for Sexual Harassment, Ever and at School in Adolescence? Findings from a 2019 Cross-sectional Study of U.S. Adults

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Abstract

Bullying of sexual minorities in the United States (US) is common and often begins in middle and high school, yet research that examines sexual harassment of sexual minorities is limited. This study examines whether sexual minorities are more likely than straight people to a) report sexual harassment and b) to report sexual harassment as adolescents at middle or high school. We analyzed survey data from a cross-sectional study of sexual harassment and assault, conducted with nationally representative samples of adults in 2019 (N=2,205). Sexual harassment was categorized as non-physically aggressive sexual harassment only (NPSH; e.g., verbal or cyber harassment), physically aggressive sexual harassment (PSH; e.g., stalking, rubbing up against you; with or without NPSH), sexual assault (SA; i.e., forced sex; with or without NPSH or PSH), or no sexual harassment (none). Six percent of female and male respondents identified as a sexual minority. A history of sexual harassment or assault was reported by 95.0% of sexual minority women and 80.3% of straight women ($p < .001$), and by 77.3% of sexual minority men and 41.3% of straight men ($p < .001$). Multivariable multinomial models demonstrate that sexual minorities were more likely than straight individuals to report NPSH (AOR: 2.88, 95% CI: 1.33, 6.20), PSH (AOR: 4.15, 95% CI: 1.77, 9.77), and SA (AOR: 5.48, 95% CI: 2.56, 11.73) (reference group: no harassment), as well as to report PSH (AOR: 2.67, 95% CI: 1.30, 5.47) at school in middle or high school. These abuses demonstrate increased risk for sexual harassment among sexual minorities, including

increased risk for physically aggressive sexual harassment when in middle and high school.

Keywords: sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexual minorities

Do Sexual Minorities Face Greater Risk for Sexual Harassment, Ever and at School in Adolescence? Findings from a 2019 Cross-sectional Study of U.S. Adults

Introduction

Background

National research documents that sexual minorities (i.e., those who are not exclusively sexually and romantically interested in cisgender opposite sex partners) in the United States are more likely than straight individuals (i.e., those exclusively interested in cisgender opposite sex partners) to have experienced sexual violence, in the form of coercion or assault (Kann et al., 2016; Kann et al., 2018; Morgan & Truman, 2018; Sudhinaraset et al., 2017; Walters, Chen, & Breiding, 2013). Disproportionate burden of victimization from sexual violence among sexual minorities is seen even among adolescents. Nationally representative data from U.S. high school students in 2017 found that as a whole, 4% of boys and 15% of girls had experienced sexual violence in the past year, yet among sexual minorities, 20% of boys and 23% of girls had such experiences (Kann et al., 2018). While this greater burden of sexual violence among sexual minorities is well documented, less is known about sexual minorities' risk for sexual harassment. National data, including that used for the current study, suggests that the pattern of harassment likely parallels that of violence, with a higher prevalence of

sexual harassment against sexual minorities (SSH, 2018). Smaller scale qualitative studies also suggest that sexual minorities experience greater exposure to harassment due to homophobic stigma - i.e., homophobic attacks in the form of harassment - and cyber sexual harassment exposure in the context of internet use for partner-seeking (Lauckner et al., 2019). Despite increased focus on sexual harassment generally as part of the #MeToo movement, little research has focused on sexual harassment against sexual minorities in the U.S.

Sexual harassment includes unwanted sexual attention or contact, as well as harassment based on sex/gender or sexual orientation (i.e., gender harassment), with experiences ranging in physical severity and inclusive of forced sexual interaction (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995). Prevalence estimates from this nationally representative population of U.S. adults show that 81% of women and 43% of men report ever experiencing sexual harassment, with 23% of women and 9% of men reporting a history of sexual assault (SSH, 2019). Importantly, simple association tests offered in the national report of this study found that these abuses are greater for sexual minorities relative to their straight counterparts and are often initiated during adolescence. These findings correspond with increasing evidence on the high prevalence of sexual harassment against adolescents in school and its intersection with bullying (Cutbush, Williams, & Miller, 2016; Doty, Gower, Rudi, McMorris, & Borowsky, 2017; Leemis, Espelage, Basile, Mercer Kollar, & Davis, 2019), as well as growing work suggesting that sexual minority youth

may be at greater risk for both bullying and sexual harassment at school (Coulter, Bersamin, Russell, & Mair, 2018; Kosciw., Greytak, Giga, Villenas, & Danischewski, 2016). Unfortunately, the scope and scale of these abuses occurring at school are not well understood because there are not national data from youth on experiences of sexual harassment; in the absence of these data, retrospective reports from adults regarding harassment at school in adolescence is useful.

In this study, we examine whether sexual minorities are more likely to report ever experiences of sexual harassment relative to their straight counterparts, as well as whether they are more likely to have experienced sexual harassment at school when they were adolescents (in middle or high school), among a nationally representative sample of adults in the U.S.. Building on prior research in this area, we consider not only the experience of any sexual harassment, but also the physical severity of the abuse, as indicated by threat or actual direct physical contact or force (Fitzgerald et al., 1995; SSH, 2018, 2019). Sexual assault is both a health and human rights issue, compromising physical and mental health (Northridge, 2019; Oram, Khalifeh, & Howard, 2017), and contributing to health disparities for sexual minorities (Hatchel, Espelage, & Huang, 2018; Lopez & Yeater, 2018; Sigurvinsdottir & Ullman, 2016). Sexual harassment, inclusive of a broader range of sexual abuses, may also be contributing to these health and human rights burdens for sexual minorities and warrants greater attention. Findings from this work can offer insight into sexual minorities' risk for and adolescent

experiences of sexual harassment, in ways that can inform policy both for sexual violence prevention and for promotion of sexual minority health and rights.

Methods

Survey

This study uses data from a nationally representative online survey conducted by Stop Street Harassment with adult women and men in 2019 (N=2219) regarding lifetime experience of sexual harassment or assault. Data were collected from February 14 - March 17, 2019, by NORC at the University of Chicago using their AmeriSpeak panel, an online probability panel which uses address-based sampling to recruit participants (SSH, 2019). This study defined sexual harassment to include “verbal sexual harassment (e.g., sexually explicit talk, homophobic slurs, repeated requests for a date after a person has said no), cyber sexual harassment (the use of text/phone and Internet to sexually harass), and physically aggressive sexual harassment (flashing or indecent exposure, being physically followed and being touched or brushed up against in a sexual way without consent)” (SSH, 2019). They defined sexual assault as involving “a sexual act that someone was forced to do against their will and without their consent.”

Participants in the AmeriSpeak online probability panel agree to provide demographic and contact information to the survey company and agree to receive surveys about a range of topics, though consent to taking each survey individually and can opt-out of any survey if they wish. The

sampling approach and recruitment rate are comparable to that seen in the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (S. G. Smith et al., 2017) and the recruitment rate, 25% for 2019 survey, is standard for online panel surveys, which hover around 20-25% (Callegaro & DiSogra, 2008). Participants in the survey panel agreed to privacy policies provided by the survey research organizations, and only completely deidentified data was shared with the organizations conducting the research presented here. Participants were compensated for all surveys taken as part of the survey panel, with compensation varying by questionnaire length and other survey factors.

The resulting sample was representative of the adult U.S. population with the use of provided sampling weights. Post-hoc analysis of data confirmed that the sample was reflective of the U.S. adult population in terms of age, region, race/ethnicity, income, and disability (SSH, 2019).

Measures

Lifetime experience of sexual harassment and assault was assessed via questions regarding 15 experiences of harassment or assault (14 types of harassment and 1 item for assault) across 15 locations. This measure was developed based on previously published research including an earlier study of street sexual harassment conducted by the team leading development of the survey (SSH, 2014); items were then reviewed by an expert advisory group of researchers and practitioners from the field of violence against women to support the content validity of this measure. Internal validity is

supported by a high Cronbach alpha (0.95), and criterion validity of the measure is indicated, as overall prevalence numbers are consistent across time and consistent with other national-level data including a comparable survey conducted in 2018 (S. G. Smith et al., 2017; SSH, 2018). The full survey is available online (SSH, 2019). Harassment or assault at school was assessed via four locations, 'At your elementary school' (generally ages 4-11), 'At your middle-school' (ages 11-13), 'At your high school' (ages 14-18), or 'At your university, college, or technical school' (ages 18+). For these analyses, we examined harassment or assault only at middle or high school.

This measure of sexual harassment was developed using a typology that allows for consideration of harassment based on physical severity or threat, with recognition that sexual harassment, like other forms of gender-based violence, is rooted in control and entitlement from the perpetrator and reinforced by fear from the (potential) victim (SSH, 2019). This typology includes non-physically aggressive forms of sexual harassment (NPSH; often verbal in nature or cyber harassment, e.g., "catcalling," calling someone sexist or homophobic terms/names, unwanted sexting), physically aggressive sexual harassment (PSH; e.g., rubbing against someone or displaying oneself without consent, stalking), and sexual assault (SA; unwanted sexual contact in the form of forced sexual interaction). Accordingly, we coded the data on experience of sexual harassment and assault into a four-category outcome: non-physically aggressive sexual

harassment only (NPSH), physically aggressive sexual harassment (PSH), sexual assault (SA), or no sexual harassment (None).

Participant demographics were not directly collected as part of the current survey but were collected when participants previously joined the online probability panel and were linked to survey results. These data included sexual minority identity, which was asked as “Which of the following best represents how you think of yourself? Lesbian or gay; Straight, that is, not lesbian or gay; Bisexual; Something else”. Participants were classified either as ‘straight’ or as ‘lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other’; participants could also refuse or skip the item, and these individuals were excluded from our sexuality classification. Additional demographics included participant age, race/ethnicity, income, region, urban or rural residence, and disability status.

Data Analysis

Demographic characteristics and primary outcomes were tabulated by gender and by sexual minority identity. Significant differences between sexual minority and straight individuals were assessed using chi-square tests. Multinomial logistic regressions were used to assess associations between sexual minority identity and sexual harassment and assault. Multinomial logistic regression was also used to assess associations between sexual minority identity and experience of sexual harassment or assault in middle or high school. Both models included both sexes due to small cell sizes for lesbian, gay, and bisexual participants; a sex by sexual minority

identity interaction term was tested for inclusion in both models. Adjusted models are presented for both outcomes; available demographics (i.e. age, race, income, region, urban/rural residence, and disability) served as covariates in adjusted models. Significance was set at $P < 0.05$. Analyses were weighted for sampling design and conducted using STATA 15.1. This study was deemed exempt by the University of California, San Diego Human Research Protections Program.

Role of the funding source

The funder had no role in study design, data collection and analysis, decision to publish, or preparation of the manuscript.

Results

Survey Population

The Stop Street Harassment survey was conducted in 2019 with $N=2219$ adult participants, 6% of whom (both male and female) identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other sexuality minority. Only two individuals identified as a gender minority (transgender or gender non-binary); therefore, we could not analyze differential experiences of sexual harassment or assault by gender minority status. We excluded those participants who declined to answer the sexual minority identity question ($n=14$), resulting in a final analytic sample of 2,205.

Sexual Harassment and Assault

Sexual minority women and men reported a higher prevalence of sexual harassment and assault than their straight peers (See Table 1). Specifically, lesbian and bisexual women respondents were significantly more likely than straight women to report lifetime experience of sexual harassment (95% vs. 80%, $p=0.001$) and sexual assault (47% vs. 21%, $p<0.001$). Similarly, gay and bisexual male respondents were significantly more likely than straight men to report lifetime experience of sexual harassment (77% vs 41%, $p<0.001$) and sexual assault (21% vs 9%, $p=0.01$). Respondents were asked if they had been misgendered or called a homophobic or transphobic slur, and 12% of women and 15% of men reported having experienced this form of sexual harassment.

Many respondents reported having experienced sexual harassment or assault in their schools, with 27% of women and 11% of men sexually harassed at their high school and 17% of women and 8% of men sexually harassed at their middle school. Sexual minority women and men were significantly more likely to report sexual harassment ever and at school relative to their straight counterparts ($ps<0.01$). Sexual minority women and men who experienced sexual harassment in middle or high school were likely to have experienced it in both school settings, as well. Similarly, for all respondents, most who experienced sexual harassment in middle school also experienced it in high school (See Figure 1).

The most common settings in which straight and sexual minority women and straight men experienced harassment or assault were public spaces (See Figure 2). Sexual minority men were most likely to report known residences or cars as the location of harassment or assault. In general, sexual minority persons were more likely than their straight counterparts to report having experienced harassment or assault across all reported locations.

The most frequently reported response to the experience of sexual harassment or assault was feeling anxiety or depression (See Figure 3). Thirty percent of women and 18% of men who had experienced sexual harassment or assault reported having felt anxiety or depression as a result; sexual minority women were more likely than straight women to report this impact (51% vs 29%, $p=0.01$). Though sexual minority men had a higher reported rate of feeling anxiety or depression as a result of sexual harassment or assault than straight men, this difference was not statistically significant (30% vs 17%, $p=0.11$).

Adjusted multinomial logistic regression models indicate that sexual minority individuals were more likely to experience non-physically aggressive harassment (AOR 2.88, 95% CI 1.33-6.20), physically aggressive harassment (AOR 4.15, 95% CI 1.77-9.77), and assault (AOR 5.48, 95% CI 2.56-11.73) than straight individuals (See Table 2). Females were more likely than males to experience each of these forms of abuse; a gender by sexual minority

identity interaction term was tested but was not significant and thus excluded (results not shown). Persons with a disability were also more likely than those without a disability to experience physically aggressive sexual harassment (AOR 2.07, 95% CI 1.26-3.42) and assault (AOR 4.01, 95% CI 2.29-7.02). No other demographic factors were significantly associated with harassment or assault in the adjusted models.

Adjusted multinomial logistic regression models examining harassment or assault experienced in middle or high school indicate that sexual minority persons had significantly increased risk of physically aggressive harassment or assault in middle or high school (AOR 2.67, 95% CI 1.20-5.47) than straight persons, but that there was no significant increase in risk of experience of non-physically aggressive harassment only (AOR 1.76, 95% CI 0.90-3.45) (See Table 3). As with overall models, females were more likely than males to experience non-physically aggressive harassment and physically aggressive harassment or assault; a gender by sexual minority identity term was again tested but not significant and therefore not included.

Discussion

Our nationally representative study demonstrated that the odds of sexual harassment were two to five times higher for sexual minority persons than for straight persons, findings consistent with prior national research specific to sexual assault alone (Morgan & Truman, 2018; L. R. Smith et al., 2017; Winter et al., 2016).

Our study also extends prior research by demonstrating that this greater risk for sexual harassment among sexual minorities was seen across all locations, including when respondents were adolescents in middle and high school. In particular, sexual minorities reported twice the odds of experiencing physically aggressive sexual harassment or assault at school relative to their straight peers. Understanding sexual harassment in schools is important, given its link to bullying and school dropout for sexual minority youth (Grossman et al., 2009). Further, homophobic harassment does not only target sexual minority youth but is also used as a means of bullying persons regardless of their sexual orientation, thus creating a climate of homophobia (Romeo, Chico, Darcangelo, Bellinger, & Horn, 2017). Research also documents that homophobic aggression among youth serves to regulate gender conformity and hierarchy generally (Romeo et al., 2017), and can even enhance social popularity among youth committing these behaviors (Espelage, Basile, De La Rue, & Hamburger, 2015; Romeo et al., 2017), which in turn can reinforce higher rates of these abuses against sexual minority youth. Further, these experiences at school can 'normalize' these behaviors long term for both perpetrators and victims.

Overall, sexual minority women had the highest burden of sexual harassment and assault, while the difference in sexual harassment and assault was greatest between sexual minority women and straight men (95% vs 41%). These findings highlight the need to consider gender and sexual identity simultaneously when understanding the vulnerability of sexual

violence. Unfortunately, the sample size and cell sizes were too small to consider diverse forms of sexual identity or gender identity beyond the male/female dichotomy, so further research is warranted.

However, other data clearly highlight that there is likely even greater vulnerability for sexual minorities who are also racial/ethnic minorities, immigrant or non-English speaking, and impoverished, and these intersecting vulnerabilities likely increase risk for sexual violence (Anderson, Wandrey, Klossner, Cahill, & Delahanty, 2017; Nasrullah, Oraka, Chavez, Valverde, & Dinunno, 2015). For example, nationally representative data indicate that poverty-affected black bisexual and gay men were more likely to report sexual assault than sexual minority men who were white or not living in poverty, or black men who were not sexual minorities (Nasrullah et al., 2015). Further, homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic stigma, both internalized and from society, not only increase risk for sexual violence among sexual and gender minorities, but also affect disclosure and help-seeking (Flanders, Anderson, Tarasoff, & Robinson, 2019; Schulze & Koon-Magnin, 2017; Sutter et al., 2019). These findings taken together with our study reinforce the need to consider the intersectionality of social marginalization and risk for sexual violence across sexual minority persons in relation to race, ethnicity, disability status, and socioeconomics.

This study also found that sexual minority men and women had significantly more anxiety and depression after being harassed than their

straight counterparts, consistent with minority stress responses (Hatzenbuehler, 2009; Johns, Poteat, Horn, & Kosciw, 2019; Romeo et al., 2017). The literature on consequences of sexual violence among sexual and gender minorities has previously focused on mental, behavioral and physical health effects, with most of the research focused on mental health, including depression and PTSD, with worse outcomes for racial/ethnic minorities (Hatchel et al., 2018; Lopez & Yeater, 2018; Sigurvinsdottir & Ullman, 2016). These concerns have also been documented in adolescents, but data for adults is lacking (Hatchel et al., 2018). This may explain why sexual minority persons (i.e. lesbians, bisexual women and men, gay men, and queer and questioning persons) have increased risk of depression, suicide, and substance use compared to their straight peers (Institute of Medicine Committee on Lesbian, Transgender Health, Research, & Opportunities, 2011; Kann et al., 2018). It may also help explain why laws accepting of same sex romantic relationships, like legalization of marriage for same sex couples, can decrease harm, like suicides (Raifman, Moscoe, Austin, & McConnell, 2017).

While our study findings offer important insight into the issues of sexual harassment and assault for sexual minority men and women, they should be considered in light of a number of limitations. Data relied on self-report and therefore were subject to recall and social desirability biases. It is likely that reports of sexual harassment were under-reported, particularly among men and racial/ethnic minority groups (Hernandez, 2001). Our survey

sample only included adults and asked them about their childhood experiences, which may not represent situations currently experienced by children. Small cell sizes affected our ability to fully explore differences by specific sexual identities, or by gender identity beyond male/female or by race and ethnicity. Other studies have documented that bisexual women, even more than lesbians, experience higher rates of sexual violence than their straight female peers (Coston, 2017; McCauley et al., 2015; Seabrook, McMahon, Duquaine, Johnson, & DeSilva, 2018; Wegner & Davis, 2017). As noted previously, this study also was unable to consider transgender persons, though other studies do indicate that transgender persons face even higher rates of sexual violence than the sexual minority population (L. R. Smith et al., 2017; Valentine et al., 2017; Whitton, Newcomb, Messinger, Byck, & Mustanski, 2019; Winter et al., 2016). Thus, larger scale research is needed to understand these issues with greater reflection on the variation across sexual and gender identities.

The purpose of this study was to better understand the disparities in experiences of and responses to sexual harassment and assault between sexual minorities and their straight counterparts, which likely derive from pervasive societal stigma and minority stress (Hatzenbuehler, Phelan, & Link, 2013). Our findings are consistent with prior research demonstrating that homophobic aggressions among youth serve to regulate gender conformity and hierarchy generally (Espelage et al., 2015; Romeo et al., 2017), and that victims of this abuse have increased risk of depression, anxiety and suicide

(SSH, 2018), particularly for sexual minority youth (Caputi, Smith, & Ayers, 2017; Marx & Kettrey, 2016). Although sex education in schools that includes sexual minority issues can decrease these abuses, (Hatzenbuehler & Keyes, 2013; Marx & Kettrey, 2016; Proulx, Coulter, Egan, Matthews, & Mair, 2019) such education alone will be unlikely to change the longstanding norm of homophobic abuses perpetrated in our society. Multi-level responses aligned with ecological systems theory to address intersections of homophobia and sexual harassment are key, with focus on social climate and safety in public spaces, as well as institutional accountability and responsibility responses from schools and other structures in which such abuses go unchecked. Thus, as the #MeToo movement gains strength, let us make sure it includes enhanced education for our youth on the harms of homophobic slurs, and hold people accountable who engage in these behaviors through institutional policies and governmental laws.

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Table 1. Survey-weighted characteristics of study sample by sexual minority identity, US adults 2019 (N=2,205)

	Female				Male			
	Sexual Minority	Straight	Total	Chi2 p value	Sexual Minority	Straight	Total	Chi2 p value
Outcomes								
Ever experience of sexual harassment or assault				0.001				<0.001
Yes	95.0	80.3	81.2		77.3	41.3	43.5	
No	5.0	19.7	18.8		22.7	58.7	56.5	
Experience of sexual harassment or assault				0.001				<0.001
Never harassed or assaulted	5.0	19.7	18.8		22.7	58.7	56.5	
Harassed (non-physically aggressive forms), no assault	23.5	21.6	21.7		13.7	16.8	16.6	
Physically aggressive harassment, no assault	24.2	37.8	37.0		42.9	15.8	17.5	
Both harassed and assaulted	47.3	20.9	22.5		20.7	8.6	9.4	
Ever experienced being misgendered or called a homophobic or transphobic slur				<0.001				<0.001
Yes	34.3	10.4	11.8		44.5	13.4	15.3	
No	65.8	89.7	88.2		55.5	86.6	84.7	
Experienced sexual harassment or assault in middle school*				0.001				0.01
Yes	39.7	15.7	17.2		18.3	6.9	7.6	
No	60.3	84.3	82.8		81.7	93.1	92.4	
Experienced sexual harassment or assault in high school*				<0.001				0.002
Yes	54.7	25.7	27.4		25.6	9.9	10.9	
No	45.3	74.3	72.6		74.4	90.1	89.1	
Type of sexual harassment or assault experienced in school				0.003				0.01
None	44.9	70.2	68.7		72.6	88.0	87.1	

Sexual Minorities' Risk for Sexual Harassment

26

Non-physically aggressive harassment	24.0	17.8	18.2		22.0	8.9	9.7	
Physically aggressive harassment or assault	31.1	12.0	13.2		5.4	3.1	3.2	
Demographics								
Age				0.001				0.20
18-24	19.3	9.8	10.4		31.9	15.2	16.3	
25-34	30.5	20.9	21.5		17.8	20.3	20.2	
35-49	38.4	23.9	24.8		21.0	24.6	24.4	
50-64	7.6	28.1	26.9		16.2	23.3	22.9	
65+	4.2	17.3	16.6		13.0	16.5	16.2	
Race/ethnicity				0.79				0.80
White Non-Hispanic	63.6	63.0	63.1		72.5	64.6	65.1	
Black Non-Hispanic	7.7	12.7	12.4		7.3	8.8	8.7	
Hispanic	20.7	17.1	17.3		12.6	17.0	16.7	
Multiple races or other race	8.1	7.2	7.2		7.6	9.6	9.5	
Income				0.10				0.07
Less than \$25K	28.7	19.5	20.1		30.8	12.9	14.0	
\$25K-49.9K	32.1	25.6	26.0		20.1	21.6	21.5	
\$50K-74.9K	5.5	20.2	19.4		22.2	20.3	20.4	
\$75K+	33.7	34.6	34.6		26.9	45.2	44.1	
Region				0.79				0.71
Northeast	16.4	16.3	16.3		11.9	19.4	19.0	
Midwest	18.2	21.2	21.0		24.2	20.8	21.0	
South	41.0	38.1	38.3		40.0	37.1	37.3	
West	24.4	24.4	24.4		23.9	22.7	22.7	
Metro residence**				0.15				0.06
Metro	94.5	88.5	88.9		95.2	88.3	88.8	
Non-metro	5.5	11.5	11.1		4.8	11.7	11.2	
Disability				<0.001				0.001
No	49.1	83.5	81.5		58.1	85.9	84.2	
Yes	50.9	16.5	18.5		41.9	14.1	15.8	

*School location categorization differs 2018-2019.

**Question was categorized as urban/suburban and rural in 2018; metro and non-metro in 2019. These definitions classify areas slightly differently but are for the most part comparable.

Table 2. Multinomial logistic regression models assessing the association between sexual minority identity and experience of sexual harassment and/or assault (reference is none), US adults 2019 (N=2,205).

	Experience of harassment and/or assault					
	Non-physically aggressive harassment only, no assault		Physically aggressive harassment, no assault		Assault and harassment	
	AOR	95% CI	AOR	95% CI	AOR	95% CI
Sexual minority identity						
Straight	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, other	2.88**	1.33,6.20	4.15**	1.77,9.77	5.48***	2.56,11.73
Gender						
Male	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Female	4.12***	2.82,6.00	6.72***	4.72,9.56	8.26***	5.32,12.84
Age						
18-24	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
25-34	1.19	0.56,2.54	1.63	0.75,3.52	1.72	0.68,4.33
35-49	1.19	0.57,2.48	1.43	0.70,2.94	1.79	0.73,4.38
50-64	0.81	0.38,1.71	1.33	0.65,2.72	1.26	0.51,3.09
65+	0.67	0.30,1.50	1.57	0.75,3.27	0.47	0.18,1.22
Race/ethnicity						
White, non-Hispanic	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Black, non-Hispanic	0.96	0.54,1.68	1.27	0.68,2.36	0.96	0.44,2.10
Hispanic	0.86	0.49,1.52	1.09	0.66,1.78	0.64	0.33,1.24
Mixed/other race	1.11	0.54,2.28	1.02	0.53,1.95	1.49	0.72,3.11
Income						
<\$25,000	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
\$25,000-49,999	0.88	0.46,1.67	0.91	0.49,1.67	0.84	0.43,1.66
\$50,000-74,999	1.22	0.64,2.34	0.9	0.48,1.72	0.82	0.39,1.75
\$75,000+	0.86	0.48,1.55	1.21	0.69,2.14	0.91	0.46,1.80
Region of US						
Northeast	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Midwest	1.07	0.59,1.94	0.83	0.49,1.42	0.78	0.40,1.52

Sexual Minorities' Risk for Sexual Harassment
29

South	1	0.56,1.78	0.85	0.51,1.42	0.9	0.47,1.72
West	1.19	0.62,2.29	1.08	0.63,1.88	1.02	0.52,2.01
Metro area residence						
Metro area	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Non-metro area	0.73	0.41,1.29	0.85	0.45,1.60	0.51	0.26,1.00
Disability						
No	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Yes	1.48	0.86,2.54	2.07**	1.26,3.42	4.01***	2.29,7.02

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

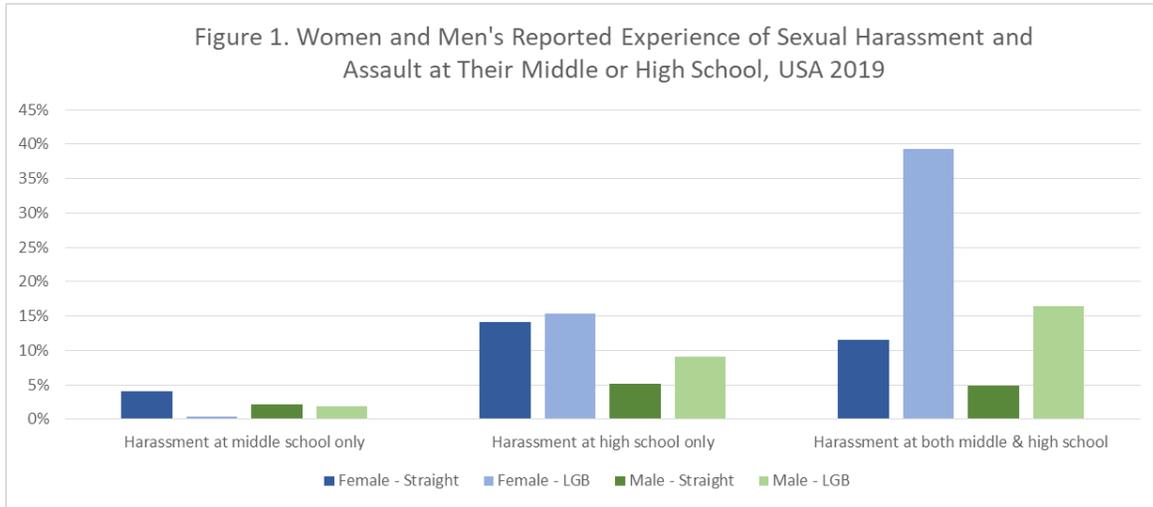
Table 3. Multinomial logistic regression models assessing the association between sexual minority identity and experience of sexual harassment and/or assault in middle or high school (reference is none), US adults 2019 (N=2,205).

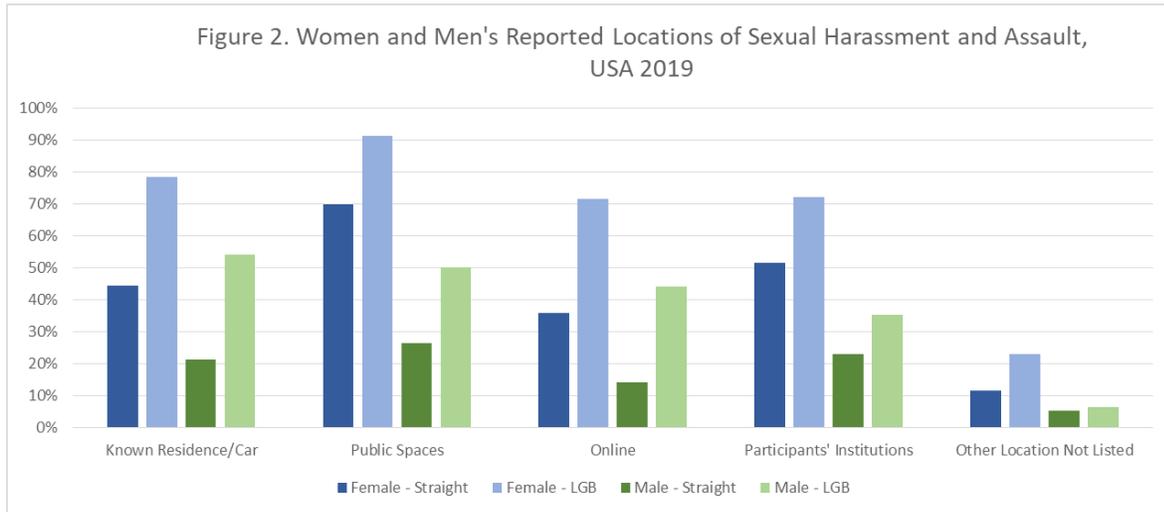
	Experience of harassment and/or assault in middle or high school			
	Non-physically aggressive harassment in middle or high school only, no assault		Physically aggressive harassment or assault in middle or high school	
	AOR	95% CI	AOR	95% CI
Sexual minority identity				
Straight	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, other	1.76	0.90,3.45	2.67**	1.30,5.47
Gender				
Male	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Female	2.62***	1.77,3.89	5.46***	3.41,8.73
Age				
18-24	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
25-34	0.74	0.37,1.45	2.51	1.00,6.32
35-49	0.60	0.31,1.16	2.24	0.89,5.62
50-64	0.48*	0.24,0.94	0.91	0.35,2.38
65+	0.30**	0.14,0.68	0.59	0.19,1.79
Race/ethnicity				
White, non-Hispanic	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Black, non-Hispanic	0.70	0.36,1.39	0.70	0.36,1.34
Hispanic	1.00	0.60,1.66	0.85	0.47,1.53
Mixed/other race	0.63	0.35,1.12	1.17	0.54,2.54
Income				
<\$25,000	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
\$25,000-49,999	1.43	0.75,2.73	1.27	0.62,2.60
\$50,000-74,999	1.44	0.76,2.74	0.89	0.42,1.88
\$75,000+	1.46	0.76,2.78	1.20	0.61,2.36
Region of US				
Northeast	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Midwest	1.02	0.57,1.84	1.55	0.73,3.28
South	1.06	0.61,1.86	1.88	0.94,3.76
West	1.39	0.77,2.49	2.18*	1.05,4.49
Metro area residence				
Metro area	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>
Non-metro area	0.29***	0.14,0.58	0.80	0.40,1.58
Disability				
No	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>	<i>Ref</i>

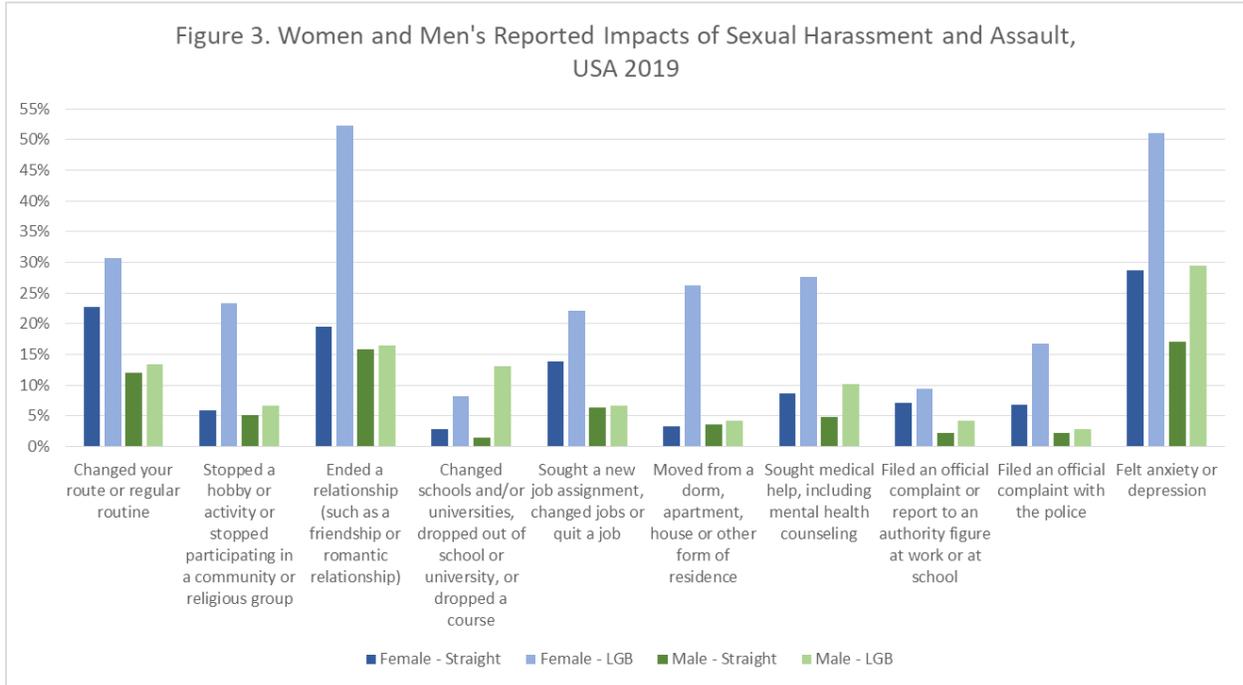
Yes	1.80*	1.13,2.88	1.44	0.85,2.45
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* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$ *** $p < 0.001$

FIGURES







Author Biographies

Dr. Davey Smith is the Co-Director of San Diego CFAR, Vice-Chair of Faculty and Head of the UC San Diego Division of Infectious Diseases and Global Public Health. He is a translational research virologist, who uses basic science techniques to answer clinically relevant questions and vice-versa. He works both at the UCSD Antiviral Research Center and in his laboratory on the UCSD campus, where he performs bench research. His primary research focus is on the transmission of HIV, including HIV superinfection, molecular epidemiology and characterizing HIV shed from the genital tract. He also investigates the virologic correlates of end-organ damage, like neuropathology, both domestically and abroad. These studies are in pursuit of understanding the drivers of HIV transmission and disease and finding new ways to interrupt them.

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