

Introduction

- Social categorization on the basis of sexual orientation may be difficult, as self-reported sexual identity and observed behavior can conflict (Pathela et al., 2006).
- This research examined how people categorize the sexual orientation of others on the basis of self-reported sexual identity and behavior.
- **Hypotheses:**
 - 1) When sexual identity and behavior are the same, people will categorize in congruence with the information.
 - 2) When sexual identity and behavior are different, people will differ in how they categorize. These differences will be driven by explicit bias, implicit bias, and the gender of the target.
 - 3) Individuals who are more biased (implicitly and/or explicitly) will rely more on behavior in making categorization decisions.

Methods

Participants

- $n = 554$ Project Implicit users
- Age: ranged from 18-113; $M = 32.59$, $SD = 15.22$
- Gender: Female – 63.7%; Male – 36.3%
- Sexuality: 86.8% Straight, 3.4% Gay/Lesbian, 6.0% Bisexual

Procedures

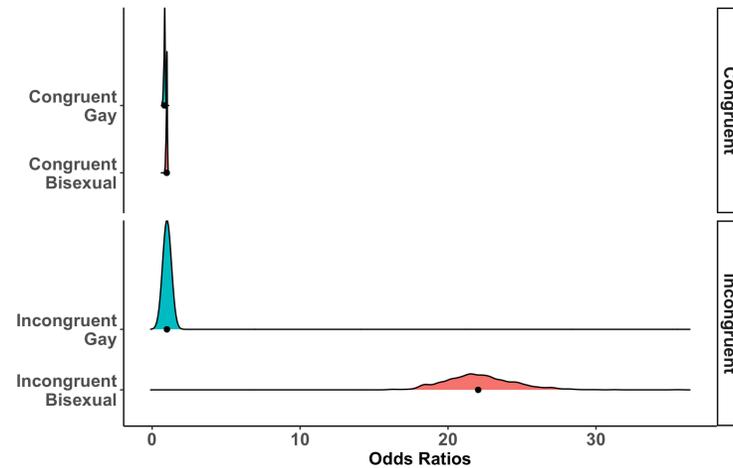
- Participants completed a self-report questionnaire categorizing another's sexual identity, followed by a Bisexual-Straight Implicit Association Test, and an explicit attitude questionnaire

Measures

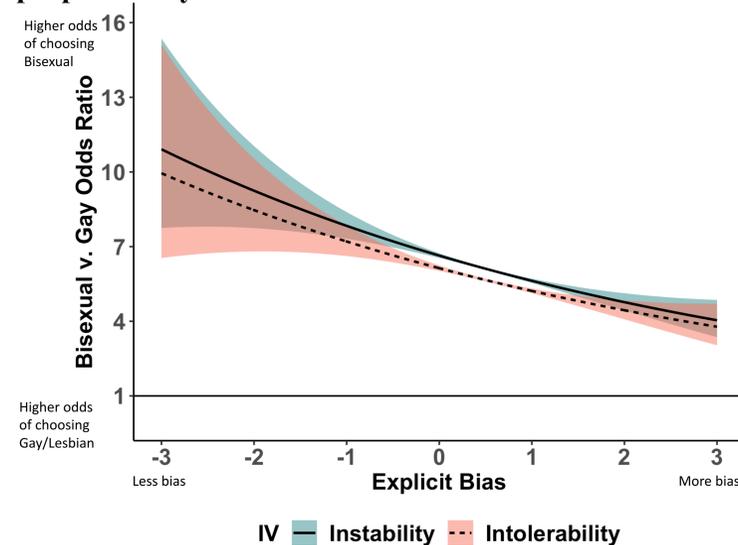
- **Sexual Categorization:** Asked participants to categorize men's and women's sexualities in the following format:
 - Same identity and behavior: A man identifies as being attracted to women, and has had romantic relationships with only women in the last year. How would you categorize this man's sexuality?
 - Different identity and behavior: A man identifies as being attracted to women, but has had romantic relationships with both men and women in the last year. How would you categorize this man's sexuality?
- **Implicit Association Test (IAT):** A Bisexual-Straight IAT was developed for use in this study
- **Attitudes Regarding Bisexuality:** Explicit attitude measure developed from Mohr & Rochlen, 1999, on two dimensions:
 - **Instability of Identity**
 - **Intolerability of Identity**

When a person's sexual identity & behavior differed:

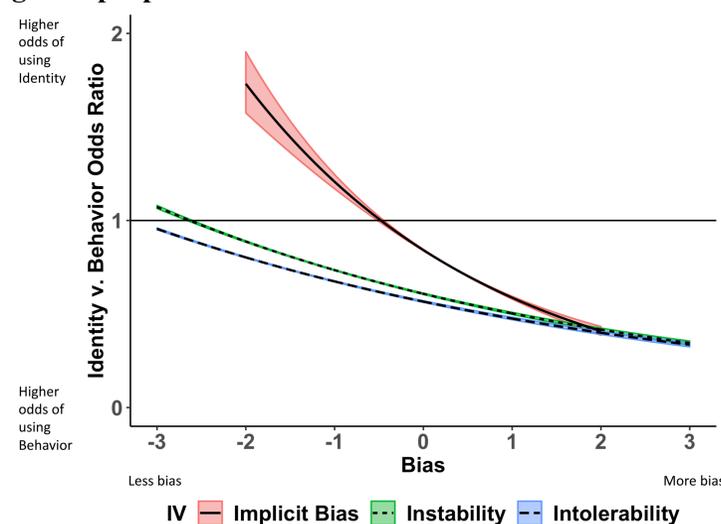
People are more likely to categorize people as Bisexual rather than Straight



People that are explicitly biased against bisexual people are more likely to categorize people as Gay/Lesbian rather than Bisexual



People that are implicitly or explicitly biased against bisexual people are more likely to categorize people based on their Behavior rather than their Identity



Results

- 1) When identity and behavior differed, the odds of choosing Bisexual were significantly higher than that of choosing Straight (Odds Ratio = 22.4, CI [2.86, 3.33]).
- 2) When identity and behavior differed, higher explicit bias on the Instability (Odds Ratio = 0.85, CI [1.77, 2.02]) and Intolerability (Odds Ratio = 0.85, CI [1.67, 1.95]) dimensions were related to higher odds of choosing Gay/Lesbian over Bisexual. Implicit bias and target gender did not significantly predict higher odds of choosing bisexual or gay/lesbian.
- 3) When identity and behavior differed, higher explicit bias on the Instability (Odds Ratio = 0.83, CI [-0.24, -0.13]) and Intolerability (Odds Ratio = 0.84, CI [-0.23, -0.12]) dimensions, as well as higher implicit bias toward Bisexual people (Odds Ratio = 0.70, CI [-0.55, -0.17]), were related to higher odds of categorizing in line with Behavior over Identity.

Conclusion

Conclusions

When behavior and identity were the same:

- people categorized based on what the information said.

When behavior and identity differed:

- people were less likely to categorize as straight.
- more biased people were more likely to categorize as Gay/Lesbian vs. Bisexual.
- people who were more explicitly or implicitly biased were more likely to be categorized based on behavior than identity

Future Directions

- Future studies may look further into the reasons why bias predicted differences in categorization.
- Future studies may also seek to determine if use of behavior over identity in categorization has negative effects on the target of categorization.

References

- Mohr and Rochlen - 1999 - Measuring attitudes regarding bisexuality in lesbi.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jonathan_Mohr/publication/232533880_Measuring_Attitudes_Regarding_Bisexuality_in_Lesbian_Gay_Male_and_Heterosexual_Populations/links/563ff52108aec6f17ddb8504.pdf
- Pathela, P., Hajat, A., Schillinger, J., Blank, S., Sell, R., & Mostashari, F. (2006). Discordance between Sexual Behavior and Self-Reported Sexual Identity: A Population-Based Survey of New York City Men. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 145(6), 416. <https://doi.org/10.7326/0003-4819-145-6-200609190-00005>