

The Effect of Minority Stress Processes on Smoking for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Individuals: A Systematic Review



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Introduction

20.6% LGB adults
35.5% transgender adults
14.9% straight adults
who smokes cigarettes?

LGBT
The LGBT community is disproportionately impacted by tobacco.

Tobacco companies also began to advertise in gay press publications in the early 1990s, often depicting tobacco use as a normal part of LGBT life.

truth initiative
INSPIRING TOBACCO-FREE LIVES

Project SCUM
A tobacco industry marketing strategy called Project SCUM targeted gay men and homeless individuals.

2x YOUNG ADULTS
aged 18-24 are nearly twice as likely to smoke as their straight peers.

- Some factors that are associated with increased smoking in LGBTQ populations include low socioeconomic status, lack of health insurance, frequent attendance at gay bars, low self-efficacy, community norms, and minority stress.
- Literature evidence suggests that LGBTQ individuals may smoke as a coping mechanism to handle minority stress.

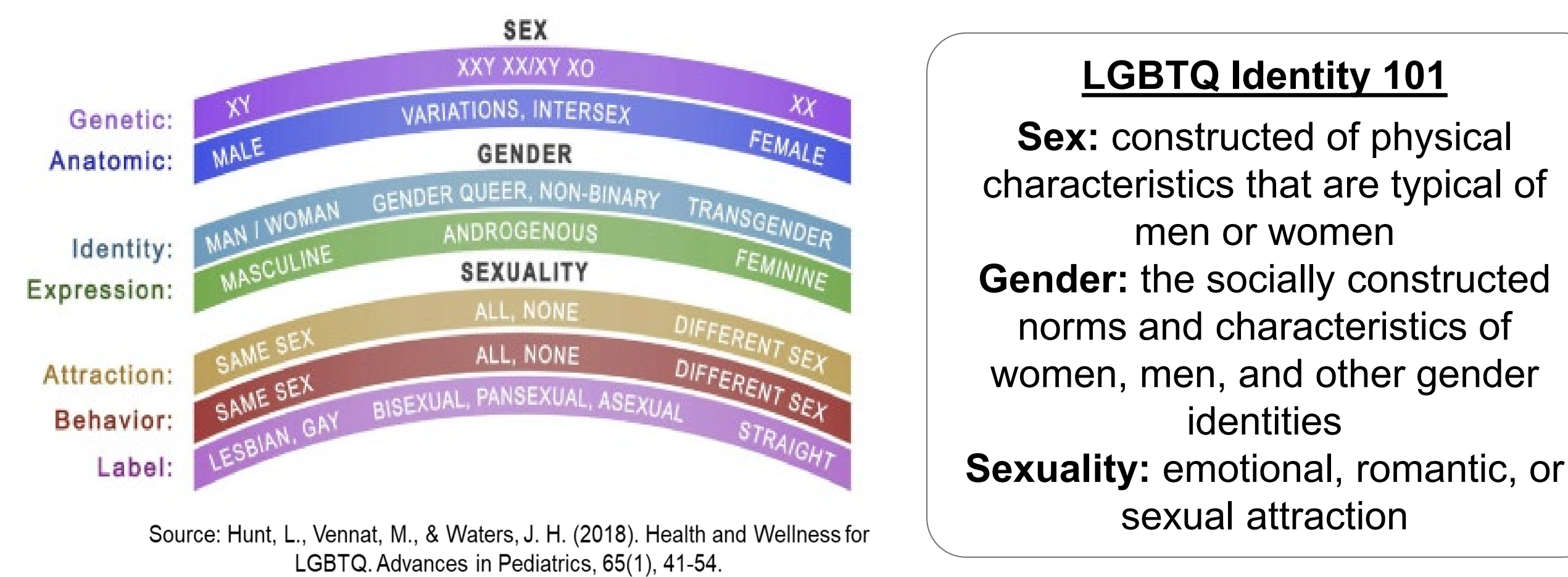
Minority Stress Model

- Discriminatory, stigmatizing, and victimizing experiences, aimed at individuals or groups of minority status, contribute to poor mental health in these populations.
- They differ from general stressors in that they are increased above what the average person experiences, chronic, and occur due to social processes, institutions, and structures beyond the individual.

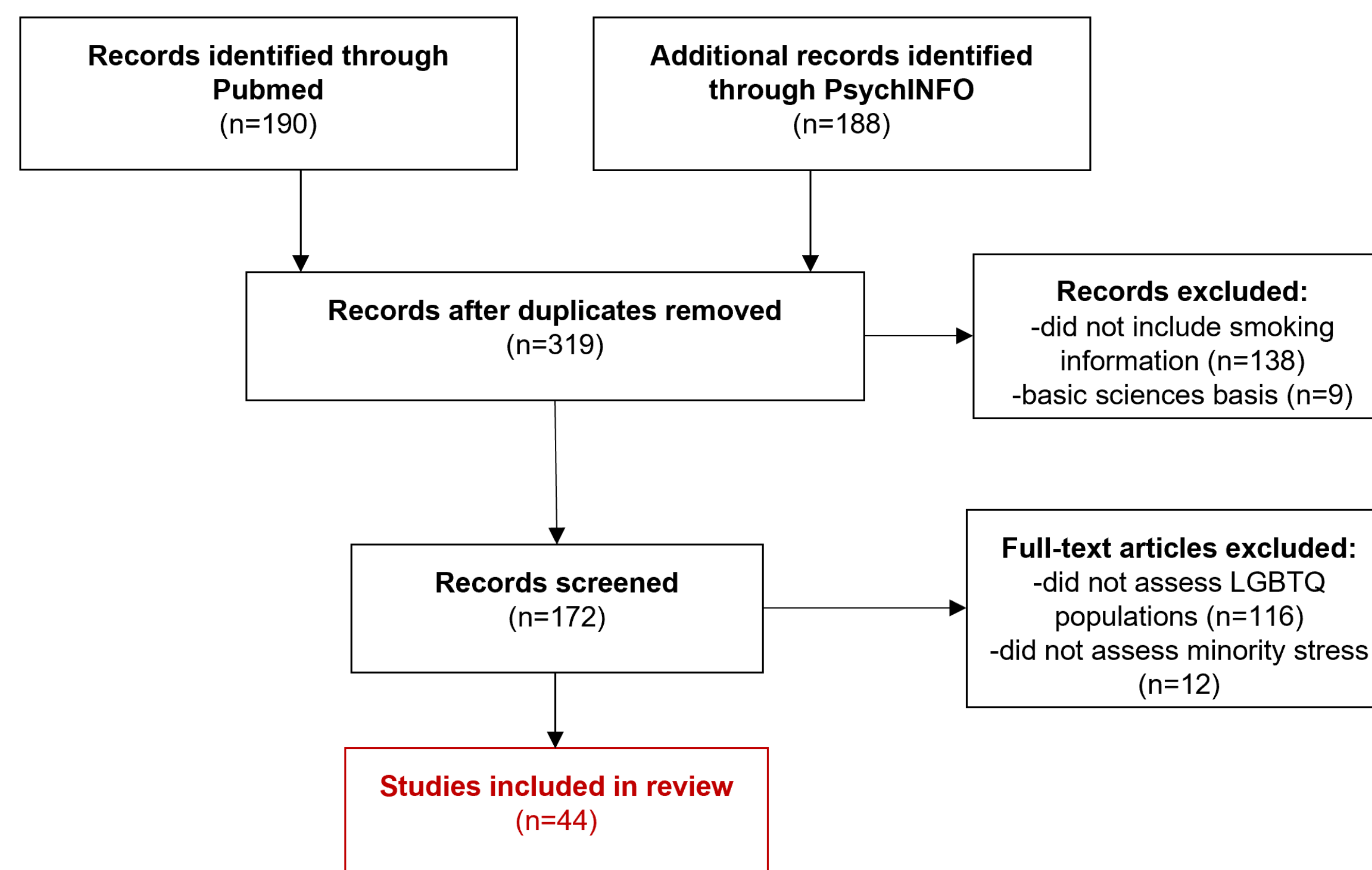
Minority Stress Processes

- Prejudice events:** explicit displays of violence, rejection, or discrimination
- Perceived stigma:** societal stigmatization of one's identity that may lead to low self-esteem, social exclusion, and insecurity
- Internalized queerphobia:** negative attitudes that an individual has towards their homosexual identity, due to anti-homosexual attitudes that exist in society

Background



Methods



Results

- Of the 24 studies that assessed prejudice events, all but 3 found that increased instances of prejudice events were associated with poorer smoking outcomes.
- Of the 15 studies that assessed perceived stigma, all but 2 found that increased negative stigma was associated with poorer smoking outcomes.
- Of the 13 studies that assessed internalized queerphobia, all but 5 found that increased levels of internalized queerphobia were associated with poorer smoking outcomes.
- Table: Type of Study, Smoking Variables Assessed, Minority Stress-Related Variables, Other Variables, Minority Stress-Related Variables Associated with Increased Smoking, Other Variables Associated with Increased Smoking

Discussion

- Societal stigma against LGBTQ identities, in the form of structural and social pressures, may lead an individual to develop psychological distress and depression, which were both shown to be associated with increased likelihood of smoking across studies.
- Discrimination and violence based on LGBTQ identity can reinforce perceptions of societal stigma and result in psychological trauma, which may lead to increased smoking as a coping mechanism.
- Smoking may be used as a mechanism to decrease stress associated with internalized queerphobia, but also as a mechanism to fit in with both cis-heteronormative and LGBTQ social groups.
- Structural discrimination can lead to greater economic stress, financial difficulties, and barriers to healthcare services, widening the disparity in smoking behavior.
- Recommendations:
 - Decreasing internalized queerphobia by encouraging involvement in LGBTQ communities or events
 - Smoking programs and counseling
 - Health care providers should strive to treat LGBTQ individuals with cultural humility and understanding

Conclusion

- Minority stress has been suggested to lead LGBTQ individuals to develop unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as smoking.
- This study demonstrates that Meyer's three proposed processes of minority stress (internalized stigma, perceived stigma, and prejudice events) are both separately and jointly associated with worse smoking outcomes in LGBTQ populations.
- Therefore, we recommend that future smoking cessation and prevention programs consider addressing these minority stress processes, especially in LGBTQ populations.

