Published in final edited form as:

AIDS Behav. 2017 June ; 21(6): 1611–1619. doi:10.1007/s10461-016-1522-7.

Identity Conflict and Sexual Risk for Black and Latino YMSM

Charisse L'Pree Corsbie-Massay¹, Lynn C. Miller², John L. Christensen³, Paul R. Appleby², Carlos Godoy², Stephen J. Read⁴

¹S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University, 215 University Pl, Syracuse, NY 13244, USA

²Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

³Department of Communication, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA

⁴Department of Psychology, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA

Abstract

Young (aged 18–30) Black and Latino men who have sex with men are at a higher risk of contracting HIV than their White counterparts. In order to better understand the unique nature of sexual risk-taking, we examined the extent to which ethnic group, ethnic identity, and sexual pride predicted condomless anal sex with casual partners among 161 young men who have sex with men (YMSM) who identify as Black or Latino. Negative binomial regressions were conducted using a cross-sectional design. Sexual pride was a negative predictor of condomless anal sex across all participants, but this effect was moderated by ethnic exploration and ethnic group; the relationship between sexual pride and condomless anal sex was strengthened by greater ethnic exploration among Latino YMSM, and weakened by greater ethnic exploration among Black YMSM. Implications for intersectional identity, identity conflict, and HIV prevention among young gay men of color are discussed.

Resumen

Los hombres jóvenes (en edades de 18 a 30 años) negros y latinos que tienen sexo con hombres tienen mayor riesgo de contraer VIH que sus homólogos blancos. Con el fin de comprender mejor la naturaleza única de los comportamientos sexuales de riesgo, examinamos hasta qué punto el grupo étnico, la identidad étnica y el orgullo sexual predijeron quiénes de los que tuvieron sexo anal sin condón con parejas ocasionales, entre 161 hombres jóvenes que tienen sexo con hombres (HSHJ), se identifican como negros o latinos. Se realizaron regresiones binomiales negativas utilizando un diseño transversal. El orgullo sexual fue un predictor negativo de que el sexo anal sin condón se realiza a través de todos los participantes, pero este efecto fue moderado por la exploración y grupo étnico; la relación entre el orgullo sexual y el sexo anal sin condón fue

[✉]Charisse L'Pree Corsbie-Massay clcorsbi@syr.edu.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of interest There are no conflicts of interest.

Research Involving Human Participants All procedures were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

reforzada por una mayor exploración étnica entre los HSHJ latinos, y debilitada por una mayor exploración étnica entre HSHJ negros. Las implicaciones para la múltiple identidad, los conflictos de identidad y la prevención del VIH entre los jóvenes homosexuales de color son discutidos.

Keywords

Ethnic identity; Gay identity; Intersectionality; Homophobia; HIV prevention

Introduction

Young men (18–30) who have sex with men (YMSM) represent about 40 % of all newly diagnosed cases of HIV [1], and Black and Latino YMSM are at an even higher risk compared to their White counterparts according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [1, 2]. In 2014, of YMSM aged 15–34 who received a new HIV diagnosis, 48.5 % were Black and 24.1 % were Latino [1]. Despite HIV incidence differentials, as well as cultural differences, little research has *compared* Black and Latino YMSM.

Research has shown a complicated relationship between identity and sexual risk taking. Identity is the value and distinctiveness associated with one's affiliated in-groups [3]; it satisfies fundamental belongingness needs, supports positive self-concepts [4], and has been positively correlated with self-esteem [5], academic achievement [6], and prosocial behavior [7]. In line with these trends, some studies have found that sexual pride (i.e., an affective commitment to one's sexual orientation) is *negatively* correlated with sexual risk taking [8, 9]. However, other studies that operationalize gay identity as engagement with the gay community have found a *positive* correlation with sexual risk taking given increased opportunities (e.g., sexual partner access) [10, 11]. This disparate operationalization of gay identity reveals a meaningful difference between cognitive self-identity and behavioral identity variables and their subsequent effects on risky sexual behavior amongst YMSM.

However, Black and Latino YMSM also experience a salient ethnic identity, and this intersectionality may interact on multiple levels simultaneously [9]. Many have postulated that identifying with communities of color may conflict with non-heterosexual preferences [2, 12, 13], such that threats to one group identity (e.g., sexual identity) can come from in-group members of a second identity (e.g., ethnic group) [14]. This identity conflict can result in negative emotions, which arise when individuals are committed to multiple identities that are incongruent or incompatible and are reluctant to betray any of these commitments [5]. For Black or Latino YMSM, identity threats may arise from both their gay identity and their ethnic identity, resulting in unique interactive effects on psychosocial needs [12] and behavior [15], including drug use [16].

As men who have sex with men, Black and Latino YMSM need support from the gay community to combat homophobia [17, 18], but they may not feel welcome and accepted by the gay community, which is often defined by White middle class males [13, 19]. In addition, as men of color, Black and Latino YMSM require support from their ethnic communities to battle racism, but communities of color in the United States have been historically intolerant of alternative sexual orientations with respect to embedded beliefs

about religion, family, and masculinity [4, 12], and especially male homosexual behaviors [13, 20]. Compared to White YMSM, Black and Latino YMSM are less likely to identify as gay [10, 21], less likely to come out to their friends and family [22], less likely to have gay or bisexual friends [23], and more likely to report greater levels of internalized homophobia [10]. In addition, Black YMSM report significantly lower gay identity and attachment to the gay community compared to White or Latino YMSM [10, 19, 24].

Furthermore, there are important differences between Black and Latino communities in their approach to homosexuality that can affect the relationships among ethnic identity, gay identity, and sexual risk taking. These nuanced effects are based in a multi-dimensional understanding of ethnic identity, including ethnic commitment (i.e., emotional affirmation of one's ethnic group) and ethnic exploration (i.e., active involvement in one's ethnic group) [6], and previous research has demonstrated that ethnic exploration is positively correlated with perceived discrimination [25]. Some Black churches have been criticized for actively fostering homophobia and excluding men who have sex with men [26, 27]; other research has also revealed that exclusion from one's family or community because of sexual identity is related to more condomless anal sex [19, 21]. In contrast, research has revealed a wider variety of attitudes and behaviors within the Latino community [28–30]; although same-sex sexual activities are not discussed openly, they may be more tolerated as compared to the Black community [10, 31]. These brief descriptions do not address all of the nuances within both of these communities (see [27, 32, 33] for extensive reviews regarding homophobia in Black and Latino communities in the United States), but the comparative cultural differences demonstrate disparate discriminatory experiences within these ethnic communities.

Few quantitative studies have examined how ethnic identity and gay identity interact to predict sexual risk taking for YMSM. A 2002 study using dichotomized identity revealed that Black men who have sex with men with high ethnic identity and high gay identity demonstrated greater self-esteem and less psychological distress compared to men reporting other types of acculturation styles (e.g., high ethnic identity, low gay identity) [34]. Studies investigating Latino YMSM demonstrate inconsistent findings with respect to ethnic identity; whereas ethnic identity predicted *less* sexual risk taking among Latinos around New York City [20], ethnic identity predicted *more* sexual risk taking among Latinos recruited in and around Chicago and Miami [19]. However, these studies featured an aggregated, single dimension of ethnic identity, and only one [20] incorporated gay identity or sexual pride, thus complicating scholars' ability to understand these nuanced communities.

Given the disproportionate impact of HIV on Black and Latino YMSM, as well as the disparate effects between these two groups, the purpose of this paper is to explore the associations between ethnic group, ethnic identity, sexual pride, and the likelihood of engaging in sexual risk taking among these often aggregated high-risk groups. In doing so, this research will also address methodological gaps in the literature through advanced statistical analyses that avoid dichotomizing identity and reducing variance [35]. Understanding how Black and Latino YMSM's multiple identities jointly predict sexual risk taking will provide insight into how conflicted identities influence behavior, and help develop effective culturally-tailored HIV prevention interventions.

Methods

Study Design and Overview

This data is part of a larger randomized control trial funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) to examine the effectiveness of an HIV prevention intervention for YMSM in Los Angeles, CA. Data was collected from 2005 through 2008. The study protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Southern California.

Study Population

Participants included 161 Black ($n = 57$; 77.2 % African–American, 5.3 % Continental African, 5.3 % Caribbean, 12.3 % Other Black/Do Not Identify with Black subgroup) and Latino men ($n = 104$; 60.6 % Mexican/Mexican–American, 29.8 % Central/South American, 5.8 % Caribbean, 3.8 % Other Latino/Do Not Identify with Latino subgroup; 64 % of Latino participants were born in the United States, and for the remaining 36 %, the average age of immigration was 10 years; only 5 % reported speaking Spanish more than English) aged 18–30; the mean age was 24.5 ($SD = 3.5$), and the annual income ranged from “none” to “over \$75,000,” with a median income of \$25,001–\$30,000. Participants did not need to self-identify as gay to be considered eligible; however, 83 % of eligible participants self-identified as “gay/homosexual,” 11 % identified as “bisexual,” and 5 % identified as “a man who has sex with men.”

Participants were recruited through print and online advertising as well as through interpersonal recruitment at gay enclaves throughout Los Angeles County, including street intercepts, popular venues, and gay pride events from 2005 to 2008. Recruitment was primarily venue based: participants were either approached on the sidewalk in front of gay venues in the evenings or at gay pride events from a booth rented by the project and asked to complete a brief screener to assess eligibility for a university study, which included age, categorical race/ethnicity, brief sexual history, and prior drug use. A smaller subset of participants responded to online and print based advertising and was screened for eligibility over the telephone.

Participants were considered eligible for the randomized controlled trial if they were between 18 and 30 years old, reported at least one instance of condomless anal sex in the past 3 months, self-reported as HIV-negative (i.e., completed a HIV test with negative results prior to enrollment), had never injected non-prescription drugs, and self-identified with one of the following racial groups: African American/Black, Hispanic/Latino, or Caucasian/White; these criteria were designed to target a specific high-risk population. If participants were eligible, they were read a brief description of the study taken from the consent form and were scheduled for an appointment the following week. A total of 11,316 potential participants were screened; approximately 9.5 % of participants were considered eligible for the overall study, but only half of eligible participants chose to enroll.

At Visit 1, eligible participants ($n = 780$; 41.4 % White, 18.0 % Black, 40.6 % Latino) were provided with an information sheet describing the study protocol and responded to a survey, which included the measures of baseline sexual risk taking prior to condition assignment.

Participants were randomly assigned to an interactive HIV intervention or a wait-list control [32]. Approximately 68 % of YMSM ($n = 534$; 43.1 % White, 17.8 % Black, 39.1 % Latino) returned for Visit 2 (3-month follow-up); during this visit, all participants completed scales assessing ethnic identity and gay identity. There was no difference between randomized groups in any of the identity measures assessed at follow-up. Participants received \$50 for each visit.

The subset of participants selected for the current analyses were YMSM who reported engaging in at least one instance of condomless anal sex with a non-primary male partner in the 3 months prior to Visit 1. Although condomless anal sex with a primary partner can also be risky, because we intended to use identity information to improve future interventions to reduce non-primary sexual behavior, we focused here on non-primary partner risky sex. Approximately half of those who completed Visit 2 were eligible for the current analyses ($n = 281$; 60 % Black, 49.8 % Latino, 52.2 % White); however, only Black and Latino YMSM were included in this analysis to investigate the role of ethnic identity and its interaction with sexual identity for this population.

Measures

Sexual Risk Taking was assessed using instances of condomless anal sex with non-primary partners during the 3 months prior to participating in the study (i.e., data collected at Visit 1). This measure has been used across several studies and is considered to be a valid measure of sexual risk taking [10, 19, 20, 36–38]. Although the other dimensions of sexual risk taking are valuable, we wanted to explore the unique risk of condomless anal sex with non-primary partners.

Ethnic Group (i.e., *Black or Latino*) was assessed by asking participants to select a general racial group (e.g., Black, Latino, White) from an NIAID-approved list, and a specific ethnic group (e.g., African American, Mexican–American, Caribbean); participants who identified with more than one group (e.g., Black and Latino) were asked to choose the group with which they most identified, and participants who refused to select a single group were not considered eligible for the parent study.

Ethnic Identity was assessed using the Multi-Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) [6]; this 12-item measure prompts participants to rate their agreement on a four-point Likert scale with statements regarding their ethnic *commitment*, or an emotional affirmation of one's ethnic group (e.g., "I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group;" Cronbach's $\alpha = .848$), and ethnic *exploration*, or active involvement in one's ethnic group (e.g., "I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group;" Cronbach's $\alpha = .707$); higher scores indicate greater ethnic commitment and exploration. Participants self-identified with any nuanced ethnic group of their choosing in an open-ended fashion (e.g., Colombian, Caribbean) at the start of the MEIM, to assess the strongest ethnic identity. The MEIM has been used in hundreds of studies since its original publication and was selected for its reliability across different ethnic groups [6] and its predictive validity in prior research investigating Black and Latino YMSM [19, 34]. Conceptually, ethnic commitment and ethnic exploration have long been viewed as two separate, but correlated, constructs; whereas behaviors define ethnic exploration, affective associations define ethnic

commitment [6]. These constructs should not be combined into a single scale, and have demonstrated unique effects on various variables [39].

Sexual Pride was assessed using the attitudes towards sexual orientation (ATSO) measure [40], which prompts participants to rate their agreement on a seven-point Likert scale with items assessing progression along the final four stages of sexual identity integration [41]. A three-item composite was constructed using items encompassing sexual pride (e.g., ‘‘I am proud of my sexual orientation;’’ Cronbach’s $\alpha = .723$), approximating gay identity (i.e., the positive value and distinctiveness associated with a group; [3]); higher scores indicate greater sexual pride. Not all participants identified as gay, therefore these items focused on participants’ pride with their own unique sexual orientation to assess the strongest measure of identity with sexual orientation. We opted against using engagement with the gay community as a proxy given that engagement may incorporate other components of identity and personality. Scales assessing sexual pride have demonstrated predictive validity in prior research [17]. Although we acknowledge that engagement with the gay community is also a component of gay identity, we did not assess this dimension in the current analyses given that the intention was to assess the moderating effects of ethnic identity on the healthful effects of sexual pride.

Statistical Analyses

Negative binomial (NB) regressions were conducted to examine the predictive role of ethnic and sexual identity on risky sex; the primary dependent variable, condomless anal sex acts with non-primary partners was a count variable and was severely skewed and over-dispersed (i.e., the variance, $SD = 26.525$, was greater than the mean, $M = 3.981$). NB regressions include a random component that accounts for dispersion, thus providing more precise estimation [42]. Furthermore, a zero-truncated NB regression was used due to the selection criteria requiring participants to have engaged in at least one instance of condomless anal sex with a non-primary partner. Ethnic group, ethnic identity, sexual pride, and the subsequent interactions were entered as predictors and incidence rate ratios (IRR) are reported along with confidence intervals (CI) and significance values.

Results

Preliminary Results

Our goal was to examine, for Black and Latino YMSM, the role of ethnic identity and sexual pride on risky sexual behavior. There were no significant differences in age, ethnic commitment, ethnic exploration, or frequency of condomless anal sex with non-primary partners between Black and Latino YMSM (Table 1). However, in line with prior research [18, 20, 23], t tests revealed a significant effect of ethnic group on sexual pride; Latino YMSM reported significantly greater sexual pride ($M = 5.192$, $SD = .126$) compared to Black YMSM ($M = 4.702$, $SD = .237$; $t(158) = 2.006$, $p = .047$, Cohen’s $d = 2.582$; See Table 1).

In addition, ethnic commitment and ethnic exploration were correlated ($r = .638$, $p < .001$), but neither commitment ($r = -.022$, $p = .784$) nor exploration ($r = -.068$, $p = .395$)

was significantly correlated with sexual pride. Given the prior literature [6, 39] regarding the disparate effects of ethnic commitment and exploration, two separate models were conducted: one featuring ethnic exploration and one model featuring ethnic commitment.

Primary Results

We tested two models of the role of ethnic group, ethnic identity, and sexual pride, on sexual risk taking, one for each measure (ethnic commitment, ethnic exploration) of ethnic identity. For ethnic commitment, the overall model was not statistically significant ($p = .179$); although sexual pride exhibited a significant main effect on condomless anal sex (IRR = $-.30$, 95 % CI $.11, -2.78$, $p = .005$), neither ethnic commitment nor the higher order interactions were significant. For ethnic exploration, on the other hand, there were a number of statistically significant effects. Results of the NB regression for the three-way model predicting condomless anal sex from ethnic group, ethnic exploration, and sexual pride (See Table 2) indicate that sexual pride was a significant predictor of sexual risk taking (consistent with findings reported above); in line with prior research [8, 9], greater sexual pride was associated with fewer instances of condomless anal sex (IRR = $.77$, 95 % CI $0.64, 0.92$, $p = .005$).

The effect of the three-way interaction of sexual pride, ethnic exploration, and ethnic group on condomless anal sex was also significant (IRR = 2.27 , 95 % CI $1.21, 4.23$, $p = .010$). To assess the effect of this interaction, continuous variables were converted into three categories [43] and plotted [44]; plots reveal that increased ethnic exploration weakened the relationship between sexual pride and instances of condomless anal sex for Black YMSM and strengthened the relationship for Latino YMSM (See Fig. 1). For Black YMSM with *low* ethnic exploration, sexual pride was negatively correlated with the risk of condomless anal sex with a non-primary partner, but this effect disappeared as ethnic exploration *increased*. Alternatively, for Latino YMSM with *high* ethnic exploration, sexual pride was negatively correlated with the risk of condomless anal sex with a non-primary partner, but this effect disappeared as ethnic exploration *decreased*.

A post hoc statistical power analysis for multiple regression was conducted using seven predictors, the current $N(161)$, the pseudo R^2 derived from the zero-truncated NB regression (.022), and a probability level of .05. The observed statistical power ($1 - \beta = .223$) was low, indicating that the probability of finding a significant effect was small; despite this impediment, the three-way interaction for ethnic exploration emerged as statistically significant (as indicated above).

Discussion

Our analyses sought to examine and report the relationship between ethnic group (i.e., Black, Latino), ethnic identity, sexual pride, and sexual risk taking behaviors among Black and Latino YMSM aged 18–30 in Los Angeles. Results indicate that sexual pride was correlated with less sexual risk taking, but ethnic group and ethnic exploration moderated this effect, and the interaction between ethnic exploration and sexual pride demonstrated different effects on sexual risk taking when comparing Black and Latino YMSM. The model featuring ethnic commitment was not significant, suggesting that the unique interactive

effects between ethnicity and sexuality on risk taking may not involve a conflict between affective commitments to both groups; instead, engaging with one's ethnic community interacts with the affective commitment to one's sexuality, resulting in a complicated and multi-layered form of identity conflict.

Results from the negative binomial regression reveal that sexual pride exhibited a significant negative effect on instances of condomless anal sex with non-primary partners; greater sexual pride predicted less sexual risk taking. This finding replicates prior work demonstrating that affective commitment to one's sexuality is correlated with safer sex behaviors [8, 9]; individuals with greater sexual pride may experience a greater overlap between the community and the self [3], thus community concerns (e.g., health trends) are personal concerns are therefore may be more likely to behave in line with safer sex norms [17]. The three-way interaction between ethnic group, ethnic exploration, and sexual pride significantly predicted instances of condomless anal sex with non-primary partners, indicating that the interaction between sexual pride and ethnic exploration exhibits a different effect for Black and Latino YMSM. Whereas for Black YMSM, ethnic exploration *weakened* the beneficial effects of sexual pride on condomless anal sex with non-primary partners, ethnic exploration *strengthened* the beneficial effect of sexual pride for Latino YMSM.

These effects may be due to the cultural differences between these two communities in their discussion of homosexuality; as a group, the Black community is less tolerant of homosexuality and more likely to hold negative attitudes toward homosexuality than other racial groups [26, 27], whereas the Latino community is more likely to demonstrate silent tolerance [28–30]. Exploration of the Black community may explicitly expose Black YMSM to homophobic messages and reduce the beneficial effect of sexual pride. For Latino YMSM, exploration into the Latino community may result in more emotional connections and nuanced attitudes towards homosexuality, thereby strengthening the beneficial effect of gay identity on sexual risk taking.

However, the disparity in tailored resources in Los Angeles may also explain these effects. Los Angeles has one of the largest Latino populations (48.1 % of Los Angeles County reporting being of Hispanic or Latino origin [45]) and the second largest gay population in the United States [46]. These sizable communities allow for an intersectional Latino gay community, and exploring one's Latino identity may not have to be independent of one's gay identity. This is evident in the number of LGBT resource centers that explicitly cater to Latino and Hispanic communities as compared to those that cater to Black or African American communities [47].

Prior work examining the possible conflict between gay identity and ethnic identity and the subsequent effect on sexual risk taking has not demonstrated consistent effects. The current findings provide insight into earlier research by deploying multiple aspects of ethnic identity and robust statistical analyses to properly assess the predictive role of continuous and nuanced measures of identity on condomless anal sex. We do not argue that the constructs featured in the current research are “true” measures of identity; instead, the current research featured nuanced constructs to better understand how certain components of identity can

conflict. Similar to the differential effects of sexual identity (e.g., pride or emotional commitment vs. behavioral involvement), different measures of ethnic identity interact with different dimensions of gay identity to predict risky behavior, and the interaction between ethnic commitment and sexual pride was not significant. The current research contributes to the literature regarding identity conflict in general and the unique effects of identity conflict by ethnic group.

Limitations and Future Research

Our study has a number of limitations. First, samples of YMSM of color need to be larger to have adequate power to detect complex interactions. Although our sample was one of the larger samples of high risk Black and Latino YMSM, and we were able to detect a three-way interaction, our power to do so was low. However, we demonstrate the importance of negative binomial regressions in understanding the complicated construct of identity; future studies should deploy this statistical method with a much larger sample, ensuring sufficient power to enable model testing within as well as across racial groups. In addition, the current sample only features Black and Latino YMSM from Los Angeles County, selected for prior risky behavior. As is the case with much of the prior research in this area that features region-specific samples, it is impossible to generalize the findings to a national population. Although the current findings are in line with the body of work regarding Black and Latino YMSM conducted elsewhere in the United States, future studies should replicate these analyses using a national sample to investigate the effects of ethnic exploration and sexual pride in different regions.

Larger, more representative samples of Latino and Black YMSM would also enable us to address a third sample limitation: inadequate examination of sub-cultural ethnic groups in predicting sexual risk taking and the nuances of ethnic identity. In the current work, most Black participants identified as “African American” and most of the Latino participants identified as “Mexican/Mexican-American” limiting our ability to generalize beyond these groups. This inability to investigate nuanced effects in other cultures and communities limits our understanding of YMSM’s dual identities and our ability to tailor effective safer sex messages. Relatedly, the current analysis assesses ethnic identity 3 months after the primary risky behavior has occurred to avoid priming participants with their identity prior to participating in the parent study. Although prior literature has demonstrated that ethnic identity among monoracial populations is crystalized by adolescence [48–51], future studies should assess ethnic identity temporally closer to the behavioral outcomes.

A fourth limitation involves our focus on men who reported condomless anal sex with non-primary male partners; this focus on risky participants and casual sexual encounters limits the generalizability of the findings. It is unclear how identity conflicts affect attitudes and behaviors for less-risky participants, or how the conflict between gay identity and ethnic identity manifests in other risk taking activities (e.g., drug use, sensation seeking). Given additional considerations in more committed relationships such as HIV status [52] and relationship satisfaction [53], it is not clear that the current findings would generalize to sexual risk taking for YMSM with primary partners (or partners with whom the individual shares an emotional connection). Therefore, future studies should investigate the effects of

gay identity and ethnic identity on sexual risk taking in primary relationships, and how relationship satisfaction interacts with these variables.

Conclusion

This research lays the groundwork for systematic consideration of identity conflict among high-risk YMSM and two factors that moderate these effects when predicting sexual risk taking. Black and Latino YMSM are at a higher risk of HIV infection compared to White YMSM [1, 36, 54–56]. Much of the prior research either aggregates Black and Latino YMSM, or investigates these populations separately. The current research demonstrates that the potential conflict between ethnic identity and gay identity is different for Black and Latino YMSM in Los Angeles County, and suggests a new path when developing HIV prevention interventions that employ different identity components and their subsequent conflict.

Researchers and clinicians must understand the differences between ethnic groups when incorporating ethnic identity and gay identity in safe sex messages for Latino and Black YMSM. Whereas emphasizing the ethnic community may impede beneficial effects of a gay identity for Black YMSM, it may enhance the effects for Latino YMSM. When developing prevention interventions, researchers should differentially leverage ethnic identity and gay identity to meet the needs of individuals; this includes emphasizing a positive gay identity while actively combatting negative messages that may be prominent in the participants' ethnic communities.

Acknowledgments

The project described was supported by Grant Number R01 AI052756 from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID). Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the NIAID. All research was conducted at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA.

References

- Centers for disease control and prevention. HIV surveillance report, 2014; vol. 26[Internet]. [updated 2015 Nov; cited 18 Apr 2016]. <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/library/reports/surveillance/>. Published 11 2015.
- Bedoya CA, Mimiga MJ, Beauchamp G, Donnell D, Mayer KH, Saren SA. Predictors of HIV Transmission Risk Behavior and Seroconversion Among Latino men who have sex with men in Project EXPLORE. *AIDS Behav* 2012;16(3):608–17. [PubMed: 21390540]
- Tajfel H, Turner JC. An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In: Austin WG, Worchel S, editors. *The social psychology of intergroup relations* Monterey: Brooks-Cole; 1979.
- Díaz RM. *Latino gay men and HIV: culture, sexuality, and risk behavior* New York: Routledge; 1998.
- Baumeister RF. *Identity: Cultural change and the struggle for self*. New York: Oxford University Press; 1986.
- Phinney J. The multigroup ethnic identity measure: a new scale for use with diverse groups. *J Adolesc Res* 1992;7(2):156–76.
- Schwartz SJ, Zamboanga BL, Jarvis LH. Ethnic identity and acculturation in Hispanic early adolescents: mediated relationships to academic grades, prosocial behaviors, and externalizing symptoms. *Cultur Divers Ethnic Minor Psychol* 2007;13(4):364–73. [PubMed: 17967105]

8. Gaertner SL, Dovidio JF. Reducing intergroup bias: the common ingroup identity model. Philadelphia: Psychology Press; 2000.
9. Seibt AC, Ross MW, Freeman A, Krepcho M, Hedrich A, McAlister A, et al. Relationship between safe sex and acculturation into the gay subculture. *AIDS Care* 1995;7(S1):85–8.
10. Flores SA, Mansergh G, Marks G, Guzman R, Colfax G. Gay identity-related factors and sexual risk among men who have sex with men in San Francisco. *AIDS Educ Prev* 2009;21(2):91–103. [PubMed: 19397432]
11. Finneran C, Stephenson R. Antecedents of intimate partner violence among gay and bisexual men. *Violence Vict* 2014;29(3):422–35. [PubMed: 25069147]
12. Marin BVI, Gomez CA. Latinos and HIV: Cultural issues in AIDS prevention. *HIV Insite* [Internet] 1998[cited 1 Sep 2015]. <http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/insite?page=pr-rr-03/>.
13. Jamil OB, Harper GW, Fernandez MI. Sexual and ethnic identity development among gay-bisexual-questioning (GBQ) male ethnic minority adolescents. *Cultur Divers Ethnic Minor Psychol* 2009;15(3):203–14. [PubMed: 19594249]
14. Shapiro JR. Different groups, different threats: a multi-threat approach to the experience of stereotype threats. *Pers Soc Psychol Bull* 2011;37(4):464–80. [PubMed: 21441217]
15. Crenshaw K. Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. In: Weisbert DK, editor. *Feminist legal theory: foundations*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press; 1993. p. 393–5.
16. Appleby PR, Briano M, Christensen JL, Anderson AN, Storholm ED, Ananias DK, et al. The disparate roles of ethnicity and sexual orientation in predicting methamphetamine use and related beliefs and behaviors among MSM. *Ann Behav Med* 2010;39(Suppl):s52.
17. Chng CL, Gélige-Vargas J. Ethnic identity, gay identity, sexual sensation seeking and HIV risk taking among multiethnic men who have sex with men. *AIDS Educ Prev* 2000;12(4):326–39. [PubMed: 10982122]
18. Frye V, Nandi V, Egan J, Cerda M, Greene E, Tieu HV, et al. Sexual orientation- and race-based discrimination and sexual HIV risk behavior among urban MSM. *AIDS Behav* 2015;19(2):257–69. [PubMed: 25381561]
19. Warren JC, Fernandez MI, Harper GW, Hidalgo MA, Jamil OB, Torres RS. Predictors of unprotected sex among young sexually active African American, Hispanic, and White MSM: the importance of ethnicity and culture. *AIDS Behav* 2008;12(3):459–68. [PubMed: 17721725]
20. O'Donnell L, Agronick G, San Doval A, Duran R, Myint-U A, Stueve A. Ethnic and gay community attachments and sexual risk behaviors among urban Latino young men who have sex with men. *AIDS Educ Prev* 2002;14(6):457–71. [PubMed: 12512847]
21. Hampton MC, Halkitis PN, Storholm ED, Kupprat SA, Sicololfi DE, Jones D, et al. Sexual risk taking in relation to sexual identification, age, and education in a diverse sample of African American men who have sex with men (MSM) in New York city. *AIDS Behav* 2013;17(3):931–8. [PubMed: 22298339]
22. Akerlund M, Cheung M. Teaching beyond the deficit model: Gay and Lesbian issues among African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans. *J Soc Work Educ* 2000;36(2):279–92.
23. Kennamer JD, Honnold J, Bradford J, Hendricks M. Differences in disclosure of sexuality among African American and White gay-bisexual men: implications for HIV/AIDS prevention. *AIDS Educ Prev* 2000;12(6):519–31. [PubMed: 11220504]
24. Rosario M, Scrimshaw EW, Hunter J. Ethnic/racial differences in the coming out process of lesbian, gay, and bisexual youths: a comparison of sexual identity development over time. *Cultur Divers Ethnic Minor Psychol* 2004;10(3):215–28. [PubMed: 15311975]
25. Romero AJ, Roberts RE. The impact of multiple dimensions of ethnic identity on discrimination and adolescents' self-esteem. *J Appl Psychol* 2003;33(11):2288–305.
26. Hayes R, Peterson J. HIV prevention for gay and bisexual men in metropolitan cities. In: DiClemente RJ, Peterson JL, editors. *Preventing AIDS: theory and methods of behavioral interventions*. New York: Plenum Press; 1994. p. 267–96.
27. Ward EG. Homophobia, hypermasculinity, and the US black church. *Cult Health Sex* 2005;7(5):493–504. [PubMed: 16864218]

28. Taylor CL. Mexican male homosexual interaction in public contexts. *J Homosex* 1985;11(3–4):117–36. [PubMed: 4093597]
29. Carballo-Diequez A, Dolezal C, Nieves L, Diaz F, Decena C, Balan I. Looking for a tall, dark, macho man... sexual-role behaviour variations in Latino gay and bisexual men. *Cult Health Sex* 2004;6(2):159–71.
30. Carballo-Diequez A, Remien RH, Dolezal C, Wagner G. Unsafe Sex in the Primary Relationships of Puerto Rican men who have sex with men. *AIDS Behav* 1997;1(1):9–17.
31. Finlinson HA, Colon HM, Robles RR, Soto M. Sexual identity formation and AIDS prevention: an exploratory study of non-gay-identified puerto rican YMSM from working class neighborhoods. *AIDS Behav* 2006;10(5):531–9. [PubMed: 16736111]
32. Collins PH. Black sexual politics: African Americans, gender, and the new racism New York: Routledge; 2005.
33. Diaz RM. Latino gay men and HIV: culture, sexuality, and risk behavior New York: Routledge; 1997.
34. Crawford I, Allison KW, Zamboni BD, Soto T. The influence of dual-identity development on the psychosocial functioning of African-American gay and bisexual men. *J Sex Res* 2002;39(3):179–89. [PubMed: 12476265]
35. Maxwell SD, Delany HD. Bivariate media splits and spurious statistical significance. *Psychol Bull* 1993;113(1):181–90.
36. Harawa NT, Greenland S, Bingham TA, Johnson DF, Cochran SD, Cunningham WE, et al. Associations of race/ethnicity with HIV prevalence and HIV-related behaviors among young men who have sex with men in seven urban centers in the United States. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr* 2004;35(5):526–36. [PubMed: 15021318]
37. Millett GA, Flores SA, Peterson JL, Bakeman R. Explaining disparities in HIV infection among black and white men who have sex with men: a meta-analysis of HIV risk behaviors. *AIDS* 2007;21(15):2083–91. [PubMed: 17885299]
38. Feldman MB. A critical literature review to identify possible causes of higher rates of HIV infection among young Black and Latino men who have sex with men. *J Natl Med Assoc* 2010;102(12):1206–21. [PubMed: 21287902]
39. Phinney JS, Ong AD. Conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity: current status and future directions. *J Couns Psychol* 2007;54(3):271–81.
40. Van de Meerendonk K, Probst TM. Sexual minority identity formation in an adult population. *J Homosex* 2004;47(2):81–90.
41. Cass VC. Homosexual identity formation: A theoretical model. *J Homosex* 1979;4(3):219–35.
42. Elhai JD, Calhoun PS, Ford JD. Statistical procedures for analyzing mental health services data. *Psych Res* 2008;160(2):129–36.
43. Hilbe JM. Negative binomial regression Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 2011.
44. Long JS, Freese J. Regression models for categorical dependent variables using stata College Station: Stata Press; 2003.
45. U.S. Census Bureau [Internet]. [Place Unknown] state and county quickfacts: Los Angeles County, California 2014 [updated 18 May 2009; cited 18 Apr 2016]. <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/06/06037.html/>.
46. Gates GJ [Internet]. Los Angeles: same-sex couples and the gay, lesbian, bisexual population: new estimates from the American Community Survey The williams institute on sexual orientation law and public policy, UCLA school of law; 2006 [cited 1 Sep 2015]. <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-Same-Sex-Couples-GLB-Pop-ACS-Oct-2006.pdf/>.
47. Funders for LGBTQ Issues. 2009 Director of LGBTQ People of Color Organizations and Projects in the U.S. [Internet] [updated Nov 2015; cited 10 Apr 2016]. https://www.lgbtfunders.org/files/FLGI_POC_Dirctry_2009.pdf. Published 5 2009.
48. Erikson E. Identity: youth and crisis New York: Norton; 1968.
49. Goodman ME. Race awareness in young children New York: Collier; 1964.

50. Katz PA. The acquisition of racial attitudes in children. In: Katz PA, editor. Towards the elimination of racism New York: Pergamon; 1976.
51. Phinney J. Stages of ethnic identity development in minority group adolescents. *J Early Adolesc* 1989;9(1–2):34–49.
52. Halkitis PN, Wilton L, Parsons JT, Hoff C. Correlates of sexual risk-taking behaviour among HIV seropositive gay men in concordant primary partner relationships. *Psychol Health Med* 2004;9(1):99–113.
53. Buchanan DR, Poppen PJ, Reisen CA. The nature of partner relationship and AIDS sexual risk-taking in gay men. *Psychol Health* 1996;11(4):541–55.
54. Hall HI, Byers RH, Ling Q, Espinoza L. Racial/ethnic and age disparities in HIV prevalence and disease progression among men who have sex with men in the United States. *Am J Public Health* 2007;97(6):1060–6. [PubMed: 17463370]
55. Lieb S, Arons P, Thompson DR, Santana AM, Liberti TM, Maddox L, et al. Men who have sex with men: racial/ethnic disparities in estimated HIV/AIDS prevalence at the state and county level, Florida. *AIDS Behav* 2008;13(4):716–23. [PubMed: 18543096]
56. MacKellar DA, Valleroy LA, Secura GM, Behel S, Bingham T, Celentano DD, et al. Unrecognized HIV infection, risk behaviors, and perceptions of risk among young men who have sex with men: opportunities for advancing HIV prevention in the third decade of HIV/AIDS. *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr* 2005;38(5):603–14. [PubMed: 15793373]

Fig. 1.
Interaction between ethnic group, ethnic exploration, and sexual pride on instances of condomless anal sex (CS) with non-primary partners (NPP) for Black and Latino YMSM; *heavier lines* indicate greater ethnic exploration

Table 1

Differences between Black and Latino YMSM

	Total (<i>n</i> = 161)	Black YMSM (<i>n</i> = 57)	Latino YMSM (<i>n</i> = 104)
Age	24.5 (3.50)	24.0 (3.41)	24.8 (3.53)
Instances of condomless anal sex w/non-primary partners	3.98 (5.12)	4.04 (5.75)	3.94 (4.77)
Ethnic commitment	3.27 (.59)	3.35 (.53)	3.22 (.62)
Ethnic exploration	2.69 (.63)	2.78 (.57)	2.64 (.66)
Sexual pride ^a	5.02 (1.49)	4.70 (1.78)	5.19 (1.28)

^a $p < .05$

Table 2

Condomless anal sex with non-primary partners NB regression models

Predictor	IRR	SE ^a	z	95 % CI ^b
Ethnic group (Black vs. Latino)	.79	.22	-.85	.45–1.37
Sexual pride	.77	.07	-2.81 ^c	.64–.92
Ethnic exploration	1.45	.36	1.49	.89–2.36
Ethnic group * ethnic exploration	2.03	1.01	1.42	.77–5.36
Sexual pride * ethnic exploration	1.07	.17	.42	.78–1.46
Ethnic group * sexual pride	.88	.17	-.65	.61–1.28
Ethnic group * sexual pride * ethnic exploration	2.27	.72	2.57 ^c	1.21–4.23

 $\chi^2(7) = 15.23, p = .033$ ^a SE robust standard error^b CI confidence interval^c $p < .01$