

CONFLICT OR HARMONY: OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIES OF
IDENTITY INTEGRATION FOR MULTIPLE
MARGINALIZED INDIVIDUALS

by

LUKE HERDER

A THESIS

Presented to the Department of Psychology
and the Robert D. Clark Honors College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Science

May 2025

An Abstract of the Thesis of

Luke Herder for the degree of Bachelor of Science
in the Department of Psychology to be taken June 2025

Title: Conflict or Harmony: Outcomes and Strategies of Identity Integration for Multiple
Marginalized Individuals

Approved: Chanel Meyers, Ph.D.
Primary Thesis Advisor

Previous literature about individuals with multiple minority identities has predominantly focused on specific interactions between domains (e.g., race and gender; Hecht et al. 2001; Yampolsky et al. 2013). However, little work has examined how different combinations of identities impact well-being and identity integration (Cheng et al., 2008; Jackson et al., 2012). As such, we were interested in sampling participants with multiple marginalized identities across race, gender, and sexual orientation. Study 1 examines the correlations between identity pride and identity integration, with those who self-identified as marginalized across at least two domains. Study 2 examines whether specific combinations of marginalized identities (e.g., race and gender vs. race and sexual orientation vs. gender and sexual orientation) report more or less identity integration or malleability. Given past research on identity integration, we expect participants who report higher identity integration of their marginalized identities to report greater identity pride. We had no specific predictions regarding which combination of marginalized identities would report more or less identity integration; however, we expect identity integration and identity malleability to be negatively correlated. These findings have critical implications for how individuals with multiple minority identities navigate their identities and whether certain identities are more or less compatible with each other.

Keywords

Multiple Marginalized Identities, Intersectionality, Daily Discrimination, Integration, Malleable Identity, Minority Identity

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend an overwhelming thank you to my primary thesis advisor, Dr. Chanel Meyers, and her graduate student, Gretchen Nihill, for supporting me throughout this process. Without the help, guidance, and support from them throughout this last year, I would not have become half the researcher I am now. Furthermore, I would love to extend a thank you to the C² lab for allowing me to deeply learn and involve myself in the field of Diversity science. Through the guidance and connections built, I have grown tremendously in my pursuit of research and commitment to this field of psychology.

Furthermore, I would like to give a big thank you to my friends who have shown unwavering care and support throughout this whole process. When I thought it was not possible, their continual love and support held me down and kept me going.

I want to thank my Clark Honors College Advisor, Casey Shoop, for guidance throughout the CHC process and for helping to answer any questions I had about this process.

Finally, I would like to thank the UROP and the Office of Vice President for Research and Innovation for sponsoring my research. Their support allowed me to survey participants from around the world.

Thank you to everyone who supported me on this journey. It's been an amazing time.

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Marginalization and Minority Identities	8
Multiply Marginalized Identity Interaction	8
Identity Integration: Conflict vs Harmony	10
Predictors of Identity Integration	10
The Present Research	12
Study 1	13
Method	13
Participants	13
Procedure	13
Measures	14
Results	15
Study 2	16
Method	17
Participants	17
Procedure	18
Measures	19
Identity Integration	19
Identity Overlap	19
Malleable Identity Integration	19
Results	20
Identity Integration Across Samples	20
Identity Overlap Across Samples	20
Malleable Identity Integration	21
General Discussion	22
Future Directions	25
Conclusion	27
List of Scales	28
Identity Integration	28
Identity Pride	29
Malleable Identity Integration	29

Identity Overlap	30
Figures	31
Figure 1	31
Figure 2	31
Tables	32
Table 1	32
Bibliography	33

Introduction

Western societies are becoming more diverse in terms of people's racial/ethnic identification, sexual orientation, and gender identity (Garlick, 2022; Vespa et al., 2018). Research examining this growing diverse population, particularly those with multiple marginalized identities, is imperative to understanding future populations. In the U.S, predictions as early as 2045 indicate that non-Hispanic whites will no longer make up more than 50% of the population (Vespa et al., 2018) and that one in six young adults, ages 18-24, identify as LGBTQ (Williams Institute, 2023). Furthermore, the UK has observed recent decreases in "White" ethnic group identification and increases in Black and Asian ethnic group identification from previous census data. (Garlick, 2022). The changing demographics serve as a call to further understand individuals with marginalized identities.

Previous literature about Multiple Marginalized Identities (MMI) predominantly focuses on Multiracial individuals, focusing on one domain (Cheng & Lee, 2009), while interactions between multiple domains, race, gender, and sexual identity, have room to be further explored. Furthermore, previous models of minority stress assume that minority stressors are additive and independent of each other (Meyer, 1995). Contrary to this model, understanding identity integration across gender, race, and sexual domains provides a more nuanced understanding of this work. Exploring these interactions will highlight how measures of minority stress and outcomes related to holding a marginalized identity may not be replicated if we look at these outcomes as additive and independent across multiple identities. Rather, how these domains interact serves as a guiding point for how multiply marginalized individuals think about their identities, guiding future research related to outcomes. We aim to examine multiple marginalized individuals and how self-identification shapes their experiences with identity integration. Study 1

explores how participants' racial, gender, and sexual identity integrate. Study 2 tests the differences in identity integration through specific population samples with two marginalized identities.

Marginalization and Minority Identities

Minority identities can be distinguished from the dominant group for language, practices, ideology, gender, sexuality, race, or other non-dominant identities (Vialdrich, 2010). Identities such as Gay, Asian, Woman, or Black are a few examples (Vespa et al., 2018). These identities shape how individuals are socially perceived and can influence one's sense of self (Camacho et al., 2019). Each identity faces its own set of challenges, and individuals with marginalized identities are uniquely predisposed to lower rates of well-being due to higher rates of prejudice, discrimination, and minority stress dimensions. (Bruce et al., 2015; Kelleher, 2008; Meyer, 2003; Meyer, 1995). Minority stressors may lead to higher rates of daily and lifetime discrimination, lower rates of well-being, and overall long-term effects on the mental health of marginalized individuals. Consequently, individuals with more than one identity may face more negative outcomes; however, there is mixed literature on this matter due to the intricacy of intersectional identities. (Hirsh & Kang, 2016; Shih & Sanchez, 2005). Our first research question explores how multiply marginalized individuals integrate their identities and whether identity pride influences integration.

Multiply Marginalized Identity Interaction

Extensive research has examined the stressors associated with holding a marginalized identity; however, few studies have explored the interactions between identity in multiply marginalized individuals. In the U.S., many queer individuals have more than one marginalized identity. Queer POC make up about 36% of queer-identifying individuals in the age ranges of

18-24(Williams Institute, 2023). With this, there remains a population of individuals whose racial/ethnic groups' values may conflict with values in queer communities. This includes values of heterosexism conflicting with a queer identity found in many Queer-POC (Bowleg, 2013; Cyrus, 2017; Robert et al., 2009). Not only can specific racial and ethnic group values contest values in queer individuals, but additional stress from being a part of these identities can contribute to negative well-being outcomes (Diaz et al., 2001). Furthermore, research surveying gay Latino men found that 65% reported being made fun of as a child for their gay identity and 31% identified as being made fun of as a child for their race (Diaz et al., 2001). This suggests that both racial and sexual identity stressors can have separate impacts on well-being, as well as interactive effects of being a Queer-POC. In a qualitative interview of Black Gay and Bisexual men, one participant stated that:

Well it's hard for me to separate [my identities]. When I'm thinking of me, I'm thinking of all of them as me. Like once you've blended the cake you can't take the parts back to the main ingredients. I'm a gay man. Also there is something to say about the aspects of being a Black man. (Bowleg, 2013, p. 758)

Identities both on their own and in combination with another identity can change the way in which an individual perceives their own identity (Bowleg, 2013; Settles & Buchanan 2014). Additionally, studies have found that LGBTQ Asian Americans report conflict between sexual identity values with those of racial group ideals, finding conflict between traditional familial obligations of a heterosexual marriage and that of expression of their sexual identity (Ching et al., 2018; Hu & Wang, 2013). This exemplifies that while individual marginalized identities have their own unique and specific stressors associated, the interaction between multiple marginalized identities can create new conflict as the values and prevalence of each identity compete against one another.

Identity Integration: Conflict vs Harmony

Research within sociology has posited that for individuals with multiple identities, challenges in negotiating their multiple identities stem from role conflict or role overload (Hecht et al., 2001). Role conflict is defined as one identity preventing the satisfaction of another identity's demands, while role overload is the total stress held by multiple identities. Similar frameworks in psychological research suggest that identity integration is comprised of the perceived conflict and distance between identities; however, much of that work is examined on multiple racial identities (Cheng & Lee, 2009). Therefore, we wanted to expand upon previous literature and examine perceptions of conflict between sets of identities across gender, race, and sexuality. As such, high levels of integration would indicate an individual having low perceived conflict and distance, and vice versa. (Cheng & Lee, 2009).

As the number of valued identities increases, the conflict between identities may increase if the norms of each identity clash (Robert et al., 2009; Sarno et al., 2021). Therefore, examining multiple domains can highlight conflict within sets of identities, and whether the conflict stems from one identity, both identities, or neither identity. Thus, we were interested in how identifying with more than one marginalized identity across broad domains (e.g., race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.) results in greater (vs. lower) conflict, and whether certain marginalized domains result in more harmony across identities (e.g., a minoritized race and a minority gender).

Predictors of Identity Integration

Within identity integration literature that focuses on Multiracial individuals, an effective strategy for reducing conflict has been recalling positive experiences (Cheng & Lee, 2009). Individuals who recall positive events surrounding their multiple racial identities create lower racial distance and conflict. In contrast, racial distance and conflict increase when individuals

recall negative events surrounding their multiple racial identities (Cheng & Lee, 2009). This suggests that an individual's history with their identities can have a large role in how they perceive their identities. For multicultural individuals, narrative coherence, the ability to make sense of one's life in an overarching framework, provides positive well-being for individuals with multiple identities (Yampolsky et al., 2013). Narrative coherence provides individuals with the opportunity to reconcile and harmonize conflicting identities through the application of four domains: orientation, structure, affect, and integration. (Yampolsky et al., 2013). Many of these strategies focus on how perceptions of one's identity history affect their ability to integrate their identities, and such strategies reflect a few ways in which individuals with multicultural backgrounds can mitigate conflict within those identities and learn to harmonize them together. Therefore, in Study 1, we decided to measure participants' identity pride, which measures how much individuals like their identity, and how advantageous they perceive their identity. Like measuring previous positive experiences, we were interested in measuring participants' positive feelings towards their identity. If participants reported high levels of pride within their identities, we would assume that, because of positive experiences, their levels of integration would be positively correlated. Furthermore, in Study 2, we hoped to better visualize how participants perceive their identities when talking about lower or higher levels of conflict, and used various identity overlap circles, ranging from completely separate to completely together, as a method of visualizing identity overlap. Finally, we measured malleable identity integration, the tendency to identify with different identities across social contexts, to further expand upon potential strategies used to reduce high levels of conflict between identities. These strategies highlight some of the many ways in which individuals with multiple racial identities integrate their

identities, while we plan to expand upon this work by measuring identity pride, malleability, and overlap for multiply marginalized individuals.

The Present Research

In Study 1, we investigated how individuals integrate their multiple marginalized identities while exploring the relationships between integration and identity pride. Past work predominantly focused on the relationship between single domains (gender, race, or sexuality) and their levels of conflict, finding that holding more salient identities made integration between identities more difficult (Hecht et al. 2001; Hirsh & Kang, 2016; Yampolsky et al., 2013). Therefore, using exploratory methods, we were interested in whether these results were replicated when measuring whether identity pride, across multiple domains, affected levels of integration between identity sets. In Study 2, we targeted samples with the following marginalized identities: racial and gender (e.g., straight Women of Color), racial and sexual (e.g., Queer Men of Color), and gender and sexual (e.g., Queer White Women) to test whether there would be differences across domains in how multiply marginalized individuals integrate their identities. Specifically, we examined their level of identity integration (e.g., their identity conflict and harmony), perceptions of self-identity overlap, and the malleability of their identities. Together, these studies help to illustrate how multiply marginalized individuals integrate and navigate their conflicting or harmonious identities and the role of identity pride in shaping these outcomes.

Study 1

In Study 1, we aim to explore the relationship between identity pride and identity integration, predicting that identity pride is negatively correlated with identity integration. Due to the study's exploratory nature, we had no specific predictions; however, we plan to run a correlational analysis between variables. For example, when measuring sets of racial and sexual identities, we were curious whether the correlation between integration and identity pride was significant across one domain, race or sexuality, both domains, race and sexuality, or neither domain.

Method

Participants

We recruited undergraduate students from the University of Oregon's human subjects participant pool with no exclusion criteria. We initially sampled $n = 100$, and our final sample was $n = 98$ (2 responses were excluded due to survey incompleteness). The final sample included 78 Women, 18 Men, and 2 Non-binary, $M_{age} = 19.10$, $SD_{age} = 1.60$. Of these participants, 69 identified as Straight, 16 Bisexual, 4 Lesbian, 4 Other, 2 Queer, 2 Asexual, and 1 Gay. Finally, the racial identification of the sample consisted of 61 White, 12 Latino, 12 Multiracial, 4 Black, 4 Indigenous, 2 East Asian, 2 South Asian, and 1 Southeast Asian. Participants received course credit from the University of Oregon Human Subjects Pool (SONA) as compensation for their time.

Procedure

Participants completed a Qualtrics survey measuring identity pride, identity integration. Participants were asked to report how much pride they feel in regard to their racial, sexual, and

gender identity using an adapted version of the Multiracial Pride scale (Cheng & Lee, 2009).

Next, participants were asked to rate the extent to which they felt conflict or harmony between their racial, sexual, and gender identities. Specifically, we asked participants to respond to the following combinations of identities: 1) race and gender, 2) race and sexuality, 3) gender and sexuality (Cheng & Lee, 2009).

Measures

Identity Pride Identity pride was measured using an adapted version of the Multiracial Pride scale (Cheng & Lee, 2009). The scale consisted of 4 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *completely disagree*) to (5 = *completely agree*), and was adapted such that participants could answer questions relating to their gender, racial, and sexual identities. Statements such as “There are more advantages than disadvantages to being a multiracial person” were changed to “There are more advantages than disadvantages to my [sexual identity]”. Items were averaged to create a total score, with higher scores indicating higher identity pride.

Identity Integration Participants completed an 8-item questionnaire we adapted from the Multiracial Identity Integration Scale (Cheng & Lee, 2009) to measure participants’ perceptions of conflict and harmony between their identities. Participants are asked to think about two identities at a time (racial and gender, gender and sexual, sexual and racial) while answering statements. The rating scale ranged from (1 = *completely disagree*) to (5 = *completely agree*). Questions such as “My racial identity is best described by a blend of all the racial groups to which I belong” were adapted to fit using gender, sexuality, and racial identity to become “My identity is best described by a blend of my [racial] and [gender] identities to which I belong”. Higher scores indicate higher racial distance and racial conflict, or lower levels of multiple identity integration.

Results

We ran a correlational analysis to explore whether identity pride was negatively correlated with identity integration. Across our entire sample, we found that identity pride was negatively related to identity integration. As individuals felt more pride in their single identities (race, gender, or sexuality), they felt less integration between identity sets (race and gender, gender and sexuality, and sexuality and race; see Table 1. Interestingly, these correlations were not significant across all identities and sets. We found that gender identity pride was significantly and negatively correlated to integration scores for racial and gender identity sets ($r = -.228, p = .02$), but not significantly related to sexual and gender identity sets ($r = -.136, p = .18$). Furthermore, we found that identity pride in sexuality was negatively and significantly correlated between sexual and gender identity sets ($r = -.323, p = .001$) and racial and sexual identity sets ($r = -.362, p < .001$). Finally, we found that racial identity pride was negatively and significantly correlated to racial and gender identity sets ($r = -.238, p = .002$), but not significantly related to racial and sexual identity sets ($r = -.162, p = .111$). These trends suggest that increased pride in a single identity domain decreases integration within identity sets. Study 2 aims to elaborate on this work by surveying multiple marginalized individuals across these identity domain sets to test levels of integration and capture strategies used to mitigate identity conflict.

Study 2

Our findings in Study 1 suggested that there may be possible differences in how the combination of domains would lead to differential outcomes regarding identity integration. To test these differences more directly, we sampled participants who held marginalized identities across the domains tested in Study 1: race and gender, race and sexuality, and gender and sexuality. By sampling participants who held these multiply marginalized identities, we would be able to test whether different combinations of marginalized identities led to more vs. less identity integration. Extending our work from Study 1, we focused on identity integration, but also examined an alternative approach to navigating multiple identities: malleability. In addition to examining which groups were more likely to integrate their multiple identities, we wanted to examine whether those with greater identity integration were more or less likely to think of their identities as malleable. In other words, would people think more flexibly about their multiple identities and move back and forth between them, rather than solely thinking of their identities as fused? Lastly, we also examined whether self-other overlap was linked to identity integration. We preregistered our study on OSF with three main hypotheses. We first hypothesized that participants' identity integration will differ across our three samples (Queer White Women, Queer POC Men, and Straight POC Women). Second, we hypothesized that participants' identity integration would positively correlate with their identity overlap level. Finally, we hypothesized that participants' identity integration would negatively correlate with their levels of malleable identification.

Method

Participants

Per our pre-registration we aimed to sample $n = 200$ per group. In total, we recruited 600 participants from Cloud Research who identify as having two marginalized identities across race, gender, and sexual orientation. Participants were paid \$1.25 for successful completion of the survey. Specifically, our three samples included: race and gender (Straight Women of Color), race and sexuality (Queer Men of Color), and gender and sexuality (Queer White Women). Notably, because our interest was in testing the differences in integration across these specific combinations of identities, we made sure that the identity held of the domain not tested (e.g., when examining racial and gender marginalized identities, we did not focus on marginalized sexual identities, therefore we sampled only individuals who identified as Straight/Heterosexual) was from the dominant group (e.g., dominant groups for race = White, gender = Men, sexuality = Straight). For the purposes of this thesis, we conducted analyses on a subset of the pre-registered sample, due to time constraints, as data collection is still currently ongoing. Our final sample included $n = 523$ participants across three groups (Sexual and Gender, Sexual and Racial, and Racial and Gender).

For the Racial and Gender marginalized group, we sampled $n = 196$, all of whom identified as Women, with ages ranging from 18-77 ($M_{R\&G} = 38.00$, $SD = 12.20_{R\&G}$). There were 92 Black, 37 East Asian, 18 Latino(a), 16 Southeast Asian, 14 South Asian, 12 Multiracial, 4 Other, 2 Indigenous/Native American, and 1 Pacific Islander participants.

For the Sexual and Racial marginalized group, we sampled $n = 129$, all of whom identified as Men, with ages ranging from 18-65 ($M_{S\&R} = 31.00$, $SD_{S\&R} = 9.32$). The breakdown of sexual identities is as follows: 66 Gay, 53 Bisexual, 5 Queer, 5 Other. There were 39 Black,

27 Multiracial, 19 Southeast Asian, 18 East Asian, 10 Latino(a), 7 Indigenous/Native American, 6 South Asian, 2 Other, and 1 Pacific Islander.

For the Sexual and Gender marginalized group, we sampled $n = 198$, all of whom identified as White Women, with ages ranging from 18-68 ($M_{S\&G} = 33.80$, $SD_{S\&G} = 10.10$). The breakdown of sexual identities is as follows: 122 Bisexual, 32 Lesbian, 21 Queer, 21 Other, and 2 Gay.

Procedure

Participants completed a Qualtrics survey measuring identity integration, identity overlap, and the malleability of identity. Depending on the participants' two identities, they were assigned to identical surveys with differing verbiage depending on their identities (e.x. "I feel conflicted between my sexual and gender identities" vs "I feel conflicted between my racial and gender identities" vs "I feel conflicted between my racial and sexual identities"). First, participants were asked a series of questions about perceived conflict and harmony between their identities using an adapted version of the Multicultural Identity Integration scale (Cheng & Lee, 2009). Next, perceptions of identity overlap were measured from an adapted version of the Inclusion of the Self and Other scale (Aron et al., 1992). Seven images of circles overlapping at varying degrees are presented, and participants are asked a series of questions about their perceived overlap between themselves and their identities. Additionally, participants' perceptions of overlap between their two identities (e.g., race and gender) were measured using the same scale. Finally, participants' perception of how much or little they move between their two identities in social settings was measured using an adapted version of the Malleable Racial Identity scale (Sanchez et al., 2009).

Measures

Identity Integration

Adapted from the Multiracial Identity Integration Scale (Cheng & Lee, 2009), this was used to measure participants' perceptions of conflict and harmony between their identities. Participants are asked to think about two identities at a time (Racial and Gender, and Gender and Sexual, and Sexual and Racial) while answering 8 statements using a 5-point Likert-type Scale (1 = *completely disagree* and 5 = *completely agree*). Questions such as "My racial identity is best described by a blend of all the racial groups to which I belong" were adapted to fit using gender, sexuality, and racial identity to become "My identity is best described by a blend of my [racial] and [gender] identities to which I belong". Higher scores indicate higher racial distance and racial conflict, or lower levels of integration.

Identity Overlap

Adapted from the Inclusion of the Other in the Self Scale (Aron et al., 1992), participants were asked to rate which picture best describes their relationship with their gender, race, sexuality, and two questions regarding the participants' two marginalized identities. Questions were answered using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *No Overlap* and 7 = *Most overlap*) with an associated picture for each response option. Higher scores indicate a higher connection of said identity to the self.

Malleable Identity Integration

Adapted from the Malleable Racial Identification scale (Sanchez et al., 2009), participants are asked if they feel as though one identity is more important than the other in given situations. Questions were adapted to fit such that "I feel that I adapt to the situation at hand by

identifying as one racial identity or another” became “I feel that I adapt to the situation at hand by identifying as one [identity] or another.” This was done as participants were prompted beforehand to think about their two marginalized identities. Questions were answered using a 5-point Likert Scale (*1 = Strongly Disagree* and *5 = Strongly Agree*). Higher scores indicate greater malleable identification in social situations.

Results

Identity Integration Across Samples

To test our first pre-registered hypothesis, we conducted a one-way ANOVA across our three groups on their level of identity integration. Congruent with our first hypothesis, we found that, between groups (race and gender, gender and sexuality, and race and sexuality), identity integration levels were significantly different, $F(2, 520) = 19.27, p < .001, \eta^2 = .069$ (see Figure 1). We found that marginalized racial-sexual participants reported the lowest level of integration ($M = 3.44, SD = .557$), and marginalized gender-sexual participants reported the highest amount of integration ($M = 3.79, SD = .478$) Post-hoc comparisons found that marginalized race-sexuality participants reported significantly lower identity integration than both race-gender ($M = 3.685, SD = .532$), $t(520) = 4.49, p < .001, d = .51$ and gender-sexuality participants, $t(520) = -6.13, p < .001, d = -.69$.

Identity Overlap Across Samples

To test our second pre-registered hypothesis, we conducted a series of correlations between identity integration and self-other overlap scores. In line with our second hypothesis, we found that identity integration was positively correlated with identity overlap; however, these correlations differed between identity groups and what identity was being measured. For

marginalized racial and gender participants, we found significant, positive correlations of identity integration with all 4 items of identity overlap: self and race ($r = .459, p < .001$), self and gender ($r = .338, p < .001$), self and race and gender ($r = .370, p < .001$), and race and gender ($r = .307, p < .001$). For marginalized sexual-gender participants, we found positive correlations between identity integration and overlap measures for self and sexuality ($r = .273, p < .001$), sexuality and gender ($r = .293, p < .001$), and sexuality and gender as separate domains posed against each other ($r = .197, p = .005$). The correlations between self and gender were non-significant, $p = .016$. For marginalized racial-sexual participants, we found support for positive correlations between identity integration and overlap measures for sexuality and race ($r = .299, p < .001$), and when sexuality and race were separate domains posed against each other ($r = .194, p < .028$). The correlations between self and race and self and sexuality were not significant, $p = .396$.

Malleable Identity Integration

To test our last pre-registered hypothesis, we conducted correlations between identity integration and malleable identity integration for all three participant groups. Congruent with our third pre-registered hypothesis, we found that participants' identity integration was negatively correlated with their levels of malleable identification. However, this was only observed with our marginalized race and sexuality participants, $r = -.233, p = .007$ (see Figure 2). The correlation between identity integration and malleability was non-significant for race and gender participants, $r = -.125, p = .08$, as well as gender and sexuality participants, $r = -.007, p = .918$.

General Discussion

Across two studies, we examined the relationship between identity integration and measures of identity pride, identity overlap, and malleable identity integration. In Study 1, we explored the relationship between identity pride and identity integration. We found that higher levels of pride were related negatively to the perception of integrations between identity sets. In Study 2, we were interested in whether integration between multiple marginalized identities was different between sets, positively related to levels of identity overlap, and negatively related to malleable identity integration. We found support for all three questions; however, interactions between identity integration and identity overlap differed between sets, and support for the relationship of identity integration and malleable identity integration was only found in racial-sexual identities. Together, these studies provide insight into how individuals with multiple marginalized identities perceive and integrate their identities, while focusing on how integration between groups differs.

In Study 1, we found correlations between identity pride and identity integration; however, the significance of these relationships differed between identity sets. For example, if an individual reported high levels of pride with their gender and sexual identities, their integration between those two identities was less than that of someone who reported low levels of pride between their gender and sexual identity. These results suggest that individuals with higher pride across their identities (gender, race, sexuality) perceive their identities to be less integrated. One possible explanation is that thinking about the aspects of an identity that someone is proud of, advantages vs disadvantages, it becomes more difficult to integrate that identity as participants view the positive outcomes as tied to a single domain; however, if an individual viewed their identity as having many negative consequences, low pride, integration may be easier as they feel

that, on their own, the identity does not bring positive outcomes. Importantly, we did not have any exclusion criteria in Study 1, so we are not able to draw any conclusions for specific individuals with multiple marginalized identities; however, these trends illustrate how identity pride influences perceptions of integration.

In Study 2, we found that identity integration significantly differed between groups, was positively correlated with levels of identity overlap, and was negatively related to malleable identity integration; however, correlations between integration, malleability, and overlap differed between identity sets. Research suggests that the difference in levels of identity integration between sets could be due to the unique stressors posed by holding multiple marginalized identities (Bowleg, 2013; Cyrus, 2017; Johnson et al., 2012; Robert et al., 2009). Individuals with racial and sexual identities may experience high levels of conflict between their identities because of tension between racial identity norms of heterosexism clashing with norms of their queer identity (Bowleg, 2013; Cyrus, 2017; Robert et al., 2009). For racial-gender identity sets, one possible explanation for why we found significant correlations across all items is that race and gender might be two identities that are difficult to separate (Johnson et al., 2012). That is, when an individual thinks about their racial identity, it is also in the context of their gender identity and vice versa. In turn, this may cause the two identities to be difficult to perceive separately. For gender-sexual identity sets, these findings suggest that conflict between identities may be driven by sexuality, as we found a correlation for the identities as sets, as well as for sexuality on its own, but not gender. This suggests that individuals with these identity sets may view integration of sexuality with gender as the main source of conflict between these identities, but potentially not gender with sexuality. These are one of many possible explanations for why

individuals with these identities have differing levels of integration; however, further research to what specifically causes these tensions has room to be explored.

Interestingly, we found a significant and negative relationship between integration and malleability only for racial and sexual minorities. As discussed previously, racial-sexual identity sets reported the highest amount of conflict, and this suggests a unique strategy for that group's ability to reduce conflict. Since sexuality is an invisible identity, they may use malleability to align with their racial identity while keeping their sexual identity undisclosed. To test this, future research should examine participants' disclosure status as a moderator for levels of identity integration. These findings provide one strategy for reducing feelings of conflict, and further research should examine strategies used by the two other groups as well as any other potential strategies that racial and sexual minorities use to reduce conflict.

Limitations

One main limitation of the study is that we only measured correlations between identity domains of sexuality, race, and gender, and our study fails to capture any additional integration between identities not sampled. Capturing additional domains, such as disability, would widen the scope of intersectional identity research and provide insight into how these domains interact as sets. This may further explain where tension lies within identity domains across broader identity sets, allowing for more experimental work to be done on increasing harmony between identities.

Furthermore, our study sample only characterizes those with two marginalized identities. This is done to measure the effects of identities together while controlling for the third domain with a dominant identity. However, this fails to examine how individuals with more than two marginalized identities integrate and perceive their identity. The presence of another

marginalized identity may change how individuals think about and integrate their identities. Additionally, individuals may use different strategies to reduce conflict, as unique stressors may arise with the presence of another marginalized identity. Future research should examine how these strategies and findings change depending on the presence of 3 or more marginalized identities.

Future Directions

The findings from the study present these domains as uniform; however, looking ahead, this work should be disaggregated within the domains present (e.g., differences across race, gender, and sexuality). We drew conclusions assuming that differences in gender, sexuality, and race were not significant and future research should analyze specific differences between racial, gender, and sexual identification. These findings provide a general overview of how individuals with two marginalized identities think about and perceive their identities, but fail to capture the unique and specific experiences that arise between different racial, gender, and sexual identities. The experience of a Black, gay man may be entirely different from the experiences of an Asian, bisexual man. Though they may experience similar stress posed by conflict as a Queer POC, individual differences such as their racial identity and sexual identity may present unique ways that they think about their identity.

Moreover, unpacking how invisible vs. visible identities shape identity integration provides a possible explanation for trends in identity integration and identity overlap correlations. For racial and gender minorities, the reason why we found correlations among all 4 items may be due, in part, to both identities being visible. Since they cannot conceal their identity, they may perceive their identities as more closely related. Furthermore, this can provide additional insight into whether visible vs invisible identities matter in the context of what sets of

identities they hold, and whether the effect of a visible identity depends on what domain it is visible in? Future research should aim to explain and provide further insight into how the visibility of an identity affects identity integration.

Conclusion

This work highlights that holding multiple marginalized identities is not uniform across domains, demonstrates unique conflict within identity sets, and highlights strategies to mitigate perceptions of conflict. In Study 1, we found that identity pride was negatively related to feelings of identity integration, perceptions of conflict or harmony between two identity domains. In Study 2, we found that racial and gender marginalized individuals reported the highest identity integration, and racial and sexual marginalized individuals reported the lowest identity integration. Finally, we found that identity integration in racial-sexual identity sets increased, swapping between identities across social contexts was a potential buffer for high levels of conflict. Together, the results of these studies provide evidence that individuals with multiple marginalized identities face different conflicts, strategies, and perceptions of integration. Through this, we may be able to better understand the challenges of holding multiple identities and explore further strategies for mitigating conflict within specific domains.

List of Scales

Identity Integration

When thinking about your sexual identity (*insert participant demographic response*), racial identity (*insert participant demographic response*), and gender identity (*insert participant demographic response*), please answer the questions below.

S.# Statement

		1	2	3	4	5
1.	My identity is best described by a blend of my racial, sexual, and gender identities.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I keep everything about my racial, sexual, and gender identities separate.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I am a person with multiple identities	1	2	3	4	5
4.	In any given context, I am best described by a single identity.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I am conflicted between my racial, sexual, and gender identities.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I feel like someone moving between my racial, sexual, and gender identities.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I feel torn between my racial, sexual, and gender identities.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I do not feel any tension between my racial, sexual, and gender identities.	1	2	3	4	5

Identity Pride

When thinking about your sexual identity, please answer the questions below.

S.#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	I like my sexual identity.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I am proud of my sexual identity.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	There are more advantages than disadvantages to my sexual identity	1	2	3	4	5
4.	There are many good things about my sexual identity.	1	2	3	4	5

Malleable Identity Integration

S.#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1.	In different situations, I will identify more closely with one of my identities than another.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I often identify more with one identity than another depending on the identity of the person I am with.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Depending on the activity, I feel closer to one identity than another.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I feel that I adapt to the situation at hand by identifying as one identity or another.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	One identity can be more important than another in the moment depending on the identity of the people I am with.	1	2	3	4	5

Identity Overlap

1. Which picture best describes your relationship with your sexual identity.
2. Which picture best describes your relationship with your racial identity
3. Which picture best describes your relationships with your racial and sexual identity.
4. Which picture best describes your relationship with your racial and sexual identity.

1.

2.

3.

4.

☐ No Overlap	☐ No Overlap	☐ No Overlap	☐ No Overlap
☐ Little Overlap	☐ Little Overlap	☐ Little Overlap	☐ Little Overlap
☐ Some Overlap	☐ Some Overlap	☐ Some Overlap	☐ Some Overlap
☐ Equal Overlap	☐ Equal Overlap	☐ Equal Overlap	☐ Equal Overlap
☐ Strong Overlap	☐ Strong Overlap	☐ Strong Overlap	☐ Strong Overlap
☐ Very Strong Overlap	☐ Very Strong Overlap	☐ Very Strong Overlap	☐ Very Strong Overlap
☐ Most Overlap	☐ Most Overlap	☐ Most Overlap	☐ Most Overlap

Figures

Figure 1

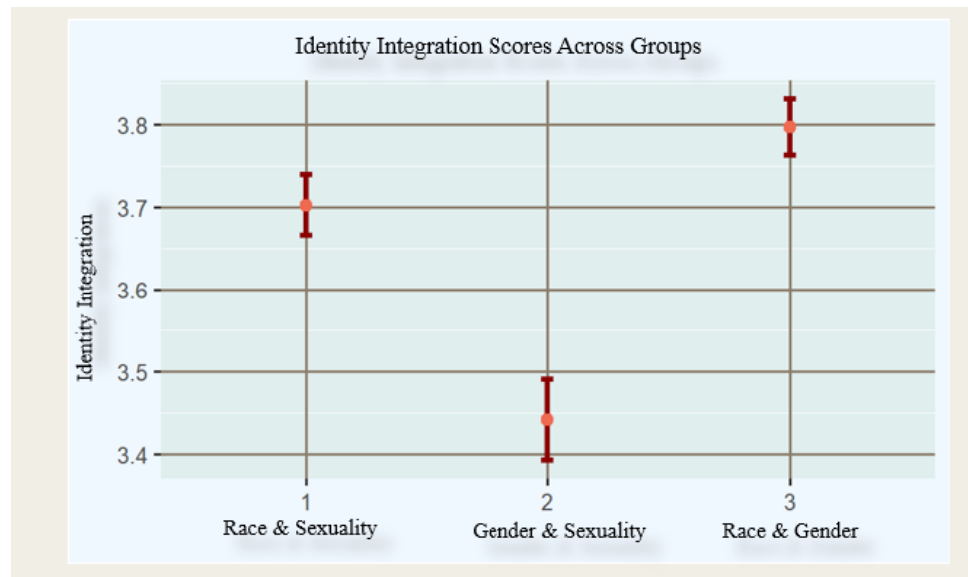
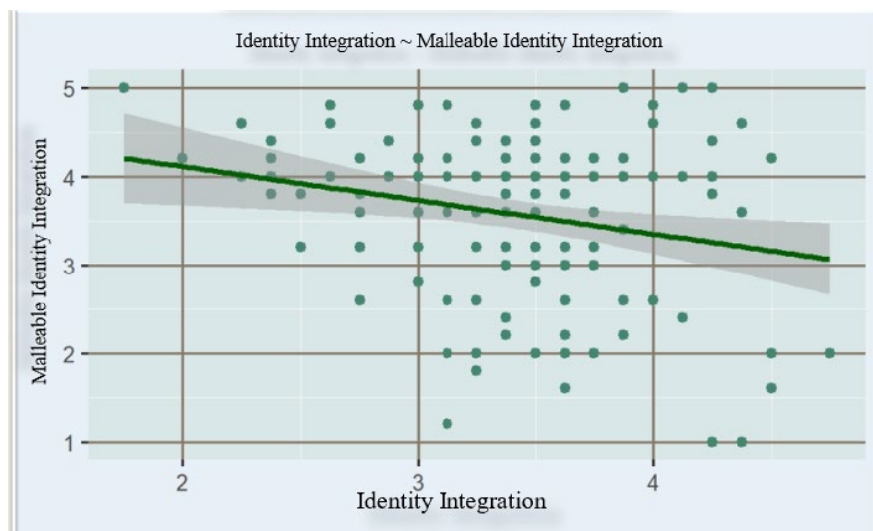


Figure 2



Tables

Table 1

Correlation Matrix		IP_G_Score	IP_R_Score	IP_S_Score	MIIS_RI_GI_Score	MIIS_SI_GI_Score	MIIS_SI_RI_Score
IP_G_Score	Pearson's r	—					
	df	—					
	p-value	—					
IP_R_Score	Pearson's r	0.50761	—				
	df	96	—				
	p-value	9.5687e-8	—				
IP_S_Score	Pearson's r	0.51868	0.44105	—			
	df	96	96	—			
	p-value	4.4742e-8	5.4817e-6	—			
MIIS_RI_GI_Score	Pearson's r	-0.22812	-0.23837	-0.35054	—		
	df	96	96	96	—		
	p-value	0.023873	0.018096	4.0216e-4	—		
MIIS_SI_GI_Score	Pearson's r	-0.13647	-0.15348	-0.32308	0.65797	—	
	df	96	96	96	96	—	
	p-value	0.180275	0.131344	0.0011754	1.8214e-13	—	
MIIS_SI_RI_Score	Pearson's r	-0.20130	-0.16184	-0.36229	0.71802	0.67437	—
	df	96	96	96	96	96	—
	p-value	0.046859	0.111356	2.4654e-4	8.7341e-17	2.6999e-14	—

Bibliography

- Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of other in the self scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(4), 596-612.
- Balsam, K. F., Molina, Y., Beadnell, B., Simoni, J., & Walters, K. (2011). Measuring multiple minority stress: the LGBT People of Color Microaggressions Scale. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 17(2), 163.
- Benet-Martínez, V., & Haritatos, J. (2005). Bicultural identity integration (BII): Components and psychosocial antecedents. *Journal of personality*, 73(4), 1015-1050.
- Bruce, D., Harper, G. W., & Bauermeister, J. A. (2015). Minority stress, positive identity development, and depressive symptoms: Implications for resilience among sexual minority male youth. *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, 2(3), 287–296. <https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000128>
- Bowleg, L. (2013). “Once you’ve blended the cake, you can’t take the parts back to the main ingredients”: Black gay and bisexual men’s descriptions and experiences of intersectionality. *Sex roles*, 68, 754-767.
- Camacho G, Reinka MA, Quinn DM, Disclosure and Concealment of Stigmatized Identities, *Current Opinion in Psychology* (2019), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsy.2019.07.031>
- Cheng, C. Y., & Lee, F. (2009). Multiracial identity integration: Perceptions of conflict and distance among multiracial individuals. *Journal of Social Issues*, 65(1), 51-68.
- Cheng, C. Y., Sanchez-Burks, J., & Lee, F. (2008). Connecting the dots within: Creative performance and identity integration. *Psychological Science*, 19(11), 1178-1184.
- Ching, T. H. W., Lee, S. Y., Chen, J., So, R. P., & Williams, M. T. (2018). A model of intersectional stress and trauma in Asian American sexual and gender minorities. *Psychology of Violence*, 8(6), 657–668. <https://doi.org/10.1037/vio0000204>
- Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385–396. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2136404>
- Cyrus, K. (2017). Multiple minorities as multiply marginalized: Applying the minority stress theory to LGBTQ people of color. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*, 21(3), 194-202.
- Diaz, R. M., Ayala, G., Bein, E., Henne, J., & Marin, B. V. (2001). The impact of homophobia, poverty, and racism on the mental health of gay and bisexual Latino men: findings from 3 US cities. *American journal of public health*, 91(6), 927. Garlick, S. (2022, November 29). *Ethnic Group, England and Wales: Census 2021*. Ethnic group, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics.

- Hecht, L. M. (2001). Role conflict and role overload: Different concepts, different consequences. *Sociological Inquiry*, 71(1), 111-121.
- Hirsh, J. B., & Kang, S. K. (2016). Mechanisms of identity conflict: Uncertainty, anxiety, and the behavioral inhibition system. *Personality and social psychology review*, 20(3), 223-244.
- Hughes, J. L., Camden, A. A., & Yangchen, T. (2016). Rethinking and updating demographic questions: Guidance to improve descriptions of research samples. *Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research*, 21(3), 138-151.
- Hu, X., & Wang, Y. (2013). LGB identity among young Chinese: The influence of traditional culture. *Journal of homosexuality*, 60(5), 667-684.
- Holman, E. G., Ogolsky, B. G., & Oswald, R. F. (2022). Concealment of a sexual minority identity in the workplace: The role of workplace climate and identity centrality. *Journal of homosexuality*, 69(9), 1467-1484.
- Jackson, K. F., Yoo, H. C. B., Guevarra Jr, R., & Harrington, B. A. (2012). Role of identity integration on the relationship between perceived racial discrimination and psychological adjustment of multiracial people. *Journal of counseling psychology*, 59(2), 240.
- Johnson, K. L., Freeman, J. B., & Pauker, K. (2012). Race is gendered: how covarying phenotypes and stereotypes bias sex categorization. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 102(1), 116.
- Kelleher, C. (2009). Minority stress and health: Implications for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) young people. *Counselling psychology quarterly*, 22(4), 373-379.
- Kertzner, R. M., Meyer, I. H., Frost, D. M., & Stirratt, M. J. (2009). Social and psychological well-being in lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals: The effects of race, gender, age, and sexual identity. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 79(4), 500-510.
- Luhtanen, R., & Crocker, J. (1992). A collective self-esteem scale: Self-evaluation of one's social identity. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 18, 302-318
- Meyer, I. H. (1995). Minority stress and mental health in gay men. *Journal of health and social behavior*, 38-56.
- Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: conceptual issues and research evidence. *Psychological bulletin*, 129(5), 674.
- Salice, A., & Montes Sánchez, A. (2016). Pride, shame, and group identification. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7, 557.

- Sanchez, D. T., Shih, M., & Garcia, J. A. (2009). Juggling multiple racial identities: Malleable racial identification and psychological well-being. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology, 15*(3), 243–254.
- Sarno, E. L., Swann, G., Newcomb, M. E., & Whitton, S. W. (2021). Intersectional minority stress and identity conflict among sexual and gender minority people of color assigned female at birth. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology, 27*(3), 408.
- Settles, I. H., & Buchanan, N. T. (2014). Multiple groups, multiple identities, and intersectionality. *The Oxford handbook of multicultural identity, 1*, 160-180.
- Settles, I. H. (2004). When multiple identities interfere: The role of identity centrality. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 30*(4), 487-500.
- Shih, M., & Sanchez, D. T. (2005). Perspectives and Research on the Positive and Negative Implications of Having Multiple Racial Identities. *Psychological Bulletin, 131*(4), 569–591. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.4.569>
- Vespa, J. E., Armstrong, D. M., & Medina, L. (2018). *Demographic turning points for the United States: Population projections for 2020 to 2060* (pp. 25-1144). Washington, DC: US Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, US Census Bureau.
- Viladrich, A., Loue, S. (2010). Minority Identity Development. In: Loue, S. (eds) *Sexualities and Identities of Minority Women*. Springer, New York, NY. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-0-387-75657-8_1
- Williams, D. R., YU, Y., Jackson, J. S., & Anderson, N. B. (1997). Racial differences in physical and mental health: Socioeconomic status, stress and discrimination. *Journal of Health Psychology, 2*, 335-351.
- Williams Institute. (2023, December). *Adult LGBT population in the United States*. UCLA School of Law. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/adult-lgbt-pop-us/>
- Quinn, D. M., Weisz, B. M., & Lawner, E. K. (2017). Impact of active concealment of stigmatized identities on physical and psychological quality of life. *Social Science & Medicine, 192*, 14-17.
- Yampolsky, M. A., Amiot, C. E., & de la Sablonnière, R. (2013). Multicultural identity integration and well-being: A qualitative exploration of variations in narrative coherence and multicultural identification. *Frontiers in psychology, 4*, 126.