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Basic need satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship of proximal
sexual minority stressors and perceived social support

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Sexual minority stress makes sexual minorities more vulnerable to the development of psychopathology than their heterosexual counterparts. This study examines how stressors such as internalized homonegativity, sexual identity concealment, and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity may relate to perceived social support and whether this relation might be mediated by basic psychological need satisfaction. In order to test these relations, three mediation analyses were performed on a total of 96 members of sexual minorities (83.30% men, 14.60% women, 2.10% others, Mean age = 30, SD = 9.80). Basic need satisfaction functioned as a mediator for the relationship of on the one hand sexual identity concealment and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity and on the other hand perceived social support. Clinical implications, limitations and possible future research directions are discussed.

Key words: sexual minority stressors, internalized homonegativity, sexual identity concealment, sexual identity related rejection sensitivity, basic need satisfaction, self-determination theory.

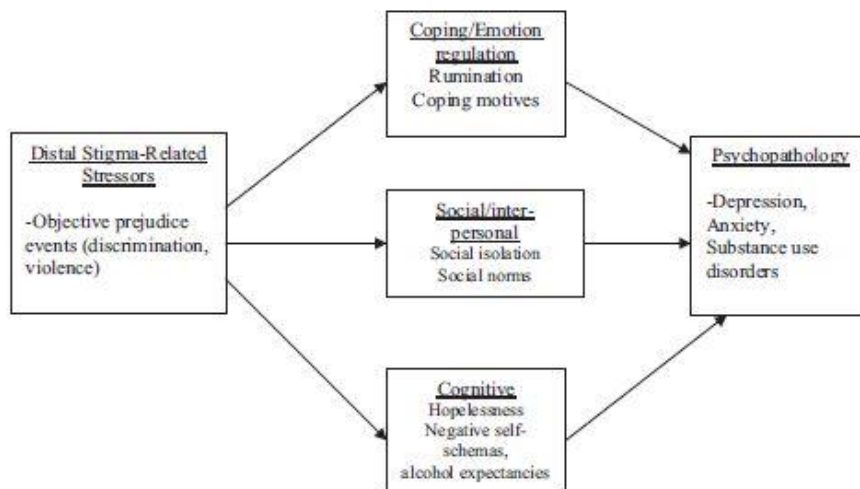
Members of sexual minorities, that is, individuals who identify with a non-heterosexual identity, are faced with relatively worse mental health conditions than their heterosexual counterparts (Bostwick, Boyd, Hughes & McCabe, 2011; Eaton, 2014; Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2018). Findings worldwide show that, compared to heterosexuals, sexual minorities are more at risk for among others, suicidal symptoms, trauma exposure, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and substance use disorder (Cochran & Mays, 2000; Lyon, 2016; Li, 2018; Kerridge et al., 2017; Hall, 2017; Feinstein, Goldfried & Davila, 2012). In the Netherlands alone, approximately 680.000 to 1.020.000 individuals are affected by this mental health disparity (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, 2018). As many individuals are affected, it's important to increase our theoretical knowledge as this would help create better treatment and prevention. This study will approach and further extend our perspective on the exact functioning of sexual minority stress and its effects on interpersonal processes. Adding to a new wave of research (e.g. Ryan, 2018), the current study will use the self-determination theory as a reference point as this theory appears to be promising in part due to its transdiagnostic nature. The current study will attempt to further investigate the existing relationship between sexual minority stress and interpersonal processes.

Sexual minority stress refers to stress that's unique to (perceived) members of the sexual minority group (Meyer, 2003). The experience of this stigma related stress renders sexual minorities more vulnerable to general psychological processes, such as social and interpersonal processes, that are known to predict psychopathology in heterosexuals (see figure 1; Hatzenbuehler, 2009). There are two distinct types of sexual minority stressors, namely distal and proximal stressors. Distal stressors are defined as prejudice-inspired events, which include violence, victimization, and discrimination. Facing such distal stressors does not necessarily depend on one's own perception of his or her sexual identity. In contrast, proximal stressors are more subjectively related to the self-identity of a sexual minority. Three such stressors are distinguished (Meyer, 2003; Balsam, Beadnell & Molina, 2013). First, *internalized homonegativity* refers to the internalization of negative societal attitudes about non-heterosexual attractions, behaviors, and identities. The individual finds himself in an intrapsychic conflict between his affection or desire for someone from the same sex and feeling the need to be heterosexual (Herek, 2004). It is salient across social context and can operate even in the absence of prejudiced others (Doyle & Molix, 2015). Second, *sexual identity rejection sensitivity* refers to anxious expectations of rejection based on an individual's sexual identity. Mostly resulting from

previous experiences of discrimination or rejection, this sensitivity leads to hypervigilance toward cues of potential bias, and to intense affective reactions to rejection (London, Downey, Romero-Canyas, Rattan & Tyson, 2012). Finally, the *concealment of one's sexual identity* may be motivated by various determinants, namely the avoidance of real threats such as discrimination and rejection (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2009). Concealment might also be the consequence of experienced internalized homonegativity (Bry, Mustanski, Garofalo & Burns, 2017).

Figure 1

Psychological mediation framework as described by Hatzenbuehler (2009)



It has been consistently shown that internalized homonegativity (e.g. Thies, Starks, Denmark & Rosenthal, 2016; Frost & Meyer, 2009; Okutan, Sunal & Ugurlu, 2017), sexual identity rejection sensitivity (e.g. Feinstein, 2019; Norona et al., 2018; Skinta, Hoeflein, Muñoz-Martínez & Rincón, 2018), and sexual identity concealment (e.g. Hall, 2018; Caron & Ulin, 1997) can negatively impact interpersonal relationships and interpersonal functioning. For example, it's been found that sexual minority stress is negatively associated with perceived social support (Balsam & Mohr, 2007; Friedman & Leaper, 2010; Lehavot & Simoni, 2011; Ehlke, Braitman, Dawson, Heron & Lewis, 2020). As a result of the lack of perceived social support, an individual

may become more susceptible to psychopathology such as depression (Coyne & Downey, 1991; Muller & Lemieux, 2000; McLewin & Muller, 2006).

As more knowledge is required to better understand the underlying mechanisms that explain the relationship between the proximal stressors and perceived social support, it may be worth exploring sexual minority stress in the context of the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017). This theory focuses on three universal basic psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness which must be satisfied for effective human functioning and psychological health (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Autonomy refers to the desire to self-organize experience and feel volitional and responsible for one's own behavior. A sense of autonomy allows one to feel authentically true to oneself and behave in accord with one's own integrated values, interests, and beliefs (Ryan, 1993). This extends to social interactions where autonomy allows for a sense of choice and endorsement of interacting (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Competence refers to the desire to feel effective and skillful in activities and obtain desired outcomes. These activities and desired outcomes may be social and/or emotional in nature. More specifically, social-emotional competence is described as a sense of effectiveness in an individual's social and emotional interactions with the environment, and being able to exercise and express social and emotional abilities (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Relatedness refers to one's desire to feel connected to others. Satisfaction of these three basic needs is associated with psychological health and greater wellbeing (e.g. Ryan, Bernstein & Brown, 2010).

The self-determination theory has also been researched in the context of social and interpersonal processes, and in the context of sexual minority stress. Basic need satisfaction is associated with greater relationship quality, greater emotional awareness, emotional disclosure to one's partner, greater relationship satisfaction and commitment, greater willingness to rely on relational partners, greater interpersonal competence, and perceived social support (Deci, La Guardia, Moller, Scheiner & Ryan, 2006; La Guardia, 2007; Leak & Cooney, 2001; Ryan, La Guardia, Solky-Butzel, Chirkov & Kim, 2005; Costa, Ntoumanis & Bartholomew, 2015; Cordeiro, Paixao & Lens, 2015). In regard to sexual minority stress, Legate, Ryan, and Weinstein (2012) found that feeling supported in one's needs was a robust predictor for the disclosure of one's sexual identity across varied relationship contexts. This, in turn, predicts greater need satisfaction of all three basic needs, and greater wellbeing (Legate, Ryan & Rogge, 2017; Ryan, 2018). Similarly,

parental autonomy support predicts lower internalized homonegativity (Legate, Weinstein, Ryan, DeHaan & Ryan, 2019). As autonomy support allows individuals to behave in ways that are congruent with their beliefs and express themselves authentically (Ryan, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2000), it may decrease or even prevent internalized homonegativity. Finally, internalized homonegativity appears to be negatively associated with relatedness (Sommantico, De Rosa & Parrello, 2018).

Integrating these findings, one might argue that sexual minority stress creates a vulnerability for psychopathology by, amongst others, lowering the perceived amount of social support. This relationship may be mediated by basic need satisfaction. As previously mentioned, basic need satisfaction positively predicts perceived social support. Research also hints at a possible relationship between sexual minority stressors and basic need satisfaction. For example, Legate and colleagues (2017) showed, autonomy support was positively associated with the disclosure of one's sexual identity. Disclosure and concealment are two extremes of the same continuum (Knox & Hill, 2016). Following this reasoning, one might argue that, for example, concealment of one's sexual identity lowers basic need satisfaction. This, in turn, would lower perceived social support as perceived social support is positively associated with basic need satisfaction (Cordeiro, Paixao & Lens, 2015). The two remaining basic psychological needs, competence and relatedness, are less researched in the context of sexual minority stress. Helpful insights may be gathered, however, by looking at more general research on the topics of concealment and rejection sensitivity. Usyal, Lin & Knee (2010) concluded that self-concealment is a negative predictor for basic need frustration. Similarly, rejection sensitivity has been shown to negatively predict autonomy and relatedness (Wismeijer, van Assen & Bekker, 2014). The current study aims to further close the existing information gap by including the three proximal stressors and the three basic psychological needs. By doing so, the current study may be one of the first that examines whether basic need satisfaction might explain the relationship between each of the three proximal stressors and perceived social support. This study will aim to test two sets of hypotheses; (1) each individual proximal stressor (internalized homonegativity, sexual identity concealment, and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity) is negatively related with perceived social support; and (2) each of these relations is mediated by basic psychological need satisfaction.

Method

Participants and procedures

Data were collected through an online survey. Participants were gathered using word of mouth, social media (e.g. Instagram), Grindr¹ (an app for male sexual minorities), and via e-mails to LGBT+ organizations (e.g. PANN). The survey started with a general introduction. Participants were informed of the contents of the survey, privacy matters (e.g. anonymity), and estimated time to finish the survey. Additionally, an email address was provided for any questions or remarks a participant may have prior to or after filling in the survey. In the following screen, participants were asked for their informed consent. After giving their informed consent, participants filled out each of the five questionnaires. There was one unique questionnaire per screen. See appendix F for the introduction screen and informed consent form. It took an average of 10 minutes to complete the survey.

Inspection of the data showed 2 participants who did not give their informed consent, and were accordingly removed from the dataset. Furthermore, a total of 3 participants failed to complete the Gay-Related Rejection Sensitivity Scale. As they left over 50% of this specific questionnaire empty, all 3 cases have consequently been removed. Finally, using the outlier labeling rule with a multiplier of 2.2 (Hoaglin & Iglewicz, 1987), 2 outliers were removed due to having an extremely low and extremely high score on two of the questionnaires. The final dataset has a sample size of 96 individuals identified as sexual minorities, ages ranging from 17 to 63 years old ($M = 30.59$; $SD = 9.92$). Eighty participants were male (83.30%), 14 were female (14.60%), and two identifying otherwise (2.10%). In the current sample, there were 62 homosexuals (64.60%), 10 lesbians (10.40%), 22 bisexuals (22.90%), and 2 identifying otherwise (2.10%).

Measures

Internalized homonegativity

Internalized homonegativity was measured using a self-translated version of the revised Internalized Homophobia Scale (IHP-R; Herek, Gillis & Cogan, 2009; see appendix A). The IHP-

¹ The decision was made not to place any announcement of the online survey on apps for female sexual minorities as these apps are seen as safe havens for their respective communities. As such, it was deemed inappropriate for a male researcher to enter this safe space for females.

R is one of the most commonly used measures of internalized homonegativity (for a review, see Szymanski, Kashubeck-West & Meyer, 2008). Similar to the original version, the revised scale has shown to have acceptable internal consistency and construct validity (Herek, Cogan, Gillis & Glunt, 1998; Herek, Cogan & Gillis, 2009). The IHP-R consists of five items, which are scored using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*Disagree strongly*) to 5 (*Agree strongly*). An example of an item is: 'I have tried to stop being attracted to the same sex'. Answers were averaged across the five items, a higher score indicating greater internalized homonegativity. For the current sample, coefficient alpha was .63 ($M = 1.76$, $SD = 0.69$, Range 1.00-3.60).

Sexual orientation concealment

Sexual orientation concealment was measured using a self-translated version of the Sexual Orientation Concealment Scale (SCOCS; Jackson & Mohr, 2016; see appendix B). The SCOCS is a relatively new scale that measures an individual's intentional concealment of their sexual identity, showing good validity and reliability (Jackson & Mohr, 2016). Using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*All the time*), six items examined participant's active behavior in concealing their sexual identity in the last two weeks (e.g. 'In the last two weeks, I have concealed my sexual orientation by avoiding contact with other LGB individuals'). Answers were averaged across the six items, a higher score indicated a greater degree of sexual orientation concealment. The coefficient for the current sample was .86 ($M = 2.07$, $SD = 0.89$, Range 1.00-5.00).

Gay-related rejection sensitivity

Gay-related rejection sensitivity was measured using a self-translated version of the Gay-Related Rejection Sensitivity Scale (GRRSS; Pachankis, 2008), using adapted questions to make the described scenarios more gender neutral and appropriate for all sexual identities (see appendix C). The scale has demonstrated excellent internal consistency and adequate convergent and discriminant validity (Pachankis, Goldfried & Ramrattan, 2008). The scale consists of 14 unique situations such as 'You bring a same sex partner to a family reunion. Two of your old-fashioned aunts don't come talk to you even though they see you'. Two similar questions are asked per situation (1) 'How concerned or anxious would you be that the situation occurred because of your sexual identity?'; and (2) 'How likely would it be that the situation occurred because of your sexual identity?', ranging from 1 (*Very unlikely*) to 6 (*Very likely*). Per situation, the response to

each of the two questions is multiplied. A total score averaging across the 14 situations is then calculated, a higher score indicating greater gay-related rejection sensitivity. For the current sample, coefficient alpha was .91 ($M = 6.95$, $SD = 4.18$, Range 1.21-21.14).

Basic Need Satisfaction

Basic need satisfaction was measured using a translation of Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction and Frustration Scale. (BNS; Chen et al., 2015; see appendix D). The psychometric qualities of the scale have been repeatedly confirmed (Campbell et al., 2015; Chen et al., 2015). The Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction scale consists of 12 questions, divided over 3 subscales with 4 questions each. Three subscales (i.e., autonomy, relatedness, and competence) of four need satisfaction items were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*Not true at all*) to 5 (*Completely true*). An example item is: ‘I feel connected with people who care for me and for whom I care’. A total score is calculated by summing the scores of each item, a higher score indicating greater need satisfaction. In the current study study, the coefficient alpha was .85 ($M = 46.88$, $SD = 6.77$, Range 28.00-60.00).

Perceived Social Support

Perceived social support was measured using a translated version of the Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (ISEL-12; Cohen, Mermelstein, Kamarck & Hoberman, 1985; see appendix E). The ISEL-12 has been found to have good internal consistency, criterion and construct validity (Cohen, 2008). The instrument consists of 12 questions, scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (‘definitely false’) to 4 (‘definitely true’). An example of an item is: ‘There is someone I can turn to for advice about handling problems with my family’. Six items being reverse scored, item scores are summed, a higher score indicating greater perceived social support. For the current sample, the coefficient alpha was .84 ($M = 39.05$, $SD = 5.81$, Range 22.00-48.00).

Statistics

The results were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 25. The custom dialog box, PROCESS v3.5 was installed. Using PROCESS, three mediation analyses were performed. The variables ‘age’, ‘gender’, and ‘sexual identity’ were entered as covariates.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

First, ANOVA tests were performed to check for possible effects of background variables ‘gender’ and ‘sexual identity’. There was a significant effect of gender on SOCS, $F(2, 93) = 3.23$, $p = .044$, $\omega = .05$. Post hoc analyses with Hochberg’s GT2 (using an α of .05) showed no group differences. There were no further significant effects of gender on the remaining studied variables. There was a significant effect of sexual identity on SOCS, $F(3, 95) = 4.16$, $p = .008$, $\omega = .09$. Post hoc analyses with Hochberg’s GT2 (using an α of .05) revealed that lesbians ($M = 1.43$, $SD = .34$) had significantly lower SOCS scores than bisexuals ($M = 2.48$, $SD = .82$). There were no other significant group differences

Secondly, age shows a significant correlation with BNS ($r = .26$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that high age is related to greater basic need satisfaction. There were no further significant correlations between age and other studied variables. Gender, sexual identity, and age have consequently been added as a covariate in all further analyses.

To have a first glance on the overall findings, correlations between the studied variables were checked by performing Pearson correlations (see Table 1). As expected, the stressors were positively correlated with each other but not with other variables, and basic need satisfaction positively correlated with perceived social support.

Table 1

Bivariate Pearson correlations (r) between the studied variables

	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Internalized Homonegativity	1			
2. Sexual Identity Concealment	.31**	1		
3. Sexual Identity Related Rejection Sensitivity	.38**	.25*	1	
4. Basic Need Satisfaction	-.43**	-.23*	-.44**	1
5. Perceived Social Support	-.17	-.43**	-.40**	.50**

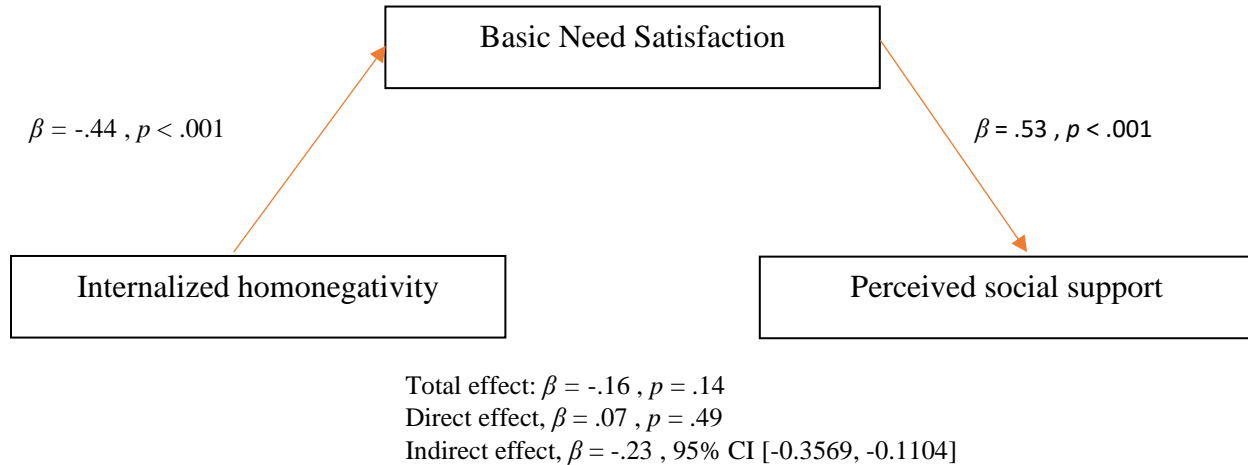
Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .10$;

Primary Analyses

Three mediation analyses were performed, using a bootstrapped confidence interval of 5000 samples. The first mediation analysis tested the hypothesis that basic need satisfaction functions as a mediator of the relationship between internalized homonegativity and perceived social support. There was a significant indirect effect of internalized homonegativity on perceived social support through basic need satisfaction, $\beta = -.23$, BCa CI [-0.3569, -0.1104]. The total effect was non-significant, $\beta = -.16$, $p = .14$, rejecting the mediation hypothesis. However, an indirect effect model was found. See Figure 3 for the model of internalized homonegativity as a predictor of perceived social support, with basic need satisfaction used as a mediator.

Figure 3

Model of internalized homonegativity as a predictor of perceived social support, with basic need satisfaction as an indirect effect

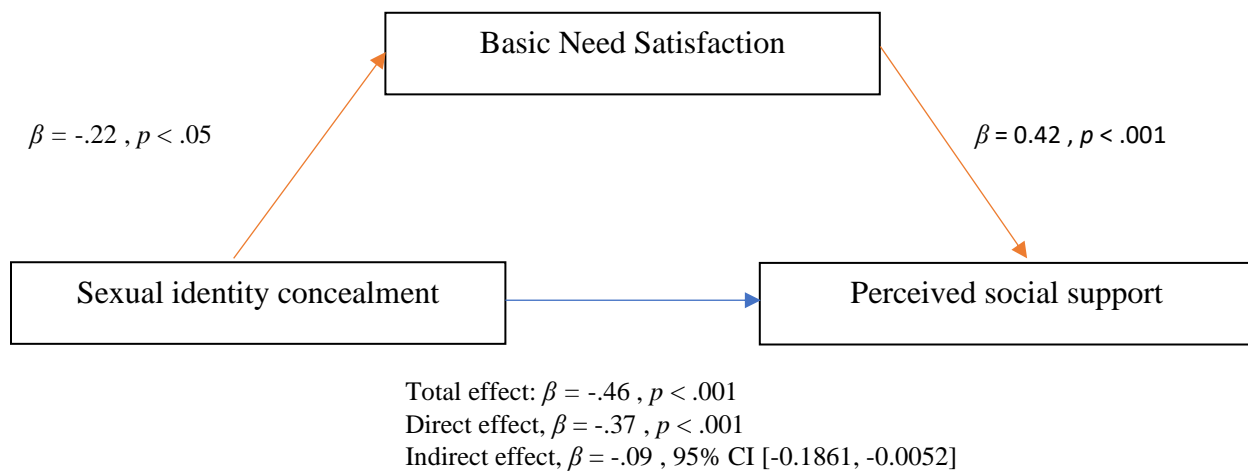


The second mediation analysis tested the hypothesis that basic need satisfaction functions as a mediator of the relationship between sexual identity concealment and perceived social support. There was a significant indirect effect of sexual identity concealment on perceived social support through basic need satisfaction, $\beta = -0.09$, BCa CI [-0.1861, -0.0052]. The total effect was also significant, $\beta = -.46$, $p < .001$, accepting the mediation hypothesis. See

Figure 2 for the model of sexual identity concealment as a predictor of perceived social support, partially mediated by basic need satisfaction.

Figure 3

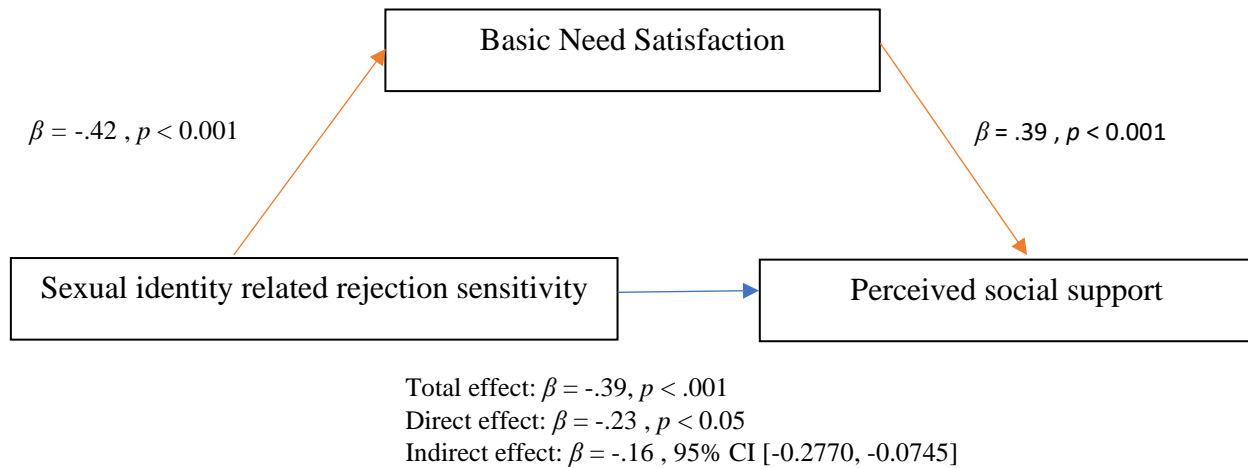
Model of sexual identity concealment as a predictor of perceived social support, partially mediated by basic need satisfaction.



The third mediation analysis tested the hypothesis that basic need satisfaction functions as a mediator of the relationship between sexual identity related rejection sensitivity and perceived social support. There was a significant indirect effect of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity on perceived social support through basic need satisfaction, $\beta = -.17, \text{BCa CI } [-0.2770, -0.0745]$. The total effect was also significant, $\beta = -.40, p < .001$, accepting the mediation analysis. See Figure 3 for the model of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity as a predictor of perceived social support, partially mediated by basic need satisfaction.

Figure 4

Model of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity as a predictor of perceived social support, partially mediated by basic need satisfaction.



Exploratory Analyses

Exploratory analyses investigated each individual basic psychological need as a mediator. A total of six mediation analyses were performed using (1) either sexual identity concealment, or sexual identity related rejection sensitivity as an independent variable, (2) perceived social support as the dependent variable, and (3) using perceived social support as the dependent variable. Analyzing indirect effects of sexual identity concealment on social support showed a significant indirect effect through relatedness satisfaction, $\beta = -.11$, BCa CI [-0.2217, -0.0105]. Given the total effect of sexual identity on perceived social support ($\beta = -.46, p < .001$), reduced into a direct effect of $\beta = -.35, p < .001$, relatedness satisfaction can be seen as partial mediator. Similarly, there was an indirect effect of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity through autonomy satisfaction, $\beta = -.07$, BCa CI [-0.1742, -0.0040]. Again, partial mediation was established as both total effect ($\beta = -.39, p < .001$) and direct effect ($\beta = -.22, p < .05$) were significant. Lastly, there was a significant indirect effect of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity through relatedness satisfaction, $\beta = -.15$, BCa CI [-0.02561, -0.0706]. This was also a partial mediation as the total effect ($\beta = -.39, p < .001$) and indirect effect ($\beta = -.24, p < .05$) were significant. See appendix G for the six corresponding mediation models.

Discussion

The current study examined basic need satisfaction as a mediator for the relationship of each of the three distinct sexual minority stressors (internalized homonegativity, sexual identity concealment, and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity), and perceived social support. Internalized homonegativity refers to the internalization of negative societal attitudes about non-heterosexual attractions, behaviors, and identities (Doyle & Molix, 2015). Sexual identity rejection sensitivity is the anxious expectations of rejection based on an individual's sexual identity (Meyer, 2003). Finally, sexual identity concealment refers the conscious and active concealment of one's sexual identity (Balsam, Beadnell & Molina, 2013). It's well documented that these stressors can have deleterious effects on the psychological health of sexual minorities (e.g. Li, 2018). Using Hatzenbuehler's (2009) psychological mediation framework as a reference point, the current study researched how these stressors may impact perceived social support. As research shows (Ehlke et al., 2020), sexual minority stress is negatively associated with perceived social support. In an attempt to better understand the underlying mechanisms that may explain this relationship, the role of basic need satisfaction as a mediator was investigated. Basic need satisfaction refers to the satisfaction of the three basic psychological needs, namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Autonomy refers to the desire to self-organize experience and feel volitional and responsible for one's behavior. Competence refers to the desire to feel effective and skillful in activities and obtain desired outcomes. Finally, relatedness refers to one's desire to feel connected to others. According to the self-determination theory, the satisfaction of these three basic psychological needs leads to psychological health and greater wellbeing (e.g. Ryan, Bernstein & Brown, 2010). Important to the current study is the finding that basic need satisfaction is also positively associated with perceived social support (Cordeiro, Paixao & Lens, 2015). Moreover, research in the field of sexual identity showed the perception of autonomy to be negatively associated with internalized homonegativity, and positively to the disclosure of one's sexual identity.

Investigating a sample of 96 individuals belonging to sexual minorities, our findings showed that internalized homonegativity is only indirectly related to social support through basic need satisfaction. Furthermore, basic need satisfaction functions as a partial mediator in the relationship of both sexual identity concealment and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity on

the one hand and perceived social support on the other. This means that the relationship between these two stressors and perceived social support is partially explained by basic need satisfaction. In other words, indirect effects may exist, and that further variables could (and should) be examined and tested.

Exploratory analyses showed that, on closer inspection, the relationship of sexual identity concealment and perceived social support is partially mediated only by relatedness satisfaction. Similarly, the relationship of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity and perceived social support is partially mediated by both autonomy and relatedness satisfaction. Again, based on the partial mediation, further investigation is warranted into other possible indirect effects.

Contradictory to previous research (e.g. Ehlke et al., 2020), there was no direct effect of internalized homonegativity on perceived social support. This inconsistency adds to the ambiguity surrounding the research findings on the effects of internalized homonegativity and interpersonal processes (e.g. Frost & Meyer, 2009; Doyle & Molix, 2015). It becomes increasingly clear that the underlying mechanisms that could explain how internalized homonegativity affects interpersonal processes are currently not well understood. One notable difference that might explain the current findings, is that sexual identity concealment and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity require an interpersonal interaction of some sort. Internalized homonegativity can operate in the absence of others. As such, unlike the former two stressors, the way internalized homonegativity affects interpersonal processes may be due to more indirect effects, which in the current study were not accounted for. This would be more in line with Frost & Meyer (2009) who showed that the relationship between internalized homonegativity and relationship quality is fully mediated by depressive symptoms. However, further investigation would be warranted as this is merely speculation at this point in time.

The strength of the current study is that it's one of the first to investigate all three proximal stressors in the context of basic need satisfaction and each individual basic psychological need. As such, it is able to provide a more in-depth look at the underlying interactions between the variables. The current study also has a number of limitations that warrant mention. It used a convenience sample, and as such, it's not representative of the sexual minority group as a whole and its experience. This becomes obvious in the skewed distribution of gender and sexual identity. Gay men were the predominant group of participants. As such, no meaningful investigation into group

differences could be performed. Another apparent limitation of this study is the use of unvalidated translations of questionnaires. The used questionnaires were directly translated from English to Dutch but no backtranslation from Dutch to English was performed. As such, the translation was a first indication that was not tested for its psychometric qualities.

We propose three recommendations for future studies. First, sexual identity related rejection sensitivity negatively predicts autonomy and relatedness satisfaction. This appears to be consistent with the findings on general rejection sensitivity (Wismeijer, van Assen & Bekker, 2014), which showed that general rejection sensitivity negatively predicts autonomy and relatedness satisfaction. Similar to the current study, it might be helpful to look at more general processes and see if they can be applied to sexual minority stress. For example, it might be useful to look into how internalized stigmatized identities could interact with interpersonal processes. This may help direct future research to help solve the existing ambiguity that surrounds internalized homonegativity and how it may affect interpersonal processes.

The second recommendation pertains to basic need frustration. Vansteenkiste and Ryan (2013) emphasize that basic need frustration is distinctly different from basic need satisfaction. Whereas need frustration promotes ill-being and psychopathology, unsatisfied needs may not be as great a risk factor for ill-being as frustrated needs are. As sexual minority stress is also linked to the development of psychopathology, further research into sexual minority stress in the context of basic need frustration is warranted. This would provide a more complete picture of how basic psychological needs interact with sexual minority stress.

The final recommendation is the inclusion of intragroup differences. For example, sexual minority men show consistently higher rates of psychopathology than sexual minority women. This is likely explained by the more extreme stigma that is linked to male homosexuality. Violations of traditional gender norms are more heavily punished among and by men. This leads to more experiences of hostility, such as verbal and physical violence, and peer rejection (D'Augelli, Grossman & Starks, 2006; Oost, Livingston, Gleason & Cochran, 2016). Similarly, a bisexual identity is also associated with a heightened risk of psychopathology compared to gay men and lesbian women (Bostwick et al., 2011). This is typically linked to the experience of a 'double stigma' by bisexuals that's present among heterosexual, gay, and lesbian populations. This stigma portrays bisexual individuals as being characterized by indeterminacy, confusion, and

deception. Consequently, bisexual individuals are left in a perpetual contestation of a meaningful aspect of their identity. As both examples are directly related to sexual minority stress, future research may benefit from highlighting and investigating these intragroup differences.

Clinical implications could focus on building need supportive environments. For example, clinicians could make use of interventions that support a client's sense of choice in pursuing need satisfying experiences (Weinstein, Khabbaz, & Legate, 2016). Considering the multitude of problems associated with sexual minority stress (e.g. substance abuse, depression, interpersonal problems), using such a transdiagnostic approach may allow the clinician to tackle multiple issues at once.

In conclusion, the current study attempted to increase our knowledge of sexual minority stress by approaching it from a self-determination perspective. The current study specifically looked at three distinct proximal stressors (internalized homonegativity, sexual identity concealment, and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity) and their deleterious effects on perceived social support. The mediation role of basic psychological need satisfaction was investigated. Findings showed that basic need satisfaction only partially mediates the relationship of both sexual identity concealment and sexual identity related rejection sensitivity on one hand, and perceived social support on the other. Further exploratory analyses were performed to investigate each individual basic psychological need, showing satisfaction of relatedness and autonomy to be the most important underlying mechanisms. Findings highlight the necessity to consider both basic need satisfaction as a whole, and each basic psychological need as a separate process. Limitations, recommendations, and clinical implications were discussed. The treatment of the existing mental health disparity of sexual minorities becomes increasingly hopeful as more knowledge is gathered on sexual minority stress.

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Appendix A: Internalized Homophobia Scale-Revised Questionnaire

Instructie vragenlijst: Hieronder volgen vijf vragen die betrekking hebben op geïnternaliseerde homofobie. Je kan een score toekennen van 1 ('Volledig mee oneens') tot en met 5 ('Volledig mee eens') om aan te geven hoe toepasselijk een vraag voor jou is. Twee vragen bevatten de term 'seksuele geaardheid'. In de context van de vragenlijst verwijst deze term naar een niet-heteroseksuele geaardheid (e.g. homoseksualiteit, biseksualiteit).

Items

1. Ik heb geprobeerd om niet meer aangetrokken te voelen tot hetzelfde geslacht.
2. Als iemand mij de optie biedt om volledig heteroseksueel te zijn, dan zou ik dat accepteren.
3. Ik wens dat ik niet homoseksueel/lesbisch/biseksueel ben.
4. Ik heb het idee dat mijn seksuele geaardheid een persoonlijke tekortkoming is.
5. Ik zou graag professionele hulp krijgen om mijn seksuele geaardheid te veranderen naar heteroseksueel.

Appendix B: Sexual Orientation Concealment Scale

Instructie vragenlijst: De volgende zes items betreffen gedragingen die LHB'ers (lesbisch/homoseksueel/bisesksueel) soms gebruiken om hun seksuele geaardheid te verbergen. Geef gelieve aan hoe vaak je een bepaald gedrag heb vertoond in de **afgelopen 2 weken** om jouw seksuele geaardheid te verzwijgen. Het is mogelijk een score toe te kennen van 1 ('Helemaal nooit') tot en met 5 ('Hele tijd').

Items

1. Ik heb mijn seksuele geaardheid verzwegen door iemand te vertellen dat ik heteroseksueel ben of door te ontkennen dat ik homoseksueel/lesbisch/biseksueel ben.
2. Ik heb mijn seksuele geaardheid verzwegen door contact te vermijden met andere LHB'ers.
3. Ik heb onderwerpen over seks, liefde, aantrekking, of relaties vermeden om mijn seksuele geaardheid te verzwijgen.
4. Ik heb mensen laten aannemen dat ik heteroseksueel ben zonder hen te corrigeren.
5. Ik heb mijn uiterlijk, gedrag, of activiteiten aangepast om door te gaan als heteroseksueel.
6. Ik heb niets gedaan tegen anti-homoseksuele opmerkingen, grappen, of activiteiten doordat ik niet wil worden gelabeld als 'LHB' door diegene die erbij betrokken zijn.

Appendix C: Gay Related Rejection Sensitivity Scale

Instructie vragenlijst: De volgende zes items betreffen gedragingen die LHB'ers (lesbisch/homoseksueel/bisesksueel) soms gebruiken om hun seksuele geaardheid te verbergen. Geef gelieve aan hoe vaak je een bepaald gedrag heb vertoond in de **afgelopen 2 weken** om jouw seksuele geaardheid te verzwijgen. Het is mogelijk een score toe te kennen van 1 ('Helemaal nooit') tot en met 5 ('Hele tijd').

Items

1. Je brengt een partner van hetzelfde geslacht naar een familiereünie. Twee ouderwetse tantes komen niet naar je toe om met je te praten, ondanks dat zij je hebben gezien.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als zij niet met je praten vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat ze niet met je hebben gepraat vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

2. Een 3-jaar oud kind van een familielid komt op je schoot zitten. Zijn moeder komt hem weghalen.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als de moeder hem wegnam vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat de moeder hem wegnam vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

3. Je hebt jarenlang met iemand van hetzelfde geslacht gedatet. Je ontvangt een uitnodiging voor de bruiloft van een heteroseksuele vriend. De uitnodiging is alleen aan jou geadresseerd, en niet aan jou plus partner.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als de uitnodiging alleen aan jou is geadresseerd vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat de uitnodiging alleen aan jou is geadresseerd vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

4. Je gaat naar een sollicitatiegesprek voor een baan en de interviewer vraagt of je getrouwd bent. Je geeft aan dat jij en je partner al vijf jaar een relatie hebben. Later hoor je dat je niet bent aangenomen voor de baan.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** ben je dat jij de baan niet hebt gekregen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat je de baan niet hebt gekregen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

5. Je wordt binnenkort geopereerd, en de dokter geeft aan dat hij bij jou een HIV test wil afnemen.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als hij bij jou een HIV test wil afnemen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat hij bij jou een HIV test wilde afnemen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

6. Je gaat bloed doneren. De persoon die jou in eerste instantie zou helpen, vraagt aan haar collega ‘‘Kan jij deze persoon helpen?’’

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als de persoon haar collega vraagt om jou te helpen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat de persoon haar collega heeft gevraagd jou te helpen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

7. Je laat je testen op soa’s, en de persoon die je helpt, vraagt op ongeleefde toon naar je seksuele geschiedenis.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als de persoon ongeleefd is richting jou vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat de persoon ongeleefd is richting jou vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

8. Je neemt je date van hetzelfde geslacht mee naar een luxe restaurant met heteroseksuele gasten. Jullie krijgen een tafel in een achterhoek van het restaurant toegewezen.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als je daar wordt geplaatst vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat je daar bent geplaatst vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

9. Je bent alleen met een groep macho mannen in een treincoupé laat in de avond. De groep mannen kijken je kant op en lachen.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als de groep mannen naar jou lachen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat de groep mannen naar jou aan het lachen zijn vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

10. Jij en je partner van hetzelfde geslacht zijn op een *road trip* en besluiten in te checken in een hotel buiten de stad. Buiten staat een bord dat aangeeft dat er kamers beschikbaar zijn, maar bij de receptie wordt jullie verteld dat er geen kamers meer beschikbaar zijn.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn dat de receptioniste loog vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat de receptioniste loog vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

11. Je gaat naar een feest en jij en je partner zijn de enige homoseksuele/lesbische/biseksuele mensen daar. Niemand lijkt geïnteresseerd om met jullie te praten.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn dat niemand met je wil praten vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat niemand met jullie heeft gepraat vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

12. Je bent in een kleedkamer van een sportschool met veel heteroseksuelen. Een persoon in de kleedkamer verplaatst zich verder van je af om zich om te kleden.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als deze persoon zich ging verplaatsen vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat deze persoon zich had verplaatst vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

13. Je heteroseksuele collega's praten over sport. Je probeert deel te nemen aan het gesprek maar ze negeren je inspraak.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als zij jouw inspraak negeren vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat ze jouw inspraak hebben genegeerd vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

14. Jouw collega's vieren de verjaardag van een andere medewerker in een restaurant. Je bent niet uitgenodigd.

Hoe **bezorgd** of **angstig** zou je zijn als je collega's je niet hebben uitgenodigd vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?
Hoe **waarschijnlijk** is het dat jouw collega's je niet hebben uitgenodigd vanwege je seksuele geaardheid?

Appendix D: Basic Need Satisfaction Scale

Instructie vragenlijst: Hieronder wordt gemeten welke specifieke gevoelens je momenteel ervaart. U kunt hier een score toekennen van 1 ('Helemaal niet mee eens') tot en met 5 ('Helemaal mee eens') om aan te geven hoe toepasselijk een vraag voor u is.

Items

- 1.** Ik heb een gevoel van keuze en vrijheid in de dingen die ik onderneem.
- 2.** Ik voel dat de mensen waar ik om geef, ook geven om mij.
- 3.** Ik heb er vertrouwen in dat ik dingen goed kan doen.
- 4.** Ik voel dat mijn beslissingen weerspiegelen wat ik echt wil.
- 5.** Ik voel me verbonden met mensen die om mij geven en waar ik ook om geef.
- 6.** Ik voel me bekwaam in wat ik doe.
- 7.** Ik voel dat mijn keuzes weergeven wie ik werkelijk ben.
- 8.** Ik voel me nauw verbonden met andere mensen die belangrijk voor me zijn.
- 9.** Ik voel me in staat om mijn doelen te bereiken.
- 10.** Ik voel dat wat ik tot nu toe gedaan heb me oprecht interesseert.
- 11.** Ik heb een warm gevoel bij mensen waarmee ik tijd doorbreng.
- 12.** Ik voel dat ik moeilijke taken met succes kan voltooien.

Appendix E: Interpersonal Support Evaluation List-12

Instructie vragenlijst: Deze schaal is opgebouwd uit een lijst van beweringen die voor jou waar of onwaar kunnen zijn. Kruis voor elke bewering ‘zeker waar’ aan als je zeker bent dat het waar is voor jou en ‘waarschijnlijk waar’ als je denkt dat het waar is maar je niet absoluut zeker bent. Op dezelfde manier, zou je ‘zeker onwaar’ moeten aankruisen als je zeker bent dat de bewering onwaar is en ‘waarschijnlijk onwaar’ als je denkt dat het onwaar is, maar je niet absoluut zeker bent.

Items

- 1.** Als ik op daguitstap zou willen gaan (bv. naar de bergen, het strand of het platteland), zou ik het moeilijk hebben iemand te vinden om met me mee te gaan.
- 2.** Ik heb het gevoel dat er niemand is met wie ik mijn meest persoonlijke zorgen en angsten kan delen.
- 3.** Als ik ziek zou zijn, dan zou ik gemakkelijk iemand kunnen vinden om me te helpen met mijn dagelijkse karweien.
- 4.** Er is iemand tot wie ik me kan wenden voor advies om problemen met mijn familie aan te pakken
- 5.** Als ik op een namiddag beslis dat ik 's avonds graag naar de film zou gaan, dan zou ik gemakkelijk iemand kunnen vinden om met me mee te gaan
- 6.** Wanneer ik suggesties nodig heb over hoe ik met een persoonlijk probleem moet omgaan, ken ik iemand tot wie ik me kan wenden.
- 7.** Ik word niet vaak uitgenodigd om dingen te doen met anderen.
- 8.** Als ik weg zou gaan voor enkele weken, dan zou het moeilijk zijn om iemand te vinden die voor mijn huis of appartement (de planten, huisdieren, tuin, enz.) zou willen zorgen.
- 9.** Als ik zou willen lunchen met iemand, zou ik gemakkelijk iemand vinden om me te vergezellen.
- 10.** Als ik op 10 kilometer van mijn huis zou beland zijn, dan is er iemand die ik zou kunnen bellen om me te komen halen.
- 11.** Als er een familiecrisis zou ontstaan, zou het moeilijk zijn om iemand te vinden die me goede raad zou kunnen geven over hoe ermee om te gaan.

12. Als ik wat hulp nodig zou hebben om te verhuizen naar een nieuw huis of appartement, zou ik het moeilijk hebben om iemand te vinden om me te helpen.

Note: Items 1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 12 are reverse coded.

Appendix F: Introduction screen and informed consent

Introduction Screen

Beste respondent,

U leest deze introductie naar aanleiding van een uitnodiging om een vragenlijst in te vullen. Alvast hartelijk bedankt hiervoor. Mijn naam is Delano van Kreel. Voor mijn masterthesis onderzoek ik of het vervullen van de psychologische basisbehoeftes invloed heeft op de negatieve gevolgen van seksuele minderheidsstress op interpersoonlijke relaties.

Omdat het onderzoek gericht is op een specifieke doelgroep, namelijk seksuele minderheden, is het van belang dat de respondenten onder deze groep vallen. Data van heteroseksuele individuen zullen dusdanig worden verwijderd. Het invullen van de vragenlijst duurt circa 10 minuten. Het wordt aangeraden de vragenlijst zelfstandig in te vullen in een stille ruimte om afleiding te voorkomen. Deelname aan het onderzoek is geheel vrijwillig en u kunt op elk moment besluiten te stoppen met het onderzoek. Om privacy te waarborgen, zullen uw antwoorden geanonimiseerd worden.

Indien u vragen heeft vooraf het invullen, dan kunt u contact met mij opnoemen met het hieronder vermelde email adres. Als u geen vragen heeft, dan kunt u beginnen met het beantwoorden van de vragenlijsten. Het is ook mogelijk om achteraf het onderzoek contact op te nemen met hetzelfde email adres indien u vragen of opmerkingen heeft omtrent het onderzoek. U zal eerst nog een informed consent te zien krijgen, opdat u accepteert vrijwillig mee te doen aan het onderzoek.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Delano van Kreel (d.r.vankreel@students.uu.nl)

Informed Consent

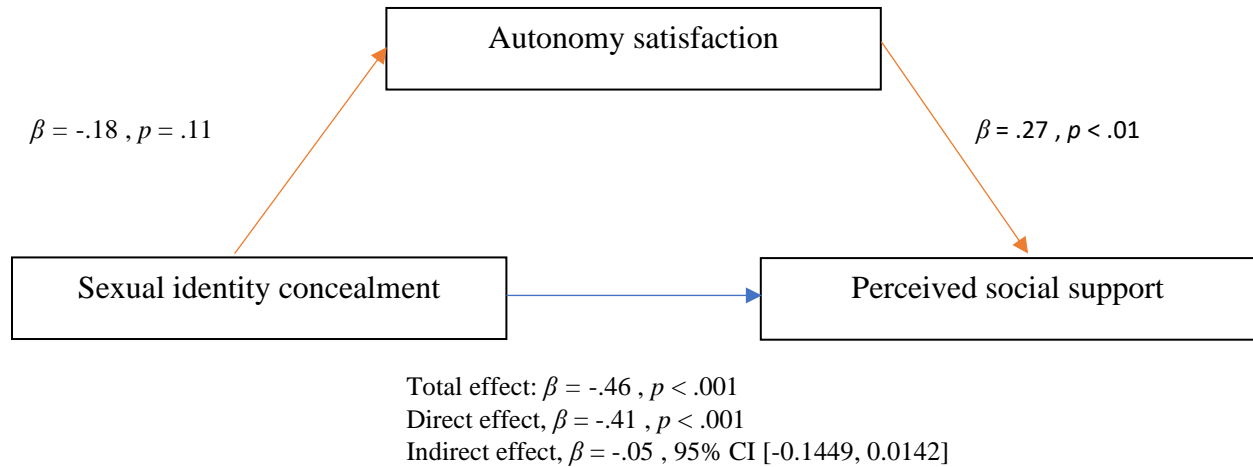
Door op het onderstaande knopje te drukken verklaar ik dat ik op duidelijke wijze ben ingelicht over de aard en de methode van dit onderzoek. Ik zal vrijwillig deelnemen aan dit onderzoek. Ik begrijp dat ik elk moment mag beslissen te stoppen met het onderzoek, ongeacht de reden. Dit zal geen consequenties met zich meebrengen en mijn gegevens zullen niet meer gebruikt worden in het onderzoek.

Mijn persoonsgegevens en onderzoeksresultaten zullen bij analyse en publicatie worden geanonimiseerd. Mijn persoonsgegevens zullen niet gedeeld worden met derden, tenzij ik daar persoonlijk toestemming voor geef.

Appendix G: Exploratory Mediation Analyses

Figure 5

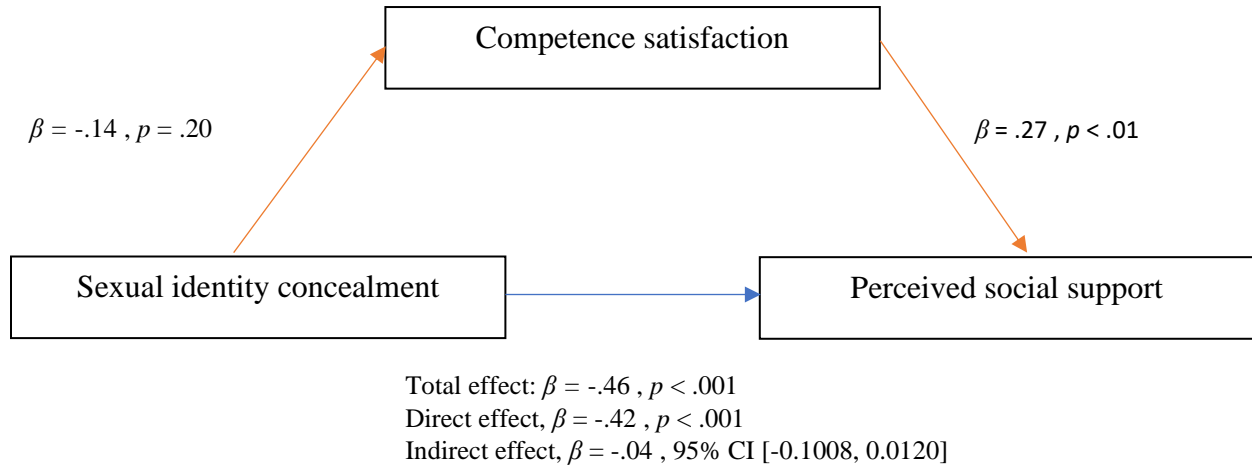
Model of sexual identity concealment as a predictor of perceived social support, using autonomy satisfaction as a mediator.



Note: The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 5000 samples

Figure 6

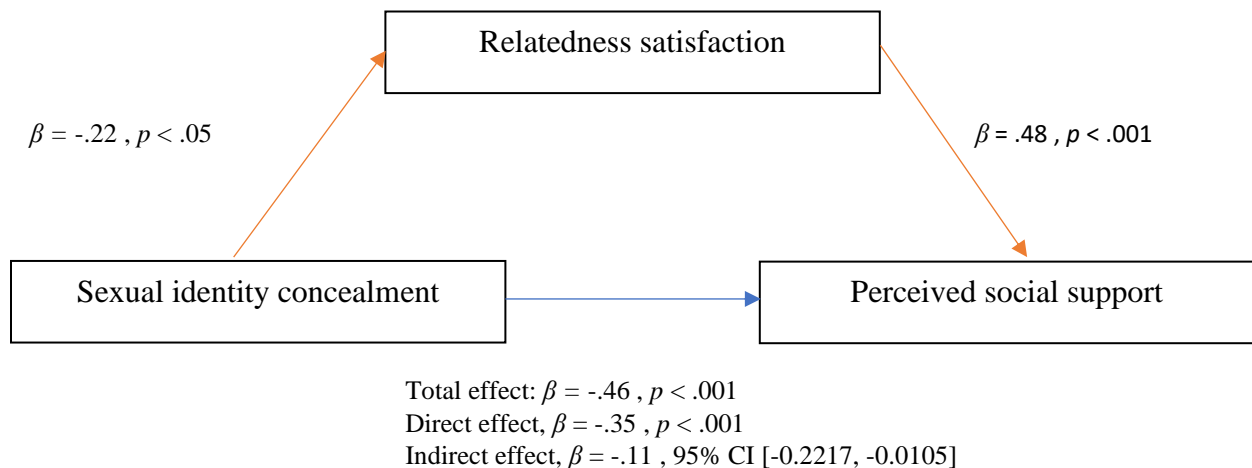
Model of sexual identity concealment as a predictor of perceived social support, using competence satisfaction as a mediator.



Note: The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 5000 samples

Figure 7

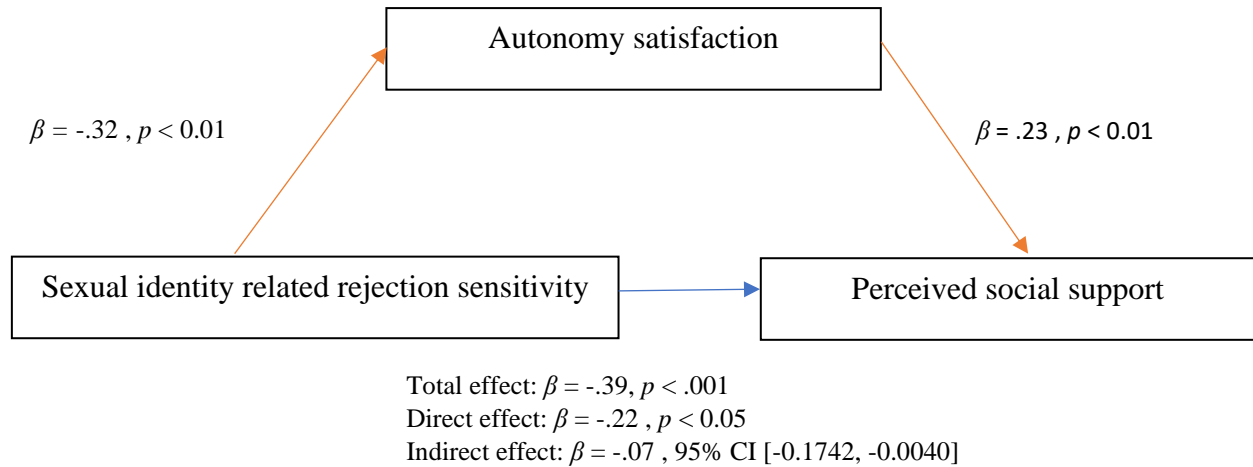
Model of sexual identity concealment as a predictor of perceived social support, partially mediated by relatedness satisfaction.



Note: The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 5000 samples

Figure 8

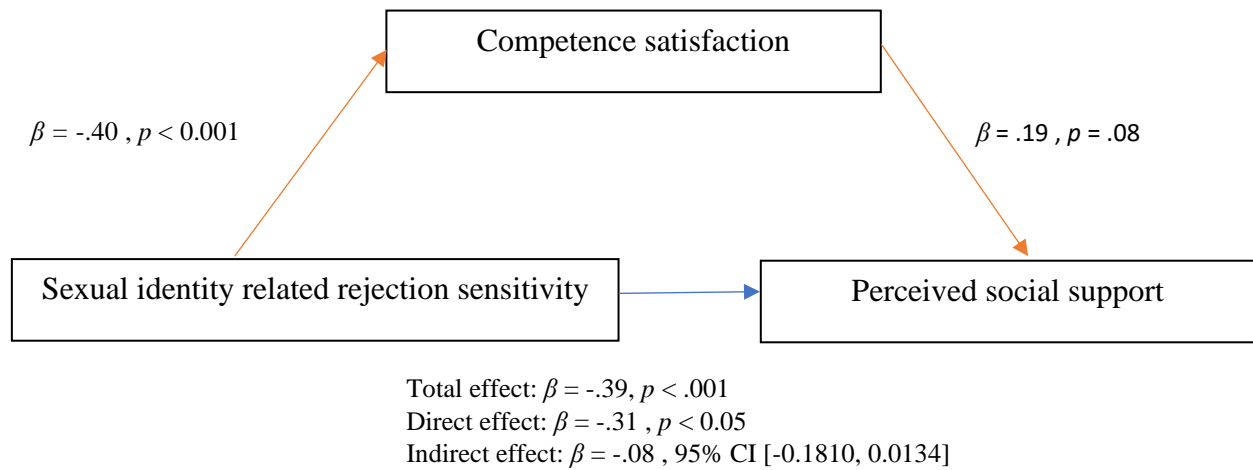
Model of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity as a predictor of perceived social support, partially mediated by autonomy satisfaction



Note: The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 5000 samples

Figure 9

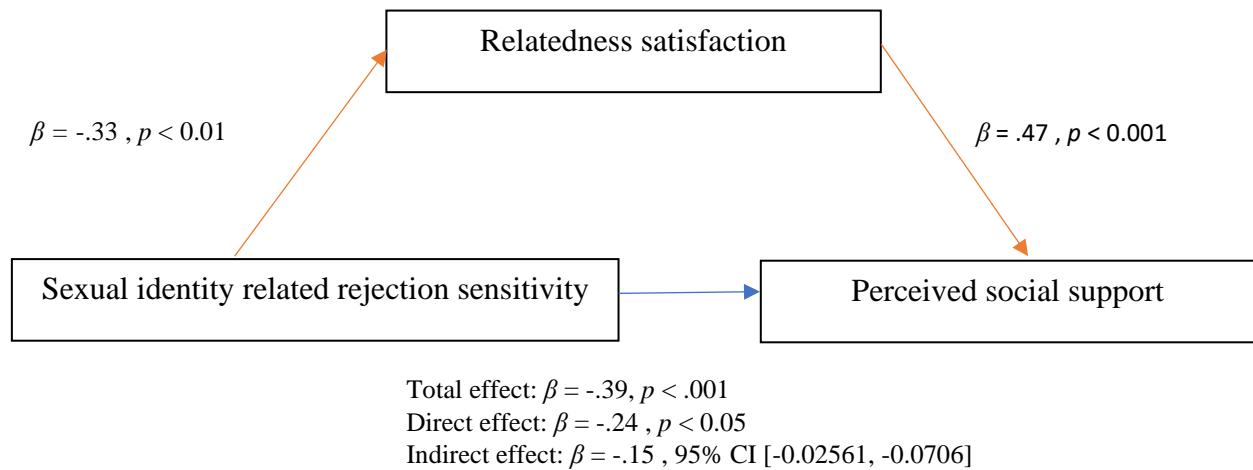
Model of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity as a predictor of perceived social support, using competence satisfaction as a mediator.



Note: The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 5000 samples

Figure 10

Model of sexual identity related rejection sensitivity as a predictor of perceived social support, partially mediated by relatedness satisfaction



Note: The confidence interval for the indirect effect is a BCa bootstrapped CI based on 5000 samples