

Journal of Counseling Psychology

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Online First Publication, June 15, 2020. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cou0000484>

CITATION

Kase, C. A., & Mohr, J. J. (2020, June 15). Within-Person Predictors and Outcomes of Daily Sexual Orientation Self-Presentation Among Plurisexual Women. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cou0000484>

Within-Person Predictors and Outcomes of Daily Sexual Orientation Self-Presentation Among Plurisexual Women

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Research suggests that plurisexual individuals face ongoing decisions about whether and how accurately to present their sexual orientation to others, in part because of stereotypes and negative attitudes specific to plurisexuality. This study tested a within-person model of theoretical predictors and outcomes of self-presentational accuracy in a sample of 165 cisgender plurisexual women. Participants completed online surveys to report on situations involving self-presentation decisions as they occurred over a 14-day period. Participants also completed nightly surveys assessing facets of well-being. Self-presentational accuracy varied substantially from day to day. Several contextual and relational factors, including acceptance and rejection cues, interaction partners' sexual orientation, and interpersonal closeness, predicted self-presentational accuracy, both directly and through the mediator of anticipated acceptance. Self-presentational accuracy predicted daily life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect through the mediator of social support. Finally, exploratory analyses underscored the relevance of goals related to authenticity, closeness, privacy, communication, educating others, and safety in self-presentation decisions. Discussion highlights the importance of context in identity management decisions among plurisexual women and the impact of these decisions on day-to-day well-being.

Public Significance Statement

The present study suggests that plurisexual women's sexual orientation self-presentation varies significantly from day to day and is influenced by interpersonal context. Furthermore, the accuracy of plurisexual women's self-presentation predicts daily social support and well-being.

Keywords: identity management, plurisexuality, sexual orientation, stigma

Supplemental materials: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cou000484.supp>

Like other groups with concealable stigmatized identities, sexual minority (SM) individuals must continually make decisions

Editor's Note. M. Paz Galupo served as the action editor for this article.—DMK Jr.

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Some of the data and narrative interpretations included in this article were presented as part of a symposium at the 2019 annual convention of the American Psychological Association (Colleen A. Kase & Jonathan J. Mohr [2019, August]. *Sexual orientation self-presentation among cisgender plurisexual women: Coping with monosexist stigma and generating social support*. Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL).

Funding for this study was provided by grants from Division 35, Section 4 of the American Psychology Association; the American Institution of Bisexuality's Bisexual Foundation; and the University of Maryland, College Park's College of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

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about whether to share their sexual orientation with others. Disclosure of a stigmatized identity may lead to discrimination and rejection (Puckett, Woodward, Mereish, & Pantalone, 2015). On the other hand, disclosure also offers the opportunity for positive outcomes, such as self-expression and social support (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Ragins, 2008). SM individuals may therefore engage in an ongoing process of identity management to control “when, how, where, and to whom” they disclose their identities (Jones & King, 2014, p. 1467), and research suggests that identity management decisions have a significant impact on SM individuals' well-being (Beals, Peplau, & Gable, 2009; Legate, Ryan, & Rogge, 2017).

Bisexual and other plurisexual (PS) individuals—that is, individuals who are attracted to people of more than one sex or gender (Mitchell, Davis, & Galupo, 2015)—make up the largest proportion of SM individuals in the United States (Copen, Chandra, & Febo-Vazquez, 2016). Research suggests that PS individuals may engage in particularly complex patterns of identity management that differ from those of their lesbian and gay (LG) peers (Mohr, Jackson, & Sheets, 2017). PS women, in particular, may exhibit a great deal of variability in how they present their sexual orientation to others (Mohr et al., 2017; Ross, Daneback, & Månsson, 2012). However, little research has examined identity management processes among PS women specifically. We investigated the day-to-day pre-

dictors and outcomes of identity management behaviors among a sample of PS women using an experience sampling methodology. We examined contextual factors believed to influence self-presentation among PS women, including factors that have been shown to be relevant for SM people in general as well as plurisexuality-specific factors. We also tested the impact of self-presentational accuracy on daily social support and well-being.

Discrimination and Identity Management Among Plurisexuality

PS individuals operate within a unique context of discrimination. Like LGs, PSs encounter heterosexism (i.e., a collection of common negative attitudes about homosexuality) from heterosexual friends, family members, and coworkers. However, PSs also confront monosexism (i.e., a collection of common negative attitudes about plurisexuality), which may be perpetrated by both heterosexuals and LGs (Roberts, Horne, & Hoyt, 2015). In fact, research suggests that PSs may experience monosexism from LGs as particularly painful, because LGs are perceived as fellow members of the SM community (McLean, 2008). Negative stereotypes include that plurisexuality is an illegitimate sexual orientation, PSs are sexually irresponsible or attention-seeking, and PSs are hiding their true LG orientation (Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Israel & Mohr, 2004). Many scholars have suggested that the extremely high rates of psychopathology found among PSs may result from the unique and profound discrimination they encounter (e.g., Bostwick, Boyd, Hughes, & McCabe, 2010). Because of this discriminatory context, the stakes of identity management are particularly high for PSs.

Likely as a result of monosexist stigma, PS individuals display complex patterns of sexual orientation identity management. Overall, PSs tend to be less “out” than LGs (Balsam & Mohr, 2007). Mohr et al. (2017) found that PS participants were more likely than LGs to present their identity differently to different people and to use diverse identity labels, such as heterosexual, LG, and nonspecific SM labels (e.g., queer). These results suggest that PSs actively engage in identity management, varying the way they present their identities from situation to situation. Existing research on identity management has several limitations with regard to PS populations. It has often excluded PSs or lumped them in with LGs (obscuring potential differences between PS and monosexual groups), it has been mostly cross-sectional (limiting its ability to examine within-person variability in self-presentation, which may be particularly relevant for PS individuals), and it has tended to focus on the disclosure of specific sexual orientation labels (which may be less relevant for PS individuals, as discussed below).

Women are significantly more likely than men to report experiencing their sexual orientation as fluid over time, and PS women are particularly likely to endorse such fluidity (Diamond, 2008; Ross et al., 2012). This suggests that PS women may exhibit even greater variability in their identity management patterns than PS men. This possibility has been supported by evidence that, among people who report sexual attraction to multiple genders, women are much more likely than men to use a variety of sexual orientation labels (Katz-Wise, 2015; Morandini, Blaszczyński, & Dar-Nimrod, 2017). Again, however, very little research has examined identity management among PS women specifically.

Predictors and Outcomes of Identity Management

Previous research has demonstrated that SM individuals consider their social environment when engaging in identity management. For instance, they are (a) more likely to reveal their sexual orientation to interaction partners from whom they have perceived acceptance cues related to homosexuality, (b) less likely to reveal to interaction partners from whom they have perceived rejection cues related to homosexuality, (c) less likely to conceal around SM others, and (d) more likely to disclose to others with whom they share close relationships (King, Mohr, Peddie, Jones, & Kendra, 2017; Wessel, 2017). Anticipated acceptance is theorized to be a mechanism through which an individual with a concealable stigmatized identity can aggregate perceived acceptance- and rejection-related information. Anticipated acceptance then serves as the heuristic by which the individual makes the decision to reveal or conceal their identity (Kelly, Klusas, von Weiss, & Kenny, 2001; Rodriguez & Kelly, 2006). However, some of these cues may directly impact identity management behavior, regardless of anticipated acceptance (e.g., revealing one’s SM identity to educate an interaction partner who has communicated negative views about homosexuality; Cain, 1991).

The effect of these interpersonal factors on identity management may be more complicated for PSs than LGs. For example, PSs may be more sensitive to plurisexuality-specific acceptance and rejection cues than to general SM-related cues, given that PSs face significant plurisexuality-specific stigma from both heterosexuals and LGs (Israel & Mohr, 2004). Similarly, it is possible that PSs would be more comfortable revealing their sexual orientation to other PS individuals than to LGs or heterosexuals. However, to our knowledge, no research has examined the impact of contextual factors on identity management among PSs specifically.

Many researchers have also suggested that inter- and intrapersonal goals may serve as antecedents to identity management decisions among people with concealable stigmatized identities (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010). Disclosure-related behaviors are thought to be motivated by approach goals (e.g., intimacy, desire for support; Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010) or the need for authenticity (Ragins, 2008), whereas concealment-related behaviors are thought to be motivated by avoidance goals (e.g., avoiding hostility or rejection; Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010). Scholars suggest that goals typically affect identity management decisions at the level of the interaction, meaning that an individual’s goals vary from context to context (Omarzu, 2000). The impact of goals on identity management has received surprisingly little attention in the SM literature, although some research has shown that SM individuals’ use of identity management strategies is impacted by their goals for an interaction (e.g., Bosson, Weaver, & Prewitt-Freilino, 2012).

Research suggests that disclosure of one’s SM status typically has a positive impact on well-being, whereas concealment has a negative impact. For example, SM participants in two daily diary studies reported greater well-being on days when they were more disclosing of their sexual orientation (Beals et al., 2009; Legate et al., 2017). Research indicates that perceived social support partially mediates the link between sexual orientation disclosure and well-being (Beals et al., 2009). Individuals who disclose their SM status risk stigmatization and hostility; however, their use of selective self-disclosure (i.e., disclosure to others perceived as likely

to be accepting) seems to mitigate these risks (King et al., 2017). Few studies have examined the impact of identity management behaviors on well-being and social support among PSs, an important gap in the literature given PSs' low levels of perceived social support and high levels of mental illness compared with LGs (Hsieh, 2014; Bostwick et al., 2010).

Self-Presentational Accuracy

Self-presentation is the part of the identity management process that includes an individual's explicit communication and behaviors that are aimed at influencing how one's identity is perceived by others (Goffman, 1963). *Self-presentational accuracy* can be defined as the extent to which the impression of the self that one attempts to produce accurately reflects one's internal sense of self. Research suggests that individuals with concealable stigmatized identities regularly vary the accuracy with which they present their stigmatized identity (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Omarzu, 2000).

The concept of self-presentational accuracy has significant advantages compared to traditional frameworks for characterizing sexual orientation identity management behaviors, such as disclosure and concealment. The accuracy perspective shifts the focus away from the disclosure or concealment of a sexual orientation label to the sharing of information that allows the other person to gain an accurate understanding of the discloser's sexual identity. This perspective also reflects the reality that disclosures vary in the extent to which they fully convey a person's experience of their own sexual orientation, in contrast to the conceptualization of disclosure as an all-or-nothing outcome that is common in SM research (e.g., Beals et al., 2009; Pachankis, Cochran, & Mays, 2015). Self-presentational accuracy can therefore reflect the use of complex identity management behaviors that are typically measured separately from disclosure and concealment (e.g., signaling, avoidance; King et al., 2017). Finally, the accuracy perspective more fully acknowledges the SM person as a self-directed actor within the identity management process, recognizing that SM individuals make conscious, strategic decisions about how accurately to present their identities to others based on factors such as the social context and their goals. Although several studies have examined self-presentation among SM individuals (e.g., Mohr et al., 2017), the present study may be the first to use the construct of self-presentational accuracy.

Self-presentational accuracy may be a particularly appropriate construct for PS individuals. PSs have more options for presenting their sexual orientation somewhat accurately than do LGs, adding an additional layer of complexity to their self-presentation behaviors (Mohr et al., 2017). For instance, a PS woman's inaccurate self-presentation may be the result of a strategy that is intended to present her orientation as either more homosexual (e.g., referring to herself as a lesbian or only mentioning female partners) or more heterosexual (e.g., referring to herself as straight or only mentioning male partners) than her actual orientation. Traditional disclosure and concealment frameworks, which typically focus on the disclosure of a specific identity label, would likely obscure these nuanced self-presentational strategies. Additionally, PSs are more likely than other SMs to identify with multiple labels, to feel that available sexual orientation labels do not accurately reflect their identities, and to identify with different labels in different situations (Dyar, Feinstein, & London, 2015; Galupo, Mitchell, &

Davis, 2015; Mohr et al., 2017). This complexity highlights the value of studying the identity management experiences of PSs in terms of self-presentational accuracy rather than disclosure or concealment.

Conceptualizing identity management through the lens of self-presentational accuracy may also help correct certain negative stereotypes about plurisexuality. As noted above, previous research has indicated that PS individuals tend to present their identities somewhat inconsistently from situation to situation (e.g., Mohr et al., 2017); this behavior may contribute to the stereotype that PSs are confused about their sexual orientation. However, the accuracy perspective recognizes that PS individuals may be inwardly confident in their identities while simultaneously varying how accurately they present their identities to others. Additionally, PSs have often been depicted as untrustworthy liars who misrepresent their identities for their own personal and sexual gain (Klesse, 2011). In contrast, the accuracy perspective recognizes that pervasive monosexism in the social environment may compel PSs to alter how they present their identities in order to preserve their own safety and dignity.

The Present Research

The focus of the present study was within-person variability in self-presentational accuracy among cisgender PS women. Previous theory (Rust, 2002) and cross-sectional research (Mohr et al., 2017) suggest that PS women may exhibit a great deal of variability in how they present their sexual orientation to others; however, this is the first study to examine variability in self-presentation among PS women as it occurs from day to day. We planned to examine the predictors and outcomes of self-presentational accuracy by testing the hypothesized multilevel path model in Figure 1. In this model, several contextual factors are hypothesized to be related to self-presentational accuracy: perceived acceptance and rejection cues from one's interaction partner toward PSs specifically and SMs generally, the interaction partner's sexual orientation, and interpersonal closeness between the participant and her interaction partner. These contextual factors are hypothesized to influence self-presentational accuracy both directly and indirectly through the mediator of anticipated acceptance. Self-presentational accuracy, in turn, is hypothesized to predict life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect both directly and indirectly through the mediator of social support. All hypotheses were tested at Level 1 (within persons) and Level 2 (between persons); however, because our focus was on within-person variability, only Level 1 results are reported here (Level 2 results are available in the online supplemental materials). We also planned to conduct exploratory analyses to examine the impact of participants' inter- and intrapersonal goals for the interaction on self-presentational accuracy.

Method

Participants

This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at a large university in the Mid-Atlantic United States. Participants were recruited through e-mails sent to SM community organizations and social media posts. Requirements to participate were being above the age of 18, identifying as a cisgender female, identifying as PS, living

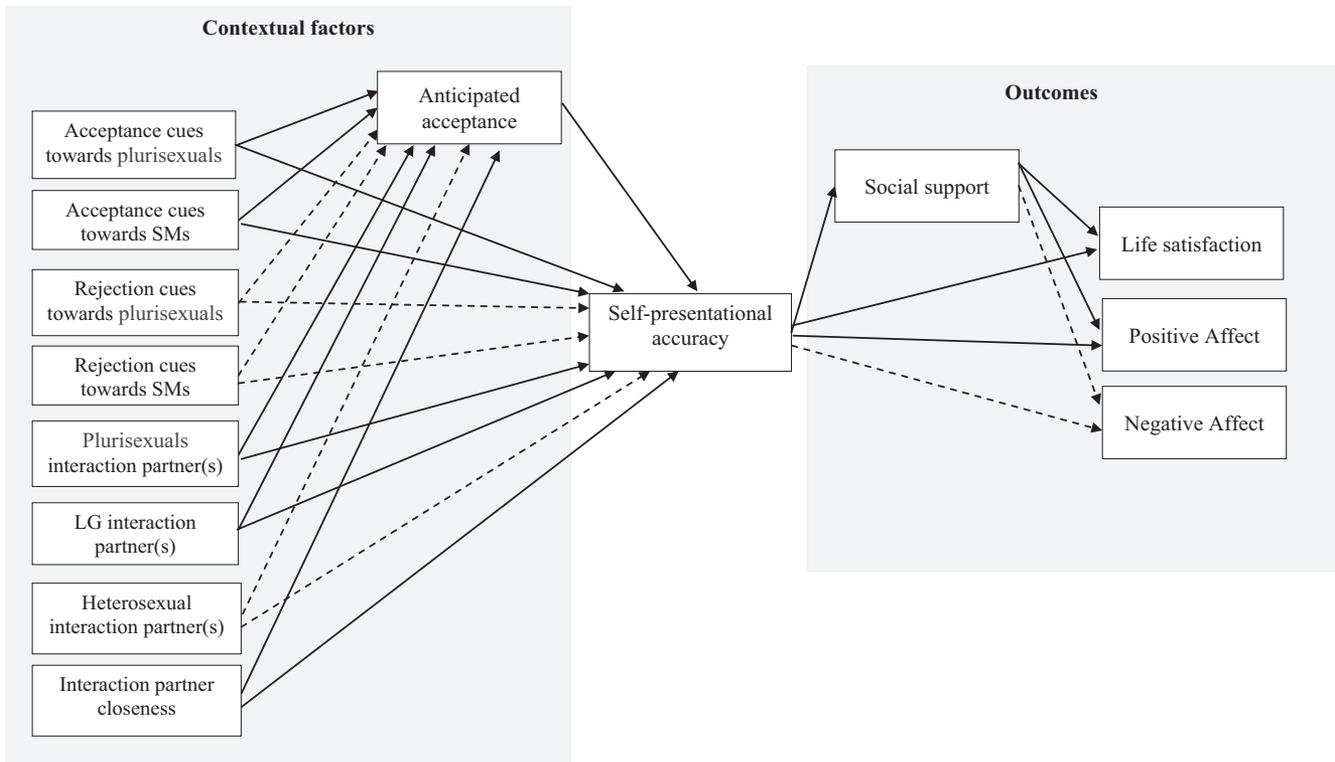


Figure 1. Hypothesized multilevel path model. For clarity, autoregressive control variables, covariances between contextual factors and between outcomes, and direct associations between contextual factors and outcomes are not shown. Solid lines represent hypothesized positive relations; dashed lines represent hypothesized negative relations. SMs = sexual minorities; LG = lesbian or gay.

in the United States, and possessing a smartphone (to access surveys). There were 165 eligible participants, the majority of whom identified as highly educated, White, and bisexual. Overall, the sample was relatively young ($M = 29.20$, $SD = 6.66$). See Table 1 for detailed demographic information.

Procedure

Interested participants took an online eligibility survey. Eligible participants then consented to participate and completed the online baseline survey, which collected demographic information. Next, participants were required to watch a 5-min video, which explained the procedures of the experience-sampling phase of the study. They were required to answer several questions assessing their comprehension of these procedures; participants were required to answer all comprehension questions correctly before moving on to the next phase of the study.

Participants engaged in the experience-sampling phase of the study for 14 days. This phase of the study involved completing two types of online surveys on a computer or mobile device: nightly surveys and self-presentation surveys. Participants were instructed to complete a nightly survey within two hours of going to sleep on each of the 14 days of data collection. The nightly survey assessed daily well-being. Participants were also instructed to complete a self-presentation survey as soon as possible after any self-presentation opportunity that occurred between waking up and

completing the nightly survey. Self-presentation opportunities were defined as any time it occurred to a participant that she could share information about her sexual orientation with another person. Participants were instructed to report events when they explicitly or implicitly shared information about their sexual orientation, whether the information was accurate or not, and when they chose not to share any information. Each self-presentation survey included measures of self-presentational accuracy, interaction partner characteristics, and identity management goals. In the event that more than one self-presentation survey was completed on a single day (number of instances = 86), only the survey that was completed closest in time to the nightly survey was utilized, in accordance with previous studies that collected both event-contingent and daily measures (e.g., Beals et al., 2009).

Participants received reminder emails about the study each morning and evening. Participants were paid 50 cents for the first 10 nightly surveys and \$1.25 for the last four nightly surveys. They also received a \$1 bonus per completed self-presentation survey (capped at one per day). In total, participant completed 733 self-presentation surveys ($M = 4.44$; $SD = 3.42$; range = 1–13) and 1,826 nightly surveys ($M = 11.07$; $SD = 3.29$; range = 1–14).

Nightly Surveys

Positive and negative affect. Participants were asked to rate on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*) the extent to which

Table 1
Demographics of Participants

Demographic factor	<i>n</i> (%)
Sexual orientation	
Bisexual	101 (61.2%)
Queer	41 (24.8%)
Pansexual	14 (8.5%)
Other plurisexual identity	9 (5.4%)
Race/Ethnicity ^a	
Asian/Asian American	6 (3.6%)
Black/African American	13 (7.9%)
Hispanic/Latina	11 (6.7%)
Native American or Alaska Native	3 (1.8%)
White/Caucasian	141 (85.5%)
Other	8 (4.8%)
Household income	
Under \$10,000	12 (7.3%)
\$10,000 to \$29,999	43 (26%)
\$30,000 to \$49,999	37 (22.4%)
\$50,000 to \$69,999	27 (16.4%)
\$70,000 to \$89,999	14 (8.5%)
\$90,000 and above	22 (19.4%)
Education	
High school diploma or equivalent	1 (0.6%)
Some college	15 (9.1%)
Associate degree	6 (3.6%)
Bachelor's degree	55 (33.3%)
Master's degree or more	88 (53.3%)
Relationship status	
Single	36 (21.8%)
Exclusive male partner	59 (35.8%)
Exclusive female partner	18 (10.9%)
Exclusive nonbinary partner	3 (1.8%)
Multiple partners	23 (13.9%)
Other	26 (15.8%)

Note. Total sample size: *n* = 165.

^a Response options were not exclusive; percentages add up to greater than 100%.

they felt each of 10 positive emotions (e.g., “enthusiastic”) and each of 10 negative emotions (e.g., “guilty”; Watson & Clark, 1994). Scores on the positive and negative affect scales have demonstrated acceptable reliability with SM samples (Cronbach’s alpha = .85 and .86, respectively; Mohr & Sarno, 2016). The positive affect scale is related to approach goals, while the negative affect scale is related to avoidance goals (Elliot, Gable, & Mapes, 2006). Multilevel reliability estimates for the positive and negative items were calculated for the current study (Geldhof, Preacher, & Zyphur, 2014). Positive affect showed good reliability at the within-person level ($\alpha = .89$) and excellent reliability at the between-person level ($\alpha = .99$). Negative affect showed acceptable reliability at the within-person level ($\alpha = .76$) and excellent reliability at the between-person level ($\alpha = .92$).

Life satisfaction. Participants completed the five-item Satisfaction with Life scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Participants rated on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*extremely*) the extent to which they agreed with statements such as “The conditions of my life are excellent.” Scores have evidenced good reliability with SM samples (Cronbach’s alpha = .89) and are correlated with social support (Beals et al., 2009). In the current study, internal consistency was acceptable at the within-person level ($\alpha = .77$) and excellent at the between-person level ($\alpha = .95$).

Social support. Participants completed the Interpersonal Support Evaluation List-12 (ISEL-12; Cohen, Mermelstein, Kamarck, & Hoberman, 1985) as a measure of social support. Participants completed the ISEL-12 by rating each of 12 items (e.g., “If I wanted to have lunch with someone, I could easily find someone to join me”) on a scale from 1 (*definitely false*) to 4 (*definitely true*). Scores demonstrate high levels of reliability with SM populations (Cronbach’s alpha = .91) and are negatively correlated with sexual risk-taking (Darbes & Lewis, 2005). In the current sample, internal consistency was acceptable at the within-person level ($\alpha = .61$) and excellent at the between-person level ($\alpha = .93$).

Self-Presentation Surveys

Self-presentational accuracy. Self-presentational accuracy was assessed with one item: “To what degree did your behavior during this interaction allow your interaction partner to accurately understand your identity as a *bisexual* (or other preferred PS identity label) person?” Participants rated this item on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*completely*). This item has not been used in previous research; however, preliminary validity evidence was collected at baseline. Scores on this item were positively associated with an established measure of revealing behaviors and negatively associated with concealing behaviors (King et al., 2017).

Interaction characteristics. Participants reported the format of the interaction (i.e., in-person, phone call, text message, Internet, or other). They also reported their interaction partner’s sexual orientation (i.e., asexual, LG, PS, heterosexual, unsure). Participants were able to select multiple levels of this variable to account for situations involving more than one person. Participants also completed six items measuring whether their interaction partner displayed acceptance or rejection cues for PS people, SM people, and heterosexual people (adapted to include PSs and heterosexuals as separate categories; King et al., 2017). For this measure, participants were instructed to consider the interaction partner who had the greatest impact on their self-presentation. For example, participants were asked, “Has your interaction partner ever expressed or implied having negative views about LGBTQ people?” and responded using a 3-point scale for each item (1 = *definitely*, 2 = *maybe*, 3 = *definitely not*). Each item was analyzed as a separate variable. This measure has demonstrated high levels of validity with SM samples at the within-person level (King et al., 2017).

Participants also completed a one-item measure of anticipated acceptance. They rated the item (“Before this interaction, how likely did you think it was that your primary interaction partner would accept your identity as a *bisexual* [or other preferred PS identity label] person?”) on a scale from 1 (*not at all likely*) to 5 (*extremely likely*). This item was adapted from a measure of general anticipated acceptance, which was shown to be associated with prosocial behavior (Stinson, Cameron, Wood, Gaucher, & Holmes, 2009). Finally, participants completed a one-item measure of their emotional closeness with their most influential interaction partner (Roberts & Dunbar, 2011). Participants were asked “How emotionally close are you to your interaction partner?” and responded on a scale from 1 (*someone I never see or hear from*) to 10 (*someone with whom I have a deeply emotional relationship*).

This item has been shown to be related to communication frequency (Roberts & Dunbar, 2011).

Goals. Prior to this study, we developed and pilot tested a measure of goals for sexual orientation self-presentation. Items were generated from a review of the literature on goals related to identity management (e.g., Cain, 1991; Derlega, Winstead, Greene, Serovich, & Elwood, 2004; Omarzu, 2000). Participants were asked “How much did each of these reasons play a role in your decisions about whether and how to share information about your sexual orientation during this interaction?” and rated nine items (e.g., “To become closer to my interaction partner”) on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*completely*). Each item represents a distinct goal. The measure was pilot tested with 75 SM adults from the United States using the Mechanical Turk web platform. Each item correlated as expected with a conceptually related scale, with the exception of one item, which was removed. Because the goal of protecting one’s privacy was suggested by over 10% of the respondents, a privacy item was added (i.e., “To protect my right to privacy”). In preliminary data collected at baseline, this item was positively associated with an established measure of privacy goals (Derlega et al., 2004).

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive statistics and correlations among primary study variables are presented in Table 2. The intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) represents the proportion of variance in scores attributable to consistency within persons; conversely, (1 – ICC) represents the proportion of variance in scores attributable to fluctuations within persons from day to day, plus error. The low ICCs associated with self-presentational accuracy, acceptance and rejection cues, interaction partner sexual orientation, interaction partner closeness, and anticipated acceptance (ICCs = .07–.23) indicate that these variables vary a great deal from day to day, which is consistent with a contextual view of sexual orientation self-presentation. The higher ICCs associated with social support, life satisfaction, and positive and negative affect (ICCs = .47–.85) indicate that these variables are more consistent within persons, although there is still some degree of daily variability. Overall, the within-person correlations among day-level variables were as expected; however, the between-person correlations were largely nonsignificant. The lack of significant between-person correlations was not anticipated; however, it is likely the result of low ICCs and small group size (i.e., number of self-presentation events per participant) among the contextual variables. These factors may have contributed to low group mean reliability among the contextual variables, and in turn, decreased statistical power at the between-persons level (Bliese, 2000).

Results revealed that the majority of reported self-presentation events took place in-person (70.7%), with the remainder taking place over the telephone or text message (13.9%), over the Internet (7.4%), or through another medium (0.5%). An ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference in mean self-presentational accuracy across in-person, telephone, and Internet interactions, $F(2, 725) = 6.66, p < .001$ (interactions taking place via another medium were not included due to low sample size). A Tukey’s HSD post hoc test with familywise error rate correction revealed

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics and Zero-Order Correlations Among Day-Level Variables

Variable	M	SD	ICC	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Self-presentational accuracy	2.71	.98	0.13	—	.41*	.36*	-.16*	-.24*	.33*	.15*	-.09*	.34*	.50*	.15*	.14*	.09*	-.12*
2. Acceptance cues towards PSs	1.96	0.54	0.18	.17	—	.66*	-.21*	-.18*	.46*	.09*	-.15*	.40*	.57*	.09*	.03	-.03	-.07*
3. Acceptance cues towards SMs	2.30	0.55	0.14	.29	.76*	—	-.14*	-.29*	.29*	.22*	-.08	.35*	.54*	.11*	.06	-.03	-.02
4. Rejection cues towards PSs	1.41	0.46	0.23	.23	.35*	.29	—	.70*	-.17*	.06	.12	-.05	.39*	-.05	-.06	-.09*	.02
5. Rejection cues towards SMs	1.34	0.43	0.16	.13	.24	.17	.90*	—	-.11*	-.12*	.15*	.00	.43*	-.07	-.06	-.06	.04
6. IP = PS	0.20	0.26	0.10	.14	.28	.29	.03	-.22	—	.17*	-.18*	.17*	.35*	.07	.02	-.02	-.05
7. IP = LG	0.18	0.26	0.08	-.06	.24	.45	.12	-.10	.40	—	-.15*	-.09*	.10*	.06	.09*	.01	-.03
8. IP = Het	0.52	0.31	0.07	-.30	.13	-.11	-.08	-.20	-.13	-.02	—	.23*	-.14*	-.08	-.06	-.02	.14*
9. Closeness to IP	4.47	2.00	0.21	-.19	.03	.23	.06	-.01	-.05	.36	.37	—	.45*	.10*	.06	-.01	-.02
10. Anticipated acceptance	3.70	0.80	0.14	.20	.26	.36*	-.13	-.19	.33	.43*	.11	-.15	—	.13*	.09*	.04	-.09*
11. Social support	3.16	0.60	0.85	.04	-.14	-.07	-.44*	-.54*	-.03	-.19	-.04	-.13	.35*	—	.28*	.18*	-.16*
12. Life satisfaction	3.79	1.07	0.85	.04	-.04	.05	-.39*	-.41*	-.05	-.19	-.02	-.07	.33*	.41*	—	.40*	-.40*
13. Positive affect	2.60	0.63	0.52	.18	.10	.15	-.11	-.18	.14	.23	-.25	.04	.27*	.32*	.47*	—	-.28*
14. Negative affect	1.84	0.51	0.47	-.02	.07	.22	.20*	0.17	-.04	.08	.17	.32*	-.07	-.21*	-.37*	-.11	—

Note. Means and standard deviations for all variables provided in original scales and based on data aggregated to the person level. Within-person correlations are located above the diagonal; between-person correlations are located below the diagonal. ICC = intraclass correlation coefficient; PS(s) = plurisexual(s); SMs = sexual minorities; IP = interaction partner; LG = lesbian or gay; Het = heterosexual.
* $p < .05$.

that participants reported higher self-presentational accuracy when interacting over the Internet ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 1.49$) than when interacting in person ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 1.49$). Sample descriptions of self-presentation events are included in Table 3.

Main Analyses: Testing the Hypothesized Model

Statistical analysis for this study is complicated by the multi-level structure of the data, wherein data from self-presentation and nightly surveys are nested within participants. Multilevel structural equation modeling (MSEM) partitions day-level predictors into latent within-cluster and between-cluster components. MSEM is better able to handle missing data and has been shown to offer higher power to detect effects than more traditional multilevel regression models (Preacher, Zhang, & Zyphur, 2011). The current study uses multilevel path modeling, which is a special case of MSEM (Heck, 2016). Nonnormality and missing data were handled using robust full information maximum likelihood estimation. Overall, 20.95% of nightly surveys were missing; this completion rate is satisfactory and relatively common for online studies with a daily survey component (Shiffman, Stone, & Hufford, 2008; Stalgaitis & Glick, 2014). The survey completion rate was unrelated to participants' age, education, income, race/ethnicity, or preferred sexual orientation label and to the day of the week (i.e., weekday vs. weekend). Predictor variables were grand-mean centered prior to analysis. Analyses were completed using Mplus software (Version 8.0; Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2017).

All associations were estimated simultaneously at Level 1 and Level 2 using a single multilevel model (see Figure 1). All exogenous contextual factors (i.e., acceptance and rejection cues, interaction partner sexual orientation, and interpersonal closeness) were allowed to covary. All outcomes (i.e., positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction) were also allowed to covary. Each contextual factor was included as a direct predictor of each outcome. To control for the stability of the well-being outcomes across days, the previous day's assessment was included as a predictor for each of the three outcomes at Level 1 only (e.g., previous-day positive affect was included as a predictor of same-day positive affect); however, results did not change substantially when autoregressive controls were removed from the model. For ease of interpretability, only the Level 1 results for the model depicted in Figure 1 are included here. Complete Level 1 and Level 2 results are included in the online supplemental materials.

Model fit. The model showed good fit to the data based on the standards suggested by Kline (2005): $\chi^2(39) = 57.78$, $p = .03$; RMSEA = 0.02; CFI = 0.99; SRMR = 0.06. The model accounted for 34% of the within-person variance in self-presentational accuracy.

Direct effects. Results of within-persons analyses are shown in Table 4. Consistent with our hypotheses, acceptance cues toward PSs, acceptance cues toward SMs, having a PS interaction partner, and interpersonal closeness to one's interaction partner predicted greater anticipated acceptance, whereas rejection cues toward PSs, rejection cues toward SMs, and having a heterosexual interaction partner predicted lower anticipated acceptance. Contrary to our hypotheses, the presence of an LG interaction partner was unrelated to anticipated acceptance. As expected, anticipated acceptance was positively associated with self-presentational accuracy. Unexpectedly, only acceptance cues toward PSs, having a PS interaction partner, and interpersonal closeness directly predicted greater self-presentational accuracy, whereas acceptance cues toward SMs, rejection cues toward PSs and SMs, and having an LG or heterosexual interaction partner had no direct effect on self-presentational accuracy. As hypothesized, higher levels of self-presentational accuracy predicted higher levels of perceived social support, which in turn predicted higher levels of positive affect and life satisfaction and lower levels of negative affect. Contrary to our hypotheses, self-presentational accuracy did not directly predict life satisfaction, positive affect, or negative affect.

Indirect effects. Mediators (i.e., anticipated acceptance, social support) were tested within the same multilevel model using the parametric bootstrap approach described by Preacher, Zyphur, and Zhang (2010), which makes no assumptions about the distribution of the indirect effect. We used Mplus software and an online utility provided by Selig and Preacher (2008) to generate 95% Monte Carlo confidence intervals of the indirect effects.

Results for the bootstrapped tests of Level 1 indirect effects can be found in Table 5. At the within-person level, anticipated acceptance mediated the relationships between several contextual factors and self-presentational accuracy: acceptance cues toward PSs and SMs, rejection cues toward PSs and SMs, having a PS or heterosexual interaction partner, and interpersonal closeness to one's interaction partner. That is, at least part of the reason that these contextual factors predicted self-presentational accuracy was because they predicted anticipated acceptance, which in turn pre-

Table 3
Sample Descriptions of Self-Presentation Events

I texted my landlord about my boyfriend visiting but didn't mention either of us being queer. (1)	I referred to myself as gay to a classmate I do not know very well. I use gay as an umbrella term like queer but they may not have known this and may just as likely have thought I meant that I am a monosexual lesbian woman. (3)
Discussed dating experiences and only referred to the men I've dated, neglecting to mention that I also date women. (1)	Wore a rainbow bracelet. (3)
I was chatting to a woman I know at the dog park and I mentioned my ex. At first I avoided using she/her pronouns but I ended up using them and thus implying that I had dated a woman. (2)	I didn't outright say I'm bi, but I said that I'm attracted to guys and girls (4)
I avoided using pronouns when talking about dating and then when he asked if I was gay I said yes. (2)	Clarified I was not gay, but bisexual. (5)

Note. Numbers in parentheses are the participant's rating of self-presentation accuracy, on a scale of 1 to 5.

Table 4
Within-Person Model Coefficients

Predictor	<i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI
Outcome: Anticipated acceptance		
Acceptance cues toward PSs	0.35* (0.07)	[0.21, 0.49]
Acceptance cues toward SMs	0.24* (0.07)	[0.11, 0.36]
Rejection cues toward PSs	-0.23* (0.09)	[-0.41, -0.05]
Rejection cues toward SMs	-0.48* (0.09)	[-0.65, -0.30]
IP = Plurisexual	0.24* (0.09)	[0.06, 0.43]
IP = LG	0.08 (0.11)	[-0.14, 0.30]
IP = Heterosexual	-0.21* (0.08)	[-0.37, -0.05]
IP Closeness	0.13* (0.02)	[0.10, 0.16]
Outcome: Self-presentational accuracy		
Anticipated acceptance	0.41* (0.06)	[0.28, 0.53]
Acceptance cues toward PSs	0.23* (0.11)	[0.03, 0.44]
Acceptance cues toward SMs	-0.02 (0.10)	[-0.20, 0.17]
Rejection cues toward PSs	0.21 (0.14)	[-0.06, 0.48]
Rejection cues toward SMs	-0.24 (0.16)	[-0.55, 0.07]
IP = Plurisexual	0.41* (0.14)	[0.13, 0.68]
IP = LG	0.24 (0.15)	[-0.06, 0.54]
IP = Heterosexual	-0.05 (0.11)	[-0.26, 0.16]
IP Closeness	0.09* (0.03)	[0.04, 0.14]
Outcome: Social support		
Self-presentational accuracy	0.02* (0.01)	[0.00, 0.03]
Outcome: Life satisfaction		
Self-presentational accuracy	0.03 (0.02)	[0.00, 0.06]
Social support	0.44* (0.07)	[0.30, 0.57]
Previous day life satisfaction	0.32* (0.04)	[0.24, 0.39]
Outcome: Positive affect		
Self-presentational accuracy	0.04 (0.02)	[-0.00, 0.08]
Social support	0.47* (0.09)	[0.29, 0.65]
Previous day positive affect	0.23* (0.04)	[0.16, 0.31]
Outcome: Negative affect		
Self-presentational accuracy	-0.03 (0.02)	[-0.06, 0.01]
Social support	-0.23* (0.07)	[-0.36, -0.09]
Previous day negative affect	0.24* (0.04)	[0.17, 0.30]

Note. *B*s = unstandardized regression coefficients; *SE*s = standard errors; CI = confidence interval; PSs = plurisexuals; SMs = sexual minorities; IP = interaction partner; LG = lesbian or gay.

* $p < .05$.

dicted self-presentational accuracy. Furthermore, social support mediated the relationship between self-presentational accuracy and all three well-being outcomes: life satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect.

Table 5
Within-Person Indirect Effects

Predictor	Mediator	Outcome	<i>B</i> (<i>SE</i>)	95% CI
Acceptance cues towards PSs	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	0.14 (0.04)*	[0.08, 0.22]
Acceptance cues towards SMs	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	0.10 (0.03)*	[0.04, 0.16]
Rejection cues towards PSs	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	-0.09 (0.04)*	[-0.17, -0.02]
Rejection cues towards SMs	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	-0.19 (0.05)*	[-0.31, -0.10]
Interaction partner = PS	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	0.10 (0.04)*	[0.02, 0.18]
Interaction partner = LG	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	0.03 (0.05)	[-0.06, 0.13]
Interaction partner = Het	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	-0.09 (0.04)*	[-.17, -.02]
Interaction partner closeness	Anticipated acceptance	Self-presentational accuracy	0.05 (0.01)*	[0.04, 0.07]
Self-presentational accuracy	Social support	Life satisfaction	0.01 (0.003)*	[0.003, 0.01]
Self-presentational accuracy	Social support	Positive affect	0.01 (0.003)*	[0.003, 0.02]
Self-presentational accuracy	Social support	Negative affect	-0.003 (0.002)*	[-0.01, -0.001]

Note. Asterisk denotes a statistically significant indirect effect ($p < .05$) as indicated by the confidence interval. *B*s = unstandardized indirect effects; *SE*s = standard errors; CI = confidence interval; PS(s) = plurisexual(s); SMs = sexual minorities; LG = lesbian or gay; Het = heterosexual.

* $p < .05$.

Exploratory Analysis: Goals for Self-Presentation

The within-person associations between participants' inter- and intrapersonal goals for an interaction and their level of self-presentational accuracy are reported in Table 6. Five goals were positively associated with self-presentational accuracy: to become closer to one's interaction partner, to be true to oneself, to make communication easier, to relieve feelings of tension, and to educate one's interaction partner. Furthermore, four goals were negatively associated with self-presentational accuracy: to avoid hostility, to gain one's interaction partner's approval, to avoid negative consequences, and to protect one's right to privacy.

To examine the unique predictive contribution of each goal, we ran a multilevel regression model in which the nine goals were predictors of self-presentational accuracy at both levels of analysis. Taken together, the goals accounted for approximately 34% of the within-person variance in accuracy. Six of the goals remained statistically significant predictors of accuracy: closeness, authenticity, communication, education, avoidance of hostility, and privacy.

Discussion

We examined the within-person predictors and outcomes of self-presentational accuracy among a sample of cisgender PS women. Past research has suggested that context plays an important role in sexual orientation identity management and has demonstrated a relationship between sexual orientation disclosure and well-being. By studying self-presentation processes using an experience sampling design, this study adds to the literature by examining how contextual factors are linked to self-presentation decisions as they occur, as well as the impact of these decisions on daily well-being. To our knowledge, this is the first study examine within-person variability in self-presentation among PS women, a group that cross-sectional research has suggested may display particularly complex patterns of identity management. Furthermore, this study utilized the novel framework of self-presentational accuracy to capture the identity management process; this framework's flexibility may be especially appropriate for PS women.

Table 6
Within-Person Correlations and Regression Coefficients for Interaction Goals and Self-Presentational Accuracy

Goal	Correlation	B (SE)
<i>Closeness</i> – “To become closer to my interaction partner”	.49*	0.20 (.04)*
<i>Authenticity</i> – “To be true to myself”	.68*	0.35 (.06)*
<i>Communication</i> – “To make communication with my interaction partner easier”	.17*	0.08 (.04)*
<i>Tension Relief</i> – “To relieve tension I was feeling”	.18*	0.03 (.04)
<i>Avoidance</i> – “To avoid hostility or judgement”	–.56*	–0.17 (0.05)*
<i>Approval</i> – “To get my interaction partner to approve of me”	–.16*	–0.01 (0.05)
<i>Education</i> – “To educate my interaction partner”	.37*	0.11 (0.04)*
<i>Benefits</i> – “To receive benefits or avoid negative consequences”	–.33*	–.07 (0.05)
<i>Privacy</i> – “To protect my right to privacy”	–.59*	–.023 (0.05)*

Note. Regression coefficients represent the within-person unstandardized regression coefficient when all goals entered into a single multilevel model predicting self-presentational accuracy. *B*s = unstandardized regression coefficients; *SE*s = standard errors.

* $p < .05$.

Overall, the PS women in this study reported presenting their sexual orientation identities moderately accurately, on average, in their day-to-day interactions. However, the results also revealed a great deal of variability in self-presentational accuracy from interaction to interaction. Indeed, only 13% of the variability in self-presentational accuracy was attributable to stable person-level differences, underscoring the value of examining these processes as they occur. The within-person results also demonstrate the highly context-dependent nature of self-presentation among PS women. As hypothesized, participants were sensitive to contextual factors such as perceived sexual orientation-related acceptance and rejection cues, their interaction partners' sexual orientation, and interpersonal closeness when making decisions about how to present their sexual orientation identities. Of note, having a PS interaction partner was a significant predictor of self-presentational accuracy, whereas having an LG interaction partner was not. This finding is perhaps unsurprising, given the stigmatization that PS individuals face from monosexual SM individuals. PS women may need to be cautious when presenting their sexual orientation to LG individuals, first gauging whether the individual is likely to hold monosexist biases.

Participants also tailored their self-presentation strategies to achieve their goals for an interaction. They tended to present more accurately when they were pursuing positively valenced goals (e.g., closeness, authenticity) and less accurately when pursuing protective goals (e.g., avoidance of hostility, privacy). It is important to note that goals and contextual factors likely explain some overlapping variability in self-presentational accuracy. For example, a person's goals for an interaction are likely influenced by the characteristics of their interaction partners (e.g., one might be more likely to pursue an authenticity goal with SM interaction partners). Similarly, goals may partially determine one's social context and cue sensitivity (e.g., an SM person with an authenticity goal might seek out accepting interaction partners and be particularly sensitive to acceptance cues). Future research should examine the influence of contextual factors and goals, as well as their interaction, on self-presentation among SM individuals.

Many of the contextual factors were linked to self-presentational accuracy indirectly by contributing to participants' judgments of how likely it was that their interaction partners would accept their

identities, which in turn influenced how accurately they presented. This finding supports previous research, which suggests that individuals with concealable stigmatized identities aggregate distinct cues about the social environment into a single heuristic that they use to make identity management decisions. However, several contextual factors operated outside of this process. For example, interpersonal closeness directly contributed to higher levels of self-presentational accuracy over and above its effect on anticipated acceptance. It may be that participants felt motivated to be their authentic selves with important people in their lives, whether or not those people would be accepting of their identities. Identifying alternative mechanisms to anticipated acceptance that guide the identity management process among SMs may be a productive avenue for future research.

Though not examined here, several person-level factors may also have impacted participants' self-presentation decisions. For example, participants with high levels of internalized monosexism may have endorsed more protection-oriented goals and had lower expectations of acceptance from their interaction partners, both of which would likely have resulted in less accurate self-presentation. Additionally, participants with a more developed sense of pluri-sexual identity may have been more adept in their attempts to make and execute strategic self-presentation decisions (Paul, Smith, Mohr, & Ross, 2014). Although our research indicates that PS women's self-presentation strategies are highly context-dependent, future research should also examine person-level factors that influence this process.

The results also indicate that self-presentational accuracy had an impact on day-to-day well-being through the mediator of social support. These findings replicate previous research with SM individuals (Beals et al., 2009) and highlight the significance of identity management processes in the daily lives of PS women. They reveal self-presentation to be a fundamentally social process, with consequences that are at least partially dependent on the response of one's interaction partner. Additionally, these results further illustrate the strategic nature of self-presentation among PS women. Participants appeared to reserve accurate self-presentation for interaction partners who were likely to provide social support, thereby managing their emotional experience of the identity management process. More research on the consequences of sexual

orientation self-presentation is needed, particularly as these processes occur.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study has a number of limitations that should be noted. First, the sample contains a high proportion of White, young, and educated participants, and all participants were cisgender women. Caution should be exercised when attempting to generalize our results to other populations. In particular, plurisexual women who hold other marginalized identities (e.g., plurisexual women of color, transgender plurisexual women, poor plurisexual women) may have access to a more limited set of self-presentation options and less social power to present their identities as they choose (Ghabrial & Ross, 2018; Lim & Hewitt, 2018). Thus, the wide range of self-presentation behaviors described in this paper may be the result of the sample's relatively high level of social privilege. Additionally, because we recruited participants from LGB-focused community organizations and social media platforms, it is likely that our sample is highly "out" in terms of their sexual orientation. A truly representative sample of PS women may have presented their sexual orientation less accurately overall and may have been sensitive to different contextual factors than our sample. Future research should examine how gender, outness, and other identity variables affect self-presentational accuracy among diverse PS individuals.

Additionally, it is likely that participants encountered many self-presentation opportunities over the course of their participation, some of which they did not report because of the time burden. The relationships between self-presentational accuracy and well-being may be stronger for highly salient or emotional self-presentation events, which may have been overreported. Furthermore, all self-presentation data were collected concurrently. Although we hypothesize about the directionality of the associations between self-presentation variables (e.g., acceptance cues influence self-presentational accuracy), it is possible that the associations among these variables may be the result of paths of reverse influence (e.g., accurate self-presentation elicits acceptance cues). Future research on self-presentation should incorporate experimental designs in order to establish causal relations. Finally, this study did not examine how participants represented their identities when they presented inaccurately. Future studies should examine whether particular contextual factors produce particular types of inaccurate self-presentation, as well as whether different types of inaccuracy have differential impacts on well-being.

Implications

The results of this study have significant implications for clinical work with PS women, which may help alleviate the significant mental health disparities that they face. Clinicians should keep in mind that their PS clients engage in an ongoing process of self-presentation and that this process may impact clients' daily well-being. PS clients may even engage in inaccurate self-presentation with their therapists, which would likely impact the client's perceptions of social support within the therapeutic context. Providing PS clients with psychoeducation about the self-presentation process, exploring their experiences with self-presentation, and build-

ing their self-presentation skills (e.g., the ability to make and execute effective self-presentation decisions) may be empowering and productive interventions. The results of this study also underscore the need for public health campaigns aimed at destigmatizing plurisexuality and social support services for PSs (e.g., affirming support groups).

From a research perspective, the results highlight the need for more nuanced theories and measurement tools related to sexual orientation identity management. Self-presentational accuracy may be a valuable construct to advance research on identity management among PSs and SMs more generally. Additionally, these results have implications for research on other groups with concealable stigmatized identities. Given the highly context-dependent nature of self-presentation, future research should utilize experience sampling and other microlongitudinal methods to examine how contextual factors influence identity management decisions among diverse groups with concealable stigmatized identities.

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Received December 19, 2019
 Revision received April 7, 2020
 Accepted May 6, 2020 ■