Media influences emotional wellbeing of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) youth (Bond, 2015).

Limited research exists that examines the influence of media at the intersection of race and sexual identity.

Latina/o LGBT individuals are of particular interest.
- Latina/os account for 17% of the U.S. population in the U.S.
- Only 5.8% of the speaking characters in film, television, and streaming stories are Latina/o (Smith et al., 2016).

The purpose of this study is to qualitatively examine how media influenced 18+ year old Latina/o LGBT individuals throughout their adolescence by asking them to think retrospectively about their experiences with and exposure to media.

Introduction

Research Questions

- RQ1: How has the emotional well being, perceived social support, and identity development differed from White LGBT individuals for Latina/o LGBT individuals?
- RQ2: How has media informed and influenced Latina/o LGBT individuals and their own understanding of their racial and sexual identities through adolescence?
- RQ3: How did media inform and influence Latina/o LGBT youth’s emotional well being, beliefs about their social support networks, and their identities through adolescence?

Method

Sample:
- N = 17
- Age range = 18-36
- Sexual orientation: Lesbian = 5, Gay = 4, Bisexual = 6, Queer = 2
- Gender identity: Female = 9, Male = 4, Transgender/Non-binary = 4
- Racial identity: Mexican = 14, Mixed race Mexican/Latina/o = 3

Methodology:
- Focus groups
- One-on-one interviews

Theoretical framework:
- Schema & script theory

Discussion

Participants discussed their religious background unprompted

Religion was specifically referenced when discussing the coming out process

A general disconnect existed between cultural identity and sexual identity

Participants felt that current LGBT representation is primarily White

Existing racial media representation, according to participants, is stereotypical and/or negative.

Participants acknowledged specific heteronormative scripts they were expected to follow along with their racial identity requirements reinforced by their surrounding culture.

Often unprompted, participants described social media being an outlet that allowed them an opportunity to express their sexuality in a safe environment not available in everyday life.