Altering Attitudes and Improving Intentions: An Evaluation of the Safe Zone Workshop at Georgia State University

Rebecca H. LeCroix
ALTERING ATTITUDES AND IMPROVING INTENTIONS: AN EVALUATION OF THE
SAFE ZONE WORKSHOP AT GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

by

REBECCA HILL LECROIX

Under the Direction of Lisa Armistead, PhD and Gabe Kuperminc, PhD

ABSTRACT

Sexual prejudice, or negative attitudes toward sexual and gender minority persons, endures in U.S. culture today. A variety of interventions attempt to reduce sexual prejudice on college campuses. This doctoral dissertation project evaluates the adapted Safe Zone Workshop, a university-based sexual prejudice reduction intervention, with 82 students, faculty, and staff from Georgia State University over 13 workshop sessions. Results suggest a significant improvement from pretest to posttest in participants’ broad awareness of oppression. However, no statistically significant change was observed in quantitative data analysis from pretest to posttest in attitude (i.e., sexual prejudice); specific lesbian, gay, and bisexual oppression; knowledge, skills, openness, and support to act as an ally; or behavioral intentions to act as an ally. However, data suggest that the lack of quantitative findings may be due to ceiling effects as
participants choosing to take part in the workshop likely have positive and accepting attitudes, knowledge, skills, and intentions before the workshop. Generally, participants reported that they liked specific activities, learning, and gaining resources in the workshop and disliked the physical space, specific activities, and timing of the workshop. Participants suggested ideas for recruitment and advertising as well as other activities to incorporate into and around the intervention. Further, many participants noted that they did experience change as a consequence of the workshop; they reported learning new terms, gaining knowledge, and becoming more comfortable and aware of issues related to gender and sexual minority persons. Therefore, this study adds to the extant literature in that few evaluations have been conducted of Safe Zone programs, fewer that include mixed-methods research on a university campus. Such programs may lead to better attitudes and actions of workshop attendees that may then contribute to safer and more inclusive environments for gender and sexual minority persons on campus.

INDEX WORDS: Program evaluation, Mixed methods, Sexual prejudice, Intervention, Prejudice reduction, Sexual and gender minority persons
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REBECCA HILL LECROIX

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REBECCA HILL LECROIX

Committee Co-Chairs: Lisa Armistead
Gabe Kuperminc

Committee: Dominic Parrott
Franco Dispenza

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University
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DEDICATION

This project wouldn’t be possible without the help, support, and encouragement of so many people. To my cohort, who stuck together through thick and thin, from first-year potlucks to General Exam to wine nights and beyond. To my labmates, particularly Nada Goodrum: from housing me on my interview day (plus an extra day!) to laughs and tears and long conversations, and Schell Hufstetler: from long car rides for lab interviews and scary movie nights to giving me a place to stay in my last Atlanta days. To my family, who have provided support and encouragement before I even knew what a dissertation was: Mom, Dad, John, Robby, Heather, Randy, Kirk, Grandma June, Linda, Brian, Maw Maw, and so many more. To Maria Martin, who encourages me daily to be the best me I can be and without whom I would not be the person I am today; from walking in beauty to days on the beach with crawfish to bathroom parties, I thank you.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Understanding and evaluating sexual prejudice reduction interventions (SPRIs) allows professionals to implement evidence-based practices to combat sexual prejudice to which psychologists are ethically committed (American Psychological Association, 2012). Sexual prejudice on university campuses may be particularly prevalent; traditional college students are typically moving away from home for the first time, and likely encountering a greater diversity of identities, including diversity in gender and sexual minority (GSM) identities. Additionally, universities act as a space in which individuals with diverse identities interact and work together regularly. Therefore, SPRIs on university campuses may be particularly important for confronting attitudes toward identities with which individuals, particularly those new to a university campus, may not have regularly interacted prior to leaving home for college. Although developers of SPRIs do not appear to have relied heavily on theory in the creation of these interventions, two theories, the Theory of Planned Behavior and Intergroup Contact Theory, may be particularly applicable to these interventions. Further, mixed methods evaluation of these programs is necessary not only to understand if SPRIs are meeting their goals (i.e., decreasing sexual prejudice), but also to provide context and deeper appreciation for the ways in which these programs function.

1.1 Sexual Prejudice History, Pervasiveness, and Impact

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, and other sexual minority individuals have historically experienced discrimination based on these social identities (Bronski, 2011). Individuals have often been punished for violating gender and sexual norms, as widespread institutionalized violence against homosexuals first appeared in the 13th-14th centuries (Franklin & Herek, 2003). Institutionalization of violence against gender and sexual minority (GSM) persons is exemplified
by the Christian Crusades and Holy Inquisition and continued through the 17th century (e.g., 1655 New Haven statute mandating death penalty for homosexuality; Boswell, 1980) to the 20th century. In the 1900s, tens of thousands of suspected gay men were convicted of homosexuality under the Nazi regime and forced to endure beating, castration, rape, and medical experimentation, a law that remained in effect in Germany until 1969 (Plant, 1986). Routine police beatings and torture of sexual minorities continue to be reported across the world today (Franklin & Herek, 2003). Institutionalized discrimination reflects individual prejudice within society, and may lead to acts of individual discrimination (Whitley & Kite, 2010).

Importantly, prejudice includes not only overt violent acts of discrimination, but also includes smaller prejudicial acts, often termed “microaggressions.” Although usually discussed in the context of race, microaggressions, or brief and often unexceptional insults that suggest hostility or are generally derogatory, regardless of intentionality (Sue et al., 2007), may apply to any marginalized social identity. For example, an attendee of the 2008 Republican National Convention stated, “Gays have all the rights they want. All they gotta do is marry a person of the opposite sex… You shouldn’t have special rights just because of the kind of sex you have. Where’s that in the Constitution?” (Stewart, 2008). The above statement exemplifies a microaggression in the form of sexual prejudice: negative attitudes toward an individual because of his or her sexual orientation, including negative attitudes toward homosexual behavior, people, communities, and relationships (Herek, 2000). While discrimination is the expressed behavioral component of social categorization, the underlying factor is often prejudice, the evaluative component of social categorization (Mio, Barker, & Tumambing, 2012). Importantly, sexual prejudice appears to be more socially acceptable than other forms of prejudice (Whitley & Kite, 2010).
Sexual prejudice may be more socially acceptable because of perceived violations of
gender-role expectations (Whitley & Kite, 2010). Gender role expectations include beliefs that
describe what women and men should and should not like, what they should and should not do,
what they should and should not wear, etc. These expectations translate to stereotypes of gay
men and lesbian women. Specifically, it is often assumed that gay men have more feminine
qualities than heterosexual men (Madon, 1997), and that lesbian women have more masculine
qualities than heterosexual women (Kite & Deaux, 1987). Although much of this research is
based in the United States, similar negative attitudes toward homosexuality have been found in
Great Britain (Hays, 1997) and Germany (Steffens & Wagner, 2004).

1.2 Sexual Prejudice in Relation to Sexual Stigma

Evidence suggests that gender stereotyping and assumptions of gender norm violations
by gay men and lesbians exist both within and outside of the United States. Although evidence
exists that sexual prejudice endures in the United States and elsewhere, prejudice can exist at the
individual, group, and sociocultural levels (Whitley & Kite, 2010). In particular, one’s own
prejudice (e.g., sexual prejudice) exists as an individual-level variable that may be targeted by an
individual or small group intervention aimed at decreasing prejudiced attitudes and/or behaviors
(Fiske, 2000).

However, to understand sexual prejudice and its effects more fully, these attitudes must
be situated within the context of sexual stigma, or the general devaluing and relative
powerlessness of non-heterosexuality as understood as shared knowledge by society (Herek,
2007). As a phenomenon of such shared knowledge, sexual stigma exists at a broader cultural
level than a singular individual’s prejudicial attitudes and exists outside and independent of these
attitudes. Further, at this broader societal level, sexual stigma is involved in creating, maintaining, and spreading sexual prejudice.

Sexual stigma is also manifested in multiple societal levels, as stated above. Herek (2007) describes sexual stigma as manifesting at the sociocultural/structural/institutional level, often referred to as heterosexism, in which institutional power structures perpetuate power differentials based on sexual orientation and maintain the status quo – heterosexuality is in a more privileged position than non-heterosexuality, which disadvantages sexual minority groups. Heterosexism (as the structural manifestation of sexual stigma) seems to legitimize the devaluing of sexual minority individuals through religion, medicine, law, housing, and other discriminatory rules and regulations.

Further, sexual stigma also manifests at the individual level as enacted sexual stigma, felt sexual stigma, and internalized stigma (Herek, 2007). Enacted stigma includes sexual minority persons’ experiences of stigma or discrimination directly, such as experiencing verbal abuse because of their sexual orientation. The experience of enacted stigma from others greatly impacts sexual minority persons at times not only physically (e.g., experiencing physical violence; Herek, 2009), but also psychologically (e.g., depression, anxiety; Szymanski, 2005). Additionally, these psychological reactions to enacted stigma may be above and beyond such psychological reactions to other crimes unrelated to sexual orientation (Herek, Gillis, & Cogan, 1999). Of note, enacted stigma is most often used to target sexual minority persons, though because sexual orientation is an identity that may be concealed, heterosexual persons misidentified as non-heterosexual may also be targeted by enacted stigma. In addition, individuals close to or associated with sexual minority individuals may also be targeted by enacted stigma (called courtesy stigma; Goffman, 1963). Therefore, any person who is a sexual minority, perceived to
be a sexual minority, or associated with a sexual minority person may be targeted and impacted by enacted stigma.

Felt stigma, another manifestation of sexual stigma at the individual level, includes a person’s expectations of the occurrences of sexual stigma, which often influence the person’s behavior (Herek, 2007). Therefore, even if the person is not directly victimized (i.e., enacted stigma), they may still be impacted by the fear of victimization (i.e., felt stigma). The impacts of felt stigma for sexual minority individuals may include continued concealment of sexual minority identity and/or hypervigilance and monitoring for threat of discrimination; however, these coping strategies may also have negative impacts on the individual by disconnecting them from potential social support and heightening psychological distress (Herek, 2007; Cole, 2006). Like enacted stigma, felt stigma may also impact heterosexual individuals as well as non-heterosexual individuals (again, as sexual orientation is a concealable identity).

As described above, psychological distress related to enacted stigma and felt stigma may be considered externalized sexual minority stress; it is related to stigma as enacted or threatened by externalized others. However, internalized sexual minority stress or internalized stigma is a different type of individual manifestation of sexual stigma. Whereas externalized stigma may impact the individual whether or not that individual endorses sexual stigma, internalized stigma includes a feeling of sexual stigma as legitimate or an integration of these beliefs into one’s own self-concept (Herek, 2007). Internalized stigma can be categorized as self-stigma (internalized sexual stigma within a sexual minority person) or sexual prejudice (internalized sexual stigma within a heterosexual person). Self-stigma can be damaging to the individual – this concept suggests that the person accepts the societal understanding of non-heterosexuality as inferior to heterosexuality, thus suggesting the person themselves as inferior to others, which can have
negative impacts both physically and psychologically (Meyer, 2003). Sexual prejudice then manifests as internalized sexual stigma harbored by a heterosexual person and may lead to enacting stigma through discriminatory practices. This framework (conceptualizing sexual stigma as externalized through enacted and felt stigma, and internalized as self-stigma and sexual prejudice) thus illustrates that stigma operates at different levels and impacts both heterosexuals and sexual minority persons.

Sexual prejudice as a manifestation of sexual stigma can be expressed in many ways as discriminatory practices, though all lead to harm. For instance, microaggressions, like the statement, “You’re too pretty to be a lesbian,” may initially seem neutral or even complimentary. However, the build-up of these assumptions, here assuming that lesbians are not or cannot be pretty, particularly in combination with external and internalized stigma and discrimination, can lead to damaging mental health outcomes (e.g., anxiety, depression, and suicidality), as well as physical health outcomes (e.g., increased risk for substance abuse and HIV/AIDS and other STDs; Cole, Kemeny, & Taylor, 1997; Hatzenbuehler, Nolen-Hoeksema, & Erickson, 2008; Hatzenbuehler, 2009; Meyer, 2003; Sue, 2017). These expressions and harmful impacts of prejudice are likely less obvious than overt expressions of discrimination, such as hate crimes. One example is the shooting of two lesbian women, one of whom was shot fatally. In 1988, while on a backpacking trip, two lesbian women were shot eight times; one of the women escaped to safety with five bullet wounds. Their attacker claimed that he was provoked to murder because of his disgust in witnessing their sexual relationship (Nussbaum, 2004). Therefore, the harm inflicted by sexual prejudice can range from discomfort in the immediate moment to long-term mental and physical health consequences.
Further, both heterosexual and non-heterosexual individuals are harmed by sexual prejudice. Although the effects of this prejudice greatly differ for those in the minority compared to the majority groups, all individuals are affected. Blumenfeld (1992) acknowledges that sexual prejudice allows the dominant group to maintain power over those who are marginalized; however, he also enumerates many ways in which sexual prejudice (“homophobia”) limits heterosexuals. For instance, sexual prejudice bars individuals from acting out of traditional gender roles without experiencing stigma; inhibits heterosexuals (primarily men) from forming close and intimate relationships with others of the same gender; pressures heterosexuals to treat others badly; can be used to target others who may be perceived as non-heterosexual, independent of their sexual orientation; can limit family relationships; can lead to premature sexual involvement; limits benefits to society from non-heterosexual individuals; and detracts energy from other endeavors (Blumenfeld, 1992).

Sexual prejudice is more socially acceptable than other forms of prejudice, varies in type and impact, and has been widely documented on university campuses. In a self-report survey, lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) undergraduates reported significantly higher rates of sexual harassment/assault and more negative psychological outcomes related to their sexual identities than their heterosexual counterparts (Smith, Cunningham, & Freyd, 2016). When surveying attitudes toward LGB individuals, findings suggest students minimize sexual prejudice (Fine, 2011) and believe themselves less anti-gay than other students (Bowen & Bourgeois, 2001).

Many individual characteristics have been associated with tolerance toward and/or acceptance of sexual minorities, including feminine gender, liberal religious/spiritual traditions, self-identification as LGB (Holland, Matthews, & Schott, 2013), liberal political ideology, belief in biological causation of sexual orientation, and having LGB friends and family (Woodford,
Silverschanz, Swank, Scherrer, & Raiz, 2012). However, university students tend to be different than the average individual, particularly with respect to prejudice and diversity training. In the United States, university students tend to report less prejudice (Baunach Burgess, & Muse, 2010), more awareness of social desirability bias against expression of prejudice (Crandall, Eshleman, & O’Brien, 2002), and more exposure to diversity training (McCauley, Wright, & Harris, 2000) compared to peers who are not in a university setting. Further, on a university campus, perception that at least one LGB student lives on the same floor or in the same building as a resident has been associated with more positive attitudes toward homosexuality (Bowen & Bourgeois, 2001). However, decreased levels of prejudice may be accounted for in that more senior students have spent a longer amount of time in contact with diverse others, and so may exhibit less prejudice. More junior students, however, may enter the university setting with less experience with diverse identities, and therefore may experience more prejudice than advanced students, who may exhibit less prejudice than the average person. Thus, contact and amount of time in university settings may account for varied levels of prejudice.

Many theories offer explanations for sexual prejudice; most often researchers find that people associate homosexuality with other-sex gender roles (Whitley & Kite, 2010). Gender-based norms dictate that men be more masculine and abjure femininity, and behavior that violates this expectation is intolerable. Thus, men are expected to reject not only their own but also others’ femininity (Whitley & Kite, 2010). In light of these gender-based norms, research also suggests gender-based differences in the expression of prejudice; one of the most consistent differences in sexual prejudice is that heterosexual men tend to have greater intolerance than heterosexual women. In a review of 112 studies examining men and women’s attitudes toward homosexuality, results suggest men tend to hold more negative attitudes than women, and that
this difference was especially pronounced when the person being rated was a gay man (Kite & Whitley, 1996, 1998), as opposed to a gay woman. This pattern has also been found in studies of university students’ attitudes (Herek, 2002). These differential attitudes may be related to social power; men have “more to lose” when stepping outside of their gender roles because of their male privilege; women, however, can show greater flexibility because of the lack of potential status loss (Whitley & Kite, 2010).

On the Georgia State University (GSU) campus, students in particular exhibit a wide range of diverse social identities. Unlike the majority of higher education institutions, over 65% of students identify as a racial/ethnic minority and approximately 94% of all students rely on financial aid (Forbes, 2017). Like other comparable institutions, 59% of the student body is female, and 41% is male (Forbes, 2017); data are not reported for student identification of gender identity (trans* or cisgender) or sexual orientation. Additionally, GSU’s main campus is located in an urban setting, in downtown Atlanta, Georgia. As the layout of the university is interspersed with other, non-GSU buildings throughout the downtown area, GSU students, faculty, and staff may experience more interactions with individuals with more diverse identities than solely GSU affiliates. Therefore, attending GSU may provide more opportunity for contact with diverse others than other, more traditionally housed universities.

1.3 Sexual Prejudice Reduction Interventions (SPRIs)

If the literature then suggests that sexual prejudice is harmful, how does the literature suggest that sexual prejudice be reduced? For the purposes of this project, “prejudice reduction” refers to a causal pathway from a specific intervention to a decreased level of prejudice.

Contact may be one of the most important components for an intervention to lead to sexual prejudice reduction. As described below (see “Intergroup Contact Theory”), contact with
an outgroup leads to cognitive and emotional change in that knowledge is increased (Eller & Abrams, 2003), stereotypes are reduced (Aberson & Haag, 2007), anxiety (Paolini, Hewstone, Cairns, & Voci, 2004) and negative expectations about intergroup interactions (Plant & Devine, 2003) are reduced, and empathy is increased (Aberson & Haag, 2007). Further, educational approaches provide information on sexuality, GSM lives, and/or prejudice through activities like lectures, films, and/or readings. Norms or expertise approaches may provide information on the ways in which experts (e.g., evolutionary psychologists) or a majority group (e.g., public opinion) views prejudice.

Although the intervention focus may be guided by theory, it is not always (Paluck & Green, 2009). Integration of theory with methodology is of utmost importance, particularly when attempting to understand psychological phenomena at a group level (Barile & Smith, 2016). Researchers have attempted to understand causes and effects of prejudice; however, markedly less effort has been devoted to developing and testing interventions (Hodson, Choma, & Costello, 2009). A recent meta-analytic review (Bartoș, Berger, & Hegarty, 2014) suggests that most interventions have been conducted with U.S. undergraduates and are educational in nature; participants learn about prejudice (e.g., learn vocabulary words, hear case studies), but do not directly engage in contact with individuals experiencing this prejudice. Education about prejudice, contact with the outgroup, and their combination had a medium effect size on sexual prejudice such that sexual prejudice was decreased.

1.4 Safe Zone

One programmatic example of SPRIs is Safe Zone. Safe Zone is a program that encourages learning about varied and diverse sexual orientation and gender identities and promotes “unlearn[ing] prejudice” (Safe Zone Project, n.d.). Often people who participate in
Safe Zone training workshops receive a sign or sticker that they may display to denote that they are supportive and open to discussing sexual orientation and gender identities, thus creating a “safe zone” for support and inclusivity.

Safe Zone is a small-group-focused workshop or training that targets sexual prejudice at the individual level. As stated previously, prejudice itself includes one’s individual attitudes, and may be best targeted by a small-group level intervention; by situating the intervention within a few (<20) participants, individuals are better able to learn information presented (Meo, 2013) and have intimate, meaningful conversations that may lead to attitude change. As will be discussed, the expectation that attitude change will occur following direct experience aligns with Allport’s (1954) Intergroup Contact Theory.

Although all Safe Zone training workshops are bound together in their aims of increasing knowledge and awareness and decreasing sexual prejudice, the methods by which these aims are implemented vary widely. The primary Safe Zone website (Safe Zone, n.d.) provides resources related to finding and attending training workshops, information (or lack thereof) about the beginning of Safe Zone, and activities for consideration in Safe Zone events. In addition, this website also includes a downloadable two-hour curriculum, to be used as the facilitator chooses (Safe Zone, n.d.). The Human Rights Campaign also provides suggestions and information about what it means to be an ally and how to start a Safe Zone program (HRC, 2017). Still, there is no set curriculum that unites all Safe Zone training workshops, outside of the above-stated aims. For example, the LGBTQ Academy at the Gay Alliance based in Rochester, New York, an independent organization promoting inclusivity for sexual and gender minority persons, offers Safe Zone Trainings to a variety of organizations and customizes each workshop for the needs of the organization (Gay Alliance, 2016). In comparison, the University of North Carolina-Chapel
Hill describes their university-housed Safe Zone program as one that is provided specifically for the campus community (though they do offer trainings to non-UNC-affiliated organizations for a fee), with goals of making the university community safer and more supportive for all UNC affiliates through creating a knowledgeable and supportive ally network (UNC-Chapel Hill Safe Zone, n.d.). Further, UNC provides an “Allies List” of individuals who have completed the training workshop. Another Safe Zone program at Pennsylvania State University provides multiple training workshops with various foci (e.g., broad and foundational knowledge about being an ally, intersectionality, transgender identities) and provides a list of individuals who have completed one or more workshops (Penn State Safe Zone, n.d.). Many Safe Zone programs are housed in university settings, and of these, many are conducted either through Student Affairs offices, Multicultural Centers, or through the university College of Education (e.g., Penn State Safe Zone, n.d.; UNC-Chapel Hill Safe Zone, n.d.). Workshops range from one two-hour meeting (e.g., Gay Alliance, 2016) to a single four-hour meeting (e.g., UNC-Chapel Hill Safe Zone, n.d.) to multiple three-hour meetings (e.g., Penn State Safe Zone, n.d.).

Safe Zone training workshops tend to include values-clarification exercises, common terms and symbols, guidelines for reporting harassment, suggestions for creating a more tolerant or inclusive environment, myths and realities about sexual and gender minority identities, histories and oppressions of sexual and gender minority persons, heterosexual and cisgender privilege, and stories or personal experiences of sexual prejudice (HRC, 2017). Interactive exercises are often included to allow participants to examine their own assumptions and biases and to practice skills related to being an ally. Many programs also include components of both education about sexual and gender minority identities as well as contact with individuals with these identities, either directly or indirectly.
Current research on characteristics of heterosexuals who are low in sexual prejudice (e.g., self-reflective, critical thinking, LGB/GSM friends; Poteat, 2015) may inform targets of intervention, and results suggest that SPRIs may assist in creating supportive environments for LGB/GSM youth (e.g., Black, Fedewa, & Gonzalez, 2012) and may have other positive effects not only for sexual minority persons but also for heterosexual allies. At GSU, Safe Zone Workshops are conducted by the Multicultural Center (GSU, 2017). Previously, three session formats were offered at different “risk” levels, based on amount and depth of introspection and engagement with traditionally uncomfortable topics (e.g., privilege and power, marginalization). Specifically, “risk” refers to the level of self-examination of one’s own biases and immersion in learning about diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice issues. Thus, higher “risk” workshops involve more introspection and engagement than lower “risk” workshops. These formats included a one-hour “low risk” basic awareness workshop that allowed participants to describe their experiences of their own identities and engage in superficial discussions of identity; a two-hour “medium risk” ally training that prepares participants for confronting oppression and reflecting on their own understanding of oppression, privilege, and power; and a four-hour “high risk” train the trainer workshop that directly challenges participants to confront oppression, engage in deep personal reflection and disclosure, and attempt to understand diversity and social justice work through multiple identities and lenses (GSU, 2017). However, in the spring of 2017, the primary facilitator of the Safe Zone workshops noted desire to revise and adapt the Safe Zone program to better fit the needs of the GSU community.

The GSU Safe Zone Workshop (SZW) has been adapted through thorough and systematic literature review and has been informed by informal feedback from previous GSU Safe Zone participants. Through these informational sources, GSU’s SZW is now divided into
faculty/staff workshops and student workshops, both of which are offered monthly and do not
differ in any content other than who is present at the workshop (i.e., either all faculty and staff, or
all students). All workshops are now approximately three hours long, and include more
interactive and insight-building activities designed to lead to heightened awareness and
understanding of personally held biases and assumptions as well as terminology and experiences
of oppression, privilege, and power related to sexual prejudice. The adapted workshop includes
elements of education (e.g., learning new terminology) and contact (e.g., watching/reading
described prejudicial experiences by sexual and gender minority community members;
facilitators identify as gender/sexual minority). The adapted SZW includes seven basic units: 1)
groundwork and history of sexual and gender minority identities; 2) identification of successful
ally-ship for intersecting identities; 3) identification and dismantling of social construction of
gender and sexuality; 4) identification of oppression experienced by gender and sexuality
minorities and such effects on mental health and quality of life; 5) identification of core gender
and sexual minority identity terminology; 6) identification of mental health issues and resources
for gender and sexual minorities; and 7) resources for further reading.

Given that this workshop has been adapted specifically for the GSU campus with input
from previous participants combined with exhaustive literature review, it is necessary to
understand if the adapted program meets its goals of improving participants’ attitudes toward
GSM persons, educating participants about sexual prejudice and its effects, and identifying and
practicing ways to act as an ally for sexual and gender minority individuals. Because of the lack
of consistency in Safe Zone curriculum across institutions and lack of incentive for evaluation
completion, empirical evaluation of these workshops cannot be located among peer-reviewed
publications. Therefore, an evaluation of GSU’s SZW must be undertaken to understand the
success or failure of this adapted intervention to meet its stated goals as well as provide context for the ways in which the program’s goals are met. The aims of this evaluation may best be accomplished by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data about the implementation and outcomes of the program.

1.5 Mixed Methods Program Evaluation

Mixed methods (i.e., both quantitative and qualitative methodology) program evaluation has been used to understand more fully the experiences of participants, the situations and contexts of those experiences, the relative “success” of meeting programmatic goals, and how a program succeeds or fails (Padgett, 2012). At the broadest level, “mixed methods” refers to the use of both quantitative and qualitative data within one study. However, most effective and useful mixed methods include the integration of these methodologies. Researchers often use mixed methods for the purposes of triangulation of data through multiple methods, complementarity of data, development of a research project, initiation of questions needing clarification, and expansion of research topics (Hesse-Biber, 2010).

The use of mixed methods within program evaluation allows for a comprehensive understanding of the relative success or failure of a program as well as context for this relative success or failure (Padgett, 2012). Further, qualitative and mixed methods evaluations allow for a well-rounded assessment of the intervention through understanding participant experiences (Rowe et al., 2016). A formative evaluation is conducted for the purposes of program improvement, and typically is conducted during development and implementation of the program (Mertens, 2005). Although most program evaluations are quantitative (Patton, 2015), qualitative investigation is also necessary for understanding the utility and success of a program (Padgett,
Multiple methods for approaching a program evaluation from a mixed methods perspective exist, and often are dependent upon the researcher’s choice to make either the quantitative or the qualitative data primary. Additionally, mixed methods approaches vary in the timing of data collection; qualitative and quantitative data may be collected concurrently or sequentially (Padgett, 2012). The timing of data collection dictates the ability of the data to be integrated. Mixed methods approaches may be designed along two axes: data collection timing and weighting of qualitative and quantitative data. Designs suggest that qualitative and quantitative data can be collected either concurrently or sequentially, and weight or prominence may be given either to qualitative or quantitative data, or these types of data may be weighted equally (termed “dominant/subdominant” or “equal weighting”) (Padgett, 2012). Sequential designs allow for better integration and understanding of data convergence. For the purposes of this program evaluation, a sequential design was implemented; the quantitative data was collected first, and then informed the qualitative interviews. Therefore, implied is that the quantitative data is dominant while the qualitative data is subdominant. This allows for better contextual understanding of the quantitative findings and enhances the study’s ecological validity.

Further, a multitude of perspectives and possible data analytic techniques exist when considering qualitative and/or mixed methods. As described by Padgett (2012), the six primary perspectives for approaching mixed methods or qualitative data include narrative approach, case studies, community-based participatory approach, ethnography, grounded theory, and phenomenological approach. The narrative approach perspective focuses on conversation and
discourse analysis, and centers on the ways in which individuals tell their stories. Case studies as used in qualitative approaches (as opposed to clinical education often used for training purposes) attempt to extract depth and meaning from one or very few instances of events that are understood in context (e.g., a case study of the effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill). Community-based participatory approaches focus on community empowerment and egalitarian partnerships; all stakeholders have opportunity and are encouraged to contribute to the research. An ethnographic perspective attempts to take an insider viewpoint of the phenomena of interest and often focuses on a cultural system with identifiable boundaries and features. Grounded theory approaches data from an inductive viewpoint; theories do not drive data analysis or findings. The perspective taken in the current study is phenomenologic; a phenomenological perspective attempts to explore the lived experience of a construct or event of interest and is most often used in psychology research. Study participants must share a particular experience (e.g., a particular social program), and common themes between participants are investigated. However, not only does phenomenology focus on the actual experience, but it also places importance upon the situations and conditions of these experiences. Overall, the varying approaches to qualitative data do not have clear boundaries, though each perspective suggests nuanced assumptions about the data and its collection and analysis.

1.6 Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; see Figure 1) is a model that suggests a change in attitude toward a behavior (e.g., change in prejudice or prejudicial actions), combined with increased perceived behavioral control, may lead to changes in intentions and/or behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). Specifically, the expectation is that individuals with improved attitudes and
more confidence in control over their actions may act or intend to act more positively toward the outgroup.

Considering the TPB within an intervention program or SPRI context, the long-term goal of the program is likely to be to change the behaviors and/or behavioral intentions of the participants. However, the intervention targets tend to be education, awareness, and attitude change (Bartoş et al., 2014). The TPB would suggest that the long-term goal of changing discriminatory behavior likely acts through change in attitude and change in one’s perceived control over one’s own behaviors. Therefore, although the most proximal aim of a program may be to better attitudes toward an outgroup, it may be assumed that the more distal programmatic goal is to decrease discriminatory behavior.

Although few, if any, SPRIs have published the Theory of Planned Behavior as their underlying theory, other prejudice-reduction interventions have utilized the TPB to develop and understand effects of their interventions. In particular, one intervention aiming to reduce sexual shame, and therefore reduce HIV risk in men who have sex with men, based the intervention on the TPB – participants were able to practice and increase their perceived control over sexually risky situations (Christensen et al., 2013). Further, in attempting to understand and decrease teachers’ negative attitudes toward students with disabilities, one study employed a combination of the TPB and Intergroup Contact Theory to successfully decrease these negative attitudes (Alhassan, 2014).

1.7 Intergroup Contact Theory

The intergroup contact theory (IGCT; the “contact hypothesis”) suggests under optimal conditions (namely, equal status, shared goals accomplished cooperatively, lack of competition, and ability for individuals to get to know each other), contact between individuals who differ on
a social identity can reduce prejudice (Allport, 1954; Brown & Hewstone, 2005). It is proposed that this interaction between people changes their beliefs and feelings toward each other (Whitley & Kite, 2010).

IGCT has been supported in the literature. Since Allport’s initial description, over 500 studies have attempted to understand its ability to explain prejudice reduction. A comprehensive literature review has shown contact can successfully reduce prejudice across settings; effects are most robust when Allport’s optimal conditions are met and largest effects occur for contact between heterosexuals and gays and lesbians (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). On university campuses, perception that at least one LGB student lives on the same floor or in the same building as a resident has been associated with more positive attitudes toward homosexuality (Bowen & Bourgeois, 2001).

Contact seems to affect prejudice by creating cognitive and emotional change. Intergroup contact increases knowledge about the outgroup (Eller & Abrams, 2003), reduces stereotyping (Aberson & Haag, 2007), reduces negative expectations about intergroup interactions (Plant & Devine, 2003), increases perceptions of unity (Eller & Abrams, 2003, 2004), reduces intergroup anxiety (Paolini et al., 2004), and increases empathy and perspective-taking (Aberson & Haag, 2007). Further, this contact need not be direct; indirect contact (e.g., observing ingroup/outgroup member interaction) has similar effects (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). For these reasons, including contact may be paramount for the success of a SPRI. If contact with members of an outgroup works to enhance knowledge and to better attitudes toward this outgroup, then it should be a component of successful SPRIs. In fact, results from a recent meta-analysis suggest approximately 27% of analyzed studies incorporated either contact alone or contact-plus-
education, and that these protocols often exhibited a medium effect size on reducing sexual prejudice (Bartoş et al., 2014).

1.8 The Current Study

Until this project, no evaluation had been conducted of the Safe Zone Workshop (SZW), a sexual prejudice reduction intervention, on the Georgia State University (GSU) campus. This intervention workshop was recently adapted to fit the needs of GSU students, faculty, and staff. The aims of the workshop include identifying and understanding sexual prejudice, building awareness of one’s own biases, identifying mental health issues experienced by sexual and gender minority individuals and available resources, and learning ways to be an ally for intersecting identities of sexual and gender minority individuals. The primary goal of this project is to conduct a formative mixed methods evaluation of the Safe Zone Workshop at Georgia State University.

The evaluation consists of both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Quantitative data were collected both before and after the workshop. Qualitative interviews were conducted with a subset of participants after the workshop. The aims of the project were to:

Purpose 1. Implement and evaluate the adapted SZW, with aims of:

a) improving participants’ attitudes toward sexual and gender minorities,

b) educating participants about sexual prejudice and its effects, and

c) identifying and practicing ways to act as an ally for sexual and gender minority individuals; and

Purpose 2. Gain a better understanding not only of whether the goals of the workshop are met, but also of the context in which these goals may be met, as understood from the participant perspective.
Based upon previous research regarding the effects of sexual prejudice reduction interventions on university campuses, the specific hypotheses include:

**Hypothesis 1.** In accordance with Purpose 1a, participants will report decreased levels of sexual prejudice from before to after conclusion of the intervention workshop, as measured by the Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (Herek, 1984; Herek, 1997).

**Hypothesis 2.** In accordance with Purpose 1b, participants will report increased awareness about oppression of lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals, as measured by the Privilege and Oppression Inventory (Hays, Chang, & Decker, 2007).

**Hypothesis 3.** In accordance with Purpose 1c, participants will report increased knowledge and behavioral intention to act with an ally identity, as measured by the LGBT Ally Identity Measure (Jones, Brewster, & Jones, 2014) and the Homophobic Behavior of Students Scale (Van de Ven, Bornholt, & Bailey, 1996).

**Hypothesis 4.** In accordance with Purpose 2, consistent with previous literature and similar program evaluations, qualitative interviews will suggest that SZW goals are met through the combination of education about and contact with sexual minority individuals. However, no additional a priori hypotheses are offered as paired with Purpose 2 as the aim of this Purpose is to provide individual understanding and perspective related to the workshop.
Figure 1. The Theory of planned behavior (adapted from Ajzen, 1991).
2 METHOD

2.1 Participants

A total of 82 participants were recruited through emails and flyers from the Multicultural Center at Georgia State University and in-person communication. The participants were all English-speaking adults ages 18 years and older who were affiliated with Georgia State University, including students, faculty, and staff. Any participants not meeting these criteria (e.g., under 18 years old) would have been excluded, though this exclusion was unnecessary as no potential participants not meeting inclusion criteria attempted to participate. All participants self-selected to participate in this study. In total, $10 in cash was offered for completion of both the pre-test and the post-test.

Of the participants, 11% were faculty, 17% were staff, and 72% were students. On average, participants were 25.29 (SD = 9.99) years old, and 68.29% were younger than 25 years old. Faculty were, on average, 39.00 (SD = 10.51) years old, staff were 37.29 (SD = 11.46), and students were 20.36 (SD = 2.47). The majority of participants (51.22%) identified their race/ethnicity as Black or African American; remaining participants identified as White (25.61%), Hispanic or Latino/a (7.32%), Biracial or Multiracial (7.32%), Asian (4.88%), and Indian (1.22%). Additionally, 2.44% of participants did not report race/ethnicity. The majority of participants also identified their gender as a woman (70.73%); remaining participants identified their gender as a man (26.83%) or gender variant/non-conforming (2.44%). Further, 2.44% of participants identified as transgender, and 97.56% identified as not transgender. Participants identified their sexual orientation as straight/heterosexual (76.83%), gay (7.32%), bisexual (6.10%), lesbian (2.44%), pansexual (2.44%), and asexual (1.22%); 3.66% reported that their sexual orientation was not listed in the provided groups.
In total, 10 participants participated in an interview after the workshop. Of these interviewees, five were faculty, three were staff, and two were students. On average, interviewees were 38.20 (13.62) years old. Half of interviewees \((n = 5)\) identified their race/ethnicity as White; remaining interviewees identified as Hispanic/Latino \((n = 2)\), Black or African American \((n = 2)\), and Multiracial \((n = 1)\). Of interviewees, six identified themselves as women, three as men, and one as gender variant/non-conforming. Further, one interviewee identified as transgender. Interviewees identified their sexual orientation as straight/heterosexual \((n = 7)\), lesbian \((n = 2)\), and pansexual \((n = 1)\).

### 2.2 Procedures

The adapted Safe Zone Workshop (SZW) was implemented on the Georgia State University campus through the Multicultural Center with 82 participants who had not previously participated in the SZW. Separate workshops were conducted for faculty/staff and for students, though all workshop material was the same. To recruit, informational emails and flyers were distributed to potential participants on the GSU campus. Interested participants signed up for a workshop through the GSU Multicultural Center website through a pre-scheduled workshop or requested additional workshops outside of these regularly scheduled times. One or two facilitators guided the three-hour workshop; 13 workshops were implemented from November 2017 through April 2018, and on average 6.31 (SD = 4.70) participants participated in this research project in each workshop with a range of one participant to 20 participants. Approximately ten additional attendees were present for some workshops who chose not to participate in the pre- and post-test evaluations; these individuals were not included as participants for the purposes of this study. All SZW attendees heard a description of the study immediately following the workshop before completing the post-test, though informed consent
was provided and electronically signed when participants completed the pretest online before the workshop.

When attendees registered for the workshop online through the Multicultural Center website, they were provided with information about the time and location of the workshop as well as the option to complete the pretest questionnaire online after consenting to participate. The informed consent included information regarding each participant’s ability to discontinue the study at any time without repercussion as well as a description of the purpose of the workshop and purpose of data collection. Additionally, the informed consent notified the participant of the potential risk of discomfort caused by discussion of sensitive information related to sexual and gender identities in the workshop. The participants then electronically signed the informed consent and completed the pretest questionnaire (for complete pretest/posttest questionnaires, see Appendices A and B).

After completion of the pretest questionnaire online, participants participated in the three-hour revised SZW. On average, participants completed the pretest 5.67 (SD = 15.31) days before the workshop. At the conclusion of the workshop, participants completed the posttest questionnaire also online with provided electronic devices (e.g., laptops, iPads) and were compensated $10 for their completion of pretest and posttest. Through the online survey, participants were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed about their SZW experience. If so willing, they had space to provide their name and contact information in the posttest. A total of 55 participants indicated willingness to participate in the qualitative interview. Of these 55, 45 were contacted but declined the opportunity, and 10 completed the interview. Interested participants were contacted for follow-up interviews focused on the experience of the revised
SZW. On average, participants completed the interview 18.70 (10.65) days after the workshop and posttest.

Individual qualitative follow-up interviews were conducted with a subset of participants who agreed to be interviewed after the posttest. No additional incentive was offered for this part of the study. The interviews were, on average, 29 minutes, 35 seconds (SD = 7 minutes, 5 seconds) long and were audio recorded on a Sony IC Recorder, ICD-PX440. These interviews were in part guided by and used to provide context for the quantitative findings, and inquired about participants’ experiences with the revised SZW, participants’ perspectives about experiences of change within themselves due to the workshop, and to what participants’ attributed these changes. Specific inquiries focused on the participants’ understanding of the effects and utility of the workshop (e.g., attitude change, skills gained, terms learned, behavioral intentions). Additionally, participants were questioned about their interest in Safe Zone, how they found out about the program, why they chose to participate, who else may benefit from the program, and how useful it is on the GSU campus. Further, participants were asked how, if at all, they consider the workshop content relevant to their own lives and were requested to provide context to answers. Lastly, after coding and analysis of the qualitative data, a subset of interviewees (N = 4) reviewed the analysis of their own interview material to ensure that they had been understood accurately (i.e., “member checking”). These participants all agreed with the data analysis interpretation of their interview material. For a better understanding of the ways in which these data types were combined in mixed methods and how qualitative interviews were analyzed with thematic analysis methodology (per Braun & Clarke, 2006), see Results, below.

Once all data were collected and analyzed, they were presented to staff at the Georgia State University Multicultural Center, in which the Safe Zone program is housed. This
presentation included information related to the parts of the workshop that participants liked and disliked, as well as change that participants reported both quantitatively and qualitatively. Additionally, information was included related to suggestions for the program made by participants and groups that participants believe would benefit from the Safe Zone workshop at Georgia State University.

2.3 Instruments

2.3.1 Quantitative Assessment of Safe Zone Workshop.

The quantitative questionnaire was administered online before participants began the workshop. The pretest questionnaire included 61 questions (for the full pretest questionnaire, see Appendix A). Pilot-testing the time to complete the questionnaire before beginning data collection suggested an average completion time of 10 minutes; after eliminating participants who completed the pretest in excess of 20 minutes (and up to 3.6 hours; 6 total participants; approximately three standard deviations above the mean) and one participant who completed less than 25% of the total pretest, the pretest questionnaire on average took 9 minutes, 38 seconds (SD: 3 minutes, 25 seconds) to complete. The following measures were used to understand the Safe Zone Workshop’s (SZW) influence on LGBT/GSM ally identity, behavioral intentions, understanding of GSM mental health issues, and attitudes toward lesbian and gay individuals. Demographic questions included sexual orientation, age, gender, race/ethnicity, and GSU affiliation (i.e., student, faculty, staff). All of the following measures, excluding demographic information and the Social Desirability Scale, were given both before and after the revised SZW; for full posttest questionnaire, see Appendix B.

Social desirability. The short form of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (SDS-SF; Reynolds, 1982) is a 12-item true/false self-report questionnaire designed to determine
if a participant’s responses are a reliable indicator of genuine beliefs or instead if the participant’s responses are influenced by social desirability, i.e., response bias such that the participant answers in a way that will be viewed favorably. For example, one item asks participants to rate as true or false: “No matter who I’m talking to, I’m always a good listener.” The internal consistency of the short-form scale as originally measured was good (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .85$), as was test-retest reliability ($r = .92$) with a sample of undergraduate psychology students (Reynolds, 1982). In the current sample, internal consistency is low but acceptable (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .71$).

**Attitudes toward LGBT/GSM individuals/sexual prejudice.** The revised Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (ATLG-R; Herek, 1984; Herek, 1997) is a 10-item measure rated by the participant on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). For example, one item asks participants to rate agreement with the statement: “Male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men.” This scale measures attitudes toward gay men and lesbians through two separate subscales, the Attitudes Toward Gay Men (ATG) and Attitudes Toward Lesbians (ATL) subscales. When used with heterosexuals in the research literature, internal consistency for the total measure (ATLG) is excellent ($\alpha = .90$), and for the individual subscales ranges from good (ATG $\alpha = .89$) to fair (ATL $\alpha = .77$). In the current sample at pretest, internal consistency for the total measure (ATLG) is good ($\alpha = .87$), and for the individual subscales is good (ATG $\alpha = .81$) and acceptable (ATL $\alpha = .77$).

**Awareness about LGB oppression.** The Privilege and Oppression Inventory, Heterosexism Awareness subscale (POI-HA; Hays, Chang, & Decker, 2007) is a 10-item measure rated by the participant on a six-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). This measure assesses the social privilege that the participant attributes to
heterosexual persons and is a subscale in the larger Privilege and Oppression Inventory. For example, one item asks participants to rate agreement with the statement: “Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals experience discrimination.” Internal consistency for this subscale measure provided in the research literature is good ($\alpha = .81$). In the current sample, internal consistency for the subscale measure at pretest is good ($\alpha = .86$).

**Ally identity.** The LGBT Ally Identity Measure (AIM; Jones, Brewster, & Jones, 2014) includes 19 statements rated by the participant on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) to report on areas of ally identity, with higher scores indicating higher levels of ally identity in each domain. The three domains include knowledge and skills, openness and support, and oppression awareness. For example, one item from the Openness and Support domain asks participants to rate agreement with the statement: “If I see discrimination against a sexual minority person or group occur, I actively work to confront it.” Internal consistency for the total measure is good ($\alpha = .88$). Internal consistency for individual domains ranges from fair (Oppression Awareness: $\alpha = .76$) to good (Knowledge and Skills: $\alpha = .80$, Openness and Support: $\alpha = .82$). In the current sample at pretest, internal consistency for the total measure is excellent ($\alpha = .94$); internal consistency for individual domains is good (Oppression Awareness: $\alpha = .89$; Openness and Support: $\alpha = .87$) and excellent (Knowledge and Skills: $\alpha = .90$).

**Behavioral intentions.** The Homophobic Behavior of Students Scale (HBSS; Van de Ven, Bornholt, & Bailey, 1996) includes 10 statements rated by the participant on a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = definitely false to 5 = definitely true) to measure the extent to which participants associate willingly or avoid contact with sexual minority individuals and willingness to act in support of gay and lesbian rights. This scale is a unidimensional measure of behavioral
intentions. Internal consistency for the scale in the research literature is good (α = .81). This scale has been validated with undergraduate students, as are many psychological scales; however, the HBSS may be appropriate with all participants in the current project (i.e., students, faculty, and staff) in the context of learning about homosexuality, prejudice, and heteronormativity because it may be adapted to assess overall behavioral intentions, not just those within a classroom setting, as described below. Items were modified to assess behavioral intentions to interact with or advocate for sexual minority persons not exclusively in the classroom. For example, one original item asks participants to rate the veracity of the statement: “I would speak individually, in class, with a gay person or lesbian about homosexual issues,” and was edited so that “in class” is removed, so the final item read: “I would speak individually with a gay person or lesbian about homosexual issues.” In the current sample at pretest, internal consistency for the measure is excellent (α = .90).

2.3.2 Qualitative Assessment of Safe Zone Workshop.

From a phenomenological perspective, qualitative interviews regarding the experience of the Safe Zone Workshop were conducted in combination with quantitative assessment of attitudes, skills, and behavioral intentions. Phenomenological analysis allows for greater understanding of a particular human phenomenon (e.g., a specific program on a college campus) from the perspective of individuals who share that particular life experience (Padgett, 2012). Further, a phenomenological perspective attempts to view the situations and conditions of participants’ experiences through both quantitative and qualitative inquiry, thus providing a foundation for a mixed methods study inquiry in which thematic analysis will be undertaken from a phenomenologic perspective. For additional information related to thematic analysis, see Results, below.
The qualitative interviews included open-ended questions related to both positive and negative experiences within the workshop, suggestions for improvement, skills gained, and reflections on one’s attitudes. Interviews focused on the utility of the workshop and possible change in attitudes toward sexual and gender minority individuals, knowledge about sexual and gender minority-related issues, and behaviors and behavioral intentions to act as an ally. Additionally, understanding of qualitative interviews was informed by obtained quantitative data to provide context for this data and to allow for deeper understanding of the experience of the SZW. For basic interview guide, see Appendix C.
3 RESULTS

3.1 Quantitative Results

Means, standard deviations, possible ranges, and observed ranges of study variables at both pretest and posttest, as well as age, days between pretest and posttest, and days between posttest and interview are presented in Table 1. Of note, many means at pretest were close to the end of the range of the scale; for example, the mean score at pretest on the HBSS (behavioral intentions) for the total sample is 45.54 (SD: 5.88) with a possible range of 10-50 and a high and more restricted observed range of 28-50. These trends are evident in all scales, suggesting ceiling and/or floor effects at pretest measurement (i.e., floor effect of self-reported low prejudice, ceiling effects of self-reported high comfort, acceptance, knowledge, skills, openness, support, awareness of oppression, positive behavioral intentions). However, although statistically not significant (reported below), patterns of means from pretest to posttest generally suggest trends toward lower prejudice, higher comfort and acceptance, and increased knowledge, skills, openness, support, and awareness of oppression, and higher positive behavioral intentions following the workshop.

Correlations for all study measures, as well as demographic variables, are presented in Table 2. Age and affiliation were significantly correlated – students were significantly younger than faculty and staff ($r = -0.75, p < 0.01$). However, neither affiliation nor age was significantly correlated with any dependent variables. Additionally, race/ethnicity was significantly associated with GSU affiliation – students were more likely to identify as a member of an underrepresented group (i.e., Black/African American, Hispanic, Latinx) and faculty and staff were more likely to identify as White ($r = -0.49, p < 0.01$). Race/ethnicity was also significantly associated with POI-HA score; participants who identified as White were more likely to report higher comfort and
acceptance than participants who identified as a member of an underrepresented group ($r = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$). Gender was significantly correlated with the total AIM ($r = 0.39$, $p = 0.01$), AIM Knowledge and Skills ($r = 0.43$, $p < 0.01$), AIM Openness and Support ($r = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$), and HBSS ($r = 0.27$, $p < 0.05$); women tended to report higher LGBT ally identity (including knowledge, skills, openness, and support) and positive behavioral intentions than men. For the purposes of these analyses, the two individuals who identified as gender non-conforming were excluded as this group was significantly smaller than the groups of individuals who identified as men or as women, and it would be inappropriate to assign them to a different gender group to create falsely binary gender categories. Because of such correlations, both race/ethnicity and gender were included as covariates in the models addressing the primary hypotheses.

Before investigating the primary hypotheses, it was observed that the data from multiple study variables were not normally distributed. Attempts were made (i.e., through square root transformations, log transformations, and natural log transformations) to normalize these distributions, but efforts were unsuccessful. However, distributions are similar from pretest to posttest for all variables. Even for the most skewed, platykurtic, or leptokurtic posttest variable distributions, half or fewer of cases scored at the lowest or highest possible value for the given scale, suggesting some variation in all variables. For histograms of pretest and posttest distributions of all variables of interest, see Appendix D. Because of this non-normality, all statistical measurements were calculated with a robust GLM estimator through SPSS v. 25.

To address the primary hypotheses, repeated measures ANCOVAs were conducted for each variable of interest, controlling for variance accounted for by gender and race/ethnicity. These were the only demographic variables significantly correlated with any non-demographic variable of interest. Further, because the measure of social desirability (SDS) did not have a
significant relationship with any measure, the SDS measure was not included in any further statistical analysis. Additionally, analyses included all participants together, and the student group was also analyzed separately. The size of the faculty/staff group was inadequate for separate analysis.

Related to attitudes, a repeated-measures ANCOVA with Bonferroni correction determined that a combined measure of prejudice against lesbians and gay men (ATLG) did not differ significantly from pretest to posttest for the full participant sample while adjusting for race/ethnicity and gender ($F(1, 60) = 0.06, p = 0.81$). Similarly, separate ANCOVAs determined no statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest for the full participant sample for specific prejudice against lesbians (ATL subscale, $F(1, 64) = 0.39, p = 0.54$) or gay men (ATG subscale, $F(1, 62) = 0.13, p = 0.72$). Student only ANCOVAs suggested similar outcomes (ATLG total, $F(1, 39) = 2.18, p = 0.15$; ATL subscale, $F(1, 42) = 0.58, p = 0.45$; ATG subscale, $F(1, 41) = 3.78, p = 0.06$).

Related to awareness of oppression and heterosexism, ANCOVA suggested no statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest for the full participant sample while adjusting for gender and race/ethnicity (POI-HA, $F(1, 63) = 0.08, p = 0.78$). The student only ANCOVA suggested a similar result ($F(1, 41) = 0.11, p = 0.75$) while also controlling for race/ethnicity and gender.

Related to knowledge and skills for being an ally, ANCOVA determined that a combined measure of ally identity (AIM total score) did not differ significantly between pretest and posttest for the full participant sample while adjusting for gender and race/ethnicity ($F(1, 51) = 1.08, p = 0.30$). Separate ANCOVAs determined no statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest for the full participant sample related to knowledge and skills for being an ally (AIM
Knowledge and Skills subscale, $F(1, 59) = 0.06, p = 0.80$ or openness and support (AIM Openness and Support subscale, $F(1, 58) = 1.99, p = 0.16$). However, ANCOVA results do suggest a statistically significant increase from pretest to posttest in participants’ awareness of oppression as measured by the Oppression Awareness subscale of the AIM (AIM Oppression Awareness subscale, $F(1, 59) = 6.52, p = 0.01$). Student only ANCOVAs suggested similar trends (AIM total score, $F(1, 32) = 0.71, p = 0.41$; AIM Knowledge and Skills subscale, $F(1, 38) = 0.01, p = 0.97$; AIM Openness and Support subscale, $F(1, 37) = 1.50, p = 0.23$; AIM Oppression Awareness subscale, $F(1, 38) = 4.07, p = 0.05$).

Related to behavioral intentions to act in positive ways to gender and sexual minority individuals, ANCOVA suggested no statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest for the full participant sample while adjusting for gender and race/ethnicity (HBSS, $F(1, 60) = 0.08, p = 0.77$). The student only ANCOVA suggested a similar trend ($F(1, 39) = 0.03, p = 0.86$).

### 3.2 Qualitative Results

Thematic analysis was used for the qualitative data to identify, analyze, and report patterns within and reactions toward the workshop intervention. This thematic analysis included conducting interviews with a total of 10 participants, transcribing the interviews, reading and re-reading the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, grouping and reviewing the themes, and generating a description of each theme, per Braun and Clarke, 2006. As phenomenology is the study of objects of direct experience and understanding everyday experiences of reality, phenomenological assumptions, such as participant experience as subjective, individual, and primarily important, guided the search for these themes. Within this project, a “theme” is defined as a patterned response in relation to research questions which
multiple participants discuss (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes were identified from a theoretical or deductive approach to thematic analysis. This theoretical thematic analysis was guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) and the Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954; Brown & Hewstone, 2005).

The thematic data analysis coding team originally included the graduate-level primary researcher and two undergraduate research assistants. However, after coding the initial three of 10 interviews, the team changed from three to two coders (the graduate-level primary researcher and one of the original undergraduate research assistants). Coder training included readings related to coding qualitative data (e.g., Braun & Clarke, 2006). Additionally, the full team met in advance to discuss biases and positions related to sexual minority persons, sexual prejudice, and sexual prejudice reduction interventions; the team regularly discussed biases and reflected on the process of interviewing, transcribing, and coding the interviews (e.g., as suggested by Levitt, Motulsky, Wertz, Morrow, & Ponterotto, 2017). The verbatim transcripts of participant interviews were coded separately by each member of the coding team, who then met for comparison analysis and at that time began to develop the initial codebook. Codes were then categorized into broader themes and subthemes, and recursive review allowed for collapsing of converging theme categories and/or subcategories (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

As noted above, the coding team changed from three to two members after completion of coding of the first three interviews. However, this change should not impact integrity of the research findings, as the team practiced reflexivity throughout the coding process (e.g., coders had conversations about coding and their own reactions before, during, and after data analysis), reviewed and came to consensus about all coding, and engaged in member checking with four
(40%) of the interviewees to ensure that their stories were told and interpreted accurately (per suggestion by Levitt et al., 2017 and Levitt et al., 2018).

Themes noted by the coding team were described according to the most recent reporting standards for qualitative and mixed methods research in psychology (Levitt et al., 2018). Themes were extracted from each interview and then compared to other interviews by the coding team, as described above. Then, subthemes within each major theme were uncovered to describe variety within each theme. See Table 3 for list of broad themes, subthemes, number of participants endorsing each subtheme, and an example quote from each subtheme.

3.2.1 Theme 1: Interest.

In total, nine broad themes were extracted from the qualitative interviews. One theme, termed “Interest,” describes the reasons that participants chose to participate in Safe Zone and how they found out about Safe Zone at GSU. Four subthemes of “Interest” were described. One subtheme included “Self-Initiated Search” (described by four of 10 participants), suggesting that participants sought out Safe Zone on their own; for example, one participant stated, “One of the first things I did when I got [to GSU] once I was moved in was to say now I’m here, have a permanent spot, I’ve had a note of Safe Zone, look it up when you get to your job.” A second subtheme of “Interest” was “Knowledge/Skills” (described by four participants), suggesting that participants were interested in participating in Safe Zone to gain knowledge and skills; one participant stated, “I think it’s good to be, as a faculty member, to be able to discuss using the correct terms and just being aware of… not just the issues that have always been around but things that are emerging.” Third, a subtheme of “Interest” was “Someone Else Told” (reported by four participants), suggesting that participants attended Safe Zone because they found about the workshop from someone else. For instance, one participant noted, “I found out about the
workshop because a faculty member in our department actually reached out to the rest of us and suggested that it would be great if every single faculty member in our department was to go through it, so that we could be perhaps, if not the first, one of the first, departments to have every single faculty member having gone through the experience.” Lastly, a subtheme of “Interest” was “Job/Credit” (noted by three participants), suggesting that participants chose to attend the workshop either for credit in a class or for their job. One participant said, “The reason I chose to participate in the workshop is because I’m a [graduate assistant] in the Multicultural Center and I was put in charge of helping get participants… I wanted to go through it so I can be able to talk to people about it and let them know in detail what you’re gonna be learning.”

3.2.2 **Theme 2: Goals.**

Participants also discussed what they believed the goals of the Safe Zone workshop to be in a broad theme termed “Goals.” Four subthemes were extracted from this broad theme. One subtheme, labeled “Education” (reported by six participants), suggested that some participants viewed one goal of Safe Zone as educating participants; for example, one participant said, “The overall goal that I believe is supposed to be educating people about GSMs, the kind of things they go through.” A second subtheme of “Goals” was “Inclusivity and Ally-ship” (described by five participants). This subtheme describes that some participants view a primary goal of Safe Zone as building a more inclusive environment in which more people act as allies for gender and sexual minority persons. For instance, one participant described, “I thought the goals were how to make you as a person a Safe Zone, how to teach you how to make the area that you’re in into a Safe Zone, how to be more inclusive, so people – anybody who comes and talks to you or is in the area – doesn’t feel judged or pressured… to be anything they don’t want to be.” A third subtheme of “Goals” was “Awareness and Comfort” (noted by three participants). This subtheme
suggests that some participants view a goal of Safe Zone as creating heightened awareness of issues related to gender and sexual minority persons and increased comfort with GSM people and discussing these issues. For example, one participant stated, “I think it’s to make us aware and consciously aware of our conversations, our ignorance.” Lastly, a fourth subtheme of “Goals” was “Challenge Prejudice” (reported by one participant), suggesting that this participant views the primary goal of Safe Zone as challenging the prejudice of the workshop participants. This participant said, “I think the goal is to challenge [people’s prejudices].”

3.2.3 **Theme 3: Likes.**

Further, participants expressed what they enjoyed and/or appreciated about the workshop, captured by the theme “Likes.” This broad theme contained seven subthemes. The first subtheme, termed “General Positive” (described by eight participants) contained any global statements endorsing the Safe Zone program. For instance, one participant noted, “I think it’s a great program.” Another subtheme, “Facilitation” (reported by eight participants), included aspects of the facilitation and/or facilitator that participants appreciated. One participant stated, “The guy who ran it, he is really friendly, definitely outgoing, so I liked the vibe and personality he had.” Further, the “Specific Activities” subtheme (conveyed by seven participants) captured activities in particular that participants liked. One participant said, “There was a part where [the facilitator] had us get up and he had four corners of the room – and it was like agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree and he would read certain statements and to watch… where people ended up and couple points where we’re like, ‘I don’t know, I’m somewhere in between here.’ So that was really interesting. You know, [to be able to] see LITERALLY where people stood.” Generally, within this subtheme, participants noted specific activities they liked included participating in a Four Corners activity to engage in one’s own experiences and attitudes (four
participants), learning about gender and sexuality as spectra through a Genderbread Person activity (one participant), hearing about history of gender and sexual minority persons (two participants), and thinking through real-world scenarios to determine if a specific person in each scenario was a “good ally” (three participants).

A fourth subtheme of “Likes” was termed “Interactions/Discussions” (noted by five participants). One participant said, “It’s very discussion-based, which I liked. And it gave each individual an opportunity to voice their opinions.” Another subtheme, “Resources” (described by four participants), captured particular resources that participants liked. Regarding the activity and information packet, one participant noted, “I think that’s helpful that you can take something with you and go back to it or refer to it or you know if you go through something too fast or we skipped some things that we could go to it and look it over. So I think that literature or having something tangible that you can take with you, I think that’s helpful.” Sixth, the subtheme “Environment” (reported by three participants) captured that some participants appreciated the general feel of the workshop. One participant stated, “It was comfortable between most people.” Lastly, the subtheme “Learning” (described by three participants) suggested that participants enjoyed learning about new ideas. One participant said, “My favorite part was talking about the difference between your romantic identity and your gender identity and your sexual identity. Most people don’t get that and I feel that’s honestly one of the first steps in breaking down sexism or sexual prejudice is by talking about the fact that those are all different.”

3.2.4 Theme 4: Dislikes.

On the other hand, participants also expressed what they did not enjoy about the workshop, captured by the broad theme “Dislikes,” subdivided into seven subthemes. The first subtheme, “Environment (Physical)” (noted by seven participants), suggests what the
participants did not like about the physical space in which the workshop was housed. For example, one participant said, “I felt very claustrophobic in the room. The physical space was really small.” Another subtheme, “Activities/Participation” (reported by seven participants), described activities that participants did not enjoy. In particular, four participants noted that one activity called “Coming Out Stars” was not done, which they wanted to complete; one participant emphasized, “I looked through my packet afterward and I saw this thing, it was about like stars or something and we just entirely missed this experience. It looked like it was something that would be… I don’t know… like engaging or seeing a point of view of someone that we don’t have. I think we should have done that because one of the other [activities] did feel pointless” (referring to an activity in which participants were instructed to guess the gender of various individuals portrayed in a variety of scenarios). Further captured by this theme is the lack of participation and interaction within the activities, as described by one participant: “There was no interacting. It was more three hours of lecture. With no interacting. And no breaks. No breaks.” Participants also noted that they, at times, disliked the leadership of the workshop, captured by the subtheme “Facilitation” (stated by five participants). One participant said, “When [participants] share information, it was like it was… you have his attention, but he doesn’t acknowledge your attention at all. He does not acknowledge your comment. He’ll look at you and he’ll listen, I think he’s listening, and then he’ll go (turns head away from interviewer) and next without any acknowledgement. Like no ‘that’s a good point’ or ‘glad you felt that way’ or ‘that’s interesting’ or ‘thank you for sharing’… none of that. It went on. NEXT.” Participants also noted that they disliked the timing of the workshop (subtheme “Timing,” reported by five participants); one participant described, “We ended up running out of time with all that was in the packet so there were one or two things he just ran through. And then, skipped a few things.”
A fifth subtheme of “Dislikes” was labeled “Resources” (suggested by five participants), in which participants noted that they disliked the type and presentation of the resources provided (or lack thereof). One participant stated, “Resources-wise, during the workshop he didn’t really present much. I wish he had. He just at the end briefly said that at the end of the packet are sources helped to design the workshop, so it was more of a, here’s a list of sources he used or other sources we could go to to learn more things. So that was the only presentation of other resources.” Another subtheme, termed “Lack of Change/Challenge” (described by three participants) is illustrated by one participant: “I don’t think anyone was really challenged on the beliefs they have. I didn’t see that, so I don’t think it’s working to change anything.” Lastly, the subtheme “Lack of Ally Training” (stated by one participant) describes one participant’s frustration: “I feel like we didn’t really TRAIN how to be an ally. I feel like that was kind of… if I had one criticism it would be to invest more time into helping people understand what their role actually is.”

3.2.5 **Theme 5: Suggestions.**

In conjunction with describing their dislikes, participants also often made suggestions to help the program to be better (broad theme “Suggestions,” with seven subthemes). Of the ten interviewees, eight described the subtheme “Recruitment/Advertising,” giving suggestions for how to recruit or observed absence of advertising. For instance, one participant gave the feedback, “I probably would never have heard about it if it weren’t for [my partner], so something… I don’t know. Something to get out there. If they’re sending emails for advertisement that’s great, but as a faculty member, we tend... I myself and a few of my colleagues we’ve talked about it before that we tend to ignore a large chunk of mass sent GSU emails, so email is probably not the best for faculty advertisement.” A second subtheme,
“Activities” (reported by seven participants), includes suggestions for bettering the included activities of the workshop. One participant noted, “There needs to be more [interactive] activities. It’s a three-hour thing. It won’t seem like three hours if every 30 minutes we’re doing like a stand-up activity. Role-playing too.” Third, participants gave suggestions related to the atmosphere of the workshop (“Environment (Feel),” noted by four participants). One participant stated, “I think it needs to be a more inclusive, better environment.” Relatedly, the subtheme “Ally/Resources” (described by three participants) includes suggestions for additional workshop components: “Include in the training how to facilitate different issues and utilize resources.”

Related to the “Timing” subtheme of the broad “Dislikes” theme, the “Time” subtheme of the “Suggestions” category gives suggestions for how to manage time more effectively; one person suggested, “I think another hour if it could be a four-hour training would be beneficial to really talk about equipping the person who’s leaving that training with some tools to engage.” A sixth subtheme, “Next Steps” (conveyed by three participants), captures ideas that participants had for Safe Zone outside of the workshop: “Maybe the Multicultural Center could have a listserv of trained folks on campus.” Lastly, the subtheme “Environment (Physical)” (noted by two participants) includes suggestions for improving the physical environment of the workshop. Specifically, one participant said, “Really, you need windows.”

### 3.2.6 Theme 6: Who Else.

Participants also described who should participate in the Safe Zone workshop, as included in the broad theme “Who Else,” with seven subthemes that describe whom participants believe would benefit from Safe Zone at GSU. The first subtheme, “Faculty and Staff” (described by four participants), suggests that some participants believe faculty and staff would most benefit from Safe Zone. One participant said, “I feel like if faculty and staff had this and
maybe had an awareness they might be able to step in and help students and better support students and whatever they need, or at least help them find resources for support even if they can’t do it themselves… just point them to where they could get help.” Next, three participants reported the subtheme “All of Campus.” One said, “Of course, I think the whole school should go through Safe Zone.” Further, two participants conveyed the subtheme “Everyone,” indicating that all people, whether or not affiliated with GSU, would benefit from Safe zone; one participant noted, “I think for everyone. Everyone should take the workshop.”

More specifically, the subtheme “Student-Engaged Populations” (noted by two participants) suggests that some participants think that any person on campus who works with students would benefit from Safe Zone: “Anyone who is gonna be interacting with students really should take this, just because you’re interacting with students you’re gonna meet so many customs… you need to be a safe zone.” A fifth subtheme, “Individuals Lacking Appreciation/Understanding of Diversity,” was stated by two participants. For example, one participant noted, “[It’s good for] people who have notions that GSM individuals are living the wrong path… people who don’t support equal treatment of GSM individuals.” Sixth, the subtheme “New Hires” (reported by two participants) suggests that anyone hired by GSU should be mandated to attend a Safe Zone workshop relatively soon after hiring. One participant said, “I think it’s an experience everyone should go through during the early stages of the job at GSU. It’s a matter of cultural sensitivity, because at GSU, they are going to be exposed to perhaps a more diverse population than they are used to in any other setting they were in before.” Lastly, the subtheme “Students” (described by two participants) suggests that GSU students would benefit from the workshop. For instance, one participant stated, “I think it would do wonders to many people in the student body.”
3.2.7 **Theme 7: Prior Knowledge.**

Further, participants described previous experiences that they had coming into the workshop, captured by the broad theme “Prior Knowledge,” with six subthemes. More than half (six out of 10) of interviewees described the subtheme “About GSM Persons/Sensitivity,” suggesting that they had prior knowledge or were already sensitive to issues related to gender and sexual minority identities. One participant described, “Well, while I’m not a sexual minority myself, I have a lot of experience around people who are. So I was no stranger to what they often go through, unfortunately. So I knew a lot going into this. There was stuff that I learned. But I was definitely no stranger.” Second, the subtheme “Family/Friends” (reported by five participants) captures participants’ descriptions of their relationships. As said by one participant, “I have lots of gay friends. And, well, all my life I’ve had gay friends. But I’ve known professionals who… he was a transman. And you know I never felt uncomfortable with him.”

Next, the subtheme “Other Training” (conveyed by four participants) relates to description of any similar training as described by participants. For instance, one participant noted, “I’ve done this kind of training before.” Participants also described sociocultural experiences, as captured in the subtheme “Culture” (noted by four participants). One participant said, “I grew up in the same binary western culture like everybody else. It’s hard for me to reset my brain to that as well.” A fifth subtheme, called “Skills/Self-Knowledge” (reported by four participants) describes any knowledge or abilities that participants knew about themselves before attending the workshop. One participant stated, “If somebody asked me what comes to mind and spit it out, I’m not very good at doing that,” suggesting knowledge about his own ways of communicating with others. Lastly, the subtheme “GSU” (suggested by three participants) includes any information described by the participant specifically about Georgia State
University. For example, one participant noted, “[GSU students are] all just so versatile, especially compared to somewhere like Georgia Tech. Most of the [GSU] students have come from poverty, first generation students, countries that you wouldn’t usually see in the traditional students, minorities, a lot higher minority rate. I feel like we should be a lot more in tune and in touch with that reality that GSU has.”

3.2.8 **Theme 8: Others’ Experiences.**

Participants often described experiences of others they observed around them, captured by the broad theme “Others’ Experiences,” with three subthemes. The first subtheme, “Ignorance/Change” (noted by four participants), describes experiences of either change, learning, or lack of knowledge that participants observed in others throughout the workshop. For instance, one participant said, “I was with people who had no idea and I did see them get some things and be like ‘Oh, okay, I see how it’s like that.’ And I saw them learn stuff.” Next, the subtheme “Help” (reported by three participants) describes participants’ experiences of helping others or observing others asking for help. One participant relayed the experience: “There was a, I guess he was a teacher or something, and he said, ‘How can I make it more inclusive in my [teaching] materials?’ And the examples he thought was when he has a sentence that reads, ‘The student XYZ, blah blah blah… and then he for example goes into the bank.’ He said that he added he/she goes into the bank, so I don’t just specify one. But how can I include everybody. And it was very obvious, we were just like, ‘They, just use they.’” Lastly, the subtheme “Previous Awareness” (described by two participants) captures previous experiences or knowledge as shared by other participants. One participant said, “I think everyone there was already sensitive to GSMs and I feel like most of the people were already educated slightly. On
my way out, I actually heard someone else there say that this was actually like their third or fourth workshop … Not at GSU, but at different places I believe.”

3.2.9 **Theme 9: Change and Growth.**

Lastly, participants described their own experience of change or growth as attributed to the Safe Zone workshop, captured in the broad theme “Change and Growth,” with 10 major subthemes described by more than one person. (For additional change/growth described by only one person each, see Table 3.) Some participants noted that they did not experience any change or growth, labeled with the subtheme “Lack Of,” described by five participants. One participant stated, “So in the end I think I didn’t change much. I think even with my survey that I took before and after, my answers were the same.” However, all of these five participants also reported at least one of the following additional “Change and Growth” subthemes.

Most often reported (by eight of the 10 interviewees) was the “Terminology/Pronouns” subtheme, describing that participants learned new terminology, learned about pronoun usage, or considered changing the ways that they use terms or pronouns because of the workshop. For example, one participant said, “What I would say I got out of the workshop is definitely learning some new terms. And thinking about [how to use] them.” Another subtheme, “Open-mindedness/Awareness” (reported by six participants), suggested that participants described becoming more aware or tolerant of issues related to sexual and gender minority persons. One person said, “I guess one of the things that I realized is I wasn’t as open-minded as I thought; it wasn’t that I was not open-minded it's just that there were certain things that I was unaware of prior to taking the workshop which made me think a little bit more and maybe help me to be a little more open-minded about certain situations or the way people react. How to react in certain situations… definitely things I was not aware of or wouldn’t have thought of on my own.”
Fourth, the subtheme “Knowledge/Skills for Ally-ship” (described by five participants) captures increased knowledge related to being an ally. For example, one participant noted, “I think just day-to-day you know whether it’s collaborating here at work in my own community thinking about what community organizations maybe I wanna be part of or support, I mean it definitely had a positive impact in that sense.” Next, the “Behavioral Intentions” subtheme (suggested by five participants) describes any intention to behave differently after attending the workshop. For example, one participant said, “If the situation arose, I would hope that I could be a better friend or ally to the person in the situation.”

Another subtheme of the broad “Change and Growth” theme is “Empathy” (noted by four participants). This subtheme suggests that participants gained empathy through the workshop, as noted by this participant: “[Safe Zone] helped me to understand like where different people are coming from you know helping me to understand how they feel particularly in certain situations and that sort of thing.” Next, the subtheme “For Others” (described by three participants) suggests that participants experienced growth or change in how they relate to other people. One participant said, “I think it has helped me with some of the students I have.” Eighth, the subtheme “Confidence” (reported by two participants) describes the gains in confidence felt by participants after the workshop. For example, one participant noted, “I think for me it’s like that, having a more immediate confidence.” Additionally, as captured by the subtheme “Insight about Self” (conveyed by two participants), some participants reported learning about themselves in addition to workshop material. In describing her own sexuality, one participant said, “I think since the workshop I’ve kind of honed more in to where well am I on the spectrum or see things more as a spectrum. That’s kind of what that workshop started, and just trying to see like maybe it will be a little less confusing to me if I can put myself on a spectrum and be more comfortable
with this. So I’ve been kind of like working on that.” Lastly, the final subtheme of this last broad “Change and Growth” theme, “Comfort/Asking Questions” (described by two participants), captures the experience that participants reported in being more comfortable about discussing and asking questions related to gender and sexual minority-related issues. For example, one participant stated, “I think the thing that I learned the most is really to ask questions. Like it’s okay to ask questions… It’s like rather than to just automatically make assumptions about somebody or even the situation is to ask questions.”

3.2.10 Qualitative Summary

Overall, themes suggest that participants sought out Safe Zone on their own or by the suggestion of another person, and chose to participate to gain additional knowledge and/or awareness, at times to benefit others. Further, they noted that they believe the goals of Safe Zone to be education, increased inclusivity and ally-ship, increased awareness and comfort, and challenging participants’ previously held beliefs. Participants gave mixed responses about whether and how these goals were met. Participants also noted that they particularly liked some aspects of the facilitation of the workshop and some of the specific activities that were included, as well as interacting with and learn from others, general learning, and gaining resources. Participants often reported that they disliked the physical space in which the workshop was held, disliked some specific activities (e.g., that one activity was not done, repetitiveness of some of the completed activities), and wanted more discussions and interactions with less time spent in lecture. Further, participants noted that they disliked the presentation (or lack thereof) of the included resources, lack of challenge, difficulties with timing, and lack of practical ally training.

Given some degree of overlap with the subthemes that participants both liked and disliked, many participants provided suggestions for improving the workshop. Specifically,
participants stated that advertising should be increased and efforts should be made to recruit individuals who may not otherwise have interest in attending a workshop. Participants also noted that they would appreciate more interactive activities throughout the workshop as well as focus on specific activities that they may employ to be allies, and stated that timing of the workshop could be handled differently (e.g., extend the workshop to cover all included material, decrease repetitive material). Participants also suggested putting together a listserv or a list of people who have completed the workshop, and made suggestions for bettering the physical environment (e.g., holding the workshop in a room with windows). Although participants made many suggestions for improvement, they also regularly suggested that many people affiliated with GSU would benefit from participating in the workshop, particularly noting that faculty and staff, student-engaged populations, and individuals newly hired would greatly benefit, and these benefits would extend to the student population.

Many participants described that they had prior knowledge about or with GSM individuals and/or related prejudice that they may experience. This prior knowledge may help to explain some participants’ frustration with the lack of change that they experienced in the workshop or the lack of challenge provided in the workshop (described in broad theme “Dislikes”). Possibly, individuals attending the workshop with already greater prior knowledge could benefit from a more advanced workshop or one in which specific ally skills and competencies were discussed and practiced, further advancing their knowledge from basics about GSM identities and oppressions. This type of advanced training may also be helpful as participants reported not only on their own prior knowledge, but also on the knowledge and experienced described by others in their workshop (e.g., that other participants had also attended similar workshops or had similar knowledge to that presented in the workshop).
Lastly, participants described their own experiences of change and growth (or lack thereof). Participants described learning appropriate use of terminology and pronouns, became more open-minded or aware of GSM-related issues as attributed to the workshop, gained knowledge about being an ally, and intended to behave more as an ally post-workshop. Additionally, participants suggested that they gained confidence to act as an ally and to ask questions rather than make assumptions, and also stated that they learned more about themselves and their own identities.

For additional discussion and exploration of all of these broad themes, see Discussion, below.

3.3 Quantitative and Qualitative Data Convergence

Generally, the quantitative data analyses both for the full sample and for students only suggest a lack of statistically significant change from before to after the Safe Zone workshop in attitudes towards lesbians and gay men; behavioral intentions to act in positive ways to gender and sexual minority persons; or ally identity in terms of knowledge, skills, openness, or support. However, findings are mixed related to change in awareness of oppression; the Oppression Awareness subscale of the Ally Identity Measure suggested statistically significant change for the full sample and student only sample, whereas the Heterosexism Awareness subscale of the Privilege and Oppression Inventory evidenced no statistically significant change.

Qualitative findings are also mixed, and to some degree support quantitative findings. For instance, the subtheme “Lack Of” within the broad theme “Change and Growth” suggests that some participants believed that they did not experience significant change in response to the workshop. However, other comments made by interviewees suggest change did occur (see all other subthemes of “Change and Growth” theme). Particularly, all participants who made
statements coded as “Lack Of – Change and Growth” also made statements coded within other “Change and Growth” subthemes, suggesting that, although they may initially observe no change for themselves, they did gain something from the workshop. When participants did describe change, they described an increased confidence in managing difficult situations and in their ability to ask questions (e.g., about someone’s pronouns). Further, participants conveyed learning new terminology and the rationale for using these terms (e.g., using “GSM” umbrella term instead of “LGBTQ” to refer to specific identities). Some participants also shared that they gained additional knowledge about being an ally and a variety of ways to act in uncomfortable situations and ways to be supportive to students in particular who may be transitioning. Further, individuals stated that their empathy for others with GSM identities grew and they understand some struggles associated with having a GSM identity more fully. Additionally, participants reported increased desire to act positively, increased open-mindedness and awareness, increased acceptance of others, and further insights about their own identities.

The relative lack of statistically significant quantitative findings may be informed by these qualitative descriptions of change and growth. Specifically, the chosen quantitative measures may not be sensitive enough or specific enough to detect the changes reported by interviewees. For instance, participants reported qualitatively increased positive behavioral intentions; however, the HBSS measure used to assess behavioral intentions quantitatively did not suggest statistically significant change. This discrepancy may be because the measure itself may not be sensitive enough to the nuances of behavioral intentions suggested by the participants. Similarly, none of the included quantitative measures directly assessed change in confidence level, increase in terminology knowledge, or knowledge about pronoun use, all of which were often-cited changes or growth experienced by participants. The one statistically
significant quantitative change, awareness of oppression as measured by a subscale on the Ally Identity Measure, was identified qualitatively by participants as an area in which they grew.

Further, qualitative findings suggest that lack of statistically significant quantitative findings may result from previous awareness, experience, or education on the part of the participants. In particular, almost all of the participants (9 out of 10), unprompted, described prior education and sensitivity toward GSM people, some similar prior training, or family/friends that identify as GSM either in their own lives or in the lives described to them by other workshop attendees. This finding suggests that the majority of participants likely were already sensitive to these and related issues and therefore had less room to grow in their knowledge and awareness potentially than others who would not voluntarily attend the workshop.

In addition, participants who completed the pre- and post-test surveys responded online to the open-ended pre-test survey question, “Why are you choosing to participate in the Safe Zone Workshop at Georgia State University?” Some of these participants were then categorized based on this question either as attending as mandated or for class credit (e.g., “for extra credit,” “required for job”) or as attending for additional knowledge or some other educational or emotional (e.g., empathy) gain (e.g., “to be more culturally competent and be able to relate to my peers in a more effective way”). In considering change from pre-test to post-test between these two groups of respondents (mandated compared to not mandated attendance), the only statistically significant quantitative differences emerged on the ATLG total score ($t(64) = -2.45, p = .02$), ATG subscale score ($t(67) = -2.64, p = .01$), and ATL subscale score ($t(69) = -2.29, p = .03$); individuals describing learning or other knowledge as their motivation for attendance evidenced significantly more change compared to individuals describing a mandate or credit as their motivation for attendance. These two groups did not differ significantly at pretest on these
measures (ATLG total score: $t(72) = 1.56, p = .22$; ATG subscale score: $t(72) = 1.56, p = .31$; ATL subscale score: $t(72) = 1.50, p = .16$); see Table 4 for means and standard deviations. These qualitative findings provide evidence or rationale for observed pretest measurement distribution (i.e., at pretest, self-report of low levels of sexual prejudice, high levels of awareness of oppression and heterosexism, high levels of identifying as an ally, and high levels of behavioral intentions to act as an ally). For further exploration, see Discussion section, below.
Table 1. Descriptive statistics of demographic, social desirability, pre-, and post-test variables.

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Possible Range</th>
<th>Observed Range</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
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<td>Lower scores indicate less socially desirable answers</td>
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<td>AIM Total (pre)</td>
<td>69.14</td>
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<td>30-95</td>
<td>Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of measurement</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIM Total (post)</td>
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<td>19-95</td>
<td>47-95</td>
<td>Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of measurement</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIM K&amp;S (pre)</td>
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<td>8-40</td>
<td>Higher scores indicate more knowledge/skills</td>
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<tr>
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<td>30.33</td>
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<td>Higher scores indicate more knowledge/skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIM O&amp;S (pre)</td>
<td>27.19</td>
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<td>7-35</td>
<td>10-35</td>
<td>Higher scores indicate more openness/support</td>
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<td>Higher scores indicate more openness/support</td>
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<td>Higher scores indicate more awareness of GSM oppression</td>
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<tr>
<td>AIM OA (post)</td>
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<td>4-20</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBSS (pre)</td>
<td>45.54</td>
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<td>10-50</td>
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<td>Higher scores indicate more positive behavioral intentions</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBSS (post)</td>
<td>46.74</td>
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<td>10-46</td>
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</table>

\(^1\) SDS- Social Desirability Scale; ATLG- Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men total score; ATG- Attitudes toward Gay Men subscale; ATL- Attitudes toward Lesbians subscale; POI- Privilege and Oppression Inventory, Heterosexism Awareness subscale; AIM Total- Ally Identity Measure total score; AIM K&S- Ally Identity Measure, Knowledge and Skills subscale; AIM O&S- Ally Identity Measure, Openness and Support subscale; AIM OA- Ally Identity Measure, Oppression Awareness subscale; HBSS- Homophobic Behavior of Students Scale.
Table 2. Correlations of included demographic, social desirability, and posttest variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Sexual Orientation</th>
<th>SDS</th>
<th>ATLG</th>
<th>ATG</th>
<th>ATL</th>
<th>POI</th>
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<th>AIM K&amp;S</th>
<th>AIM O&amp;S</th>
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<td>Gender</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<td>.11</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
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<td>ATG</td>
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<td>POI</td>
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<td>.39**</td>
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<td>AIM O&amp;S</td>
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<td>.25*</td>
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<td>&lt;.01</td>
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<td>-.42**</td>
<td>-.38**</td>
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<td>.91**</td>
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<td>AIM OA</td>
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<td>.10</td>
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<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>-.45**</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>.80**</td>
<td>.73**</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.72**</td>
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<tr>
<td>HBSS</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.27*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.54**</td>
<td>-.51**</td>
<td>-.55**</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td>.60**</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.66**</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. *Significant at the p < .05 level; **Significant at the p < .01 level.

2 All included measures are post-test measures, with the exception of demographic variables and Social Desirability Scale (SDS) scores.
3 For purposes of this table, two participants self-identifying gender as “gender non-conforming” were excluded, and gender was dichotomized as “man” (coded as 0) or “woman” (coded as 1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Example Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>Self-Initiated Search</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“It was one of the first things I did when I got here once I was moved in was to say now I’m here, have a permanent spot, I’ve had a note of Safe Zone, look it up when you get to your job.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge/Skills</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“I think it’s good to be, as a faculty member, important to be able to discuss using the correct terms and just being aware of whatever… not just the issues that have always been around but things that are emerging.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Someone Else Told</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“I learned about the workshop because of my colleague.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Job/Credit</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“The reason I chose to participate in the workshop is because I’m a GA (Grad Assistant) in the Multicultural Center and I was put in charge of helping get participants… I wanted to go through it so I can be able to talk to people about it and let them know in detail what you’re gonna be learning and everything.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>“It’s just providing this information to GSU, I guess staff, students.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusivity &amp; Ally-ship</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>“I thought the goals were how to make you as a person a Safe Zone. How to teach you how to make the area that you’re in into a Safe Zone, how to be more inclusive, so people – anybody who comes and talks to you or is in the area – doesn’t feel judged or pressured… to be anything they don’t want to be.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Awareness &amp; Comfort</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“I think it’s to make us aware and consciously aware of our conversations, our ignorance”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge Prejudice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“I think the goal is to challenge them [people’s prejudices].”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likes</td>
<td>General Positive</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“The information was definitely good.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitation</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“The guy who ran it, he is really friendly, definitely outgoing, so I liked the vibe and personality that he had.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Specific Activities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>“There was a part where will had us get up and he had four corners of the room – and it was like agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree and he would read certain statements and to watch you know like where people ended up and couple points where we’re like I don’t know I’m somewhere in between here. So that was really interesting. You know see LITERALLY where people stood.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interactions/</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>“It’s very discussion-based, which I liked. And it gave each individual an opportunity to voice their opinions.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td></td>
<td>“I think that’s helpful that you can take something with you and go back to it or refer to it or you know if you go through something too fast or we skipped some things that we could go to it and look it over. So I think that literature or having something tangible that you can take with you, I think that’s helpful.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>“It was comfortable between most people.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>“My favorite part was talking about the difference between your romantic identity and your gender identity and your sexual identity. Most people don’t get that and I feel that’s honestly one of the first steps in breaking down sexism or sexual prejudice is by talking about the fact that those are all different and maybe even like pointing out key examples or like telling stories.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dislikes

Environment (Physical) 7
“I felt very claustrophobic in the room. The physical space was really small.”

Activities/Participation 7
“I looked through my packet afterward and I saw this thing, it was about like stars or something and we just entirely missed this experience. It looked like it was something that would be... I don’t know... like engaging or seeing a point of view of someone that we don’t have. I think we should have done that because one of the others did feel pointless.”

Facilitation 5
“When [participants] share information, it was like it was... you have his attention, but he doesn’t acknowledge your attention at all. He does not acknowledge your comment. He’ll look at you and he’ll listen, I think he’s listening, and then he’ll go (turns head away from interviewer) and next without any acknowledgement. Like no “that’s a good point” or “glad you felt that way” or “that’s interesting” or “thank you for sharing”... none of that. It went on. NEXT.”

Timing 5
“We ended up running out of time with all that was in the packet so there were one or two things he just ran through. And then, skipped a few things.”

Type and Presentation of Resources 5
“Resources-wise, during the workshop he didn’t really present much. I wish he had. He just at the end briefly said that at the end of the packet are sources helped to design the workshop, so it was more of a, here’s a list of sources he used or other sources we could go to to learn more things. So that was the only presentation of other resources.”

Lack of Change/Challenge 3
“I feel like there may not be enough people who actually need the workshop going to it.”

Lack of Ally Training 1
“I feel like we didn’t really TRAIN how to be an ally. I feel like that was kind of... if I had one criticism it would be to invest more time into helping people understand what their role actually is.”

Suggestions

Recruitment/Advertising 8
“I think it would help to do a little more advertising. Maybe something more... I don’t know if you’re allowed or they’re allowed to do like the screens, the digital screens ... in our building in Park Place. Each floor has a digital screen and they keep announcing events and reminding people of things. So I think that will be a great place to do it.”

Activities 7
“There needs to be more activities. It’s a three-hour thing. It won’t seem like three hours if every 30 minutes we’re doing like a stand-up activity. Role-playing too.”

Environment (Feel) 4
“I think it needs to be a more inclusive, better environment.”

How to be an Ally/Resources 3
“Include in the training how to facilitate different issues and utilize resources.”

Time 3
“I would say time management needs to be handled better.”

Next Steps 3
“Maybe the Multicultural Center could have a listserv of trained folks on campus.”

Environment (Phys.) 2
“Really, you need windows.”

Change and Growth

Terminology/Pronouns 8
“What I would say I got out of the workshop is definitely learning some new terms. And thinking about [how to use] them.”

Open-Mindedness/Awareness 6
“I guess one of the things that I realized is I wasn’t as open-minded as I thought; it wasn’t that I was not open-minded it’s just that there were certain things that I was unaware of prior to taking the workshop
which made me think a little bit more and maybe help me to be a little more open-minded about certain situations or the way people react. How to react in certain situations... definitely things I was not aware of or wouldn’t have thought of on my own.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge/Skills for Ally-ship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioral Intentions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
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<td>For Others</td>
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<td>Confidence</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insight about Self</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfort/Asking Questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>History/Facts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reinforcement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At GSU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting Others</td>
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<td>Certification</td>
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<td>Resources</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Knowledge</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Lack of

“So in the end I think I didn’t change much. I think even with my survey that I took before and after, my answers were the same.”

Knowledge/Skills for Ally-ship

“I think just day-to-day you know whether it’s collaborating here at work in my own community thinking about what community organizations maybe I wanna be part of or support, I mean it definitely had a positive impact in that sense.”

Behavioral Intentions

“If the situation arose, I would hope that I could be a better friend or ally to the person in the situation.”

Empathy

“[Safe Zone] helped me to understand like where different people are coming from you know helping me to understand how they feel particularly in certain situations and that sort of thing.”

For Others

“I think it has helped me with some of the students I have.”

Confidence

“I think for me it’s like that, having a more immediate confidence.”

Insight about Self

“I think since the workshop I’ve kind of honed more in to where well am I on the spectrum or see things more as a spectrum. That’s kind of what that workshop started, and just trying to see like maybe it will be a little less confusing to me if I can put myself on a spectrum and be more comfortable with this. So I’ve been kind of like working on that.”

Comfort/Asking Questions

“I think the thing that I learned the most is really to ask questions. Like it’s okay to ask questions... It’s like rather than to just automatically make assumptions about somebody or even the situation is to ask questions.”

History/Facts

“I like the history, like I know some of the history, but some of the stuff on here was stuff that I didn’t know, so I think that’s really good to use to talk to people or anyone who might be coming out or might be having difficulties or whatever it may be. I think that’s a good resource to have, too. Like this has been going on forever. I know it’s been going on forever but it’s good to have those facts.”

Reinforcement

“It was just reinforcing and like making sure that the way I am treating people is in line with what I believe in, what I’ve been trained in doing.”

At GSU

“I got the awareness that there is somebody at GSU making an effort to educate the staff institutionally... which at this point I wasn’t even aware of.”

Meeting Others

“I ended up meeting classmates there that were in my class that I had never met before, which was great.”

Certification

“I love being able to put that on my resume now—-SZ certified.”

Resources

“This has helped me be more aware or more careful about programs, whether it’s events or long-standing programs, year-long programs, to maybe promote in my classes or to think about going myself or talk to other faculty here.”

Prior Knowledge

About GSM Persons/Sensitivity

“Well, while I’m not a sexual minority myself, I have a lot of experience around people who are. So I was no stranger to what they often go through, unfortunately. So I knew a lot going into this. There was stuff that I learned. But I was definitely no stranger.”

Family/Friends

“I have lots of gay friends. And well all my life I’ve had gay friends. But I’ve known professionals who... he was a transman. And you know I never felt uncomfortable with him.”
Other Training 4 “I’ve done this kind of training before.”
Culture 4 “I grew up in the same binary western culture like everybody else. It’s hard for me to reset my brain to that as well.”
Skills/Self-Knowledge 4 “If somebody asked me what comes to mind and spit it out, I’m not very good at doing that.”
GSU 3 “They’re all just so versatile, especially compared to somewhere like Georgia Tech; most of the students have come from poverty, first generation students, countries that you wouldn’t usually see in the traditional students, minorities, a lot higher minority rate. I feel like we should be a lot more in tune and in touch with that reality that GSU has.”

Others’ Experiences
Ignorance/Change 4 “I was with people who had no idea and I did see them get some things and be like ‘Oh, okay, I see how it’s like that.’ And I saw them learn stuff.”
Help 3 “There was a, I guess he was a teacher or something, and he said how can I make it more inclusive in my [teaching] materials. And the examples he thought was when he has a sentence that reads, “The student XYZ, blah blah blah… and then he for example goes into the bank.” He said that he added he/she goes into the bank, so I don’t just specify one. But how can I include everybody. And it was very obvious, we were just like, ‘They, just use they.’”
Previous Awareness 2 “I think everyone there was already sensitive to GSMs and I feel like most of the people were already educated slightly. On my way out I actually heard someone else there say that this was actually like the third or fourth workshop … Not at GSU, but at different places I believe.”

Who Else
Faculty and Staff 4 “I feel like if faculty and staff had this and maybe had an awareness they might be able to step in and help students and better support students and whatever they need, or at least help them find resources for support even if they can’t do it themselves… just point them to where they could get help.”
All of Campus 4 “Of course, I think the whole school should go through Safe Zone.”
Everyone 3 “I think for everyone. Everyone should take the workshop.”
Student-Engaged Populations 2 “Anyone who is gonna be interacting with students really should take this, just because you’re interacting with students you’re gonna meet so many customs… you need to be a safe zone.”
Individuals Lacking Appreciation/Understanding of Diversity 2 “[It’s good for] people who have notions that GSM individuals are living the wrong path… people who don’t support equal treatment of GSM individuals.”
New Hires 2 “I think it’s an experience everyone should go through during the early stages of the job at GSU. It’s a matter of cultural sensitivity, because at GSU, they are going to be exposed to perhaps a more diverse population than they are used to in any other setting they were in before.”
Students 2 “I think it would do wonders to many people in the student body.”
Table 4. Means and standard deviations of pretest and posttest scores on ATLG measures by motivation for workshop attendance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mandated Attendance</th>
<th>Not Mandated Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-test (M(SD))</td>
<td>Post-test (M(SD))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATLG Total Score</td>
<td>16.13(7.36)</td>
<td>13.53(4.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATL Subscale Score</td>
<td>8.13(3.74)</td>
<td>6.78(2.79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATG Subscale Score</td>
<td>8.00(3.79)</td>
<td>7.19(2.90)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Contributions and Findings

4.1.1 Current Study Findings

In general, quantitative hypotheses were not supported. Hypothesis 1 was that participants would report decreased levels of prejudice from pretest to posttest as measured by the ATLQ; however, quantitative results suggested no statistically significant change in these attitudes either for the whole sample or for students only. Similarly, Hypothesis 3, which suggested that participants would report increased knowledge and behavioral intentions to act with an ally identity with respect to sexual and gender minority persons as measured by the overall LGBT Ally Identity Measure and the Homophobic Behavior of Students Scale, was not supported – results indicated no statistically significant change from pretest to posttest for the full sample or for the student sample. Hypothesis 4, that qualitative interviews would suggest that Safe Zone workshop goals would be met through combination of education about and contact with sexual minority individuals, was partially supported. For instance, upon specific questions related to what the goals of the workshop were and if and how these goals were met, many interviewees noted that they believed the goals of Safe Zone to be educating participants, building inclusivity and ally-ship, and increasing awareness and comfort with sexual and gender minority persons. Although all participant-stated goals were in line with workshop goals, participants did not suggest that the goals were met because of contact with sexual minority individuals. They noted that they gained some knowledge, particularly about terminology and asking others questions, though did not describe any change or growth as attributed to contact.

Hypothesis 2, which suggested participants would report increased awareness about the oppression of lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals as measured by the Privilege and Oppression
Inventory, was not supported in that results indicated no statistically significant change from pretest to posttest for the full sample or student sample. However, participants did endorse statistically significant differences on the Oppression Awareness subscale of the LGBT Ally Identity Measure from pretest to posttest. Statistically significant change on this four-item subscale suggests gain in awareness related to specific behaviors and experiences of bullying, depression, and suicidal thoughts of sexual minority adolescents; oppression of sexual minority groups; and barriers in the workplace faced by sexual minority individuals but not faced by heterosexuals. Further, means for all total scores and all Ally Identity Measure (AIM) subscale scores were in the hypothesized direction, although not statistically significant. That is, scores on the ATLG (sexual prejudice) from pretest to posttest went down (indicating decreased prejudice), scores on the POI-HA (heterosexism awareness) went up (indicating more comfort and acceptance), scores on the AIM knowledge and skills subscale went up (indicating increased knowledge and skills), scores on the AIM openness and support subscale went up (indicating increased openness and support), and scores on the HBSS (behavioral intentions) went up (indicating more positive behavioral intentions) – see Table 1 for comparison. Because these means were in the hypothesized direction, though without statistical significance, future research may focus on accessing measures more sensitive to changes occurring in the workshop; current measures attempt to assess generally broad constructs (e.g., attitudes toward sexual minority persons), though using more specific measures (e.g., learning how to use knowledge to be a better ally, as observed in the statistically significant change in Oppression Awareness scores on the LGBT Ally Identity Measure, described above) may clarify any nuanced change not detected in the current study.
The means generally were in the hypothesized direction, and the lack of statistically significant findings may be attributed, at least in part, to the existence of subgroups within the sample as a whole. For instance, participants may be divided into those who were mandated to participate (e.g., for a class, for their job) compared to those who had other, more internal, motivations (e.g., to gain knowledge, to become more empathic). A workshop like the Safe Zone Workshop at Georgia State University may work differently for these different groups. Even though these two specific groups (mandated compared to not mandated workshop attendance) did not differ at pretest on their described levels of sexual prejudice (as measured by the ATLG), they did differ on these same measures at posttest. This finding speaks to the convergence of qualitative and quantitative data; although quantitative data was collected first, without this included qualitative question, additional quantitative findings (i.e., regarding subgroups related to their motivation for attending the workshop) would have been missed. Further, this quantitative finding, that there are different subgroups for whom the workshop may work differently, leads to a suggestion that the subgroups may benefit from different workshops or a different approach to changing their experiences of sexual prejudice. This finding may also suggest that the “one size fits all” approach currently employed by the workshop may not be as effective as having a variety of workshops tailored to the individual’s incoming knowledge or amount of contact with sexual and gender minority individuals (e.g., a basic level course and an advanced course).

Of note, participants in the current study quantitatively reported low levels of sexual prejudice at pretest. Evidence for a ceiling or floor effect may exist: behavioral intentions, awareness, and ally identity were already high, and negative attitudes (prejudice) toward lesbians and gay men were already low. Therefore, these ceiling/floor effects influence the ability for
participants to indicate statistically significant change on these quantitative measures. For example, the ATLG total mean at pretest was 14.65 with a possible range between 10 and 50 with lower scores indicating lower prejudice; many more participants may be needed to detect a significant change given this sample mean in conjunction with the possible range. Similarly, the HBSS mean at pretest was 45.54 with a possible range between 10 and 50 with higher scores indicating more positive behavioral intentions; many more participants may be needed to detect a significant change given the highest possible score is 50, suggesting a ceiling effect.

Information gained by qualitative interviews may inform and provide context to lack of statistically significant quantitative findings. Many participants noted that they already had considerable knowledge and sensitivity toward gender and sexual minority persons, as captured by the “Prior Knowledge” theme, and also indicated that others in their workshops had similar experiences, captured by the “Others’ Experiences” theme. This qualitative information suggests convergence of quantitative and qualitative data as participants are stating and quantitative data indicate participants already possessed much of the knowledge and sensitivity the workshop was attempting to instill.

4.1.2 Support for Theory Described in Research Literature

Findings from the current study are supported by the theories employed during the planning, implementation, and data analysis and interpretation of this study. The Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1954; Brown & Hewstone, 2005) would suggest that – given equal status, shared and cooperatively-achieved goals, lack of competition, and ability to get to know each other – contact between heterosexuals and gender and sexual minority persons will decrease sexual prejudice for heterosexual persons. However, the current Safe Zone workshop did not include a panel of sexual and gender minority individuals; therefore, the only contact that
participants had with people with these identities were the facilitator(s) and any other participants that happened to be in their workshop with such an identity. In essence, the workshops as implemented did not incorporate intergroup contact theory. Further, if a workshop did not include any participants with gender or sexual minority identities, then participants’ only in-workshop contact was with the facilitator(s), and thus contact was not of equal status. Additionally, both student and faculty/staff participants qualitatively reported that workshop often felt “like a lecture,” which therefore suggests that participants may not have had an opportunity to get to know the facilitator well. Moreover, some interviewed participants noted they felt the primary facilitator at times was not open to exploring other ideas related to workshop material. For example, participants reported the primary facilitator rarely acknowledged workshop participants’ comments and moved on very quickly to provide his intended response, particularly if participants did not give the “right” answer. Thus, the workshop may have contained some sense of competition, in contrast to Allport’s condition of lack of competition. This type of environment supports findings by Baunach and colleagues (2010) that the type of contact respondents have is more important than the amount of contact they report.

Further, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) would suggest that individuals with improved attitudes and more confidence and control over their actions may act or intend to act more positively toward the outgroup – gender and sexual minority persons, in the case of the current study. However, as quantitative data suggest, participants’ attitudes did not change significantly, as explained by qualitative data – the majority of participants already reported low to no sexual prejudice before the workshop. In addition, participants did not note specifically that they felt more confidence in control of their actions, though they did
qualitatively report increased confidence in their ability to manage difficult situations, discuss
difficult topics, and have appropriate terminology to manage these discussions. Lack of change
in attitudes and control over their own actions may explain, per Theory of Planned Behavior,
lack of statistically significant change in behavioral intentions. Still, interviewed participants did
report that the workshop reinforced their actions and behavioral intentions to act as an ally and
provide support to gender and sexual minority persons. Thus, if workshop attendees at baseline
were to experience higher levels of prejudice or lower sense of control over their actions than the
current sample, it may be possible to observe a decrease in prejudiced attitudes, increased sense
of control, and thus significantly changed behavioral intentions.

4.1.3 Consideration of Mixed Qualitative Findings

Many of the qualitative results in the current study initially seem contradictory; for
instance, the “Likes” and “Dislikes” broad themes had many similarities. However, upon further
inspection, such contradictory findings may be explained. Considering this example, many
subthemes are included in both broad themes. Although many people (eight out of 10
interviewees) made general positive comments about the workshop, information was provided in
both “Likes” and “Dislikes” related to facilitation, specific activities, participation/interactions,
and provision of resources. For facilitation, eight interviewees noted aspects that they liked, five
noted aspects that they disliked, and a total of four interviewees were included in both “Likes”
and “Dislikes” of the subthemes Facilitation. For instance, one interviewee noted that she liked
the primary facilitator’s outgoing personality, but noted that she “like[d] his personal stories, but
sometimes it felt a little overboard… it was just a little overwhelming at certain points.” Another
interviewee appreciated that the primary facilitator was “very, very professional,” though later
added that he did not create a warm or inviting environment, was too professional, and did not
acknowledge participants’ comments within the workshop, instead “boasting for that moment” about his writing of the workshop. This participant stated, “You’re dealing with students; you don’t have to prove yourself.” Another participant endorsing Facilitation as both a “Like” and “Dislike” stated that the facilitator was obviously passionate about the topic, but also inflexible and confrontational when challenged. Both students and faculty/staff members reported these experiences.

Related to specific activities “Likes” and “Dislikes,” seven (70%) interviewees noted activities they liked, seven interviewees noted activities they disliked, and these groups almost completely overlapped – six participants endorsed both. Participants noted that they generally liked the Four Corners activity, presented scenarios, and learning new terminology. However, they also described disliking the lack of processing the Four Corners activity, the ways in which the scenarios were presented (i.e., as if there were one specific “right” answer), and the lack of discussion of new terminology (one participant said, “[The facilitator] had us look at the vocab words, not at the definitions… but then he just defined it himself without actually letting us read the definition… it was more of [him] defining it, not what was on the paper; and I’d assume what was on the paper actually had a citation or a source.”). Further, four of the participants noted that one specific activity (“Coming Out Stars”) in the activity packet was skipped, and that they would have preferred this activity to others that were used.

Related to participation and interactions, five participants noted that they liked the interactions and discussions, stating that they particularly appreciated meeting new people and voicing their opinions. A separate two interviewees stated that they disliked one particular activity related to learning new terminology that relied on participants being interactive; one participant stated, “But it wasn’t very interactive because nobody wrote anything. [The
facilitator] was just like, ‘Take a piece of paper and write down questions that you have.’ And I think people who don’t know anything might not know what to ask… it just felt like it was interactive but it was lacking.” Another participant repeatedly stated, “There’s really just no participation,” and “It’s no interacting. It was more like three hours of lecture. With no interacting.” Therefore, qualitative evidence suggests some participants felt the workshop was particularly warm and engaging, whereas others felt as if they were being lectured to and may have felt disconnected from the workshop, included material, and/or others in the workshop.

Multiple reasons may explain these differences. For instance, of the five participants who stated that they liked the interactions and discussions, a majority (four out of these five participants) were faculty and staff, three of whom attended the same workshop (with a total of six attendees). Further, these faculty and staff reported that they appreciated having open conversations, learning from their peers, and observing their peers’ learning as well. One faculty member also noted that he “like[d] the classroom feel” and “like[d] that there was never any pressure to speak.” The student who noted appreciation of the participatory aspect of the workshop stated that she “definitely liked the discussion,” though stated that “there were just too many people in the room.” Individuals who described disliking some aspect of the workshop generally reported that they wanted more participation. One staff participant from a larger workshop group (approximately 15 attendees) emphasized the lack of time for interaction with others and the lack of breaks during the three-hour workshop. Further, she stated, “The information was good, it was just overwhelming,” and described her difficulty with paying attention to a lecture for three hours with no breaks and no interaction with others during that time. A faculty member participant from an eight-attendee workshop suggested a similar experience, reporting, “I think [the facilitator] maybe planned for us to have a discussion, but if
nobody spoke up immediately, [the facilitator] would just speak up and tell us what the ‘right answer,’ really just what his answer and what he wanted us to say, was.” Thus, it may be that size of workshop greatly impacts the environment and interactive nature of the workshop; larger workshops may feel less interactive than smaller workshops. Additionally, faculty and staff may experience this interaction differently than students; students may appreciate just being able to have these conversations, whereas faculty and staff may appreciate learning from each other above and beyond learning only from the facilitator.

Related to resources, four of 10 participants stated that they liked aspects of provided resources, and the same four plus one additional participant stated that they disliked aspects of provided resources. The participants who endorsed both liking and disliking resources generally liked the provided packet of resources and list of vocabulary terms; however, these same participants disliked that the facilitator failed to go over the resource list. One participant stated, “It’s just too much to sort through. I have [the resources] and I feel like I have them all. But I’m gonna have to actively go into what they all are for it to be useful.” Overall, it seems that participants exhibited both appreciation and frustration with aspects of the workshop, as qualitative data often reveals.

4.1.4 Importance of SPRI Evaluation

Previous published research suggests a dearth of evaluations of sexual prejudice reduction interventions (SPRIs), particularly on university campuses. Therefore, the current study provides a significant contribution by advancing the understanding of the goals, methods, and needs of university-based SPRIs. Through this study, others may be conducted to understand ways in which a mixed-methods program evaluation may be undertaken for a university-based SPRI.
The qualitative findings of the current study indicate that an adapted Safe Zone Workshop at Georgia State University may work to contribute to the growth and change of workshop participants, though results of the quantitative data analyses were less supportive of this notion. Moreover, data indicate that aspects of the workshop can still be improved. Safe Zone programs across universities and other community organizations exhibit a wide variety of difference in included workshop content. Because of this variety, the workshops may benefit from participant feedback, particularly feedback related to aspects of the workshop that lead to change. In particular, findings from the current study are largely consistent with previous findings regarding race and prejudice. Baunach and colleagues (2010), in a survey of student sexual behaviors and attitudes on Georgia State University’s campus, found that contact with gay and lesbian people significantly lowered prejudice for all participants with the exception of Black students. These findings may provide rationale for lack of change observed in the current study. Specifically, in the current study, 45% of the sample identified as Black/African American students, and quantitatively participant responses suggested lack of statistically significant change in attitudes and behavioral intentions related to sexual and gender minority persons. Thus, it is possible that previous findings (Baunach et al., 2010) shed light on the reason for lack of statistically significant findings with the current sample in the current study.

Further, an exploratory evaluation of a Safe Zone program within a graduate school for professional psychology indicated that a majority of participants (92%) would recommend the program to others, thought it should be a requirement for the graduate program (94%), and overall ranked the workshop very highly (4.07 on 5-point Likert-type scale; Finkel, Storaasli, Bandele, & Schaefer, 2003). Also, feedback described in this graduate program Safe Zone evaluation was constructive and positive, though some participants noted feeling “preached to”
and “felt heterosexual guilt.” Also similar to the current study, this evaluation reported that about 8% of participants qualitatively said that the workshop had no effect (Finkel et al., 2003). Of these participants, approximately 33% had experienced previous training, though unlike in the current study, 61% participants of this previous evaluation noted no previous exposure to this information. However, like the current study, participants described experiential exercises, particularly role-play, as most effective for eliciting participant change (Finkel et al., 2003).

### 4.2 Strengths, Limitations, and Challenges

One strength of the current study is that it seems to be the first evaluation of Safe Zone at Georgia State University. Therefore, it provides much needed information about the utility, strengths, and goal-meeting capacity of Safe Zone, particularly the adapted program. Further, the mixed methods nature of this evaluation allows qualitative context for quantitative statistical analyses which, alone, would indicate that participants experienced little to no change through the program. However, qualitative inquiry highlighted more nuanced growth and change that may have gone undetected with the quantitative evaluation alone.

One consideration of the current study is that the student author primarily collected, coded, and analyzed data for the study. Although each step also involved the research and coding team, there is the possibility of an unconscious bias given that one person was primarily responsible for most of the collection and management of data. Attempts were made to decrease concerns related to unconscious bias, for example, through reflexivity on the part of the student author, often in conjunction with the coding team, and with member checking after the qualitative data had been analyzed. Still, future studies should consider the roles of investigator and experimenter, as well as the importance of reflexivity, when creating a team for qualitative data collection, coding, and analysis.
A further limitation is the possibility that demand characteristics may influence the results from the current study. Participants may have been able to deduce the goal of the current research, and so may have responded positively and/or offered comments supportive of the Safe Zone program, particularly because no compensation was offered for follow-up interviews. Volunteer bias may suggest that interviewees did have a better experience with Safe Zone; it is possible that only individuals with particularly positive experiences with the workshop may have agreed to the interview. However, just by agreeing to and actually following through with the interview, participants may have experienced cognitive dissonance or effort justification; because they chose to participate in additional meetings related to Safe Zone, they justify to themselves that they gained more from the workshop, or may have reported that they liked or appreciated it more than they would have felt otherwise (e.g., Baumeister & Bushman, 2007; Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959; Aronson & Mills, 1959).

Additionally, because no control condition was included in the current study methodology, it is impossible to rule out threats to internal validity; however, these threats seem unlikely, given the average time between completing pretest and posttest (mean: 5 days, median: <1 day, mode: <1 day) seems to preclude maturation and history effects. However, timing of the post-test may increase the likelihood of testing effects; participants learned the material and experienced the workshop immediately before completing the post-test, and so likely recall the information easily. Future studies may consider incorporating not only an immediate post-test, but also a later follow-up post-test to determine the length of time associated with recalling workshop information. The current study may have begun this work through qualitative interviews (on average, conducted 18.70 days after post-test), though similar quantitative
measures were not given at this time. Further, it would behoove future evaluations of Safe Zone to include a control condition.

The data for multiple dependent (posttest) variables were not normally distributed and could not be transformed as such (see Figures 2-10 for side-by-side comparison of pre- and posttest variable distributions), violating one assumption of conducting ANCOVA tests. However, additional research and guidelines suggest (e.g., Field, 2013) that with a relatively large sample size (i.e., 60 participants or more), the impact of this assumption may be minimalized. Another limitation is the measurement of social desirability; this measure was unrelated to other variables and thus was not included in any model. In future studies, it will be important to continue to use a measure of social desirability to ensure participants answer study questions with fidelity, reducing concerns related to social desirability and demand characteristics.

The difference in demographics between the full set of participants and the subset of interviewees also serves as a limitation for the current study. Although 72% of participants were students and the remaining 28% were faculty and staff, faculty and staff composed 80% of the qualitative interviewees. Therefore, it is possible that the qualitative interviews give a skewed perspective of the workshop. The two student interviewees suggested that the workshop felt a bit as if they were in a lecture, with one student saying that she “felt talked down to,” whereas faculty and staff generally reported that they appreciated the warm atmosphere in which they were able to learn. Thus, it is possible that those participants who volunteered to participate in a non-compensated interview not only had a better overall experience than those who chose not to participate in the interview (given the voluntary nature of the interview), but they also may have
had a different experience because of their affiliation with the university (faculty/staff compared to student) and their age, and thus possibly with the primary workshop facilitator.

Because of the individualized and tailored nature of the Safe Zone Workshop at GSU and because of the use of a nonprobability sample of affiliates of a single university, the implications of the current study’s findings should not be overstated. It is possible that the findings of the current study may not be generalizable to programs outside of GSU given the tailored nature of the intervention.

Further, individuals on a university campus may be more likely to have contact and be involved in discussion of issues related to gender and sexual minority persons than the general public (Baunach et al., 2010). Therefore, such individuals, if choosing and not mandated to participate in the workshop, may already have knowledge and sensitivity related to these populations and may contribute to ceiling/floor effects uncovered in the current quantitative analyses. Further, the current study is focused on an urban university setting serving underrepresented groups in the southeastern United States; given that the majority of the participants were students who were significantly younger than included faculty and staff, cohort of the majority of the current sample (i.e., the student participants) may help to explain lack of significant findings. The current generation of college students was raised during a sociopolitical climate that normalized more awareness of and openness to homosexuality, transgender identities, and related issues (Baunach et al., 2010). Further, the urban location of the university has a large organized gay community that is among the largest in the United States; annual pride festivities are over 40 years old, with the 48th annual pride festival scheduled for October 2018 (Atlanta Pride, n.d.) and a separate pride festival for African American sexual and gender minority persons, often known as the largest Black Gay Pride in the world. Thus, the findings
An additional challenge involved in the current study included working within university systems and the need to collaborate across these systems. Although no specific ethical dilemmas were encountered, it should be noted that all stakeholders should be informed of goals and the study timeline regularly; thus, all parties may be able to work together to achieve the goal of completing the project and learning about its goals, utility, and meeting of stated goals.

4.3 Changing Sexual Prejudice in Context of Sexual Stigma

Given that sexual prejudice may be understood within the context of internalized sexual stigma, sexual prejudice may be thought of as attitudes learned and reinforced from a young age at a variety of levels (e.g., one’s family, general social connections, broader sociocultural practices and norms). In considering sexual prejudice as long-term and reinforced stigma, it seems an attitude thus ingrained would be resistant to change, particularly through a relatively short workshop (Herek, 2007). Further, should even low levels of prejudice exist within a given sample, individuals choosing to participate in a workshop may be unable or unwilling to acknowledge “socially undesirable” attitudes. Additionally, heterosexism (described earlier as structural or sociocultural stigma) creates another barrier to targeting and eliminating sexual prejudice, given that the nature of heterosexism includes reinforcing current power structures that maintain heterosexual privilege. Then, Herek (2007) suggests that the “deep-seated nature” of sexual prejudice and underlying heterosexism render it resistant to change, and instead suggests attempts to observe reduction of sexual prejudice when it occurs naturally to understand more fully the processes involved in decreasing strongly-held and culturally-reinforced beliefs.
In the current study, participant sexual orientation was not shown to correlate significantly with other study variables. However, this finding may be explained by low numbers of participants identifying as a sexual minority person, and may also be obscured by the volunteer bias inherent in the study. Although sexual orientation was not significantly correlated with other variables, it could moderate some of the associations; having a sexual minority identity may influence one’s experience and/or knowledge related to heterosexism, oppression awareness, or being an ally. Still, both self-stigma (sexual minority person’s internalized sexual stigma) and sexual prejudice (heterosexual person’s internalized sexual stigma) may develop similarly, as discussed in the sexual stigma context described by Herek (2007) and presented above. If both are internalized stigmas developed and reinforced throughout a person’s life, it may be possible to understand them similarly and thus understand ways of eliminating internalized stigma. Future research may focus on gaining adequate samples of both heterosexual and non-heterosexual participants to determine mechanisms of change in internalized sexual prejudice, thereby better understanding any differences or similarities between self-stigma and sexual prejudice. Such an undertaking may necessitate differences in presentation of material, given that sexual minority persons may be motivated differently to alter internalized stigma compared to heterosexual persons. In particular, the ability to accept oneself and live a more actualized life for a sexual minority person is likely more motivating than motivations felt by heterosexual persons for decreasing their experience of sexual prejudice (as sexual prejudice likely does not personally impact a heterosexual person in the same way that self-stigma impacts a sexual minority person). Therefore, it may benefit future studies to include equal groups of sexual minority and heterosexual persons to work toward decreasing all manifestations of internalized sexual stigma.
4.4 Conclusions, Implications, and Future Directions

In conclusion, the only quantitatively statistically significant finding suggested that participants gained increased awareness of oppression of gender and sexual minority individuals. However, although not statistically significant, other pretest to posttest means were in the hypothesized directions and were supported by qualitative reports of participants. As there was a significant difference indicated in oppression awareness on one measure (Ally Identity Measure) but not on another (POI-HA) there is a need for further research, potentially with measures that are more sensitive to change expected in this type of workshop, as suggested by the current study. In particular, the current study’s findings suggest that many participants already have knowledge related to heterosexism before the workshop, and may instead benefit from and show significant change in learning and/or practicing specific activities related to being an ally in a variety of ways. In addition, samples with differences in previous experience and knowledge related to sexual and gender minority persons and related issues may serve to distinguish the additional knowledge and sensitivity imparted by the workshop alone. This evidence may be accomplished by investigating workshop pretest and posttest results from individuals mandated to attend these and/or related workshops.

Additionally, future research may benefit from including a measure of pre-workshop contact with sexual and gender minority persons. Future research may benefit from including a measure assessing type and amount of contact independent of the workshop, particularly because so many participants in the current sample indicated that they had regular and/or past contact with sexual and/or gender minority persons.

The current study conveys additional implications. For instance, continuing to revise programs and regularly evaluate the needs, goals, and significance of the program to those being
served is indicated. The program was revised approximately six months before the first of these interviews were conducted, yet participants continued to provide suggestions for further improvement. Although the program can continually be revised and updated, it does provide valuable information to participants about sexual prejudice, discriminatory actions, and steps toward being a better ally to sexual and gender minority persons. Sexual prejudice affects not only the holder of the prejudice, but also has implications toward others’ rights (e.g., adoption, military service, protection from employment discrimination) and may lead to engagement in discriminatory behaviors, like name-calling, threats, harassment, and overt violence and hate crimes. These discriminatory behaviors are common and represent the greatest severity of aggression among hate crimes, with research suggesting that medical attention was required by 46% of victims of bias-motivated assaults (Mio et al., 2012). However, individuals (specifically heterosexuals) without sexual prejudice can act as allies and engage in supportive behaviors, like challenging heterosexist or transphobic jokes, using one’s preferred pronouns, objecting to derogatory language, and stepping in to defend sexual or gender minority persons from derision (Schope & Eliason, 2000).

Programs like Safe Zone encourage ally identities and behaviors and aim to reduce sexual prejudice and therefore discriminatory behaviors. These goals therefore attempt indirectly to improve the lives of sexual and gender minority persons by creating a more inclusive and accepting space, particularly on university campuses on which many students with marginalized identities attend class, go to extracurricular functions, and live their daily lives. These goals, both direct and indirect, should be promoted to create a safer environment for all affiliates of the university.
Safe Zone workshops are one of many possible interventions on university campuses to decrease sexual prejudice and increase safety and comfort for sexual and gender minority persons on campus (Schueler, Hoffman, & Peterson, 2009). However, Safe Zone specifically attempts to include education on being an effective and visible ally; for it to be successful in its goals and have greatest impact, individuals from all sectors of the campus must be involved. This effort may increase the number of allies and contribute to a more inclusive and safer learning environment for sexual and gender minority students, faculty, and staff on campus. Therefore, Safe Zone can only benefit from empirically supported demonstrations of its efficacy, which are lacking in the published research literature. In this respect, the current study contributes to the research literature. The reduction of sexual prejudice and discriminatory behaviors and increased positive attitudes and ally behaviors will improve the lives of all stakeholders involved. Although many aspects of a person’s history influence their attitudes and behaviors, further experiences continue to shape such attitudes and behaviors. These further experiences could include workshops like Safe Zone that promote positive interactions, attitudes, and actions in the daily lives of the workshop participants.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Safe Zone Workshop Pretest

(open-ended) Why are you choosing to participate in the Safe Zone Workshop at Georgia State University?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Short Version)

Instructions. Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Please read each item and decide whether the statement is true or false as it applies to you. For each item, please mark either “True” or “False.”

True    False  1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.
True    False  2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don’t get my way.
True    False  3. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
True    False  4. No matter who I’m talking to, I’m always a good listener.
True    False  5. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.
True    False  6. I’m always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
True    False  7. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.
True    False  8. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
True    False  9. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.
True    False  10. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
True    False  11. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
True    False  12. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone’s feelings.

(Reynolds, 1982; Loo & Thorpe, 2000)

Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale

Instructions. Please rate how strongly you agree with each item.

1. I think make homosexuals are disgusting.
Privilege and Oppression Inventory (Heterosexism Awareness Subscale)

Instructions. Please rate how strongly you agree with each item.

1. Heterosexuals are treated better in society than those who are not heterosexual.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. Male homosexuality is a perversion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. Sex between two men is just plain wrong.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

5. Male homosexuality is merely a different kind of lifestyle that should not be condemned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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6. I think lesbians are disgusting.

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7. Female homosexuality is a perversion.

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8. Female homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in women.

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9. Sex between two women is just plain wrong.

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(Herek, 1984; Herek, 1997)

Privilege and Oppression Inventory (Heterosexism Awareness Subscale)

Instructions. Please rate how strongly you agree with each item.

1. Heterosexuals are treated better in society than those who are not heterosexual.

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(Herek, 1984; Herek, 1997)
2. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals do not have the same advantages as heterosexuals.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

3. Many gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals fear for their safety.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

4. Heterosexuals have access to more resources than gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

5. Openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals lack power in today’s society.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

6. The media negatively stereotypes gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

7. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals experience discrimination.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

8. Some individuals are devalued in society because of their sexual orientation.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

9. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals lack power in the legal system.

   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

10. I think gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals exaggerate their hardships.

    strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

(Hays, Chang, & Decker, 2007)

**LGBT Ally Identity Measure**

*Instructions.* Please rate how strongly you agree with each item.

1. I keep myself informed through reading books and other media about various issues faced by sexual minorities groups, in order to increase my awareness of their experiences.

   1 = Strongly Disagree

   2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree
2. I keep myself informed through reading books and other media about various issues faced by sexual minorities groups, in order to increase my awareness of their experiences.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

3. I know of organizations that advocate for sexual minority issues.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

4. If I see discrimination against a sexual minority person or group occur, I actively work to confront it.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

5. Sexual minority adolescents experience more bullying than heterosexual adolescents.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

6. I have taken a public stand on important issues facing sexual minority people.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

7. I am aware of policies in my workplace and/or community that affect sexual minority groups.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

8. I regularly engage in conversations with sexual minority people.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

9. I try to increase my knowledge about sexual minority groups.
   1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

10. Sexual minority adolescents experience more depression and suicidal thoughts than heterosexual adolescents.
    1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

11. If requested, I know where to find religious or spiritual resources for sexual minority people.
    1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

12. I am aware of the various theories of sexual minority identity development.
    1 = Strongly Disagree  2  3  4  5 = Strongly Agree

13. I am open to learning about the experiences of sexual minority people from someone who identifies as an LGBTQ person.
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree

14. I know about resources for families of sexual minority people (for example: PFLAG).  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree

15. I have developed the skills necessary to provide support if a sexual minority person needs my help.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree

16. I have engaged in efforts to promote more widespread acceptance of sexual minority people.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree

17. I think the sexual minority groups are oppressed by society in the United States.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree

18. I think sexual minority individuals face barriers in the workplace that are not faced by heterosexuals.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree

19. I am comfortable with knowing that, in being an ally to sexual minority individuals, people may assume I am a sexual minority person.  
1 = Strongly Disagree 2 3 4 5 = Strongly Agree

(Jones, Brewster, & Jones, 2014)

**Homophobic Behavior of Students Scale (Modified)**

*Instructions.* As a part of this workshop, it may be possible to organize some additional activities and guest speakers. So that these can be planned, please indicate in which of the following activities, if any, you would participate. Circle the number that comes closest to representing your willingness to participate.

1. I would speak in a small group with a gay person or lesbian about homosexual issues.  
   Definitely False 1 2 3 4 5  
   Definitely True

2. I would speak individually with a gay person or lesbian about homosexual issues.  
   Definitely False 1 2 3 4 5  
   Definitely True

3. I would NOT like to have a gay person or lesbian address a group I attend about homosexual issues.
4. I would take the opportunity to talk in an informal lunchtime meeting with a group of four lesbians or gay males.
   Definitely True

5. I would NOT attend a lunchtime barbecue at which four gay males or lesbians were present.
   Definitely True

6. I would watch a video in which a lesbian or gay person is featured.
   Definitely True

7. I would sign my name to a petition asking the government to do more to stop violence against gay men and lesbians.
   Definitely True

8. I would NOT sign my name to a petition asking the government to make sure gays and lesbians have equal rights with everybody else.
   Definitely True

9. I would sign my name to a petition asking the government to allow lesbian and gay couples to officially register their marriage or partnership.
   Definitely True

10. I would sign my name to a petition asking the government to allow lesbian and gay couples to adopt children.
    Definitely True

(Van de Ven, Bornholt, & Bailey, 1993, 1996)
Appendix B. Safe Zone Workshop Posttest

Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale

Instructions. Please rate how strongly you agree with each item.

1. I think make homosexuals are disgusting.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree Somewhat
   - Strongly Agree

2. Male homosexuality is a perversion.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree Somewhat
   - Strongly Agree

   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree Somewhat
   - Strongly Agree

4. Sex between two men is just plain wrong.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree Somewhat
   - Strongly Agree

5. Male homosexuality is merely a different kind of lifestyle that should not be condemned.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
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6. I think lesbians are disgusting.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
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7. Female homosexuality is a perversion.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree Somewhat
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8. Female homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in women.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
   - Neither Agree nor Disagree
   - Agree Somewhat
   - Strongly Agree

9. Sex between two women is just plain wrong.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree Somewhat
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    - Strongly Disagree
    - Disagree Somewhat
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(Herek, 1984; Herek, 1997)
Privilege and Oppression Inventory (Heterosexism Awareness Subscale)

Instructions. Please rate how strongly you agree with each item.

1. Heterosexuals are treated better in society than those who are not heterosexual.
   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

2. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals do not have the same advantages as heterosexuals.
   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

3. Many gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals fear for their safety.
   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

4. Heterosexuals have access to more resources than gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals.
   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

5. Openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals lack power in today’s society.
   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

6. The media negatively stereotypes gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals.
   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

7. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals experience discrimination.
   strongly disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 strongly agree

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5. Sexual minority adolescents experience more bullying than heterosexual adolescents.
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(Jones, Brewster, & Jones, 2014)

Homophobic Behavior of Students Scale (Modified)

Instructions. As a part of the follow-up to this workshop, it may be possible to organize some additional activities and guest speakers for the future. So that these can be planned, please indicate in which of the following activities, if any, you would participate. Circle the number that comes closest to representing your willingness to participate. Just because you state that you would be interested does not mean that you must participate if this is offered in the future.
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    Definitely False 1 2 3 4 5 Definitely True

(Van de Ven, Bornholt, & Bailey, 1993, 1996)
Appendix C. Basic Interview Guide

Basic Information
- How did you find out about the workshop?
- Why did you choose to participate in the workshop?

Safe Zone Goals
- What do you believe the primary goals of Safe Zone are?
- Prior to Safe Zone, what did you think about prejudice and GSM individuals?

Experiences with Safe Zone
- Overall, what did you think about the workshop?
  - What did you like about it? What was your favorite part?
  - What parts of the workshop were most useful?
  - What did you not like? What was your least favorite part?
  - What do you think should be removed from the workshop?
  - What else could have been better?
- Do you have suggestions for what else could be included in the workshop?

Experiences since Safe Zone
- What do you think you got out of the workshop?
- Have you made any changes since participating in the workshop?
  - What are some of those changes?
  - Why did you make those changes?
  - How do you feel about the changes?
  - To what do you attribute these changes (or lack thereof)? Why do you think these changes happened?
- What parts of the workshop do you think contributed to these changes?
- What parts of the workshop do you think you will use in your life?

Conclusion
- What else would you like us to know about your experiences with Safe Zone?
- Are there any other ways you can think to make it the best it can be?
- What have we not asked about that you think is important for this workshop?
- Do you know anyone else on campus that can benefit from Safe Zone? (do not list personal information)
Appendix D. Comparison of Pre- and Post-test Data Distributions, by Measure

Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data - Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men scale.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data- Attitudes Toward Lesbians subscale.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data - Attitudes Toward Gay Men subscale.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data- Privilege and Oppression Inventory, Heterosexism Awareness subscale.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data - LGBT Ally Identity Measure.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data- LGBT Ally Identity Measure, Knowledge and Skills subscale.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data- LGBT Ally Identity Measure, Openness and Support subscale.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data- LGBT Ally Identity Measure, Oppression Awareness subscale.
Comparison of distribution of pre- and post-test data- adapted Homophobic Behavior of Students Scale.