

Coordinator: Diana Rodriguez  
Haley Puddy  
Lauren Van Blarcum  
Samantha Manuel

Perception of Vulnerability and Fear of Crime Victimization:  
EPPS 6356 Research Project Proposal

Project Purpose & Literature:

The purpose of this study is to contribute to existing research which suggests that vulnerability has a moderating effect on gender and fear of victimization (Felix-Highsmith 2021). Recent literature on victimization suggests that more studies that include minority gender identity and minority sexual orientation groups are needed to further understand the relationship between perception of vulnerability and its influence on fear of victimization (Felix-Highsmith 2021). This study aims to contribute to existing literature on vulnerability and fear of victimization by categorizing perception of vulnerability on a non-binary scale by including minority sexual orientation (e.g., gay/lesbian/bisexual/pansexual), and minority gender identity (e.g., transgender/non-binary/non-gender conforming) as identity variables. Looking forward, we hope that the results of this study will provide a foundation for continued research and potentially suggest policy changes for individuals of minority gender identities and sexual orientations.

Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Minority sexual orientation students will report a higher perception of vulnerability to victimization than heterosexual students.

Hypothesis 2: Minority gender identity students will report a higher perception of vulnerability to victimization than cis-gendered students.

Hypothesis 3: Students who select minority sexual orientation and minority gender identity identifiers will report a higher perception of vulnerability to victimization than students who identify with one or no minority groups.

Design & Analysis Plan:

Our analysis plan includes using primary data collected from a Qualtrics survey developed by our other project members in EPPS 6302 (Hoda Elsafadi, Thomas Allen, Sami Manuel, Diana Rodriguez). We will use convenience sampling by distributing the survey to willing participants. From there, we plan on conducting various multivariate regressions to measure if gender and sexual orientation have an effect on fear of victimization. We also plan on doing a linear regression model with interaction/moderation effects to test whether the perception of vulnerability to victimization acts as a moderator for gender, sexual orientation and fear of victimization. In addition to visualizing with these regression tables, we plan on using charts (e.g., bar charts, scatterplots) to provide visual aids of our results. We also aim to use interaction effect plots.

Variables:

IV: Sexual orientation & gender identity (nominal)

DV: Fear of Victimization

Moderating variable: Perception of vulnerability to victimization

References:

Felix-Highsmith, Shanna. 2021. "Routine Activities, Minority Stress, and Social Support: Victimization Risk and the Lived Experiences of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People." dissertation.