

# Beliefs, Behaviors, and Experiences of APRNs with Lesbian and Gay Patients: A Mixed Methods Study

Marianne Snyder PhD, MSN, RN

She/Her/Hers

Assistant Professor and Director  
of Undergraduate Programs

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*“The fact that we are here and that we speak these words is an attempt to break that silence and bridge some of those differences between us, for it is not difference which immobilizes us, but silence. And there are so many silences to be broken.”* (Lorde, 1984, p.44).



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# Background

- 267,000 Advanced Practice Nurses (APRN) in USA
- 3.8% - 10% of the population in the United States identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual and /or transgender (LGBT)
- Nursing has had a history of silence with regard to LGBT education
- American Nurse's Association (ANA) Code of Ethics . . . .  
“practice with compassion and respect . . . dignity . . .  
unique attributes of every person”

# Significance

- LGBT individuals encounter barriers to care and culturally inappropriate treatment
- Heterosexism, homophobia and discrimination contribute to healthcare disparities
- Healthcare providers are positioned to improve health outcomes for these vulnerable and marginalized populations

# Theoretical and Philosophical Perspectives

## Gay Affirmative Practice (GAP)

“Affirms an LGB identity as an equally positive human experience and expression to heterosexual identity” (Davies & Neal, 1996, p. 25).

## Social Constructionism

Informed the study on GAP

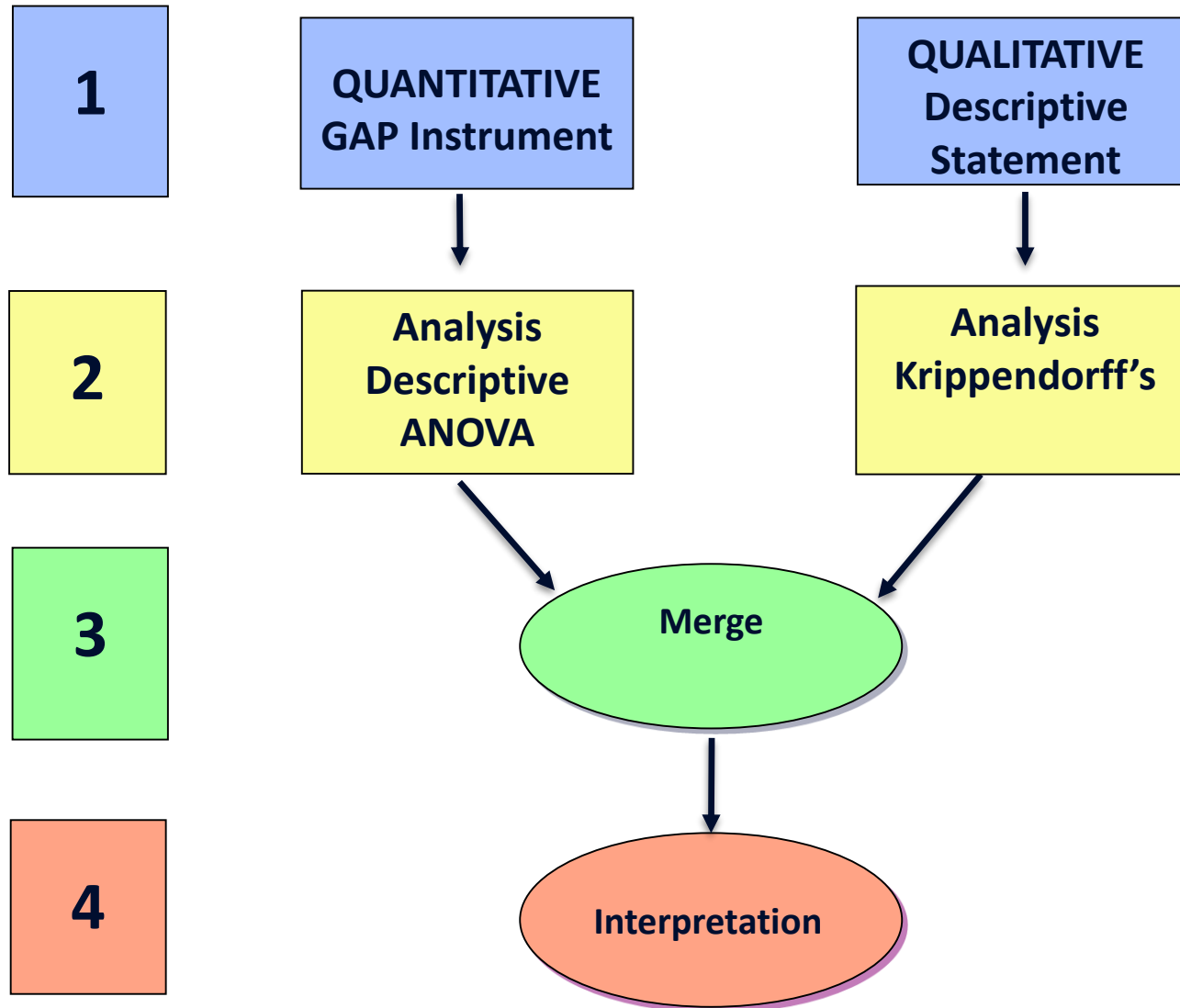
## Pragmatism

Informed the study design

# Research Questions

- What are beliefs and behaviors of APRNs about caring for lesbian and gay persons?
- What demographic variables correlate with high or low GAP scores?
- What are clinical experiences of APRNs who have cared for lesbian and gay patients?
- How do findings from APRN experiences with lesbian and gay patients enhance the findings from total GAP scores?

# Phases of the Convergent Parallel Mixed Method Design



# GAP Scale Summary Scores

<b>N = 678</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Beliefs</b>	21	75	<b>65.4</b>	8.9
<b>Behaviors</b>	19	75	<b>56.3</b>	12.8
<b>Total</b>	43	150	<b>121.7</b>	19.6

- 4,366 licensed APRNs from a northeast state in USA
- N = 678 Licensed APRNs completed the survey
- 15.5% Response rate



# Personal Characteristics and Total Score Group Mean Comparisons

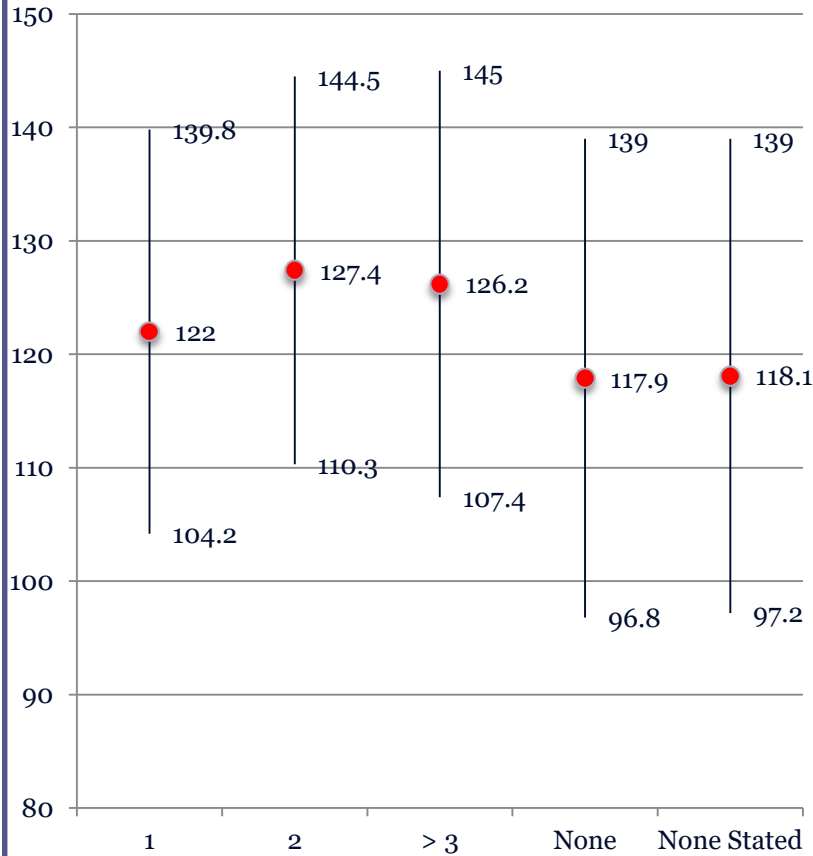
No. L/G in my family				
Group	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	
1	1	192	122 (17.8)	
2	2	99	127.4 (17.1)	
3	≥3	99	126.2 (18.8)	
4	None	224	117.9 (21.1)	
5	None Stated	64	118.1 (20.9)	
<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i> <sup>2</sup>	Tukey's HSD
6.24	4,673	<.001	.04	4 <2, 3; 5<2

My Identity				
Group	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	
1	Heterosexual	564	120.5 (19.5)	
2	Gay	12	131.3 (17.2)	
3	Lesbian	26	141.1 (9.7)	
4	Bisexual	17	128.9 (15)	
5	None Stated	59	120.4 (20.5)	
<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i> <sup>2</sup>	Tukey's HSD
8.64	4,674	<.001	.05	1, 5, <3

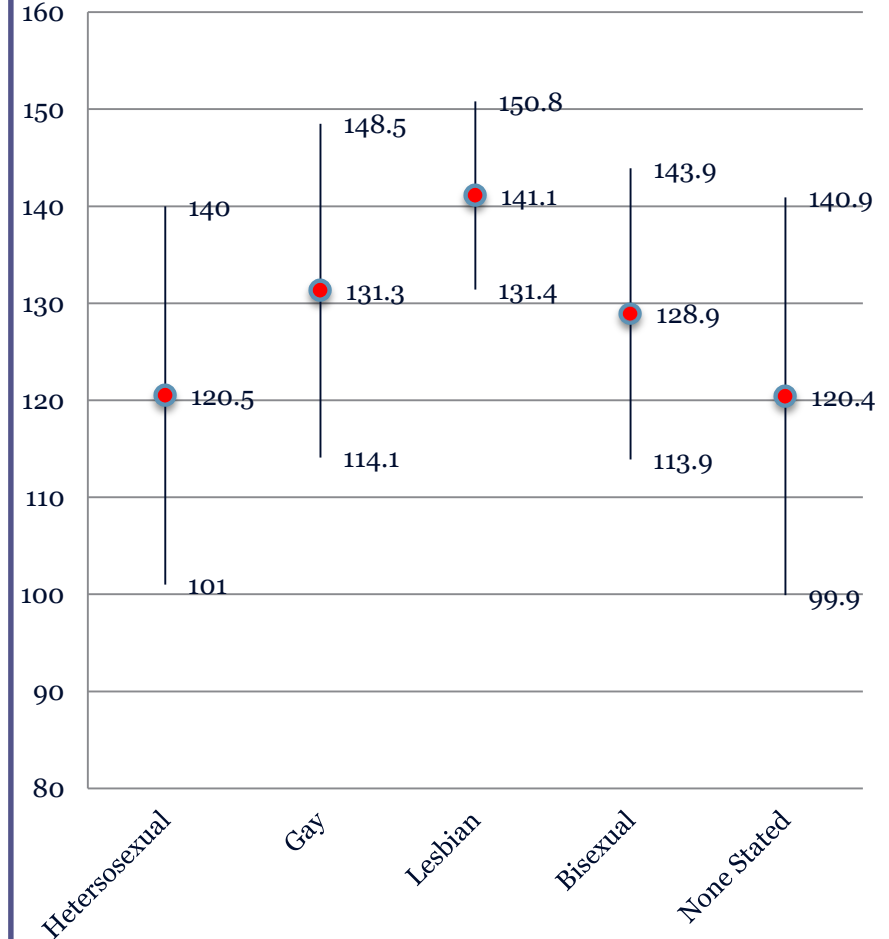
Note. To account for multiple testing, the threshold for statistical significance was lowered to  $p \leq .005$ .

# Personal Characteristics and Total Score Group Mean Comparisons

## No. L/G in My Family



## My Identity



# Personal and Practice Characteristics and Total Score

## Group Mean Comparisons

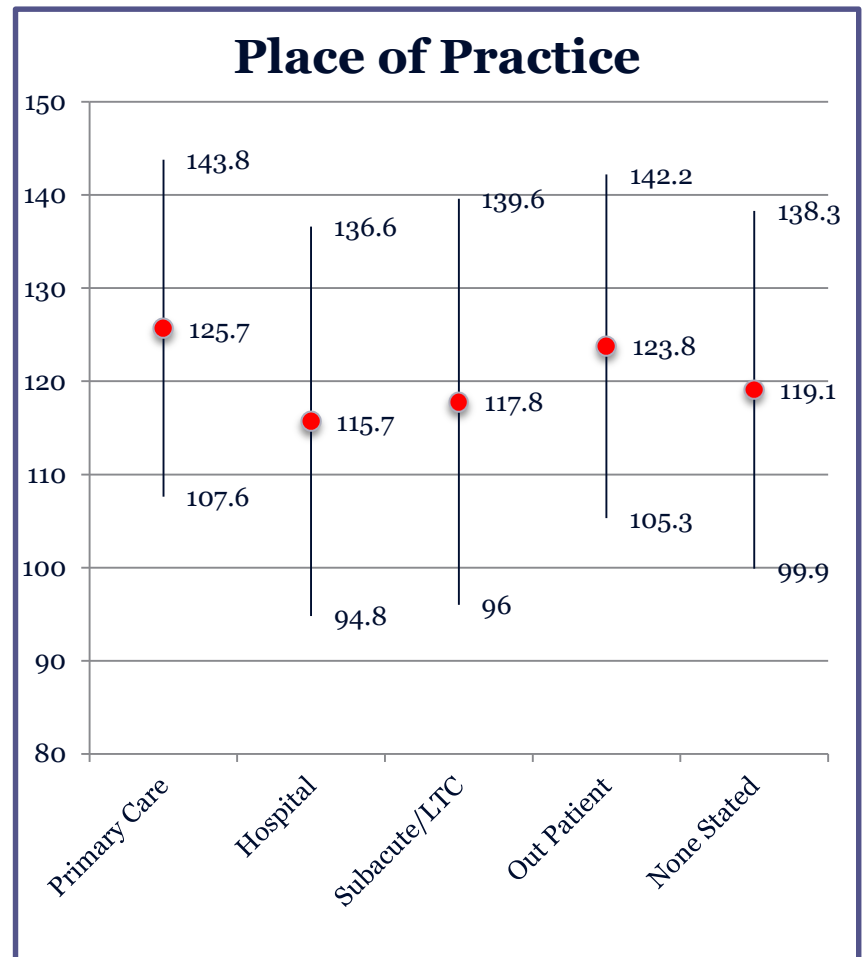
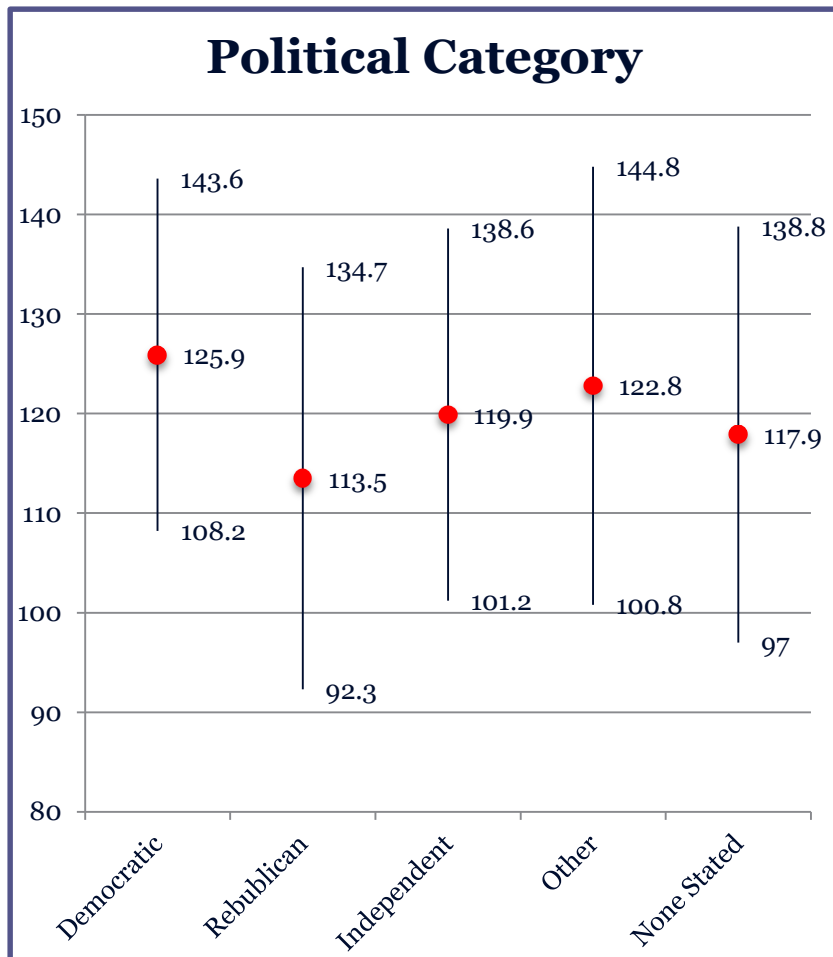
Political Party				
Group	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	
1	<b>Democratic</b>	312	<b>125.9 (17.7)</b>	
2	Republican	81	113.5 (21.2)	
3	Independent	140	119.9 (18.7)	
4	Other	36	122.8 (22)	
5	None Stated	109	117.9 (20.9)	
<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i> <sup>2</sup>	Tukey's HSD
9.04	4,673	<.001	.05	2, 3, 5 <1

Place of Practice				
Group	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	
1	<b>Primary Care</b>	192	<b>125.7 (18.1)</b>	
2	Hospital	99	115.7 (20.9)	
3	Subacute/LTC	99	117.8 (21.8)	
4	<b>Out patient</b>	224	<b>123.8 (18.5)</b>	
5	None Stated	64	119.1 (19.2)	
<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i> <sup>2</sup>	Tukey's HSD
6.24	4,673	<.001	.04	2 <1, 4

Note. To account for multiple testing, the threshold for statistical significance was lowered to  $p \leq .005$ .

# Personal and Practice Characteristics and Total Score

## Group Mean Comparisons



# Practice Characteristics and Total Score Group Mean Comparisons

## No. L/G Patients Cared For

Group	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>		
1	1-3	34	110.5 (17.3)		
2	4-6	58	117.8 (17.9)		
3	>6	521	124 (18.9)		
4	None	17	94.3 (19.6)		
5	None Stated	48	118.5 (19.9)		
<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i> <sup>2</sup>	Tukey's HSD	
14.96	4,673	*.00	.08	1 < 3; 4 < 1, 2, 3	

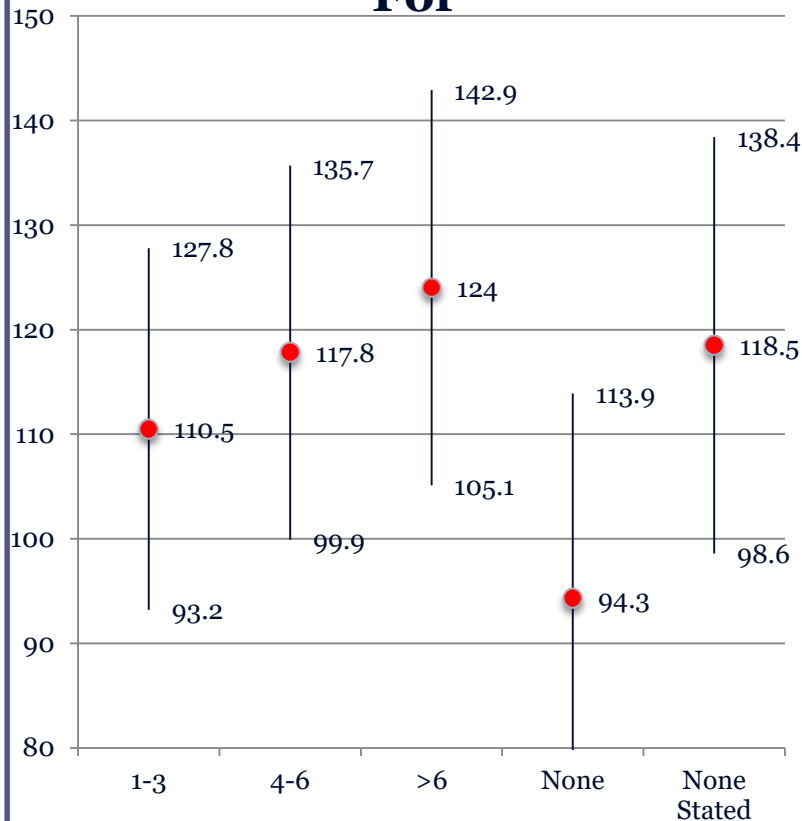
## Practice Focus

Group	Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>		
1	Adult Men	8	123 (10.2)		
2	Adult Women	62	121.1 (17.8)		
3	Children/Adol.	63	125.3 (17)		
4	Psych	51	131.5 (14.8)		
5	Neonatal	8	96 (16.3)		
6	Multiple Selection	437	121 (20)		
7	None Stated	49	117.4 (21.8)		
<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>n</i> <sup>2</sup>	Tukey's HSD	
5.48	6,671	<.001	.05	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 < 4; 5 < 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7	

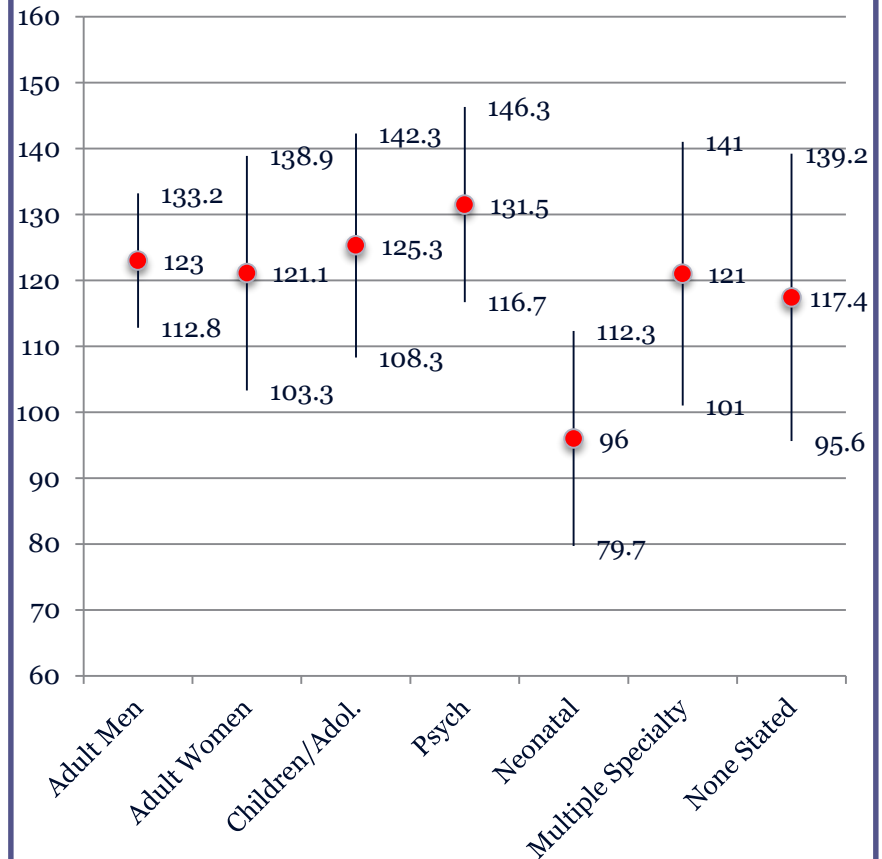
Note. To account for multiple testing, the threshold for statistical significance was lowered to  $p \leq .005$ .

# Practice Characteristics and Total Score Group Mean Comparisons

## No. L/G Patients Cared For



## Practice Focus



# Thematic Categories

- **Theme 1:** Affirming Beliefs and Behaviors
- **Theme 2:** Sexual orientation only asked if relevant
- **Theme 3:** Limited Experience with lesbian and gay patients
- **Theme 4:** Sexual orientation is not the focus of my practice

# Thematic Categories

- **Theme 5:** Non-affirming beliefs and behaviors
- **Theme 6:** Treat all the same
- **Theme 7:** Have witnessed discrimination
- **Theme 8:** More education needed

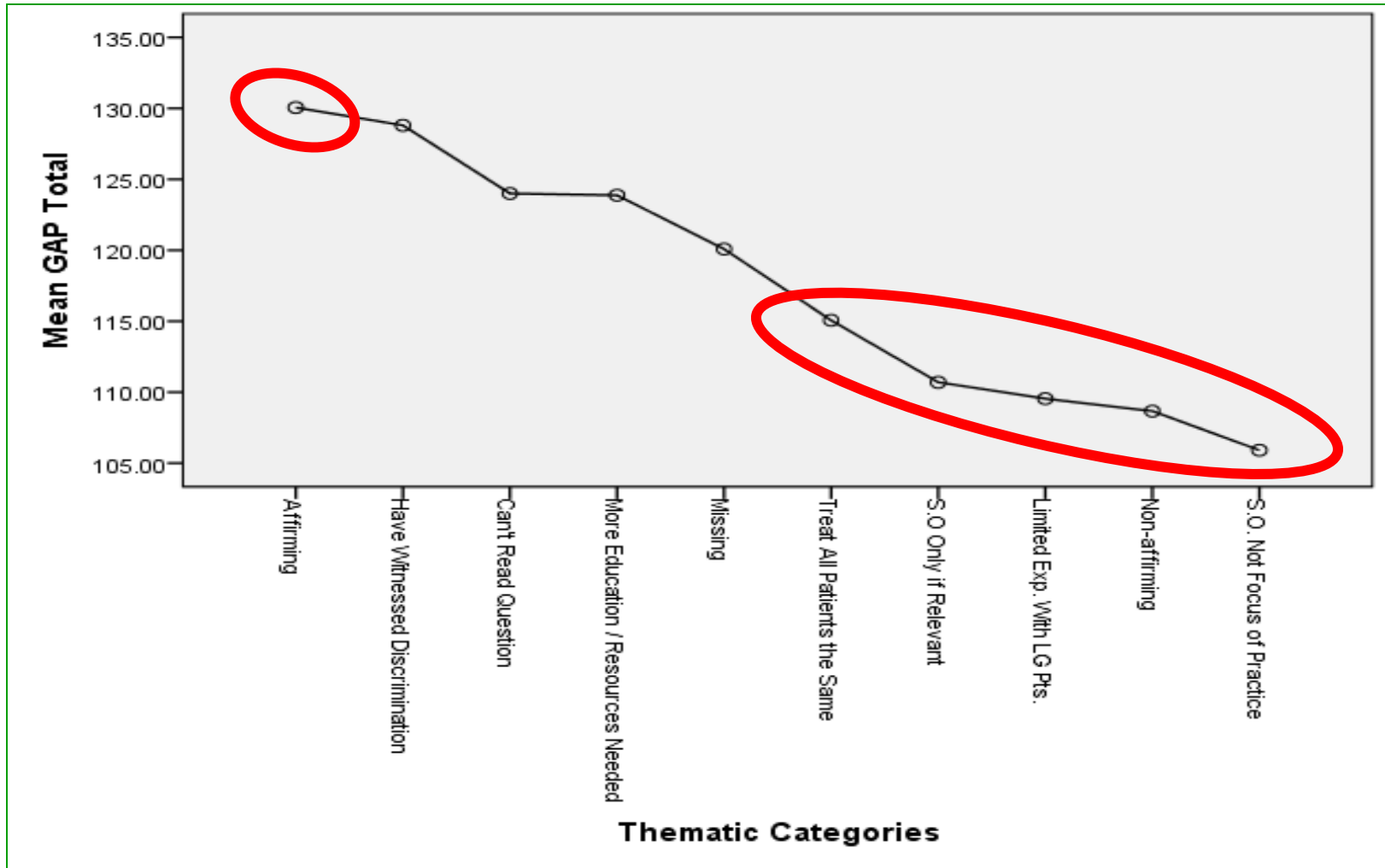


# Thematic Categories and Total Score Group Mean Comparisons

Theme	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	$\eta^2$	Tukey's HSD
			14	9, 668	< .001	0.19	
<b>Affirming (1)</b>	251	<b>130.1 (20.4)</b>					<b>1 &gt; 2,3,4,5,6</b>
Have witnessed discrimination (7)	10	128.8 (11.5)					NS
More education Needed (8)	25	123.8 (15.8)					NS
<b>Treat all the same (6)</b>	63	115.1 (18.2)					6 < 1
<b>Sexual orientation only asked if relevant (2)</b>	23	110.7 (14.9)					2 < 1
<b>Limited experience with L/G patients (3)</b>	46	109.5 (21.1)					3 < 1
<b>Non-affirming (5)</b>	12	108.7 (19.6)					5 < 1
<b>Sexual orientation not focus of my practice (4)</b>	33	105.9 (18.1)					4 < 1

Note: Statistically significant at  $p \leq .005$  f and DF Tukey's here

# Mean Comparisons of GAP Total Scores to Qualitative Thematic Categories



# Implications for Education and Practice

- **Education**

- Integrate LGBT didactic and clinical experiences into curriculum

- **Practice**

- Never assume sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI)
- Acknowledge the family
- SOGI data in medical record
- Ask each person how they identify
- Create LGBT welcoming and affirming practice environments
- Treat each person as an individual – **WE ARE NOT ALL THE SAME**

# Implications for Policy and Research

- **Policy**
  - Funding; non-discrimination policies
  - Mandatory education
  - LGBT inclusive care
- **Research**
  - LGBT healthcare experiences
  - Barriers and facilitators to LGBT education
  - Healthcare providers' (HCP) self-efficacy to demonstrate gay affirming behaviors
  - Correlates of GAP in HCPs across different practice settings

# Conclusion

- Findings supported the significance for conducting the study and need for more education and research
- Treating all the same was incongruent with gay affirmative practice
- APRNs have the potential to be the role models of gay affirming practice

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