

A Systematic Review of Constructs Studied as Potential Correlates of Relationship Quality in Sexually Minoritized People of Color

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Enduring Qualities

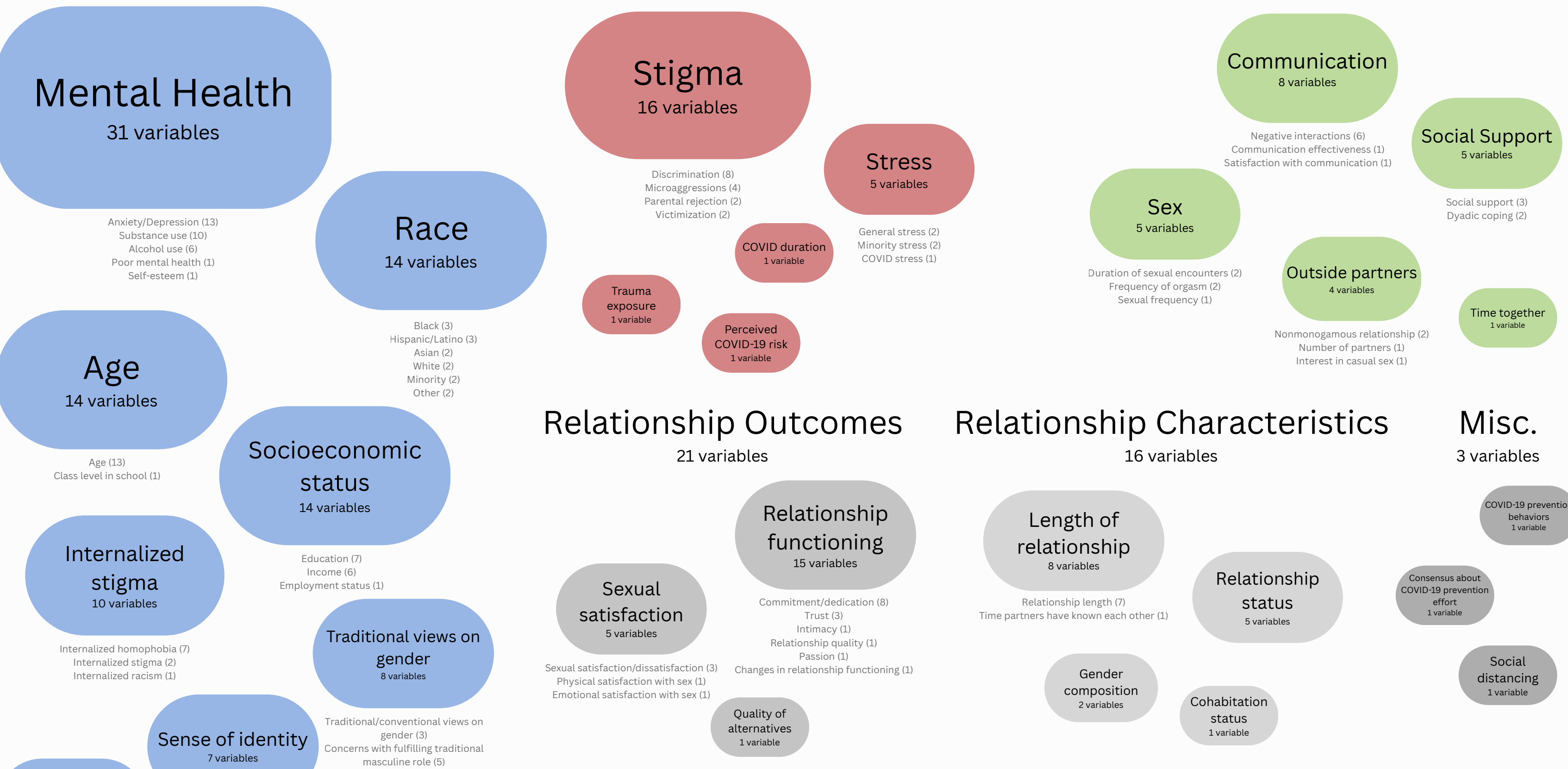
124 variables

Stressful Events

24 variables

Adaptive Processes

23 variables



Relationship Outcomes

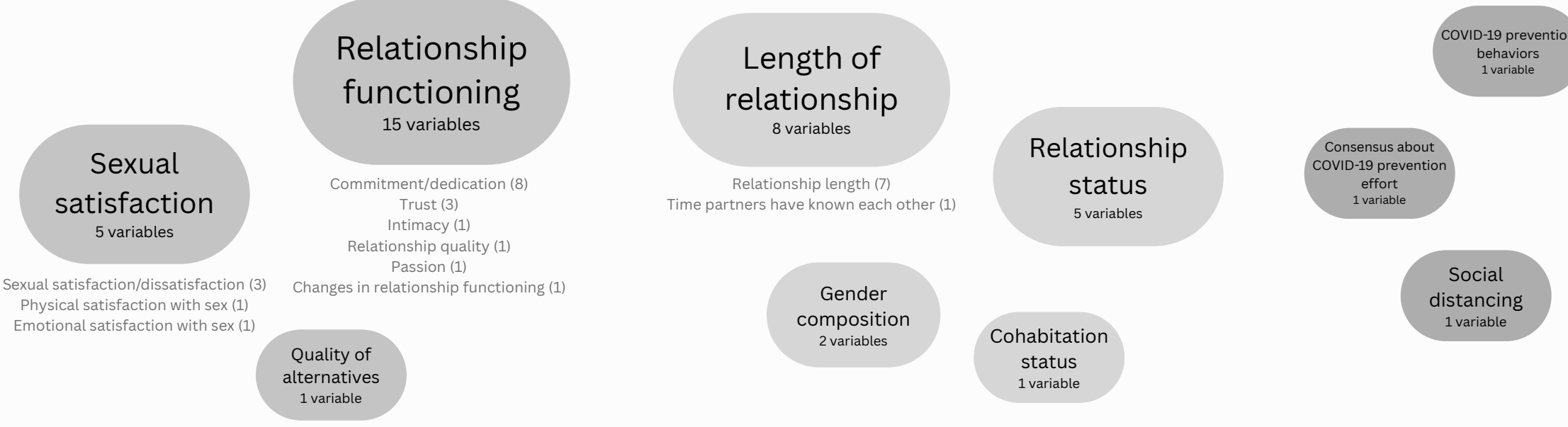
21 variables

Relationship Characteristics

16 variables

Misc.

3 variables



Introduction	Method	Results	Discussion	References
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The romantic relationships of sexually minoritized people of color (SMPOC) face distinctive challenges.Using the Vulnerability Stress Adaptation (VSA; Karney & Bradbury, 1995) model, we systematically reviewed variables included in studies as constructs potentially associated with relationship quality among SMPOC.We categorized these variables into the central VSA components of adaptive processes, stressful events, and enduring qualities.We conclude with a summary of which constructs have strong empirical support describing their association with relationship quality and which need further study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We conducted a search of six databases yielding 1,039 articles.We included studies that examined relationship quality in a sexually minoritized sample with at least 39% people of color, the current population percentage.A total of 211 variables (described in the ovals above) from 28 studies had effect size information available and therefore were included in the final review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We found that, of the three VSA categories, research on relationship quality for SMPOC seems focused on enduring vulnerabilities (124 variables, 110 variables other than race/ethnicity), with stressful events (24 variables) and adaptive processes (23 variables; 40 variables studied did not fit within the VSA model) receiving relatively little attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The focus on enduring vulnerabilities overemphasizes individual deficits and downplays the role of contextual stressors.Because the experience of stigma-related stress is a distinctive characteristic of the relationships of SMPOC (Meyer, 2003), stressful events should be a more prominent focus of research on these couples.Adaptive processes also warrant more attention due to their particular importance for couples experiencing high stress (McNulty et al., 2021) and their especially proximal influence on relationship quality (VSA; Karney & Bradbury, 1995).	<p>Karney, B. R., & Bradbury, T. N. (1995). The longitudinal course of marital quality and stability: A review of theory, methods, and research. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 118(1), 3–34. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.118.1.3</p> <p>Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: Conceptual issues and research evidence. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i>, 129(5), 674–697. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.5.674</p> <p>McNulty, J. K., Meltzer, A. L., Neff, L. A., & Karney, B. R. (2021). How both partners' individual differences, stress, and behavior predict change in relationship satisfaction: Extending the VSA model. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences - PNAS</i>, 118(27), e2101402118. https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2101402118</p>