If Adorno Met Intersectionality Theory: Reconceiving the Method of Negative Case Analysis

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Abstract
This article endeavors to present a methodological innovation that is described here as Adornian negative case analysis (ANCA). The method of negative case analysis is theoretically expanded upon using Adornian and Intersectional lenses and in doing so, it provides a means by which equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) can be substantiated in research design. ANCA is inclusive of underrepresented perspectives so that points of comparison can be created with the intent of challenging assumptions that have historically negated the experiences of diverse and equity-seeking groups. Understanding that negative case data require saturation, identities can be appreciated as irreducibly complex, but subsequently explored in relation to the universalizing social categories that work to sustain imbalanced power relations. To demonstrate how ANCA can be practically applied, the author will describe how it was used in her doctoral research study. Beginning with recruitment and following through to data analysis, this article provides a summary of how the substantiation of EDI in the design of a Constructivist Grounded Theory study transpired through ANCA.

Keywords
constructivist GT, critical theory, dialectic critique, grounded theory, methods in qualitative inquiry, social justice

Introduction
Negative dialectics provide a way of thinking against dominant philosophical views; that which is assumed is negated, and understanding can be further complicated through negative critique (Adorno, 1973). Recruiting a diverse sample population can allow for theoretical sampling to be conducted across specified categories of identity so that the structuring of power can be explored within a studied context. A diverse sample population makes possible the creation of multiple points of comparison through the inclusion of participants whose perspectives are explored in relation to reductive categories of identity that include Indigeneity, race, gender, sexual orientation, class (dis)ability, and citizenship, in addition to others that have been constructed in opposition to dominant perspectives. Establishing inclusion criteria can substantiate the embeddedness of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in research design. Intersectionality theory will be used to support the negation of Adorno’s position on identity theory by applying McCall’s (2005) approaches to managing intersectional complexity. Described here as Adornian negative case analysis (ANCA), this methodological innovation can be used to identify that which is assumed (such as normative expressions of sexuality and gender), that which is constructed in opposition (such as sexual and gender minorities), and appreciate human experience as irreducibly complex for a broadly inclusive analysis of power relations in a studied context. The means by which EDI can be embedded in research using the ANCA method will be described within the context of a Constructivist Grounded Theory study on the delivery of primary healthcare services to 2SLGBTQ (Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer) populations in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia being conducted by the

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Historically, cisgender white males have been the subjects of health research, which has hindered progress in understanding health outcomes in populations that are non-white, non-cisgender, and non-male (Fisher and Kalbaugh, 2011; White Hughto et al., 2015; Woitowich et al., 2020). In addition to reinforcing assumptions of the cisgender white male as the ideal subject, researchers have conducted unethical research on minority populations, such as the Tuskegee Syphilis Study, where the natural course of untreated syphilis was being investigated in Black men who were not given treatment, even after an effective medication had been developed (Fisher and Kalbaugh, 2011). The effective medication was made available in the 1940s, but the Tuskegee Syphilis Study continued until 1972, highlighting one of numerous reasons for mistrust among Black populations toward researchers (Fisher and Kalbaugh, 2011). The “Fruit Machine” experiment is another example of the unethical use of science that creates historical barriers to the inclusion of diverse and equity-seeking groups in research. Created by a Carleton University professor who was working with the Government of Canada to address a perceived risk to national security during the Cold War, the Fruit Machine was used by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to test Canadian public servants for what was described as deviant sexuality (Pearson, 2016; Wawzonek, 2021). For these reasons and others that are beyond the scope of this article, marred is the credibility, richness, and depth of analysis in relation to groups who are constructed in opposition to those who are dominant. The inclusion of diverse and equity-seeking groups in research could work to address their historical underrepresentation, but these histories and others need to be meaningfully addressed.

Within the Canadian context, EDI has been identified by federal research funding agencies as essential in advancing knowledge and understanding in a way that allows the Canadian research enterprise to respond to current challenges faced at local, national, and global levels (Government of Canada, 2020). EDI is defined as intervening upon systemic barriers and biases that are disproportionately experienced by underrepresented groups by addressing historical inequalities in ways that promote equal integration and support of individuals and their contributions (Government of Canada, 2020). EDI is not about intervening in ways that intend to avoid criticism surrounding fair and equal treatment (Government of Canada, 2020). What EDI could involve is careful consideration of how the inclusion of diverse and equity-seeking individuals comes about, while avoiding the kind of prioritization that comes at the expense of other historically underrepresented groups. This article seeks to meaningfully address the underrepresentation of diverse and equity-seeking groups in research by describing a methodological innovation that will not only confront problematic histories within research and beyond, but offer a method that will assist qualitative researchers in substantiating EDI in their research design. Through intentional and systematic inclusion of participants from diverse and equity-seeking groups using a reconceived method of negative case analysis, unrealized possibilities for qualitative research may emerge.

**Expanding Upon the Method of Negative Case Analysis.**

Negative case analysis is “the critical analytic strategy for validity” (Hanson, 2017, p. 1, italics in original) because it can be used to uncover perspectives not yet represented in the data and create additional points of comparison that enhance the credibility, richness, and depth of qualitative analysis (Polit & Beck, 2017). Those perspectives would be considered negative cases because they are exceptions to that which has been uncovered up to that point of an investigation; it might be an exception that “proves” the rule or expands upon it, but it might also reveal a concept or category that lacks in robustness (Charmaz, 2014; Polit & Beck, 2017). As a qualitative research method that is routinely implemented near the end of data collection, negative case analysis guides the researcher in collecting additional data that can be used to test hunches, assess emergent concepts, and confirm the depth of the analysis (Polit & Beck, 2017). It could be likened to a detective chasing down a lead. When a piece of evidence is found that contradicts that which has been uncovered up to that point in the investigation, this signals to the investigator that there may be more to discover. A negative case might also be one that disproves the rule or something that the researcher assumed to be true. Negative case analysis can then be used to assist investigators who are interested in expanding their analyses to collect data that exists beyond limitations imposed by assumptions that risk inadvertently upholding some sort of rule. The method of negative case analysis can thus be expanded upon to reveal concepts and categories that lack robustness due to assumed ways of being within broader social contexts. In doing so, negative case analysis can be employed to meaningfully collect data on the perspectives of historically underrepresented groups. Rather than implementing it near the end of data collection, negative case analysis can, in its reconceived form, be used to purposefully recruit participants with diverse perspectives, maximize the potential for multiple points of comparison, substantiate the application of EDI in research design, and enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative findings in relation to populations that have been historically underrepresented. To reconceive negative case analysis, a philosophical expansion of the method will now be described.

**Negative Dialectics**

Historically, philosophers regarded dialectics as affirmative processes whereby contradictions were resolved through negation (Adorno, 1973). This logic was challenged by Adorno, who argued that opposing perspectives rely upon one
another to exist and that contradictions are inextricably linked by way of a dialectical relationship that cannot be resolved (Pinkard, 2020). Adorno’s thinking allows for an exploration and complication of the association between contradictions that are inextricably linked through opposition and perpetuated by way of negative affirmations that result in the prioritization of perspectives that can then become dominant, normalized, naturalized, or positioned as morally superior. Adorno argues that relationships as these obscure opportunities to bring about unrealized possibilities for resolution. This way of thinking encourages a pushing beyond the limitations of what has become naturalized by humanity (i.e., that which is constructed as the rule) and can be used to highlight pathological traditions and practices that work to rationalize social domination (Nietzsche, 2003). As such, negative dialectics make possible an exploration of perspectives that have been historically underrepresented and negatively affirmed by way of those that dominate through opposition and naturalize their own overrepresentation.

Adorno (1973) conceives what he calls “non-identities”: described as reductive social categories that are negated by cultural traditions and norms because they exist beyond the limitations of individuals’ ability to understand experiences that are socially constructed in opposition to their own. Adorno’s work reflects a belief that one cannot appreciate a social context without situating it within the broader social context. For Adorno, social contexts are inseparable from the totality of society. Subjective meaning can then be understood in relation to the limitations that society places on thought. As such, negative dialectics can support a philosophical expansion of negative case analysis because the methods are complementary to one another; this author’s interpretation of the latter is that social norms negatively affirm that which is opposed to and thus threaten the advantages conferred by overrepresented groups. Ravela’s (2020) interpretation of negative dialectics helps to flesh out this author’s position within the context of post-civil rights America; race represents a negative dialectic in so far as Blackness critiques and exposes the racism that grounds American citizenship, thus creating an alternative narrative. As such, this narrative brought forth by Black American civil rights activists challenged “the rule” of white supremacy in the United States and accepted “truths” about Black populations. This author’s application of Adorno’s Negative Dialectics (1973) differs from Ravela’s (2020) in that it attempts to complicate analyses by way of the inclusion of historically underrepresented perspectives that arise from multiple and intersecting categories of identity. Inclusion criteria for research can maximize the variation in perspective and outline a breadth of experience that serves to provide context to the data that will be collected; comparisons can be made between the accounts of participants who belong to various social categories that relate to broader structural issues and rely upon the reduction of identity to perpetuate power imbalances. Ravela (2020) uses Adorno’s way of thinking to explore Blackness. This author will be inclusive of Blackness, but inclusion comes about by way of 2SLGBTQ identities, which do not operate in isolation from other intersections of identity. Rather 2SLGBTQ identities intersect with every population because sexual orientation and gender cut across all other intersections of identity (Lane, 2020).

Finding the Limitation in Adorno’s Thinking

Adorno (1973) rejected identity theory because he saw it as a primitive form of ideology that imposes universalizing social categories upon individuals in such a way that subjects could become opposed to—and, thus—negate one another through contradictory belief systems. Adorno saw identity theory as a necessary precursor for domination because it can provide false context for the limitations that are placed upon human agency. Under negative conditions, identities can be seen as constructs that carry “specific class relationships and interests” (Adorno, 1973, p. 354), and this shapes how groups and individuals interact in relation to the norms of dominant cultures. In this sense, oppositional subjectivities do not rely on one another to exist. Rather, it is the relations of power that rely upon oppositional subjectivities to exist. Adorno (1973) would want us to try to conceptualize the objects for what they are in and of themselves, not the reductive conceptualizations that society would deceive us into accepting for the purpose of domination. The rejection, or negation, of identity theory does, however, place limitations on such an analysis. The dialectic remains unresolved through negation; introducing Adorno’s stance on identity theory to Intersectionality Theory negates his rejection, contradicts the assertion that identity cannot be conceived in ways that appreciate irreducible complexity, and enables an exploration of experiences that are socially constructed in opposition to that which are assumed to be the rule.

Introducing Adorno to Intersectionality Theory

Sawchuk (2020) contends that negative dialectics promote robust analyses that strive toward resolving contradictions: not by generalizations, but by way of the differences, particularities, and variations within and between subjective realities. In this sense, negative dialectics become a methodological means by which oppositional relationships and interests can be explored (Sawchuk, 2020). Through negative dialectics, Adorno’s stance on identity theory can be negated with Intersectionality Theory’s method of complicating identity. The fallacy in logic that Adorno confronts is that subjectivities are maintained through oppositional relationships. This author agrees that history can serve to provide an objective account of subjectivities that maintain imbalanced power relations, and like Adorno, she would also call into question the fallacy in logic that the existence of overrepresented groups must rely upon the underrepresentation of others. Rather than arguing...
for the rejection of identity theory, Intersectionality Theory can be employed to complicate our understanding of identity. Through an exploration of power relations that mutually constitute one another and rely upon the reduction of identity to perpetuate social inequities, understandings of the advantages that are necessary for groups to sustain their dominance can be furthered.

Crenshaw (1989) coined the term intersectionality, but the style of critical inquiry existed prior to its introduction to and institutionalization in the academy (Hill Collins and Bilge, 2020). Intersectionality is an analytic tool for understanding social problems in their historical contexts and how “power relations […] are not discrete and mutually exclusive entities, but rather build on each other and work together; and that while often invisible, these intersecting power relations affect all aspects of the social world” (Hill Collins and Bilge, 2020). Intersectional epistemology, its history, and the relationship between critical inquiry and praxis that ground it as a tool of analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is important to note that there are multiple narratives in existence (Hill Collins and Bilge, 2020). To conceive and appreciate categories of identity as irreducibly complex for the purpose of qualitative research, meaningful attention to the differences between and within groups is required. These groups include—but are certainly not limited to—race, gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, and citizenship. It is necessary to address the impossibility of exploring differences in a way that effusively captures the complexities existing within and between these groups. It is possible, however, to explore differences in a way that brings about a complex understanding of the potential for variations that exist between and within perspectives that mutually constitute power relations (Hill Collins and Bilge, 2020).

**Negating Adorno’s Stance on Identity Theory**

Adorno’s (1973) stance on identity theory, which states that social identities are irreducibly complex and can work to uphold the naturalization of prevailing social conditions, is that categories of identity can be misappropriated to legitimate imbalanced power relations. Arrangements as such create negative conditions whereby the advantages of some individuals are reinforced through negatively affirming those who are already placed at a disadvantage. As a result, the persistence of power imbalances relies upon oppositional relationships. Those who are engaged through a power imbalance would remain in existence if the contradiction at the root of the oppositional relationship was resolved. Such a resolution does not have to negate existence, merely the contradiction that creates the opposition, but Adorno’s rejection of identity theory does not allow for an exploration of different perspectives that mutually constitute power relations. Contradictory perspectives can be complicated in such a way that avoids perpetuating opposition, power imbalances, and reducing social categories of identity in ways that create new social hierarchies or increase competition there within. As such, the differences, particularities, and variations in perspective within and between subjective realities can be meaningfully acknowledged using Intersectionality Theory.

Adornian negative cases address Adorno’s concerns about imposing universalizing social categories by conceiving identities as irreducibly complex and exploring the impact of imposing universalizing social categories. Through a critique of that which is constructed as the rule, Adornian negative cases bring forth alternative narratives that are obscured through imposed social categories. By challenging that which is assumed, the intent is to uncover perspectives not yet represented and create additional points of comparison. As such, subjectivities that are underrepresented, misrepresented, and rendered invisible by dominant cultures and part of a dialectical process whereby the interests of advantaged groups emerge from power relations are Adornian negative cases if they are also conceived by way of an appreciation of their irreducible complexity. Power relations can then be explored through ANCA using Intersectionality Theory because social structures operate through systems of privilege and converge upon individuals by way of imposing social categories and identities that are universalized, thus negating the breadth of experience there within. Interactions that arise from power relations as these place limitations on human agency so that the interests, superiority, and entitlement of some are protected; social categories are universalized so narratives that would challenge social norms can be positioned beyond the limitations of that which is constructed as normal, natural, or morally superior by dominant cultures (Adorno, 1973; Bourdieu, 1977; Nietzsche, 2003, 2010).

Cases that are negatively affirmed by dominant cultures, particularly those that are defined in relation to universalized social categories, may serve as the grist of analyses in addition to complicating understandings of social issues that might otherwise be reductively conceived because they operate beyond the limits of thought that are created and maintained by social norms. ANCA could thus interrogate for underlying assumptions that reinforce social norms. The ambiguity of searching for negative cases can result in importing them into the research process (Charmaz, 2014), but the abstraction of negative dialectics creates further challenges to bringing this methodological innovation into concretion (Adorno, 1973). For this reason, an objective phenomenon whereby negation is ongoing and thus unresolved will be used to demonstrate the application of ANCA. McCall’s (2005) three approaches to managing intersectionality complexity will be used to demonstrate how this methodological innovation can be applied in qualitative research to illustrate how the embeddedness of EDI can be substantiated.

**Applying Adornian Negative Case Analysis**

Embedding EDI into research design was explored by the author with her supervisor and doctoral committee members during proposal development and through the conduction of
her doctoral research, the latter of which was over the same period that this manuscript underwent revisions. The Constructivist Grounded Theory study is currently in the data analysis phase and substantive theory is being generated with the aim of furthering understanding on how primary healthcare services are delivered to 2SLGBTQ populations in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia. ANCA has evolved from being almost completely abstract in its description, which mirrors one of the major critiques of Adorno's work, into its current iteration, which is both conceptual and practical, illustrating the utility of Intersectionality Theory in qualitative research. An outline of how ANCA can be applied constitutes the remainder of this article; it begins with description of how a diverse sample can be conceived, the limitations of the ANCA in the described study, and the process by which multiple points of comparison were created through the inclusion of as many perspectives as possible (maximum variation sampling) on the phenomenon under study.

Conceiving a Diverse Sample Population

Practically speaking, ANCA relies upon an intersectional lens to be used in qualitative research. Intersectionality Theory is recognized as a best practice for research that aims to imbend EDI (Government of Canada, 2020) as it is the lens through which a critique of systemic barriers that reinforce privileges and oppressions that sustain power relations over time comes about. Through an intersectional lens, ANCA seeks to explore social problems and engage in broadly inclusive analyses of differences between and within groups in a way that promotes an appreciation for irreducible complexity. This may enhance the application of research findings to diverse and equity-seeking populations because the analyses upon which findings emerge are grounded in the experience of a diverse sample population. To appreciate the variation in perspectives within a sample population, intersectional complexity needs to be managed so that differences are appreciated and so reduction and universalization are avoided. This management can be carried out methodologically so analyses can expand by way of the systematic inclusion of multiple dimensions of social life (McCall, 2005) by way of social categories of identity. Three approaches to managing intersectional complexity can serve to explore structurally embedded inequalities and were described as if they would be employed separately; however, to address the risk of oversimplifying complex social problems as it experienced by a described sample population, the approaches can be used in succession to outline and thus substantiate the inclusion of diverse perspectives by way of social categories of identity.

ANCA makes use of Intersectionality Theory by beginning with what McCall (2005) describes as the anti-categorical approach, which “deconstructs analytical categories […] [as] too irreducibly complex – overflowing with multiple and fluid terminations of both subjects and structures” (p. 1773). This acknowledgement is central to ANCA because recognizing identity as irreducibly complex is a necessary first step in creating multiple points of comparison for the purpose of qualitative analyses in a way that is equitable. To address social problems that emanate from social structures, historically underrepresented as well as overrepresented perspectives must be explored; dominant social categories are still included, but more effort is made to be inclusive of perspectives that have been historically disadvantaged through the universalization of social categories of identity. To enhance inclusivity, ANCA would thus seek to deconstruct power relations between categories of identity that are constructed in opposition to each other and attend to that which is constructed beyond social norms. In this context, inclusion does not mean tacking on new priority groups to those which have been historically prioritized, because it risks reproducing the social structures that underlie the issues that EDI aims to address and might actually increase competition among diverse and equity-seeking groups, which sustains the status quo (Davis et al., 2020).

Identifying anti-categories, or what Adorno (1973) called non-identities, is the starting point for ANCA because they promote the creation of multiple points of comparison between different perspectives, and thus challenge that which is assumed to be the rule. McCall’s (2005) inter- and intra-categorical approaches can then be employed to describe differences that exist within a sample population. Alternative narratives can be brought forth by complicating histories that have been obscured or oversimplified by dominant perspectives; by identifying that which is in opposition to a rule that is normatively constructed and maintained as such by power imbalances that benefit dominant groups, underrepresented perspectives can be included and described in ways that appreciate their irreducible complexity. Appreciating differences between perspectives (using the inter-categorical approach to managing intersectional complexity) would require an adoption of existing categories and involve exploration of defined “relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality along multiple and conflicting dimensions” (p. 1773). For example, there are multiple categories among 2SLGBTQ populations that can be appreciated using the inter-categorical approach; however, an exploration beyond sexual orientation and gender is required if an appreciation for the irreducible complexity of the social categories included in the analysis will come about. As such, to complicate analyses of Adomian negative cases, intra-categorical complexity would reveal differences within each of the adopted categories. This point of the analysis brings focus to “social groups at neglected points of intersection—‘people whose identity crosses the boundaries of traditionally constructed groups’—in order to reveal the complexity of lived experiences within such groups” (McCall, 2005, p. 1774). Continuing with the example of 2LGBTQ populations that is fleshed out in more detail below, this would require pushing beyond sexual orientation and gender to uncover alternative narratives at underrepresented points of intersection, such as race, (dis)ability, and citizenship.
Defining the Limitations of an Adornian Negative Case Analysis

To acknowledge the limitations of an ANCA, categories of identity need to be described according to what is represented in a sample population. ANCA is not intended to be exhaustive of all social categories of identity within a sample, only those that have been defined, and thus outline the limitations of the analysis. The Constructivist Grounded Theory study whereby ANCA was conceived and explored can substantiate the inclusion of a diversity in perspective according to sexual orientation, gender, race, (dis)ability, and citizenship. The sample population \( (n = 30) \) in the study consisted of 2SLGBTQ-identified health service users \( (n = 10) \) and health service providers \( (n = 10) \), and non-2SLGBTQ-identified health service providers \( (n = 10) \).

Using the Anti-Categorical Approach in Adornian Negative Case Analysis

ANCA does not intend to capture the full range of experience held within a social category of identity; through employing the anti-categorical approach to managing intersectional complexity, it is acknowledged that such a task is not possible. Taking an anti-categorical stance involved a deconstruction of what “2SLGBTQ” is in and of itself. First, “2SLGBTQ” was identified as an anti-category because it is constructed in opposition to the rule of heterosexuality within heteronormative contexts. In so far as there is potential for infinite diversity within the social category of 2SLGBTQ because sexual orientation and gender cut across every population (Lane, 2020), this social category is an Adornian negative case because its underrepresentation, misrepresentation, and invisibilization comes about by way of heteronormative negation—it can be conceived as irreducibly complex—and in doing so, alternative variations (or narratives) of normal human sexuality and gender emerge. For the purpose of identifying the power relations central to this ANCA, 2SLGBTQ as a group of communities is often reductively conceptualized as that which it is not (heterosexual and gender normative); 2SLGBTQ and non-2SLGBTQ are thus mutually constituted through their negation of one another, but the former has been historically positioned as unnatural and morally inferior by heteronormative cultures, which are then used by the latter to gain advantages and sustain power imbalances. Outlining the sample population would begin with sexual orientation and gender but would then extend beyond these categories of identity to represent subgroups within the sample population and gain an appreciation for their complexity. The tension between privilege and oppression needs to be present in the analysis; being inclusive only to historically underrepresented groups may exclude important insights that come about through negative dialectics during data collection and analysis. Dominant categories of identity were left universalized because their positions of power rely on the reduction of social categories, including their own. The inclusion of dominant categories of identity is part of ANCA because the critique of dominant narratives cannot happen without the inclusion of dominant perspectives.

Using the Inter-Categorical Approach in Adornian Negative Case Analysis

The author’s first attempt at understanding the identities that potential participants would bring to the study involved a rudimentary tool that was created for the purpose of recruiting a diverse sample. Potential participants were asked to complete a short questionnaire that confirmed eligibility and requested that they select as many categories of identity that applied to them. Participants were selected purposively for maximum variation in perspective according to the questionnaire responses. The categories that were adopted into the analysis by way of participants’ identities created points of comparison between groups and according to sexual orientation and gender. They included: Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, non-binary, asexual, pansexual, woman, man, cisgender, and heterosexual. Within the context of this sample population, identifying categories of sexual orientation and gender made appreciating differences between each possible by way of intersecting categories of race (dis)ability, and citizenship. In so far as the study in question is using Constructivist Grounded Theory methods and methodology, data analysis began at the point from which data collection began. The ANCA became more complicated as data collection continued because each participant had their own perspective; new points of comparison were thus created, but in such a way that power relations that rely upon the universalization of social categories of identity could be explored.

Using the Intra-Categorical Approach in Adornian Negative Case Analysis

The ANCA carried out in this study can substantiate the inclusion of diverse perspectives across sexual orientation, gender, race, (dis)ability, and citizenship through employing the intra-categorical approach to managing intersectional complexity. Data analysis that compares perspectives held by 2SLGBTQ participants can be described between each category of identity (using the inter-categorical approach) and then further complicated by way of bringing focus to categories of identity within each of the aforementioned categories. Intra-categorical complexity added additional points of comparison by way of the inclusion of intersections of identity that cut across categories of sexual orientation and gender (race (dis)ability, and citizenship). To fully describe the diversity within the sample is beyond the scope of this paper, but within the category of race, subcategories included Indigenous (Mi’kmaq and unspecified), Black (African, African Nova Scotia, Caribbean, and unspecified), Asian (Japanese, Chinese, and unspecified), other visible minority, and White;
the category of (dis)ability included mental illness (depression, PTSD, and anxiety), neurodevelopmental disorders (ADHD and other unspecified neurodivergence), other unspecified health-related (dis)abilities, and non-disabled; the category of citizenship included First Nations (Mi’kmaq), Acadian, and Canadian. The category of citizenship is slightly different than the others because the dominant group in a country like Canada cannot be left universalized or the perspectives of immigrants who are Canadian citizens would go unaccounted for. As such, the subcategory of Canadian within the citizenship category was inclusive of first (Northeast Africa and China), second (Croatia and Ireland), and third (Japan) generation immigrants in addition to non-immigrants. Other categories that complicated the analysis, but were not described across the entire sample population were class, religious/belief system, and HIV status. It should be noted that categorical dimensions of ANCA do not reflect the full range of experience held by a sample population, they merely outline the substantiation of EDI in research design by demonstrating that participants were recruited in ways that make it possible to engage an analysis of power relations that have led to the historical exclusion of participants from diverse and equity-seeking groups in research. It is imperative to note ANCA limitations to avoid tokenizing study participants. The three strategies of managing intersectional complexity for the purpose of substantiating EDI in research design are visually represented in Figure 1.

**Finding a Shared Social Problem to Explore Differences Between and Within Categories of Identity**

The final aspect of ANCA to be described here addresses the analysis itself. Stigma emerged from the onset of data collection as significant to participants in the study. Broadly speaking, the construct of stigma upholds social norms by negatively affirming groups and individuals by way of the negation of their existence or worth (Goffman, 1963). In other words, groups and individuals whose subjective realities would call into question that which is assumed are negated (or negatively affirmed) through stigma, allowing for those identities to be reduced into that which opposes the rule. Stigma takes many forms and is structurally embedded; it reflects “societal-level conditions, cultural norms, and institutional policies that constrain the opportunities, resources, and wellbeing of the stigmatized” (Hatzenbuehler and Link, 2014). As any other structural determinant, structural stigma is representative of social relationships that have been shaped over time to create differences in how goods and services are accessed and distributed, which creates differences between and within groups as to how individual lives are impacted (Waldron, 2020). Through practice, social structures are reproduced (Bourdieu, 1977), and so stigma is reproduced by way of the distribution of goods and services.

This Constructivist Grounded Theory study used stigma as its sensitizing concept and confirmed it as a meaningful construct to participants. Participants in the study all experienced stigma, some within the role of stigmatized, others as stigmatizer, and many operating within both roles. In so far, as this study was interested in the delivery of health services to 2SLGBTQ populations in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, an understanding of stigma within the health system in relation to sexual and gender minorities was established by way of reviewing the literature. The pathologization of homosexuality is a salient example of how the normative construction of heterosexuality has been upheld within heteronormative contexts (Lane, 2020) and the Diagnostic and

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**Figure 1.** Applying McCall’s approach to conceptualize 2SLGBTQ intersectional complexity and negate Adorno’s rejection of identity theory. (a) 2SLGBTQ anti-category—disproves the rule of heterosexuality, (b) Inter-categorical complexity within 2SLGBTQ communities would look at differences between each community, and (c) Intra-categorical complexity within 2SLGBTQ communities would look at differences, such as race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and citizenship within each community.
Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSMs) provides a tracing of the medicalization of gender norms (Drescher, 2015). Psychiatry’s destructive attempts to categorize the mental health of 2SLGBTQ populations as disordered is a distortion of reality; the multiple versions of the DSM represent an incomplete understanding of stigma as the cause of mental illness among sexual and gender minorities and an unresolved history between 2SLGBTQ populations and health systems that is ongoing. This reveals how stigma can be taken up from the broader context of society. In this case, stigma was reproduced by health systems from its broader social context by way of the psychiatric discipline, which allowed for the cause of psychopathologies among 2SLGBTQ populations to be distorted and wrongly attributed to the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of individuals who were constructed in opposition to gender norms. There are stigmas that overlap due to social structures converging upon individuals by way of intersecting identities; the entry point for analyzing the differences in how stigma impacted the experiences of participants within the context of primary healthcare was the stigmatization of sexual and gender minorities. The stigmatization of Black skin in relation to White skin within the context of a white supremacy serves to illustrate how stigmas can overlap for sexual and gender minorities; racism negatively affirms those who are not White, maintains power imbalances, and sustains the status quo. The ANCA employed in the example study is exploring perspectives on stigma between and within social categories of identity within the sample population, to appreciate how they overlap and create barriers to accessing good and services. To illustrate this with a simple example that could be further complicated by including additional social categories of identity, recruiting participants into a study who are 2SLGBTQ and Black, 2SLGBTQ and White, non-2SLGBTQ and Black, and non-2SLGBTQ and White could bring about an understanding of how stigma is experienced that would be more complex than if just sexual orientation, gender, and race were compared as if they operate independently of one another. A robust analysis that strives toward resolving contradictions in how stigma is experienced—not by generalizations, but by way of the differences, particularities, and variations within and between subjective realities is thus promoted and expanded through the inclusion of multiple social categories of identity within a sample population.

Conclusion

Through negative dialectics, negative case analysis has been conceptualized in such a way that qualitative researchers can substantiate EDI in research design. It was argued that the substantiation of EDI in research design can be achieved by way of the inclusion of perspectives belonging to members of diverse and equity-seeking groups; however, the need to explore the interplay between intersections of identity, including those that are associated with dominant groups, was illustrated as a means by which understandings of power relations within a studied context can be furthered. Using Adornian and Intersectional lenses, negative cases that contradict dominant narratives can become the grist for analyses that explicate social problems that are structurally determined. To substantiate the embeddedness of EDI in research design, a sample population must be recruited purposefully so that there is variation in perspectives, which allows for the meaningful creation of multiple points of comparison through intersecting categories of identity. The analysis is thus systematically complicated by way of ANCA and explores power relations by way of a social problem that is itself a negative dialectic, such as stigma. While the application of ANCA is illustrated using the example of 2SLGBTQ stigmatization, this author sees the method as adaptable for studying any social problem that negatively affirms a diverse population that is reduced and universalized in ways that carry benefits for groups that can then maintain their dominant position.

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