



Bisexual People Face Pervasive Stereotypes and Myths Surrounding Bisexuality: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract: Bisexuality can be found at any corner of the globe including India because sexual orientation is highly personalized and varies from one person to another. Most bisexuals start feeling confused about their attraction towards both sexes questioning their own reality and wondering and get confused over their sexual orientation. Many bisexual feel like outsiders in both gay, lesbian world as they cannot fit anywhere, so remain confused and isolated for some negative stereotypes. Bisexuals are promiscuous neurotic shallow, narcissistic and emotionally they experience extreme conflict living in the real world often scorned by family and friends and rejected by spouses or potential partners for being bisexuals. They hide their sexual orientation and feel isolated and alone with their inner turmoil, over their dual attractions. There whole range of rights gets violated making them victims of policeouting, oppression and marginalization. The present topic highlights how bisexual people face discrimination and human rights violation and have legal injustice issues.

Key Words: Androgynous, Narcistic, Promiscuous, Stereotypes, Shallow.

Introduction:

In India, and in other parts of the world, sexual minority activism is always led by gay men and transgenders, so the problems and issues of bisexual men and women tend to get sidelined. Bisexuals are persons who are sexually and romantically attracted to both genders. Although bisexual people describe themselves as "50-50" that is men having sex with men & women and women having sex with women and men. Bisexual are a small community and are attracted to binary genders and are sacred of commitment and polyamorous. They are promiscuous, sexually greedy and are cheaters. However no text exists

to determine what amount of attraction to each gender is necessary to identify as a bisexual. They are confused about their sexuality which is a hardest myth to dispel. So to be bisexual one has to love both sex (male-female) equally, sexually and emotionally. Bisexuality is one the three main attractions of sexual orientations along with homosexual and heterosexual. The question that vexes everybody's mind, is bisexuality a third kind of sexual identity between or beyond homosexuality and heterosexuality or is it something that puts a question the very concept of sexual identity in the first place or does it teach something fundamental to



everyone the nature of human behavior. Lack of bisexuality activism in India was felt to be a serious issue because there whole range of rights gets violated and the problems and issues of bisexual men and women goes unaddressed and get sidelined in mainstream society. Bisexuals face disproportionate levels of poverty violence, suicide and discrimination.

Who is a bisexual:

Though the textbook definition of bisexual and bisexuality is attraction to both men and women. They are genuine enough to enjoy best of the world. They cut across distinctions of race ethnicity, gender, identity, age, class, ability and religious affiliation. Some of them show the desire to be androgynous and contrary to homophobic paradigm identifying the people who are bisexual is quite difficult because their emotions and attractions are very much similar to other people. But what they lack is the bonding in their relation. Especially males are more prone to bisexuality as they always demand more from one relation leading them to bisexual track. The choice of sex partner totally depends upon situation and can be changed at any time during course of life.

Historical overview of bisexual behavior:

Bisexual erasure or bisexual invisibility is a tendency to ignore remove falsify or re-explain evidence of bisexuality in history academic news media and other primary sources. Though bisexuality has gained visibility yet progress is uneven and awareness of bisexuals is still minimal. Bisexuality is as old as human civilization while discourse about bisexuality may be surfacing in recent times. In India sexual activity with members of both sexes is

discussed in texts such as kamasutra and depicted in art and sculpture. Rajasthani paintings and Khajuraho sculptures. Same-sex love in India authored by Saleem Kidwai and Ruth Vanita delves into instances of ancient, medieval, modern and postmodern Indian texts and Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Islamic and Christian literatures.

Causes of becoming bisexual:

Alfred Kinsey's work on sexual behavior in all human male found that nearly 46% of male population had engaged in both heterosexual and homosexual activities or react to persons of both sexes. The Kinsey scale of zero to six was developed by sex researchers to describe sexual orientation as continuum. Heterosexual people are at zero on the scale gay and lesbian people are a six at the other end of the scale but everywhere in between from one to five are bisexuals.

There is no consensus among scientists about the exact reasons that an individual develops to become a bisexual. The proposed reasons include a combination of genetic factors including paternal birth order. Sigmund Freud theorized that every person has the ability to become bisexual at sometime in his or her life. Research indicates that bisexuality is influenced by biological, cognitive and cultural variables in interaction and this leads to different types of bisexuality and social factors, sex drives, masculinization, parental hormones, brain structures, chromosomes and other factors are also responsible for making a person bisexual.

Freud has famously summarized on the basis of clinical observations that all human being are bisexual and there libido is distributed between objects of both sexes either in a manifest or in a latent form. According to him people



remain bisexual all their lives in a repression to monosexuality of fantasy and behavior. Bisexuals have high rates of sexual activity, fantasy or erotic interest. Both male and female bisexuals had more sexual fantasy than heterosexuals. However bisexual men had more sexual activities with women than heterosexual men and bisexuals had fewer happy marriages than heterosexuals.

Several studies indicate that for most women, high sex drive is associated with increased sexual attraction in both men and women. For men however high sex drive is associated with increased attraction to one sex or other but not to both depending on sexual orientation. Similarly for most bisexual women high sex drive is associated with increased sexual attraction to both men and women while for bisexual men high sex drive is associated with increased attraction to one sex and weakened to the other.

Musculinization of women and hypermusculinization of men has been a central theme in sexual orientation research. There are several studies suggesting that bisexuals have high degree of masculinization. Excess testosterone and estrogen hormones are associated with female sex fantasies in adults. Both effects are associated by bisexuality rather than homosexuality. Exposure of high testosterone hormone levels may be associated with bisexuality because testosterone in general is important for sexual differentiation.

Some evidence supports the concept of biological precursors of bisexual orientation in genetic males. According to them men with extra Y chromosomes are more likely to be bisexual, paraphilic and impulsive. Some evolutionary psychologists have argued

that bisexuality can be due to normal variation in brain plasticity.

Types of Bisexual:

Bisexual people are very diverse group there are several theories about models of bisexual behavior. They are categorized in terms of their sexual desires and experiences and include:

Alternating Bisexual: Alternate bisexuals have relationship with a man and once that relationship ends may choose a female partner for a subsequent relationship and go back again to male partner next usually monogamous they may have one relationship at a time the first might be exclusively gay and the next one straight and vice versa.

Circumstantial Bisexual: Primarily circumstantial bisexuals are heterosexual but will choose same-sex partners only in situations where they have no access to other sex partners, such as when in jail, prison, military gender segregated schools. That means in absence of opposite sex partners in circumstances as mentioned they prefer same-sex partners.

Concurrent relationship Bisexual: They have primary relationship with one gender, but may have multiple casual relationship with partners of other gender at the same time.

Conditional Bisexual: Conditional bisexuals are persons who will switch sexuality for personal financial or career gains, primarily they have relationship with one gender only but have causal or secondary relationship with people of another gender at the same time.

Integrated Bisexual: They have two or more concurrent primary relationships one with a man one with a women.

Exploratory Bisexuals: they are either straight or gay/lesbian but have sex with another gender just to satisfy curiosity or



just to see what it is like. They are like testing the water seeing if they like it.

Hedonistic Bisexual: Hedonistic bisexuals have an uncanny knack to switch purely to sexual pleasure they are primarily straight or gay/lesbian but will sometimes have sex with another gender primarily for fun or purely for sexual satisfaction.

Recreational Bisexual: They are primarily heterosexual but engage in gay, lesbian relationship only under influence of drugs and alcohol. They are the so called high party bisexuals.

Isolated Bisexual: Isolated bisexuals are 100% straight or gay/lesbian but has had one off sexual encounter in the past which qualifies them as bisexual.

Latent Bisexual: Latent bisexuals are completely straight or gay, lesbian in behavior but have strong desire for sex with another gender but have never acted on it. They have strong yet so far unsatisfied urges to go the other way.

Motivational Bisexual: motivational bisexuals are straight women who have sex with other women only because a male partner insists on it to titillate him. So they will go bisexual to satisfy a partner e.g. straight women agreeing to male female female threesome.

Transitional Bisexual: Transitional bisexuals temporarily identify as bisexual while in the process of moving from being straight to being gay or lesbian or from being gay or lesbian to being heterosexual. This is the only type of bisexuality the gay community understands the one going through a phase.

Emotional Bisexual: emotional bisexuals have intimate emotional relationships with both men and women, but only have sexual relationship with one gender.

Theories of Bisexuality:

Bisexual people are very diverse group and there are several theories of bisexual behavior.

The parental hormone theory of sexual orientation suggests that people who are exposed to excess levels of sex hormones have masculinized, brains and show increased bisexuality. So the exposure to excess testosterone hormone causes an over-musculinezed brain in male and excess oestrogen hormone in females causes over feminized brains. So men with extra Y chromosomes are more likely to be bisexual and impulsive. Even brainstructures and size of hypothalamus found in INA H₃ nucleus of anterior hypothalamus was smaller than that of heterosexual men and closer in size to heterosexual women.

The psychoanalytic theory has always assumed that all human beings are psychologically bisexual. A man who sleeps with a man is effeminate and a woman who sleeps with a woman has masculinized tendencies. Similarly, a man who in intercourse with another man feels himself to be a woman is inverted in respect of his own ego and is referred to homoeroticism. A large number of women remain arrested in their original attachment to their mother and never achieved a true changeover towards men which leads to innate ambivalence which can manifest in either sex of bisexual behavior.

There is a **queer theory** which says bisexuality is a gateway of erotic pleasure and ascetic communication beyond sexual functionalism and the middle ground that deconstructs the binarism of identity, musculanity, feminity, straight, gay, that the project of queer theory sought to at least blur. According to this theory as plural love bisexuality transgresses heteronormative mandates of gender and intimacy. Their libido is



distributed between objects of both sexes either in a manifest or in a latent form. So queer theory and bisexuality are two parallel thoughts, collectives that had made significant contributions to cultures discourses about sexual and amorous praises.

Pop Theory: And finally there is a pop theory which says a person who used to be heterosexual and then remain with a same-sex partner or partners may end up as a gay and a person who used to be a gay and then remains with an opposite sex partners may end up as a heterosexual. This law of the excluded middle excludes bisexuality which in some people mind must be concurrent or simultaneous in order to be real. They have primary relationship with one gender but have causal relationships with partners of other gender at the same time. Sequential bisexuality is just a wishy washy hetero or homosexuality and situational bisexuality.

Discrimination and violation rights of bisexual:

India as a country is deeply conservative and tends to be bound by traditions and as such there is little open discussions of sexual matters of any kind at any level. Many people view sexuality as a straight forward cut and dry matter. Bisexuals face social stigma, discrimination, harassment in every field which leads to low self esteem, demotivation, stress, anxieties, self harm, suicidability. Many of the oppressions documented are common to bisexuals such as oppressions of police atrocities in the field of education, employment and healthcare services. They lack legal accessibility and are denied social security benefits and face socio-economic inequalities and injustice in several fields. There fundamental rights also gets violated.

They experience high rates of being ignored, discriminated and demonized by both heterosexual world. The state is one of the powerful institution through which discrimination against bisexuals is eroded, institutionalized and enforced. The prime means through which discrimination becomes a structural feature of everyday living of bisexual people is done through police and law. They lack social spaces, support organization and cohesive community in India which is a serious problem.

There whole gamut of rights are routinely violated by police goondas, hustlers family members, service providers, state and non state actors and access to redressal mechanism are hindered by their criminal status. Lack of statutory framework or because of judicial interpretation they remain invisible as rightholder. So what is apparent is that bisexual population is subject to criminal law. Who are fit to be harassed and remain invisible in civil law a right holder. Though articulation of rights of bisexual men and women has proliferated in the last fifteen years yet societal attitudes, vices and prejudices, taboos and stigmas become the biggest anachronistic obstacle to enjoy their rights to the fullest.

Social intolerance fostered by legal regime of Section 377 of IPC becomes structural basis of widespread stigmas, marginalization and discrimination in India. Section 377 of IPC express deep societal repugnance towards bisexual and represent flag leaf of legitimacy of harassment by media official institutions and family members and law enforcement agencies who do not provide safety, security measures to protect them.



Supreme Court's judgment in Suresh Kumar Koushal verdict turned the wheel of history backwards to make bisexuals face emotional turmoil and full of insecurity.

Supreme Court of India is the guiding sentinel which preserves the rule of law but in 2013 the Supreme Court in Suresh Kumar Koushal & Anr Vs. Naz Foundation & ors¹³ took the unprecedented step of reversing rights granted to LGBT community. From the text of the judgment it appears as if the courts logic was rooted in narrow reading of the power of judicial review to protect fundamental rights of miniscule minority. The judgment betrayed the values of Delhi High court judgment and said gay sex is illegal and Section 377 of IPC does not suffer from vice of unconstitutionality and the declaration made by Delhi high court is legally unsustainable. The court said the High court was not right in declaring Section 377 ultravires of Article 14,15,19 and 21 and left section 377 for parliament to delete from statute books.

The same judges who did not have problem in encroaching the legislative domain on a regular basis for a variety of issues were suddenly reluctant to do so, when it came to implementing fundamental rights of LGBT people. This was followed by a review petition which was dismissed by Supreme Court. This unreasoned order was barely a few sentence long and quashed the hopes of law reform. The court even without hearing oral argument dismissed it.

This was followed by a curative petition which pose several constitutional dimensions of importance

and was referred to a five judge constitutional bench because the review verdict proved to violate principles of natural justice and the judges were biased and opt for comprehensive hearing of arguments placed for protection of dignity and rights of LGBT community.

Conclusion:

To conclude the discourse of homosexuality and bisexuality and same-sex physical relationships has been a hot media topic in the last decade. LGBT activists are leaving no stone unturned to change both the legal and social obstacles that plague the LGBT community. However the colonial discourse of Section 377 has enjoyed an undisputed certainty in the way which homosexuality and bisexuality has been conceptualized and dealt with. For 148 years the judiciary has consistently used items ranging from despicable, abhorred to mental aberrations to describe a homosexual and bisexual. The core for bisexual activism is the desire for equality, inclusion and non-discrimination. The environment of compulsory heterosexuality refuses them there rights and entitlements and makes them vulnerable and invisible as a right holder and claim a space in civil society. So all eyes will be on the curative petition which would decide their future in which direction their destiny is going to move.

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