

# Exploring Heteronormative Pressure and Stigma among Teenage Female Bisexuals: A Sociological Case Study in Ernakulam District

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## ABSTRACT

Heteronormativity, a deeply entrenched societal norm that enforces heterosexual behaviour as both natural and normative, exerts a significant influence on the lives of individuals who deviate from the conformity standard. Social norm operates through a complex array of cultural, social, and institutional mechanisms that privilege heterosexuality and marginalize different sexual orientations. The societal expectation to conform to heteronormative norms can create an environment of invisibility and hyper-visibility, where bisexual individuals either ignored or subjected to heightened scrutiny and judgment. Dual experience complicates their social acceptance and self-identification processes lead to a profound sense of isolation and confusion. In Ernakulam District, the exploration of heteronormative pressures and stigmas takes significant among teenage female bisexuals. Female Bisexuals navigate a social landscape characterized by varying degrees of acceptance and rejection, profoundly impacts their mental health, social relationships, and overall well-being. The study aims to delve into the unique challenges faced by these individuals, highlighting the intersection of gender, sexuality, and regional cultural influences.

**Keywords:** Adolescent identity, bisexuality, heteronormativity, intersectionality, minority stress, social stigma

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## Introduction

In India, adolescents are frequently subjected to expectations of conforming to traditional gender roles and future heterosexual marriage. These pressures are particularly intense for girls, whose sexuality is often closely regulated. As a result, teenage female bisexuals may conceal their identity to avoid stigma, discrimination, or familial conflict. The persistence of heteronormative pressures within key social institutions such as family, schools, and religious communities, coupled with patriarchal societal norms, significantly affects their identity development and disclosure. The UNESCO (2018) reports that schools often reinforce rigid gender roles and heterosexual norms, creating environments where non-heteronormative identities are marginalized. Ilan H. Meyer (2003) identified individuals belonging to stigmatized groups experience chronic stress due to prejudice, discrimination, and social exclusion, which significantly affects their psychological well-being. Environment fosters stigma and discrimination, negatively impacting their mental health and wellbeing. In addition to general sexual minority stress, bisexual individuals experience a distinct form of marginalization often referred to as bisexual erasure. Kenji Yoshino (2000) argues that bisexuality is

frequently invalidated or ignored within both heterosexual and homosexual frameworks, leading to its systemic invisibility. However dual marginalization creates unique stressors that are particularly relevant for bisexual adolescents navigating identity formation. In Ernakulam, traditional values and cultural norms play a crucial role in shaping social expectations and behaviours. These values often dictate strict adherence to heterosexual norms, creating a significant challenge for bisexual teenagers. The pressure to conform to these expectations can lead to experiences of erasure or misunderstanding from both heterosexual and homosexual communities. Bisexual individuals are frequently perceived as being in a transitional state or confused about their sexual orientation, rather than being recognized for their valid and stable identity. Bisexual individuals face unique forms of stigma that differ from those experienced by other sexual minorities. Matthew E. Brewster and Bonnie Moradi (2010) identified that bisexual individuals are often perceived as confused, unstable, or promiscuous. These stereotypes contribute to prejudice and discrimination in both heterosexual and LGBTQ+ spaces. This phenomenon, often described as “dual stigma,” intensifies social isolation. The invisibility of bisexuality within mainstream discourse

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further reinforces these negative perceptions, making it difficult for bisexual adolescents to find validation and support. However, erasure is compounded by the lack of visible bisexual role models and representation in the media and community, making it difficult for these young individuals to find acceptance and support. The mental health consequences of stigma and heteronormative pressure are significant. Lori E. Ross et al. (2018) found that bisexual individuals report higher levels of depression and anxiety compared to both heterosexual and homosexual individuals. These outcomes are closely linked to identity concealment, fear of rejection, and lack of social support. Minority Stress Theory (Meyer, 2003) further explains that internalized stigma and chronic stress contribute to adverse mental health outcomes. For teenage girls, these challenges are compounded by gender-based expectations and limited access to affirming spaces.

The study examined the dynamics of self-disclosure, concealment, and early life experiences among teenage female bisexuals in Ernakulam District. It explores how bisexual females are stigmatized and excluded within a heteronormative society and investigates the effects of such exclusion on their overall health and wellbeing. The research delves into the particular challenges faced by Bisexuals, such as dual stigma from both heterosexual and homosexual communities, which may uniquely impact their psychological and social health. By focusing on bisexual-specific experiences, the study aims to shed light on the nuanced ways in which heteronormativity influences their lives and to propose targeted interventions that could support their well-being and inclusion in society.

### Relevance of the Study

Globally, bisexual individuals face unique challenges compared to their gay and lesbian counterparts. Studies shown that bisexual people have higher rates of mental health issues due to the compounded stigma they experience. According to the report of Human Rights Campaign, bisexual youth are less likely to be out to their families and friends, which can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and exclusion. In a 2019 survey conducted by the Trevor Project, it was found that 40% of bisexual youth seriously considered suicide, compared to 31% of gay and lesbian youth. Indian society is deeply influenced by heteronormative values that prioritize heterosexual relationships and traditional gender roles. The United Nations Development Programme (2014) highlights that LGBTQ+ individuals in India face widespread stigma, discrimination, and social exclusion, particularly within family and community structures. Kerala had a complex social landscape. Family

expectations, religious influences, and social norms often reinforce heterosexuality as the default and acceptable form of identity, thereby marginalizing bisexual individuals. Furthermore, the lack of legal recognition for same-sex marriages exacerbates the social exclusion and insecurity experienced by bisexual individuals, denying them the social and legal protections afforded to heterosexual couples. Relationship issues are particularly prevalent, as the societal disapproval and lack of understanding about bisexuality create additional barriers to forming and maintaining healthy romantic relationships

The study aimed to explore the experiences of stigma, discrimination, and exclusion faced by teenage female bisexuals in this culturally complex and legally restrictive environment. It seeks to understand the multi-dimensional impact on their personal and social identities, their inner struggles, relationship issues, as well as their mental and emotional health. By contextualizing the local experiences within the broader global statistics, this research aims to highlight the pervasive and widespread nature of the issues faced by bisexual individuals, underscoring the need for comprehensive social and legal reforms. Ernakulam, located in the south-western state of Kerala, India, is a region where traditional values and cultural norms strongly influence social expectations and behaviours. These values often emphasize strict adherence to heterosexual norms, creating a significant challenge for bisexual teenagers. The pervasive expectation to conform to these norms can lead to experiences of erasure or misunderstanding from both heterosexual and homosexual communities. Bisexual individuals are frequently perceived as being in a transitional state or confused about their sexual orientation rather than being recognized for their valid and stable identity. Support systems for LGBTQ+ individuals in India are gradually emerging, including non-governmental organizations, online communities, and advocacy groups. Reports by the National Human Rights Commission (2018) emphasize the need for inclusive policies and awareness programs to address discrimination. However, these support systems often adopt a generalized LGBTQ+ approach and may not adequately address bisexual-specific issues such as identity erasure and dual stigma. The lack of targeted interventions for bisexual adolescents highlights a significant gap in both research and practice.

### Methodology

The study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to examine the lived experiences of teenage female bisexuals in relation to heteronormative pressures

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and social stigma. A total of four participants were included in the study. Given the sensitive and often concealed nature of sexual identity, snowball sampling was utilized to recruit participants through existing social networks, thereby facilitating access, trust, and confidentiality. Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews guided by a semi-structured interview guide. The use of an interview guide ensured thematic consistency across participants while allowing flexibility to capture individual narratives in depth. This approach enabled the exploration of key dimensions such as identity formation, experiences of stigma, peer relations, and familial influences. The selection of in-depth interviews is methodologically appropriate, as it allows for a comprehensive understanding of subjective experiences within a sensitive research context. Overall, the chosen design and methods are well-suited to generate rich, contextualized data while upholding ethical principles, including informed consent, anonymity, and voluntary participation

### General Objective

To conduct a qualitative study on the social stigma and exclusion towards teenage female bisexuals in Ernakulam District.

### Specific Objectives

- To Examine societal expectations and pressures influencing bisexual teenagers.
- To Investigate instances of stigma and discrimination faced by Teenage female bisexuals.
- To Evaluate the role of peer group in to understand the possibility of Inclusivity and exclusivity in future

### Theoretical and Conceptual Analysis

The study is informed by Kimberle Crenshaw's Intersectionality Theory, which provides a framework for understanding how multiple social identities—such as gender, sexuality, class, and social location—interact within broader systems of power. Rather than viewing these identities separately, the theory emphasizes that they are interconnected and shape experiences in combined and complex ways. Systems like patriarchy, heteronormativity, and social hierarchy overlap to produce varied forms of privilege and marginalization.

This perspective helps explain the differences observed across the cases of “A,” “B,” “C,” and “D.” Although all are teenage bisexual girls, their experiences are not uniform. Contextual factors such as rural-urban setting, family environment, and access to emotional or social support significantly influence how stigma is experienced. For instance, more visible and direct discrimination is evident in conservative rural

contexts, while urban settings often produce subtle exclusion and internal conflict. Family attitudes and peer interactions further shape their sense of identity, belonging, and well-being. The analysis also highlights how additional factors, such as self-esteem and body image, can intersect with sexual identity to intensify personal struggles. Overall, this approach demonstrates that social experiences are layered and interconnected, underscoring the importance of inclusive and context-sensitive responses to address diverse forms of inequality.

### Research Design

The study employs a descriptive design to intensely narrate the problems and experiences of teenage female bisexuals in Ernakulam and diagnose the stress levels experienced by the respondents due to social stigma and exclusion.

### Sampling Technique

Bisexuals maintain a hidden identity in the society and mostly not legally registered anywhere. Thus snowball sampling method was employed to identify participants through networks beginning with known contacts within the community. Snowball sampling leverages the trust within existing social networks, where initial participants refer others who share similar experiences. Snowball sampling not only increases the likelihood of recruiting participants who might otherwise be difficult to reach but also fosters a sense of safety and confidentiality. By tapping into these networks, the study gathered rich, in-depth data that accurately reflects the complexities of their experiences, thus enhanced the robustness and validity of the qualitative research findings.

### Tools for Data Collection

**Primary Tool:** In-depth interview guided by an interview guide.

**Secondary Sources:** books, academic journals, articles, and trusted internet sources.

**Data Collection and Analysis** Primary data will be gathered through in-depth interviews. Secondary data will be incorporated to enrich the study. Data analysed narratively, focusing on the personal stories and experiences shared by participants to answer the research questions.

### Ethical Considerations

Ensure confidentiality and anonymity of all participants.

Obtain informed consent from all participants.

Ensure that participation is voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time.

Provide support and resources for participants who may experience distress during the study.

### Case Studies

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### Case 1- A

Age: 17

Educational Level: High School

Family : Middle class

Religion: Christian

Residential Area: Urban

"A" is a 17-year-old high school student living in Ernakulam, Kerala, India. Her family belongs to the upper echelons of society, characterized by wealth and influence. Both parents are esteemed professionals. Her father was a high-ranking executive in a multinational corporation, and her mother a renowned neurosurgeon. As the only child, "A" enjoys material comforts and opportunities. The demanding careers of her parents mean that they are frequently absent, both physically and emotionally. From a young age, "A" sensed that her feelings toward her peers did not align with the traditional heteronormative expectations prevalent in her social and cultural milieu. During her early teenage years, she found herself attracted to both boys and girls, a realization that both intrigued and terrified her. As she began to understand her bisexual identity, she was simultaneously confronted with the harsh realities of societal expectations and the conservative values of her surroundings. The realization of her bisexuality was a profound and personal journey. Her parents, despite their educational backgrounds and professional successes, uphold conventional beliefs about relationships and family structures. Family gatherings, social events, and community functions are regular occurrences where the family's reputation must be upheld. In such environments, any deviation from the expected norms is often met with judgment and gossip, further entrenching "A"'s reluctance to reveal her true self.

A's social circles, conversations about relationships are overwhelmingly heteronormative. School functions, community events, and even casual gatherings propagate the ideal of heterosexual relationships, implicitly excluding or marginalizing those who do not conform to these norms. At school, "A" observes a rigid adherence to traditional gender roles and expectations. The curriculum does not include comprehensive sex education, and discussions on LGBTQ+ issues are often absent or treated as taboo. The prevailing attitudes among her peers reflect the broader societal norms any deviation from heterosexuality is met with confusion, ridicule, or outright hostility. "A" feeling alienated and misunderstood, unable to excel academically, consistently ranking among the top students. However, her academic achievements do little to mitigate the sense of isolation she feels due to her bisexual identity. Teachers often unknowingly reinforce

heteronormative ideals, making offhand comments or jokes that exclude or stigmatize non-heterosexual orientations. She has a small circle of close friends who are supportive and accepting of her identity. However, outside this circle, she faces a mix of indifference and hostility. Gossip about her sexual orientation circulates among her peers, leading to a pervasive sense of unease and the constant fear of being outed or judged.

**Instances of Stigma and Discrimination** At school, she encounters casual homophobia disguised as jokes or passing remarks. For example, comments such as "That's so gay" are often thrown around by her peers, reflecting a broader lack of understanding or acceptance of LGBTQ+ identities. Social events and gatherings present another challenging arena for "A." At these functions, she often feels scrutinized, with some peers making snide remarks or asking invasive questions about her personal life. The intersection of her family's wealth and her sexual orientation leads to insinuations and gossip that question her morals or character. These experiences leave her feeling exposed and vulnerable, as the environments where she should feel safest school and social gatherings are instead sources of anxiety and discrimination. The support "A" receives from her peers is inconsistent, varying greatly depending on the social setting and the individuals involved. Within her inner circle of friends, she finds understanding and acceptance. They were aware of her bisexuality and offer a safe space for her to express herself freely. This support is crucial for "A," providing her with a sense of belonging and validation. "A" feeling invisible and marginalized. Others are overtly hostile, making derogatory comments or spreading rumours, further isolating her within the school environment.

**Future Inclusivity and Exclusivity** Her aspirations for the future are deeply intertwined with her desire for a more inclusive and understanding society. She yearns for a community where discussions about sexuality are not only tolerated but celebrated, allowing individuals like herself to live authentically without fear of judgment or discrimination. "A" envisions a future where schools and communities actively promote inclusivity through education and open dialogue. She hopes for comprehensive sex education that includes discussions about sexual orientation and gender identity, fostering a more informed and accepting generation.

### Case- 2

Case Study: "B"

Age: 17

Educational Level: High School

Family : Upper class

Religion: Christian

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Residential Area: Rural

The story of "B", a 17-year-old high school student from a rural part of Ernakulam, presents a nuanced exploration of the struggles faced by bisexual teenagers in conservative, rural settings. Despite her affluent background, "B" contends with societal and familial pressures that significantly impact her ability to express her identity. B's father, a wealthy businessman, struggles with alcohol issues and holds a conservative stance on many social issues, including sexuality. His presence in the household creates an environment where "B" feels unsafe discussing her identity. Ernakulam, although a part of the relatively progressive state of Kerala, has rural areas that are steeped in traditional values and conservative beliefs. In these communities, the attitude towards sexuality is predominantly homophobic, shaped by a lack of comprehensive sex education and rigid adherence to traditional norms. "B" discovered her bisexual identity at the age of 14, a period marked by the exploration and understanding of her sexual orientation. This realization, however, came with the daunting task of navigating her identity in a community that is unaccepting and often hostile towards non-heteronormative identities. The conservative nature of her family further complicates her ability to express this aspect of herself openly.

**Instances of Stigma and Discrimination** "B" has faced significant stigma and discrimination both from her community and within her circle of friends. Several of her relationships were exposed, leading to intense scrutiny and social orientation. These experiences have not only caused emotional distress but also heightened her sense of vulnerability, making her wary of forming new connections. The betrayal by friends, who revealed her relationships to others, has left a lasting impact on "B." These betrayals have not only fractured her trust in her peers but also contributed to her isolation. As a daily scholar, "B" travels to and from school each day, facing varying reactions from her peers. The exposure of her relationships has shifted her status among her peers, creating a complex social environment. Some peers show support, while others distance themselves or react negatively, making school a challenging arena where education is often overshadowed by social navigation. The inconsistency in reactions from her peers contributes to "B's" anxiety and stress.

**Future Inclusivity and Exclusivity**  
Despite the challenges she faces, "B" remains hopeful for a future where people are educated about and accepting of different sexual orientations. She dreams of a community where individuals can express their identities

without fear of judgment or reprisal. Her resilience is evident in her pursuit of writing, which serves as a therapeutic outlet and a means to envision a more inclusive future. When reflecting on her most challenging experiences, "B" highlights the ongoing conflict between her identity and the expectations of her society. The exposure of her relationships and the subsequent backlash represent a continual source of stress and anxiety. These experiences underscore the pervasive stigma and discrimination that bisexual individuals face in conservative settings.

**Future Inclusivity and Exclusivity** "B" emphasizes that her identity and experiences are just one part of her life. She is passionate about literature and uses writing as a therapeutic outlet to cope with her challenges. Her love for literature not only provides her with an escape but also empowers her to articulate her thoughts and advocate for greater acceptance and understanding of diverse sexual orientations

### Case -3

Case Study: The Story of "C"

Age: 17

Educational Level: High School

Family : Upper class

Religion: Christian

Residential Area: urban

The narrative of "C," a 17-year-old high school student residing in an urban part of Ernakulam, offers a vivid portrayal of the internal conflicts and external pressures faced by a young individual exploring her identity within a conservative family setting. "C's" parents, both doctors, met during their time in a school hostel and bonded over their shared career ambitions. Their professional success and exposure to diverse social environments have not altered their conservative views on sexual orientation, which they regard with marked homophobia. This paradox of being educated yet conservative places "C" in a precarious position, as she navigates her identity amidst these conflicting dynamics. Growing up in a large family surrounded by several relatives who often gather for family events creates a vibrant but scrutinizing environment for "C." The frequent gatherings foster a sense of community but also amplify the pressures to conform to traditional norms and expectations.

**Instances of Stigma and Discrimination** Her parents, though caring and involved in her academic life, maintain strict views about sexuality, which are not supportive of LGBTQ+ identities. This atmosphere leaves "C" feeling isolated and fearful of expressing her true self. As an introvert, "C" prefers a small circle of close friends whom she trusts deeply. Her introverted nature means she often keeps her thoughts and feelings

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about her identity and romantic interests private, fearing judgment not only from her family but potentially from her friends as well. This preference for privacy further complicates her ability to navigate her identity in a supportive manner. To cope with this internal conflict, "C" turns to reading and occasionally writing poetry. These creative outlets offer her a means of expressing her nuanced emotions and thoughts that she cannot openly discuss. Poetry becomes a therapeutic tool, allowing her to articulate her feelings in a safe and private manner, providing her with a sense of relief and catharsis. However, "C" is acutely aware of the challenges that lie ahead in balancing her personal happiness with family expectations. The fear of disappointing her parents and facing potential rejection from her family weighs heavily on her. She understands that achieving acceptance and understanding may be a long and challenging journey, but remains determined to find a path that allows her to live authentically. When reflecting on her most challenging experiences, "C" describes the ongoing challenge of concealing her true self as draining and isolating. The need to hide her romantic feelings and identity from her family and friends causes her significant emotional distress. This concealment creates a barrier to forming deeper connections and finding genuine support, exacerbating her sense of isolation and loneliness.

.Through poetry, she can explore her identity in a safe and private manner, finding a sense of relief and catharsis. The story of "C" illustrates the inner turmoil and the quiet resilience of a young woman grappling with her identity within a well-educated yet conservative family. It highlights the juxtaposition between external success and internal conflict, emphasizing the need for understanding and acceptance regardless of background. "'C's" story reflects broader societal issues related to the acceptance and understanding of LGBTQ+ identities. It highlights the ongoing need for education and advocacy to challenge deep-seated homophobic attitudes and create more inclusive and accepting environments. Her journey underscores the importance of addressing not only individual and familial support but also broader societal change to ensure that all individuals can live authentically and without fear of judgment or reprisal.

### Case- 4

Case Study: "D"

Age: 17

Educational Level: High School

Family : Upper class

Religion: Christian

Residential Area: urban

The story of "D," a 17-year-old high school student from an urban part of Ernakulam, sheds light on the multifaceted challenges faced by teenagers growing up in affluent yet emotionally disconnected households. Despite the privileges afforded by her family's wealth and success, "D" grapples with significant personal and emotional struggles, including body image issues, self-esteem, and the exploration of her bisexual identity. Her experiences provide a poignant insight into the complexities of adolescence, emphasizing the crucial need for emotional support, understanding, and genuine connections. "D" is the daughter of two successful entrepreneurs, whose deep involvement in their businesses often leaves little time for emotional nurturing at home. Her parents' entrepreneurial ventures have provided her with a comfortable lifestyle, access to excellent educational opportunities, and material luxuries. The lack of emotional support at home has profoundly impacted "D's" personal development. Without a nurturing environment to discuss personal or sensitive topics, she finds herself navigating complex feelings about relationships, self-worth, and her evolving sexual identity largely on her own. Emotional disconnect fosters a sense of isolation, making it challenging for her to seek guidance or support from her parents. Her parents, although caring in their own way, seem to prioritize their businesses over family interactions. The communication gap between "D" and her parents is significant, particularly regarding topics like sexuality and personal insecurities. This gap leaves her feeling misunderstood and unsupported, further complicating her emotional landscape. The disparity between their professional success and the emotional disconnect at home highlights the importance of balancing career ambitions with family dynamics and emotional well-being. "D" has long struggled with body image issues, feeling insecure about being considered chubby. This insecurity profoundly impacts her self-esteem and influences her behaviour and interactions. The societal emphasis on physical appearance and the pressure to conform to idealized body standards exacerbate her insecurities, leading to feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt. Her self-esteem is significantly affected by her body image issues. The fear of judgment and rejection based on her appearance often leads her to adopt a self-centred demeanour as a defence mechanism. This behaviour, while a means of protecting herself from hurt, can sometimes alienate her from potential friendships and deeper connections. Her body image insecurities also complicate her romantic relationships. The fear of not being accepted or loved for who she is leads to emotional turbulence in her interactions with potential partners.

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This turbulence is further intensified by her experiences of rejection, which reinforce her insecurities and make it difficult for her to form trusting and healthy relationships.

"D" was initially interested in relationships with men until a series of rejections left her emotionally bruised. These experiences prompted her to reconsider her identity and explore connections with female peers, marking the beginning of her journey into understanding her bisexuality. Her exploration is not just about dating but also a deeper quest to understand her own needs and desires amidst the emotional turbulence. The rejections she faced from male peers significantly impacted her emotional well-being. Each rejection was a blow to her self-esteem, reinforcing her insecurities and making her wary of forming new connections. The cumulative effect of these experiences led her to question her identity and seek solace in exploring relationships with female peers, where she hoped to find acceptance and understanding. As she delves into her bisexuality, "D" encounters a complex emotional landscape. The journey involves not only understanding her sexual orientation but also reconciling it with her existing insecurities and societal expectations. This exploration is a critical aspect of her personal development, offering her a path to self-discovery and self-acceptance. The image-focused culture at her school places significant pressure on students to conform to societal standards of beauty and success. This emphasis on appearance and social status further intensifies "D's" body image issues and impacts her self-esteem. The need to fit in and be accepted by her peers often conflicts with her personal insecurities and self-perception. The fear of judgment and rejection makes it difficult for "D" to trust others and be vulnerable. This fear leads her to keep her emotional struggles and insecurities private, even from her close friends. The limited circle of friends offers her some comfort, but the lack of broader social support can contribute to her feelings of isolation and loneliness.

"D" is apprehensive about her future, particularly concerned about how her evolving sexual identity will affect her social and emotional life. The fear of rejection and misunderstanding due to her past experiences weighs heavily on her mind. She worries about finding acceptance and forming meaningful connections in a world that often feels judgmental and unforgiving. The fear of rejection based on her bisexuality and body image issues is a significant concern for "D." Past experiences of rejection have left her emotionally scarred, making her cautious about opening up to new people and forming new relationships. This fear affects her outlook on the

future and her ability to envision a life where she is fully accepted and loved for who she is.

### Apprehensions about the Future

"D" is apprehensive about her future, particularly concerned about how her evolving sexual identity will affect her social and emotional life. The fear of rejection and misunderstanding due to her past experiences weighs heavily on her mind. She worries about finding acceptance and forming meaningful connections in a world that often feels judgmental and unforgiving. "D" recounts the difficulty in balancing her desire for romantic connections with the fear of rejection and judgment about her body image and bisexuality. Her balancing act is a constant struggle, as she navigates her insecurities and the societal pressures that influence her self-perception and relationships. The fear of being judged or rejected for her appearance or sexual orientation creates a significant emotional burden, making it challenging for her to form trusting and healthy relationships. The narrative of "D" provides a comprehensive insight into the complexities faced by a teenager grappling with issues of self-esteem, body image, and bisexuality in a fast-paced, sometimes superficial urban environment. Her story underscores the need for emotional support and open communication, particularly in families with busy, career-oriented parents. "D's" journey highlights the importance of self-acceptance and the quest for genuine, empathetic relationships in the challenging landscape of adolescence.

### Major Findings

Based on the case studies of "A", "B", "C", and "D", the research objectives have been explored and analyzed to provide detailed findings and conclusions for each, as well as general observations across all objectives.

**Objective 1: Examine Societal Expectations and Pressures Influencing Bisexual Teenagers-**"A" experienced isolation due to heteronormative and affluent societal expectations, where her socioeconomic status intensified scrutiny. "B" faced overt discrimination in her rural, conservative community, emphasizing the role of traditional values in stigmatizing non-heterosexual orientations. "C" struggled with her conservative family's views in contrast to their high education level, revealing a gap between educational attainment and progressive attitudes. "D" encountered challenges related to body image and societal expectations in a competitive urban environment, impacting her self-esteem and social interactions.

In the study the researcher identified that societal pressures and expectations placed on bisexual teenagers vary significantly based on their environment and social

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context. These pressures may often lead to isolation and a sense of not belonging, highlighting the need for societal change towards more inclusive attitudes.

### **Objective 2: Investigate Instances of Stigma and Discrimination Faced by Teenage Female Bisexuals**

**Findings:** Each participant reported experiences of stigma and discrimination, though the nature and severity varied. "B" experienced the most overt discrimination, "A" and "C" faced subtle exclusion, and "D" dealt with discrimination linked to her body image and exploration of sexuality. Stigma and discrimination are pervasive issues for bisexual teenagers, deeply affecting their mental health and social relationships. This underscores the urgent need for initiatives aimed at reducing stigma and promoting acceptance within communities and peer groups.

### **Objective 4: Evaluate the Role of Peer Group**

**Findings:** -The role of peers was crucial but varied across the cases. "A" found solace in a supportive peer group, while "B" was negatively impacted by peer betrayal. "C" and "D" benefited from small, supportive friend groups but also experienced limitations in social interactions. Peers play a significant role in the lives of bisexual teenagers, influencing their social experiences and sense of acceptance. Positive peer interactions can mitigate other challenges, whereas negative interactions can exacerbate feelings of isolation and distress.

### **General Findings**

Across all cases, the intersection of personal, familial, and societal factors creates a complex landscape for bisexual teenagers. Issues of stigma, discrimination, and the struggle for acceptance are common, despite differences in background and environment. Mental health emerges as a significant concern, with all participants experiencing varying degrees of emotional distress due to their circumstances.

### **Suggestions for Supporting Bisexual Teenagers**

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the case studies, the following comprehensive suggestions are aimed at various stakeholders to better support bisexual teenagers and foster environments of acceptance and understanding.

- **Educational Institutions-Inclusive Curriculum:** Develop and implement an educational curriculum that includes comprehensive sex education, addressing various sexual orientations and gender identities. This approach normalizes diversity and promotes understanding from an early age.
- **Teacher Training:** Provide ongoing professional development for teachers and staff on LGBTQ+ issues, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to support

bisexual students and effectively address bullying and discrimination.

**Support Groups:** Establish school-based support groups for LGBTQ+ students, offering a safe space for self-expression and peer support.

**Anti-Bullying Policies:** Strengthen and enforce anti-bullying policies that explicitly protect sexual orientation and gender identity, ensuring a safe and inclusive school environment.

**Families; Parental Education Workshops:** Conduct workshops for parents to educate them on LGBTQ+ issues, focusing on how to provide support and understanding to bisexual children.

**Family Counselling:** Encourage families to participate in counselling that addresses issues related to sexuality, aiming to improve communication and acceptance within the family.

**Resources for Parents:** Provide resources and reading materials for parents to better understand the challenges and needs of bisexual teenagers, along with strategies for supportive parenting.

**Community and Public Policy Community Awareness Programs:** Launch community-based awareness campaigns involving local leaders and influencers to shift public perceptions and reduce stigma associated with bisexuality.

**LGBTQ+ Friendly Spaces:** Develop and promote community centres and other spaces that are explicitly welcoming to LGBTQ+ individuals, offering safe environments for socialization and support.

**Legislative Advocacy:** Advocate for legislation that protects the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals, ensuring anti-discrimination laws cover sexual orientation and gender identity in all areas of public life.

**Healthcare Providers-Training on LGBTQ+ Health Issues:** Ensure that healthcare professionals receive training on the specific health needs of LGBTQ+ populations, including mental health and the impacts of societal stigma.

**Mental Health Services:** Increase the availability of mental health services specializing in LGBTQ+ youth, with professionals trained to address the complexities of sexual identity and societal pressures.

**Confidentiality Protocols:** Strengthen confidentiality protocols to ensure that LGBTQ+ teenagers feel safe and protected when seeking health services.

**Media and Online Platforms; Positive Representation:** Encourage media outlets and content creators to include more positive and diverse representations of bisexual and LGBTQ+ individuals in television, movies, and online content.

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- Online Support Networks: Promote and support the development of online forums and social media groups that offer peer support and information sharing for bisexual teenagers.
- General Public; Promote Ally ship: Educate the general public on the importance of ally ship, providing practical steps for individuals to support their LGBTQ+ friends, family members, and community members.
- Challenge Stereotypes: Encourage individuals to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about bisexuality through personal education and public discourse.

Implementing these suggestions can significantly improve the lives of bisexual teenagers by creating more supportive environments at home, in schools, within the community, and in public policy. These efforts collectively contribute to a more inclusive and understanding society.

### Conclusion

The journey towards a more inclusive society for bisexual teenagers is ongoing. It requires concerted efforts across various sectors to ensure that these young individuals can thrive without fear of judgment or discrimination. The research not only highlights the specific needs of bisexual teenagers but also serves as a call to action for all stakeholders to play a role in fostering an environment where every young person can openly embrace their identity. Through such collective efforts, we can hope to see a future where diversity in sexuality is not just accepted but celebrated.

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