Arts and Social Sciences Journal

Open Access

# Ostracization and Marginalization: Unequal Social Patterning of Homosexuals in India

**Pavithra Lakshmi Narasimhan\***

*Department of Psychologist, University of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India*

## Abstract

Homosexuals often conceal their identity in the fear of being socially excluded. The lack of familial support that could possibly arise upon disclosing their sexual preference could bring in detrimental effect on the Individual, Family and the Society. In a country like India where the culture is strongly conservative with minimum families adopting modern-liberal outlook, family and social support is seen as the biggest source of strength and it does act like a protective factor in unexpected times of turbulence. However disclosing one's own sexual preference may not benefit the Individual as there is a constant fear of social rejection. Since there is no or limited freedom for them to express their orientation despite the legislation passed in their favor facilitating for an inclusive society, the situation still remains grave and all this consequently leads to emotional repression leading to depression. Previous researchers have given insights on the correlates of repressed emotions on a person's Well-being. Mental health-related classification systems of the World Health Organization and American Psychiatric Association also do not deem homosexuality as a disorder. Unfortunately, homosexuality continues to be stigmatized. The family and social support provides greater self-esteem and psychological strength that is also reflected in the overall general health. On the contrary no support makes them vulnerable to could lead to suicidal ideation. In addition to this the discrimination faced in the society and stigmatized by the very own family can be catastrophic. Undoubtedly Perceived social support is a consistent predictor of well-being Ability to express one's emotion on the sensitive issues without the fear of being judged indicates social acceptance. Self – acceptance and self love is supported and built partly by the constructs of the support received and the rest stems from the emotional regulative behavior adopted by oneself. This paper aims to understand on the effects of social exclusion on the self, family and society and also explores on the possible solutions for a more holistic society.

**Keywords:** Social exclusion • Interpersonal discrimination • Stigma impacted interactions

## Introduction

Homosexuality can refer to both attraction and sexual behavior between people of the same sex, or to a sexual orientation [1,2]. When describing the latter, it refers to enduring sexual and romantic attraction towards those of the same sex, but not necessarily to sexual behavior. Homosexuality is contrasted with heterosexuality, bisexuality and asexuality.

Sexual orientation, determined early in life, may or may not match sexual identity, which can change over time.

Sexual orientation focuses on the biological sex of the person who an individual is sexually attracted to. Sexual orientation can be classified as heterosexual, bisexual, and homosexuals Heterosexuals are attracted to people of the opposite biological sex, homosexuals are attracted to those of the same biological sex, and bisexuals report being equally attracted to both sexual orientations is influenced by biological, genetic, or hormonal factors during critical stages of development. From a social, religious – cultural

and political elements an individual expresses his or her sexual orientation is associated with the type of environment he or she was raised in Sexual orientation describes patterns of sexual, romantic, and emotional attraction-and one's sense of identity based on those attractions.

Homosexuals facing social exclusions tries to mitigate the same by adopting the approach of social invisibility and thus believe that it helps them with a strategic defense against the hate, crime and violence perpetrated.

The very fundamental aspect of this decision could be because of the Institutionalization of social structures of marriage, economy, religion, governance and education that grapples them with no inclusions on all the realms. These institutions have a pre-determined function and structure and thus any disruption leads to chaos. This

**\*Address to correspondence:** *Dr. Pavithra Lakshmi Narasimhan, Department of Psychologist, University of Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, E-mail:*

*pavithra.narasimhan85@gmail.com*

rigid frame work makes inclusion highly impossible as behaviors outside normative spread is reportedly highly rebellious. An attitudinal change in this regard seems more difficult because of the interplay with other social structures of religion and education which condemns homosexuality and associates it to the context of disobedience to God which would invoke severe punishment and subsequently the fear psychosis associated with the curse from the spirits leading towards victimization. Education on the other hand provides a stringent curriculum which is conservative and upholds the religious practices as there is a constant interface to the educational institutions bearing religious identity. It is worth to mention that India, being a motherland to people from all diversified backgrounds show greater inclination to the cultural identity and continue to support the institutions run by their tribes [3]. One inference of this behavior could be for the very reason that they don't want the identity to diminish rapidly as out of sight can be out of mind too, too many cultures and too many languages, their ideas, thoughts and perspectives should be passed on to the next generation unravel the subtle fantastic attitude and its cognitive dispositions. Although there are a number of schools and universities mushrooming it doesn't come with a liberal-Outlook. In India, identity is closely related to religious and cultural practices, educational platforms have also gained a significant community preference. For Instance, there are schools following Hindu, Christianity, Islam, Sikh religious beliefs and the mere existence could be for protecting and safe-guarding their community rights, beliefs and this system makes them immune towards the younger generation adopting a different path It is worth mentioning that religious inclinations are taught with emotional index. A child that witnesses the parents and immediate family displaying high emotions has the tendency to learn and exhibit the same at a similar forum. When grown up they display the ingested information and act on that basis. when this is blended into the syllabus that shuts down the chances of being open and welcoming and thus there is a mental blocking that doesn't encourage rationality

The religious practices and the stories narrated gets strengthened through continuous exposure to rituals practiced at schools which strives to imbibe devotion and encourages students to be God-fearing citizens to uphold societal laws, rules and norms. According to the universally regarded social structure homosexuality is considered abnormal and this thought has a deeper infestation in people's mind [4]. This plagued understanding allows people to generously associate it with mental illness and thus exclusion has become quite inevitable.

Sexual orientation threatens the basic psychological affiliations need for an individual to be functioning and that could aid his survival. The basic needs for a functioning life has been questioned or thwarted. Subsequently the concept of "Self" has taken a hit which results in their Self- esteem and self-concept are distorted. Being Ostracized threatens basic psychological needs (belonging, control, meaningful existence, and self-esteem; Receiving no acknowledgment, response, or involvement from others, the ostracized individual loses his or her sense of belonging. Self esteem declines for the fact they have been treated as third class citizens and society's attitude towards their behavior is intriguing

Control is stripped away because of the lack of responsiveness .no matter what the individual does to provoke attention and inclusion.

Finally, existential needs are threatened because the ostracism experience evokes the feeling of non-existence and worthiness. It is being supplemented with no education that is linked to the job and finally end up in government shelter homes, concentration camps or in slum dwelling as they don't have resources to pay for the survival. The following headers assess the theoretical correlates of homosexuality and its effects on day-day living.

## Theoretical Inferences

Classical theories from Psychology and sociology argue and hypothesize on the causes of such behavior. The researchers conducted throw insights but it is very un likely that sexual orientation has stemmed from one aspect that could be psychological or environmental. Discrimination not only denies LGBT people equal access to key social goods, such as employment, health care, education and housing, but it also marginalizes them in society and makes them one of the vulnerable groups who are at risk of becoming socially excluded. Some of the stressors identified are Psycho-Social in nature

Freudian theory assumes that sexual life does not begin at puberty, but starts with clear manifestations soon after birth. He emphasizes on the pleasure zones and Freud stressed that the first five years of life are crucial to the formation of adult personality. The id must be controlled in order to satisfy social demands; this sets up a conflict between frustrated wishes and social norms. According to him, all human beings are polymorphous perverse and child hood gender non conformity poses a strong correlate of adult sexual orientation [5]. childhood gender nonconformity is characterized as cross- dressing, desiring to have long hair, playing with dolls, disliking competitive sports and rough play, preferring girls as playmates, exhibiting elevated separation anxiety, and desiring to be or believing that one is a girl. In girls, gender nonconformity comprises dressing like and playing with boys, showing interest in competitive sports and rough play, lacking interest in conventionally female toys such as dolls and makeup, and desiring to be a boy.

In relevance to identity development, Erikson's life-span theory of personality development the roles of social and cultural factors are accountable of psychological well-being Erikson's notion that subjective experiences of growth often occurred as a result of understanding of the stressful episodes. For example, conflicts of the identity crisis developed during teen age (identity vs. role confusion) can be accomplished through developing a personal and social identity. As a result, strengths related to identity and sense of belongingness become inevitable dimensions that make the core of adult's personality. Erikson's postulated links between Subjective wellbeing and perceived social support.

Sexuality is influenced by people's social environment according to the postulates of Social Learning theory. This theory asserts that sexual attitudes and behaviors is learned through observation of role models such as parents and media figures, as well as through positive or negative reinforcements for behaviors that match or defy established gender roles.

Social structure theories study the macro level causes of crime (for instance, poverty, unemployment, racism, and poor education).it describes homosexuality as a form of sexual deviance rooted in

environmental causes: (1) society, (2) families, (3) peer groups, and (4) social movements.

Social alienation describes that non conformity aroused due to the differences in thought, perspectives and interpretation leads to severing the ties with the specific individual. Those who have been subjected to the gradient of alienation faces backlashes and thus not integrated into the society resulting to be vulnerable.

Conflict theorists, mentions on the dimensions over same-sex marriage-that could stem from ideological or economic differences. Being in Patrilineal or Matrilineal dominant groups might have led to frustration and the internal drive not letting the other sex members to exert control which gets strengthened with more liberty towards the economy.

The dimensions concerning Legal, health and culture has the ability to penetrate into other macro-micro aspects that are still being impartial to the community.

## Legal significance

The judgment passed by the apex court of India decriminalizing same-sex relationship has certainly done by keeping in mind the International human rights and the right to live, right to choose and practice their ideas freely that the constitution has promised [6]. Though the judgment has focused on the fabric of the Indian constitution justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual it is saddening to record that it exists only in the books. There still remains an anti"Homosexual propaganda" adopted by religious and community leaders which is affecting normalcy. Perhaps this prejudice makes them to lobby with their own tribe and clan. Due to the repercussions of social rejection and isolation the entire family might have to grapple upon deciding to include their family member who apparently is a homo-sexual.

## The cultural context

Anti-LGBT attitudes once considered the norm, have changed over time in many social and institutional settings in the west. However, heterosexism is also common; it idealizes heterosexuality and considers it the standard while stigmatizing all non-heterosexual forms of behavior, identity, relationships, and communities [7,8]. Religious and social orthodoxy and patriarchy complicate the issues in many conservative and tradition-bound societies. This is particularly true in India, making it difficult for LGBT people to be accepted as equals in society. Such a state of affairs calls for a clearer understanding of the relationship between medicine and law on one hand and society on the other hand.

## Effects of social exclusion on psychological

**Parameters:** Well-being as a complex construct which concerns optimal experience and functioning. "the situation where young people have the necessary support, resources and opportunities to choose to live independently, to run their own lives and to have full social and political participation in all sectors of everyday life, and to be able to take independent decisions.

**Marginalization and social exclusion:** Marginalization is at the core of exclusion from fulfilling and full social lives at individual, interpersonal and societal levels. People who are marginalized seem to have no control over their lives and inadequate availability of resources makes them more vulnerable members [9]. No inclusion into the society makes them socially alienated and hereby restrict their social contributions resulting in low self- confidence and self-esteem which are considered to be the key indicators for Subjective wellbeing. The impacts of marginalization, is linked to the rigid psycho-social attitude developed (such as towards impairment, sexuality, ethnicity and so on) or social circumstances (such as closure of workplaces, absence of affordable housing and so on).

Sexual minorities may experience exclusion which is reflected in their multiple forms of marginalization-such as racism, sexism, poverty or other factors alongside homophobia or trans phobia that negatively impact on mental health.

**Dealing with rejection:** Higher rates of family rejection during adolescence were significantly associated with poorer health outcomes. young adults who reported higher levels of family rejection are more susceptible to suicidal Ideation and has more exposure to drugs, unprotected sexual intercourse compared with peers from families that reported no or low levels of family rejection.

The tremendous harm of family rejection, even if parents think they are well-intentioned, following deeply held beliefs or even protecting their children has been undoubtedly strenuous.

**Persecution in schools:** Outside the home, schools are the primary means for educating, socializing, and establishing social relationships. Schools provide difficult environments for students on the basis of sexual orientation or gender Identity. A cold, unfriendly climate with no positive inclusion can be a bad precedent as the students at young age learn predominantly through observational learning. A lack of clear policies and practices that affirm and support LGBT youth-and a failure to implement protections means that LGBT students nationwide continue to face bullying, exclusion, and discrimination in school, putting them at physical and psychological risk and limiting their education.

**Desolate and deserted:** LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) individuals face a particular set of challenges, both in becoming homeless as well as when they are trying to avoid homelessness. LGBT persons face social stigma, discrimination, and often rejection by their families, which adds to the physical and mental strains/challenges that all homelessness persons must struggle with.

Frequently, homeless LGBT persons have great difficulty finding shelters that accept and respect them. LGBT individuals experiencing homelessness are often at a heightened risk of violence, abuse, and exploitation compared with their heterosexual peers. Transgender people are particularly at physical risk due to a lack of acceptance and are often turned away from shelters; in some cases signs have been posted barring their entrance.

**Abuse and addiction:** The LGBTQ community suffers from higher rates of substance abuse than the population as a whole. This is due in part to a number of societally imposed obstacles that they face, often on a daily basis, that those who identify as heterosexual typically don't.

## Victims of hate crimes and violence

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people and those perceived to be LGBT are regularly targeted as victims of hate crimes and violence. LGBT people experience stigma and discrimination across their life spans, and are targets of sexual and physical assault

harassment and hate crimes. Additional factors that may impact on mental health and well- being for LGBT people include the process of -coming out‖ (sharing one's LGBTQ identity with others), gender transition, internalized oppression, isolation and alienation, loss of family or social support, and the impact of HIV and AIDS[10,11]. However, LGBT individuals 'experiences of violence and discrimination differ depending on a number of factors including race, gender, income, immigration status and language barriers. LGBT immigrants are more likely to face violence based on race and ethnicity and/or sexual identity and/or gender identity.

## Discussion

Support the most marginalized of the LGBT community-people of color, low- income, young, elderly and transgender people.

Establish collaborations on cross-issue work that includes LGBT issues affecting low- income and people of color populations.

Engage foundation staff in public education around issues affecting LGBT low-income people and LGBT people of color, especially as they relate to transgender issues.

Schools and teacher education programmers are crucial sites where LGBT issues and concerns need to be addressed. To help promote health and safety among LGBT youth, schools can implement the following policies and practices

Legal funds need to be created that can take on Public Interest Litigation on LGBT issues.

Training needs to be conducted for health professionals to increase their understanding of LGBT identity as potential risk factor for self-harm suicidal behavior and depression. Respective authorities should ensure that health, mental health and social care services are provided in a way that is accessible and appropriate to LGBT people.

National as well as state government should develop initiatives to support employers in making workplace and workplace culture more supportive and inclusive of LGBT people.

To check the violence that is perpetrated in the home as well as in the public sphere, the domestic violence law has to be expanded to include non-spousal and parental violence as well

## Conclusion

The unique findings presented here highlight that public policy needs to change in order to reflect the needs of, and positively engage LGB persons across the distribution.

Sexual orientation effects both psychological wellbeing and life satisfaction. Gender plays a significant role in the effect of sexual orientation on wellbeing. Partnership reduces the impact that sexual orientation has on wellbeing. We cannot be deciphering whether this is due to partnered sexual minorities being happier before becoming partnered, or if partnership itself improves wellbeing. o Controlling for fixed personality traits highlights that previous analyses have been upward bias. Quintile analyses have highlighted that the effect sexual orientation has is, in general, negative across the distribution. Mean based findings are a result of significant gaps at the bottom of the distribution of wellbeing.

The ability to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life as well as in decision- making is another integral part of the process of social inclusion However; young people tend to be less empowered and represented, and are often unable to have their voices heard in policy-making and in society at large. This is especially true for young people who belong to a social minority. "young people all over the world face the danger of being excluded from full participation in society because of their gender, ethnic origin, disability, employment status, sexual orientation and many other reasons".

## References

1. LGBT. "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender." Wikipedia, Retrieved (2014).

2. Majd, Katayoon, Marksamer Jody, and Reyes. "Hidden Injustice: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth in Juvenile Courts." Retrieved (2019).

3. Ryan, C. (2009). Supportive families, healthy children: Helping families with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender children. San Francisco, CA: Marian Wright Edelman Institute, San Francisco State University.

4. Ryan, Caitlin, David Huebner, Rafael M. Diaz and Jorge Sanchez. "Family Rejection as a Predictor of Negative Health Outcomes in White and Latino Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Young Adults." *Pediatrics 123 (2009): 346-352.*

5. Ryan, Caitlin. "Helping Families Support Their Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Children." Washington, DC: National Center for Cultural Competence, Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, USA (2009).

6. Wilber, Shannan, Caitlin Ryan and J Ody Marksamer. "Best Practices Guidelines: Serving LGBT Youth in Out-of-Home Care." Washington D.C: Child Welfare League of America, United States, (2006).

7. Mottet, Lisa and John M. Ohle. "Transitioning Our Shelters: A Guide to Making Homeless Shelters Safe for Transgender People." Washington, DC: Natonal Gay and Lesbian Task Force, USA, (2003).

8. Kost ,Sara. "LGBT Students Face Harassment in Schools." *Retrived* (2010).

9. Cochran, Susan. "Connecticut Network of Care: American Psychologist." *Retrived* 56 (2001).

10. Mayock, Paula, Audrey Bryan, Nicola Carr and Karl Kitching. "Supporting LGBT Lives: A Study of the Mental Health and Well-Being of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender People." Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) and BeLonGTo, Ireland, (2008).

11. Badgett, Mary Virginia Lee. "Income Inflation: The Myth of Affluence Among Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Americans." Los Angeles: Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies, Canada, (2018).