

Bisexual Individuals' Experiences With Changing Their Self-Identified Sexual Orientation: The
Roles of Partner Gender and Pressure From Partners

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Sexual minority individuals are at increased risk for negative health outcomes relative to heterosexual individuals (Meyer, 2003), and accumulating evidence indicates that bisexual individuals experience the greatest burden (for a review, see Feinstein & Dyar, 2017). These health disparities are due, in large part, to stigma-related stressors (e.g., discrimination; Meyer), and bisexual individuals experience unique stressors that gay/lesbian individuals do not, such as "dual-sourced discrimination" (i.e., discrimination from both heterosexual and gay/lesbian individuals; Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Mohr & Rochlen, 1999). There is some evidence that bisexual individuals also experience unique stressors in the context of their romantic relationships, such as pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientation to reflect the gender pairing of their current relationship (e.g., to identify as gay/lesbian while in a same-gender relationship or heterosexual while in a different-gender relationship). However, little is known about this unique stressor. To address this, the current study examined bisexual individuals' experiences with changing their self-identified sexual orientation because of the gender of their partner and pressure from their partner.

The Impact of Stigma on Willingness to Date a Bisexual Partner

Heterosexual and gay/lesbian individuals both report negative attitudes toward bisexual individuals (de Bruin & Arndt, 2010; Eliason, 1997; Mohr & Rochlen, 1999; Mulick & Wright, 2002; Yost & Thomas, 2012). These negative attitudes reflect the stereotypes that bisexuality is not a stable sexual orientation (e.g., it is a temporary or transitional identity) and that bisexual individuals are not suitable romantic relationship partners (e.g., they are promiscuous and unfaithful; Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Mohr & Rochlen). For example, bisexual individuals are perceived as less likely to be monogamous than heterosexual individuals and more likely to transmit an STD to a partner than heterosexual and gay/lesbian individuals (Spalding & Peplau,

1997), and bisexual men are viewed as more confused, less trustworthy, less inclined toward monogamy, and less able to maintain a long-term relationship than heterosexual and gay men (Zivony & Lobel, 2014). Armstrong and Reissing (2014) found that men and women both endorsed concerns about dating a bisexual partner (e.g., that they would not be able to fulfill the bisexual partner's sexual needs, that the bisexual partner would cheat on them), and these concerns were most pronounced for committed relationships compared to casual sex and dating.

This bias against bisexual individuals as potential relationship partners often goes beyond negative attitudes and extends to an unwillingness to have sex with or to date a bisexual partner. For example, Eliason (1997) found that most heterosexual individuals reported that they were somewhat or very unlikely to have sex with a bisexual partner, and Mohr and Rochlen (1999) found that nearly one-third of gay/lesbian individuals reported that they were unwilling to date a bisexual partner. Feinstein, Dyar, Bhatia, Latack, and Davila (2014) also found that willingness to be in a relationship with a bisexual partner was lower than willingness to have sex with or to date a bisexual partner, suggesting that some people are able to overlook their concerns about bisexual partners when it comes to casual sex and dating, but not when it comes to serious or committed relationships. This is not surprising, given that bisexual individuals are stereotyped as being promiscuous, unfaithful, and unable to maintain monogamous relationships (Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Mohr & Rochlen), all of which are more relevant concerns for serious/committed relationships compared to casual ones. Bisexual individuals themselves have also described being rejected as potential partners because of their sexual orientation, noting that people have rejected them because of stereotypical expectations as well as negative past experiences with bisexual partners (Li, Dobinson, Scheim, & Ross, 2013). In sum, bisexual individuals face unique challenges related to dating, especially when it comes to serious/committed relationships.

Ongoing Challenges for Bisexual Individuals in Relationships

Bisexual individuals can also experience challenges related to their sexual orientation after entering into relationships. For example, in qualitative studies, bisexual individuals have described experiences in which their partners have invalidated their identities and put them down for being bisexual (Bostwick & Hequembourg, 2014; Hequembourg & Brallier, 2009; Ross, Dobinson, & Eady, 2010). Bisexual women have also described experiencing pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientation to reflect the gender pairing of their current relationship or because their partner was opposed to dating someone who identified as bisexual (Bostwick & Hequembourg). Further, bisexual women noted that attempts to resist pressure to change their self-identified sexual orientation were often perceived as reflecting stubbornness or a lack of commitment to the relationship (Bostwick & Hequembourg).

Several potential explanations for this pressure have been proposed. Ochs (1996) suggested that a partner who maintains their bisexual identity while in a relationship can be perceived as holding onto the possibility of having a relationship with a partner of a different gender. Ochs also suggested that gay/lesbian individuals may be especially concerned that a bisexual partner will leave them for a different gender partner to gain the privileges afforded to people who are, or who are assumed to be, heterosexual. However, while being in a different-gender relationship can afford certain privileges, it can also present challenges for bisexual individuals. For example, bisexual individuals in different-gender relationships are often assumed to be heterosexual (Ross et al., 2010) and bisexual women with different-gender partners report higher levels of stigma-related stress (e.g., binegative discrimination) and negative mental health outcomes (e.g., depression, binge drinking) compared to bisexual individuals with same-gender partners (Dyar, Feinstein, & London, 2014; Molina et al., 2015).

Therefore, bisexual individuals can experience stigma-related stress regardless of the gender of their partner. Steinman (2001) also suggested that people prefer for their partners to match their own sexual orientation, because of their personal investment in their identity. Of note, both scholars proposed that lesbian women may be more likely than gay men to reject bisexual individuals as potential partners, because of their strong community bonds and the politicized nature of lesbian identity (e.g., connections with feminism and antipatriarchy).

The Current Study

Despite qualitative evidence that some bisexual women experience pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientation, little is known about this experience. For example, given that the qualitative evidence came from a sample of 10 bisexual women (Bostwick & Hequembourg, 2014), it is unknown how common these experiences are among bisexual individuals, including bisexual men and transgender/nonbinary individuals. To address this, we conducted an exploratory study of bisexual individuals' experiences with changing their self-identified sexual orientation because of the gender of their partner and pressure from their partner. Additionally, to better understand these experiences, we examined their associations with other stigma-related stressors. We hypothesized that bisexual individuals who had changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender would report higher levels of other stigma-related stressors, including discrimination, internalized stigma, acceptance concerns, difficulty developing a positive bisexual identity, and uncertainty about which sexual orientation label best reflects their attractions and behavior compared to those who had not changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender. Similarly, we hypothesized that bisexual individuals who had experienced pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientation would also report higher levels of other stigma-

related stressors compared to those who had not experienced pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientation. To our knowledge, this is the first quantitative study to examine these experiences.

Method

Procedure

Data were collected as part of an Internet-based survey focused on sexual identity, minority stress, and relationship experiences among individuals attracted to more than one gender. Participants were recruited from Facebook groups and online listservs for LGB individuals and required to meet the following inclusion criteria to participate: report being at least 18 years old, attracted to more than one gender, and able to read English. Participants provided informed consent, completed a series of questionnaires, and were offered the opportunity to enter a raffle for one of six \$50 gift cards. The questionnaires (described below) were administered in the following fixed order: (1) demographics; (2) experiences with changing one's self-identified sexual orientation; (3) binegative discrimination; (4) internalized binegativity; and (5) acceptance concerns, sexual identity uncertainty, and difficulty developing a positive bisexual identity.

Participants

A total of 397 individuals who reported attractions to more than one gender completed the survey. Most identified as bisexual (70.3%), followed by pansexual (12.8%), queer (11.0%), and other sexual orientations (5.9%). Additionally, most identified as cisgender women (i.e., assigned female at birth and currently identified as female; 53.7%), followed by cisgender men (i.e., assigned male at birth and currently identified as male; 26.7%), and other genders (e.g., transgender, nonbinary; 19.6%). Additional demographics are reported in Table 1. Of note, most

participants were White and from the United States and other English-speaking countries.

Measures

Demographics. Participants were asked to report their age, self-identified sexual orientation, gender identity, sex assigned at birth, race/ethnicity, and country of residence. Response options and descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1.

Experiences with changing one's self-identified sexual orientation. Participants were asked, "Have you ever identified with another sexual identity/orientation because of the gender of your relationship partner?" Response options included: (1) No; (2) Yes, I identified as heterosexual while in a different-gender relationship; and (3) Yes, I identified as lesbian/gay while in a same-gender relationship. Participants could select more than one response option, and responses were dichotomized to represent whether or not participants had ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender (0 = no, 1 = yes). Those who endorsed this experience were also asked: "Did you experience any pressure from your relationship partner to identify in this way?" (0 = no, 1 = yes). Participants who had changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender in more than one relationship were instructed to consider their most recent experience.

Binegative discrimination. The Anti-Bisexual Experiences Scale (Brewster & Moradi, 2010) was used to assess binegative discrimination. It includes 17 items, each administered twice—once referring to experiences with heterosexual individuals and once referencing experiences with lesbian/gay (LG) individuals. There are three subscales: (1) experiences in which people assume that bisexuality is not a stable sexual orientation (sexual orientation instability, 8 items; e.g., "People have acted as if bisexuality is 'just a phase' I am going through"); (2) experiences in which people assume that bisexual individuals are sexually irresponsible (sexual irresponsibility,

4 items, e.g., "People have treated me as if I am obsessed with sex because I am bisexual"); and (3) experiences of hostility (hostility, 5-items; e.g., "People have not wanted to be my friend because I identify as bisexual"). Items were rated on a 6-point scale (1 = never, 6 = almost all the time) and subscale scores were computed by averaging item responses. Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alphas for each subscale were as follows: sexual orientation instability (from heterosexual individuals: $M = 2.75$, $SD = 1.20$, $\alpha = .94$; from LG individuals: $M = 2.60$, $SD = 1.30$, $\alpha = .95$); sexual irresponsibility (from heterosexual individuals: $M = 2.08$, $SD = 1.07$, $\alpha = .81$; from LG individuals: $M = 1.92$, $SD = 1.03$, $\alpha = .81$); and hostility (from heterosexual individuals: $M = 2.02$, $SD = .90$, $\alpha = .85$; from LG individuals: $M = 1.86$, $SD = 1.00$, $\alpha = .87$).

Internalized binegativity. The Bisexual Identity Inventory (Paul, Smith, Mohr, & Ross, 2014) was used to assess internalized binegativity. The 8-item "illegitimacy of bisexuality" subscale reflects internalization of the attitude that bisexuality is not a legitimate sexual orientation (e.g., "I think that being bisexual is just a temporary identity"; $M = 1.20$, $SD = .42$, $\alpha = .78$). The 5-item "internalized binegativity" subscale reflects a negative affective response to being bisexual (e.g., "It's unfair that I'm attracted to men and women"; $M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.25$, $\alpha = .82$). Items were rated on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) and subscale scores were computed by averaging item responses.

Acceptance concerns, sexual identity uncertainty, and difficulty developing a positive bisexual identity. The Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identity Scale (Mohr & Kendra, 2011) was used to assess acceptance concerns, sexual identity uncertainty, and difficulty developing a positive bisexual identity. All references to "LGB" were changed to "bisexual." The 3-item "acceptance concerns" subscale reflects concerns about being accepted because of one's bisexual identity

(e.g., "I often wonder whether others judge me for my sexual orientation"; $M = 3.51$, $SD = 1.22$, $\alpha = .79$). The 4-item "sexual identity uncertainty" subscale reflects uncertainty regarding which sexual identity label most accurately describes one's attractions and behavior (e.g., "I can't decide whether I am bisexual or homosexual"; $M = 2.06$, $SD = 1.10$, $\alpha = .85$). The 3-item "difficult process" subscale reflects difficulty developing a positive bisexual identity (e.g., "Admitting to myself that I'm bisexual has been a very slow process"; $M = 3.56$, $SD = 1.45$, $\alpha = .80$). Each item was rated on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) and subscale scores were computed by averaging item responses.

Data Analyses

Analyses were conducted using SPSS Version 24. Less than 1% of the data were missing and they were handled using pairwise deletion. First, we examined the proportion of participants who had ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender. Second, we used a chi-squared test and follow-up z-tests to examine whether this proportion differed based on participant gender. Third, we used analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) and follow-up pairwise comparisons of marginal means to examine whether levels of other stigma-related stressors differed based on whether or not participants had ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender (adjusting for participant age and gender). Finally, in the subset of participants who endorsed changing their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender, we examined the proportion who had experienced pressure from their partner to do so, whether this differed based on gender, and whether levels of other stigma-related stressors differed based on whether or not participants had experienced pressure from their partner.

Results

Changes in Self-Identified Sexual Orientation Because of the Gender of One's Partner

Approximately one-third of participants ($n = 116$, 29.2%) reported that they had ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender. Of those 116 participants, 72 (62.1%) reported that they had identified as heterosexual while in a different-gender relationship, 34 (29.3%) reported that they had identified as gay/lesbian while in a same-gender relationship, and 10 (8.6%) reported that they had done both. There was a significant gender difference, $\chi^2 [2] = 9.26$, $p = .01$, which indicated that cisgender women were more likely than transgender/nonbinary individuals to have ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender (cisgender women: $n = 74$, 34.7%; transgender/nonbinary individuals: $n = 13$, 16.7%). Neither group differed from cisgender men ($n = 29$, 27.4%). Compared to those who had not changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender, those who had reported higher levels of several stigma-related stressors (see Table 2), including internalized illegitimacy of bisexuality, acceptance concerns, sexual identity uncertainty, and difficulty developing a positive bisexual identity. There was also a trend toward them reporting higher levels of internalized binegativity.

Pressure From One's Partner to Change One's Self-Identified Sexual Orientation

Of those who had ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender ($n = 116$, but 3 did not answer the follow-up question), 43 (38.1%) reported that they had experienced pressure from their partner to do so, and this proportion did not differ based on participant gender, $\chi^2 [2] = 3.45$, $p = .18$. Compared to those who had not experienced pressure from their partners, those who had reported higher levels of several stigma-related stressors (see Table 3), including all three binegative experiences from heterosexual individuals (sexual orientation instability, sexual irresponsibility, and hostility) and acceptance concerns.

There were also trends toward them reporting higher levels of binegative experiences from LG individuals (sexual orientation instability) and internalized illegitimacy of bisexuality.

Discussion

The goal of the current study was to broaden our understanding of bisexual individuals' experiences with changing their self-identified sexual orientation in the context of romantic relationships. To our knowledge, this was the first quantitative study to examine this experience. Previously, a small qualitative study of 10 bisexual women found that some bisexual women had experienced pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientation to reflect the gender pairing of their current relationship (Bostwick & Hequembourg, 2014). Our findings add to this literature by demonstrating that 29.2% of the bisexual individuals in our sample had changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of the gender of their partner, of whom 38.1% had experienced pressure from their partner to do so. Therefore, 10.8% of our sample had experienced pressure from a partner to change their self-identified sexual orientation.

Changing one's self-identified sexual orientation in and of itself should not be pathologized. In fact, it is a relatively common experience. For example, in a longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample, 12% of young adults (ages 18-26) reported a different self-identified sexual orientation 7 years later, 70% of whom became more same-sex oriented (Everett, 2015). Further, self-identified sexual orientation can continue to evolve after initially adopting a nonheterosexual identity. Rosario and colleagues found that 28% of sexual minority youth (ages 14-21) reported a different self-identified sexual orientation across four time points (prior to baseline, baseline, 6 months later, and 12 months later; Rosario, Schrimshaw, Hunter, & Braun, 2006). Similarly, Diamond (2005) found that 32% of nonheterosexual women (ages 18-25) reported both lesbian and nonlesbian identities over 8 years, and Everett and colleagues

found that 25%-26% of nonheterosexual women (ages 18-82) reported a different self-identified sexual orientation 4 to 5 years later and again 7 years later (Everett, Talley, Hughes, Wilsnack, & Johnson, 2016). There are diverse motivations for changing one's self-identified sexual orientation, including experiencing fluctuations in attractions and contextual changes across development (e.g., new relationships; Diamond, 2008; Peplau, Sparlding, Conley, & Veniegas, 1999). However, someone can also be motivated to change their self-identified sexual orientation because of stigma (e.g., discrimination), and pressure from one's partner represents a unique form of discrimination affecting some bisexual individuals. Although speculative, pressure from partners to change one's self-identified sexual orientation may help explain previous findings that relationship involvement is associated with increased anxiety (Feinstein, Latack, Bhatia, Davila, & Eaton, 2016) and psychological distress (Whitton, Dyar, Newcomb, & Mustanski, in press) for bisexual individuals, but not for gay/lesbian individuals. The extent to which changes in self-identified sexual orientation are motivated by different factors (e.g., fluctuations in attractions, stigma) remains an empirical question.

Of note, more bisexual individuals had changed their self-identified sexual orientation to heterosexual while in a different-gender relationship than to gay/lesbian while in a same-gender relationship. This is likely due, in part, to different-gender relationships being more common than same-gender relationships among bisexual individuals (Pew Research Center, 2013). However, it is also possible that it may be more challenging to maintain one's bisexual identity while in a different-gender relationship compared to a same-gender relationship. Previous research has demonstrated that bisexual women with male partners are less open about their sexual orientation, experience more binegative discrimination, and report more depression, binge drinking, and alcohol-related consequences compared to bisexual women with female partners

(Dyar et al., 2014; Molina et al., 2015). Therefore, the unique challenges facing bisexual individuals with different-gender partners may lead to them being more likely to change their self-identified sexual orientation while in a relationship. It will be important for future research to examine the different motivations that bisexual individuals have for changing their self-identified sexual orientation in the context of different types of relationships.

We also found that cisgender women were most likely to have changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender (34.7%), while transgender/nonbinary individuals were least likely (16.7%). These findings may reflect sexual fluidity being more common among women than men (i.e., women are more likely than men to experience changes in their sexual attractions, behaviors, and identities; Diamond, 2016). Additionally, women are more likely than men to engage in accommodative behaviors in relationships (Schoenfeld, Bredow, & Huston, 2012). Therefore, it is also possible that changing one's self-identified sexual orientation because of the gender of one's partner reflects a unique form of accommodation among cisgender bisexual women. In regard to transgender/nonbinary individuals, it is possible that they are less influenced by societal pressure to change their bisexual identity compared to cisgender individuals, because they are more accustomed to belonging to a stigmatized social group due to their minority gender identity. If our findings are replicated, it will be important for future research to examine why cisgender women are more likely to change their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender, despite not being more likely to experience pressure from their partner to do so.

In regard to other stigma-related stressors, we found that bisexual individuals who had changed their sexual orientation because of their partner's gender reported more internalization of the belief that bisexuality is an illegitimate sexual orientation, acceptance concerns, sexual

identity uncertainty, and difficulty developing a positive bisexual identity. Although speculative, these stigma-related constructs may reflect motivations for changing one's self-identified sexual orientation while in a relationship. We specifically asked participants if they had ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of the gender of their partner, but it is possible that such changes were also motivated by having internalizing negative beliefs about bisexuality, concerns about being accepted by others, uncertainty about the sexual identity label that most accurately describes one's attractions and behavior, and struggling to accept one's own bisexuality. It will be important for future research to examine the extent to which each of these concerns influences decisions to change how one identifies.

Finally, we found that having experienced pressure from one's partner to change one's self-identified sexual orientation was associated with having experienced more binegative discrimination, especially from heterosexual individuals. Although our measure of binegative discrimination distinguished between experiences with heterosexual and gay/lesbian individuals, it did not distinguish between experiences with different types of people (e.g., strangers, family members, romantic partners). It is possible that participants who endorsed having experienced pressure from their partner to change their self-identified sexual orientation and binegative discrimination were reporting on binegative discrimination from their partner. However, it is also possible that these findings reflect a pattern wherein some bisexual individuals experience binegative discrimination from their partners and other people. We also found that those who had experienced pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientation reported more concerns about being accepted and a trend toward more internalization of the belief that bisexuality is an illegitimate sexual orientation. It is possible that experiencing pressure from one's partner to change one's self-identified sexual orientation contributes to

bisexual individuals being more concerned about whether or not people accept them for being bisexual and internalizing the belief that bisexuality is an illegitimate sexual orientation.

The current findings highlight the need for structural interventions to reduce bisexual stigma at the population level. Until attitudes toward bisexual individuals improve, clinicians are tasked with helping their bisexual clients to cope with stigma-related stressors and their consequences for mental health and relationship functioning. It is important for clinicians to recognize that bisexual individuals can experience unique challenges related to finding partners and after entering into relationships. Therefore, interventions that address stigma-related stress need to consider discrimination and rejection from diverse sources, including current relationship partners. That said, it is also important that clinicians do not pathologize changes in one's self-identified sexual orientation. If a client is experiencing pressure from their partner to change their self-identification, then the clinician could help them explore their feelings about being pressured to do so, the pros and cons of changing their self-identification (if they are considering it), and the implications of changing their self-identification (e.g., for their sense of self, relationship, and community involvement).

The decision to change one's self-identified sexual orientation, regardless of the motivating force, is a personal decision. As such, we do not believe that there is a single "right" decision that applies to everyone who is considering doing so. Instead, we believe that clinicians can help their clients to understand their thought processes and emotional experiences in an effort to make a decision that is in line with their personal values and goals. Depending on the individual client's goals, specific evidence-based interventions may be useful as well. For example, if a client is experiencing pressure from their partner to change their self-identified sexual orientation and it is contributing to feelings of depression or to internalizing negative

beliefs about bisexuality, then cognitive-behavioral interventions guided by minority stress theory may be useful (for an example, see Pachankis, Hatzenbuehler, Rendina, Safren, & Parsons, 2015). If the client wants help resisting pressure from their partner, regardless of whether or not they want to maintain the relationship, then they may benefit from communication skills training (e.g., learning how to communicate their feelings in an effective manner). Again, if a client is considering changing their self-identified sexual orientation because of the gender of their partner or because of pressure from their partner, then we encourage clinicians to focus on helping the client to understand their experience and work toward their individual goals, rather than assuming that there is a "right" decision in such a situation.

The current findings should be considered in light of several limitations. First, although we specifically asked whether participants had ever changed their self-identified sexual orientation because of their partner's gender, it is possible that there were diverse motivations that influenced their decision. It will be important for future research to examine these motivations in order to understand their consequences on relationship satisfaction and well-being. Second, our sample was not a representative sample of bisexual/nonmonosexual individuals. All of our participants were affiliated with an LGB-oriented organization listserv or Facebook group and elected to participate in a research study advertised to bisexual/nonmonosexual individuals. Further, most of our participants identified as White and were from the United States and other English-speaking countries. Therefore, research is needed with more diverse and representative samples of bisexual/nonmonosexual individuals. Third, although we examined gender differences in bisexual individuals' experiences with changing their self-identified sexual orientation, it is possible that other demographic characteristics (e.g.,

age, generational cohort) also influence these experiences. For example, there is some evidence that societal attitudes toward bisexual individuals have shifted from negative to more neutral, and that younger individuals have more positive attitudes toward bisexual individuals (Dodge et al., 2016). As such, younger generations of bisexual individuals may be less likely to experience pressure from their partners to change their self-identified sexual orientations. However, younger individuals are also more likely to identify as bisexual (Copen, Chandra, & Febo-Vazquez, 2016; Pew Research Center, 2013), and this increased visibility may lead to more opportunities to experience this unique stigma-related stressor. It will be important for future research to examine the extent to which age, generational cohort, and other demographic characteristics influence these experiences. Finally, given our cross-sectional design, we do not know if changes in self-identified sexual orientation preceded or followed other stigma-related stressors. Longitudinal research is needed to better understand the direction of these associations. Limitations notwithstanding, to our knowledge, the current study was the first quantitative study of bisexual individuals' experiences with changing their self-identified sexual orientation in the context of a relationship. Therefore, findings shed light on a unique experience that warrants attention in future research in order to understand the unique stigma-related stressors facing bisexual individuals and their consequences.

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Table 1. Demographics.

Demographic Variable	%
Age (<i>M, SD</i>)	27.2 (9.9)
Sexual Identity	
Bisexual	70.3%
Queer	11.0%
Pansexual	12.8%
Other	5.9%
Gender	
Cisgender male	26.7%
Cisgender female	53.7%
Transgender	2.3%
Genderqueer	9.0%
Other	8.3%
Race/Ethnicity	
Caucasian/White	82.1%
Latino/Hispanic	4.8%
African American/Caribbean American/Black	2.3%
South Asian	1.8%
Middle Eastern	1.0%
Native American/First Nations	.8%
East Asian	.5%
Biracial/Multiracial	5.1%
Other	1.8%
Country of Residence	
United States	72.0%
Canada	7.6%
United Kingdom	8.8%
Australia	1.8%
Germany	2.1%
Other	7.7%

Note. For self-identified sexual orientation, “other” included: lesbian, omnisexual, heterosexual, mostly lesbian, mostly gay, mostly heterosexual, and other.

Table 2. Associations between changes in self-identified sexual orientation because of the gender of one's partner and stigma-related stressors.

Outcome	Omnibus ANCOVA			No Change		Change	
	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
ABES-H Instability	1, 386	2.79	.10	2.67	.07	2.89	.11
ABES-LG Instability	1, 386	2.39	.12	2.53	.08	2.75	.12
ABES-H Sexual Irresponsibility	1, 385	1.05	.31	2.09	.07	2.21	.10
ABES-LG Sexual Irresponsibility	1, 385	.24	.62	1.94	.06	1.99	.10
ABES-H Hostility	1, 384	.29	.59	2.05	.05	2.10	.09
ABES-LG Hostility	1, 384	.18	.67	1.89	.06	1.85	.09
Internalized Binegativity	1, 385	5.13	.08	2.15	.08	2.39	.12
Internalized Bi-Illegitimacy	1, 385	5.16	.02	1.16	.03	1.27	.04
Sexual Identity Uncertainty	1, 385	18.06	< .001	1.92	.07	2.43	.10
Acceptance Concerns	1, 385	11.21	.001	3.36	.07	3.81	.12
Difficult Process	1, 385	17.36	< .001	3.36	.09	4.03	.14

Notes. ABES = Anti-Bisexual Experiences Scale; H = heterosexual; LG = lesbian/gay; means represent marginal means adjusting for participant age and gender.

Table 3. Associations between pressure from one's partner to change one's self-identified sexual orientation and stigma-related stressors.

Outcome	ANCOVA			Change in Identity without Pressure		Change in Identity with Pressure	
	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
ABES-H Instability	1, 108	5.99	.02	2.72	.16	3.24	.18
ABES-LG Instability	1, 108	3.50	.06	2.67	.18	3.13	.20
ABES-H Sexual Irresponsibility	1, 108	4.12	.04	2.14	.14	2.53	.16
ABES-LG Sexual Irresponsibility	1, 108	1.17	.28	2.01	.15	2.22	.16
ABES-H Hostility	1, 107	6.77	.01	1.97	.12	2.36	.12
ABES-LG Hostility	1, 107	.28	.60	1.81	.13	1.90	.14
Internalized Binegativity	1, 108	.08	.78	2.31	.20	2.38	.22
Internalized Bi-Illegitimacy	1, 108	3.68	.06	1.20	.08	1.40	.09
Sexual Identity Uncertainty	1, 108	.50	.48	2.36	.17	2.53	.19
Acceptance Concerns	1, 108	4.02	.05	3.54	.15	3.95	.17
Difficult Process	1, 108	2.10	.15	3.80	.19	4.16	.20

Notes. ABES = Anti-Bisexual Experiences Scale; H = heterosexual; LG = lesbian/gay; means represent marginal means adjusting for participant age and gender.