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Bi-Tween Worlds: A Qualitative Exploration of Bisexual Identity Demarcation by Gay and Lesbian Members of the Greek LGBTQ+ Community

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examines intra-community biphobia in Greece through semi-structured interviews with 10 gay and lesbian participants. Using thematic analysis, the findings identify a process through which bisexuality is delegitimized, moralized, and symbolically marginalized within LGBTQ+ spaces. Participants frequently shifted from describing bisexuality as unstable or transitional to judging it in moral terms—questioning sincerity, reliability, and relational commitment. These moralized evaluations functioned as mechanisms of boundary maintenance, legitimizing relational distancing and reinforcing community hierarchies. Gendered patterns of exclusion emerged, with male bisexuality often reframed as covert homosexuality and female bisexuality sexualized or treated as performative. Situated within the Greek sociocultural context, the analysis illustrates how Orthodox-influenced moral norms, heteronormativity, and limited bisexual visibility intensify intra-group regulation and symbolic marginalization. By centering gay and lesbian perspectives, this study advances bisexual theory by demonstrating how binegativity is reproduced through interconnected processes of emotional interpretation, moral reasoning, and community boundary enforcement. The findings highlight the need for culturally sensitive interventions to foster genuine inclusion within LGBTQ+ advocacy and community spaces.

KEYWORDS

Biphobia; Bisexuality;
LGBTQ+ community;
Gender Stereotypes;
Greece

1. Introduction

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, and other (LGBTQ+) communities encompass a wide spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities that challenge prevailing heteronormative and binary frameworks. As noted by the APA Dictionary of Psychology (n.d.), this is a multifaceted and heterogeneous population that resists simple categorization. Despite significant legal and social progress in

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many countries, members of the LGBTQ+ community continue to experience discrimination, sometimes from within their own community (Cipollina et al., 2024). One such underexplored form of intra-community prejudice is biphobia meaning the stereotypes, hostilities, and exclusionary attitudes directed at bisexual individuals (Yoshino, 2000). This phenomenon not only marginalizes bisexual people but also undermines community cohesion and affects psychological well-being (Cipollina et al., 2024). Importantly, bisexual individuals represent the largest subgroup within the sexual minority population (Gates, 2011), and research shows that this identity is being increasingly adopted over time (Phillips et al., 2019). While public attitudes toward gay and lesbian individuals have become more accepting in recent decades (Pew Research Center, 2020), perceptions of bisexuality have remained markedly more negative or indifferent (Dodge et al., 2016), suggesting a persistent stigma specific to bisexual identity.

Biphobia is rooted in a widespread adherence to binary thinking, in which sexuality is perceived as either heterosexual or homosexual. This binary model delegitimizes sexual fluidity and frames bisexuality as an unstable or transitional identity (Angelides, 2001; Diamond, 2008). As a result, bisexual individuals are often treated with suspicion or outright denial, with their identities frequently dismissed as inauthentic or indecisive (Vonlanthen & Roy-Charland, 2025). This form of erasure, common both outside and within LGBTQ+ spaces, leads to what researchers have described as “double marginalization” (Savin-Williams, 2021), where bisexual individuals are alienated from both heterosexual and homosexual communities. While this study focuses on bisexuality, it is important to note that bisexuality belongs to a broader spectrum of plurisexual or multisexual identities, such as pansexual, omnisexual, and queer, whose experiences often overlap due to shared stigma and similar challenges to binary models of sexuality.

Research has shown that this exclusion has serious mental health implications. Studies such as Ross et al. (2018) and Feinstein et al. (2021) report that bisexual individuals experience elevated rates of depression, anxiety, and social isolation. To cope, many adopt protective strategies such as concealing or modifying their sexual identity depending on context (Feinstein et al., 2021; Kincaid, 2024). While these strategies can mitigate external stigma, they often intensify internal distress and inhibit authentic self-expression. Internalized biphobia, where individuals adopt negative societal beliefs about bisexuality, further compounds these issues and can lead to long-term psychological harm (Velasco et al., 2024). This is a pressing public health issue, given their unique exposure to negative perceptions and discrimination. The minority stress model (Brooks, 1981;

Meyer, 2003) helps explain these disparities by highlighting how chronic stressors, such as prejudice and social exclusion, contribute to poorer health outcomes among sexual minorities.

In addition to personal and interpersonal consequences, biphobia has broader political and structural dimensions. Marcus (2018) argues that LGBTQ+ rights campaigns often prioritize monosexual narratives (i.e., gay or lesbian experiences), sidelining bisexual perspectives in both activism and policy. As a result, bisexual individuals frequently lack adequate legal protections and are underrepresented in advocacy efforts. Even within LGBTQ+ spaces, bisexuals are sometimes viewed as outsiders or as lacking commitment to the cause (Chan & Yip, 2021). This invisibility not only limits opportunities for solidarity but also reinforces a narrow conception of legitimate queer identity.

Although literature on biphobia has grown in recent years, significant limitations remain. Much of the existing research is based on young, white, Western samples, primarily from the United States and United Kingdom (Colledge et al., 2015; Marzetti et al., 2022), making it difficult to generalize findings across different cultural contexts. In addition, this body of work has been predominantly quantitative, focusing on factors that contribute to these attitudes (Anderson & Maugeri, 2024; Feinstein et al., 2022) or mental health outcomes (Feinstein et al., 2021; Ross et al., 2018) through surveys and statistical analysis. While this has provided useful baseline data, there remains a shortage of in-depth qualitative studies that explore how such attitudes are formed, experienced, and rationalized, particularly from the perspective of those who hold them.

Moreover, while a few qualitative studies have examined attitudes toward bisexual individuals, they have primarily focused on heterosexual participants (Stotzer, 2009), rather than members of the LGBTQ+ community itself. Within this community, there is a notable scarcity of qualitative research specifically exploring the attitudes of gay and lesbian individuals who may perpetuate biphobia. For instance, Klysing et al. (2024) and Charley et al. (2023) offer valuable insights into bisexual identity and its contestation within LGBTQ+ relationships, but their small sample sizes and narrow focus limit broader applicability. Similarly, while Cipollina et al. (2024) and Wurthmann and Ortega (2023) shed light on perceptions of bisexuality as “less authentic,” their analyses do not fully engage with the underlying psychological and sociocultural foundations of these beliefs. These gaps are particularly evident in non-Western contexts, such as Greece, where heteronormative traditions remain strong and bisexuality receives minimal visibility. Most Greek studies on LGBTQ+ issues, such as Pavlou’s (2008), have focused primarily on gay men and lesbians, leaving bisexual individuals underrepresented and biphobia under-theorized.

The broader Greek sociocultural environment may further intensify these dynamics. Greek culture places strong emphasis on the family as the core social unit, with expectations that children remain closely connected to the family until marriage and avoid keeping private aspects of their lives hidden (Phellas, 2001, 2005). Any deviation from cultural norms—particularly relating to sexuality—is perceived as reflecting not only on the individual but on the family's honor, a value expressed through the powerful concept of *philotimo*, or the love of one's family's reputation (Zervoulis, 2016). Sexuality is deeply intertwined with this honor-shame system, and the disclosure of non-heterosexual identities has historically been viewed as a source of profound social disgrace (Fygetakis, 1997). Studies of Greek gay men further show how these cultural expectations generate internalized shame and conflict, often clashing with modern narratives of LGBTQ+ pride and visibility (Dendrinou, 2008). Additionally, Greece's deeply patriarchal social structure places heightened pressure on men to embody traditional gender roles, which may partly explain why negative attitudes in Greek society—and even among professionals—tend to be more pronounced toward gay men than lesbians (Papadaki et al., 2013).

Another important cultural factor shaping attitudes toward sexuality in Greece is the enduring influence of the Greek Orthodox Church. Orthodoxy is not only a religious institution but a central marker of national and cultural identity, historically functioning as a key source of social cohesion across the Eastern Mediterranean (Bakas, 2024). In the Greek context, the Church continues to shape everyday moral expectations, views on family life, and traditional gender roles, often promoting heteronormative ideals as part of its broader cultural mission (Bakas, 2024). Because of its strong presence in public life and its perceived role as a guardian of collective heritage, religious discourse frequently informs public opinion on LGBTQ+ issues (Spina, 2016). As a result, Church influence can reinforce conservative attitudes toward non-heterosexual identities, contributing to the stigma and social pressures faced by bisexual individuals within both the general population and LGBTQ+ community (Spina, 2016). Given the above cultural factors, there is a critical need for research that not only addresses bisexual experiences but also interrogates the attitudes of other LGBTQ+ members toward them.

The current study aims to address this gap by exploring the biphobic perceptions of gay and lesbian individuals within the Greek LGBTQ+ community. Using a qualitative approach, this research will investigate the psychological and social roots of these attitudes and consider their implications for community solidarity, advocacy, and the well-being of bisexual individuals. In doing so, the study contributes a culturally specific perspective that complements and expands upon the existing, largely

Western-centric literature. The overarching research questions guiding this study are: 1) What factors contribute to the rejection of bisexual persons by gay men and lesbians within the Greek LGBTQ+ community? and 2) How might these biphobic attitudes influence the broader dynamics of inclusion and cohesion within the LGBTQ+ community?

2. Methodology

2.1. Design

The primary objective of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and perceptions of biphobia within the LGBTQ+ community. To achieve this, a qualitative research approach was employed, given its suitability for exploring complex and sensitive social phenomena through the meanings individuals ascribe to their lived experiences. Qualitative methodology facilitates a nuanced analysis of subjective attitudes, emotions, and social dynamics, thereby enabling the generation of rich, interpretive data that quantitative methods are often unable to capture effectively (Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

2.2. Participants

The study involved ten participants (seven cisgender women and three cisgender men), aged between 18 and 35, all of whom self-identified as members of the LGBTQ+ community and demonstrated awareness of biphobia-related issues (see Table 1). This age range was selected to ensure a diversity of experiences and a heightened level of social awareness regarding sexual identity and discrimination.

Participants were required to be adults and self-identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community relevant to the research focus. Emphasis was placed on recruiting individuals capable of providing meaningful insights based on their personal experiences, perspectives, or reflections related to biphobia. Capability to provide meaningful insights was assessed during initial contact through brief screening questions regarding their experiences,

Table 1. Participants’ Characteristics

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Sexual Orientation
Eleni	30	Woman	Lesbian
Maria	35	Woman	Lesbian
Sofia	26	Woman	Lesbian
Andreas	27	Man	Gay
Niki	19	Woman	Lesbian
Dimitris	28	Man	Gay
Kostas	29	Man	Gay
Anna	25	Woman	Lesbian
Christina	30	Woman	Lesbian
Katerina	27	Woman	Lesbian

observations, or opinions about bisexuality and intra-community prejudice. This ensured that participants had relevant experiential or reflective knowledge rather than hypothetical or uninformed viewpoints. Additionally, participants were required to have a stable residence in Greece to ensure that the data reflected experiences within a shared cultural and social context, although nationality was not a criterion for inclusion.

Exclusion criteria included: individuals who did not self-identify as LGBTQ+, those under 18, bisexual individuals (as the study focused on perceptions held by non-bisexual community members), and individuals who indicated no relevant experience or awareness of biphobia. Finally, persons reporting an active psychiatric diagnosis that could impair emotional wellbeing or interview participation were excluded. This assessment was made through self-report during the screening process, with the aim of protecting participant safety given the sensitive nature of the topic.

2.3. Data collection

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling to ensure the inclusion of individuals with relevant experiences and insights into biphobia within the LGBTQ+ community. Recruitment was conducted through the LGBTQ+ community in Thessaloniki as well as various online platforms. Strategies included sending invitation emails outlining the study's aims, ethical considerations, and participant rights, alongside posts on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Given the sensitive and underexplored nature of biphobia within the Greek LGBTQ+ community, recruitment posed challenges. Many potential participants were reluctant to openly discuss intra-community prejudice due to concerns about social repercussions or community tensions. Consequently, achieving in-depth, candid narratives required careful, trust-building engagement and extended recruitment efforts. Though full saturation was not entirely achievable due to the limited sample, the analysis revealed consistent and rich themes across interviews, indicating a strong preliminary understanding of key perceptions and experiences related to biphobia among gay and lesbian individuals in Greece—serving as an important foundational investigation that can inform future larger-scale or mixed-method research while emphasizing depth over breadth, allowing for nuanced exploration of participants' emotional, social, and moral narratives.

Prior to participation, all participants received a comprehensive written information sheet outlining the study's purpose, the nature of their involvement, confidentiality, and privacy assurances. Informed consent was obtained through signed consent forms, which affirmed voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any point without penalty. Data were collected through semi-structured, face-to-face interviews conducted by

the first author in private, accessible, and comfortable locations to promote participant safety, openness, and trust. This approach balanced flexibility and structure, allowing exploration of emergent personal experiences, emotions, and perceptions (Kallio et al., 2016). Data were collected from November 2024 to March 2025 and an interview guide was developed based on the study's objectives and current literature. The interview guide included key thematic areas while allowing for participant-led narrative and deviations as relevant. Interview topics encompassed: a) general perceptions and acceptance of bisexual identities (e.g., "How do you view bisexual identities within the LGBTQ+ community?"), (b) personal experiences or observations of suspicion, marginalization, or questioning of bisexual people (e.g., "Can you share any experiences where you or others expressed doubt or skepticism toward bisexual individuals?"), (c) perceptions of gender and sexual fluidity (e.g., "What are your thoughts on the concepts of gender and sexual fluidity?"), and (d) the position of bisexual individuals within the broader LGBTQ+ collective and activism (e.g., "How do you think bisexual people fit within the wider LGBTQ+ community and its activism efforts?"). Interviews typically lasted approximately 45 min, though duration varied according to participant engagement and the conversational flow. Upon completion, a brief debriefing reiterated the study's goals, offered an opportunity for questions or comments, and assessed participant well-being. Participants were reminded of their right to withdraw their data within two weeks following the interview. With participants' explicit permission, interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim to ensure data integrity. All data were securely stored in encrypted files on a password-protected computer accessible only to the authors. Following the withdrawal period, data were anonymized in accordance with ethical research standards. To ensure full anonymity, participants were assigned randomly selected pseudonyms for publication. These pseudonyms are not derived from participants' names, initials, or any identifying information.

2.4. Data analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyze the data with the aim of identifying recurring themes emerging from the participants' personal narratives. This method is well-suited for the in-depth exploration of lived experiences and for elucidating the meanings individuals assign to the phenomena they encounter. The transcribed data were analyzed following the six-phase framework outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). Initially, the transcripts were read multiple times to achieve deep familiarity and comprehensive understanding. Subsequently, meaningful excerpts were highlighted, and initial codes were generated to capture the semantic content of the data. In this

phase, codes were created inductively: short labels were assigned to segments of text that described specific actions, evaluative statements, emotional expressions, or reasoning patterns. For example, when participants justified exclusionary attitudes on moral grounds, these passages were coded using labels capturing the evaluative logic rather than descriptive content. This inductive approach allowed the coding to stay close to participants' meanings while beginning to identify broader interpretive patterns.

Both authors independently coded the data to enhance the rigor and reliability of the analysis. Regular meetings were held to compare and discuss their coding and emerging themes. During these meetings, interpretive disagreements were addressed by examining the original transcript excerpts together, articulating the assumptions underlying each interpretation, and assessing how well each coding option aligned with the analytic aims of the study. Disagreements were resolved through a process of negotiated consensus, in which both researchers justified their reasoning and jointly revised the codebook when necessary. This iterative refinement ensured that the final thematic structure represented a shared and critically examined interpretation rather than an unchallenged merger of individual viewpoints.

These codes were then grouped into broader conceptual categories (themes), which were rigorously reviewed for internal coherence and relevance to the dataset as a whole. Consideration was given to both the frequency and the significance of each theme in representing critical aspects of participants' experiences. The final thematic structure was organized based on the substantive content of the themes, culminating in an analytical narrative supported by illustrative participant quotations. This presentation seeks to reflect the multifaceted manifestations of biphobia within the LGBTQ+ community, while honoring the complexity and individuality of the participants' accounts.

2.5. Reflexivity and researcher influence

Given the interpretive nature of qualitative inquiry, both authors engaged in ongoing reflexive practice throughout the research process. The first author does not identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community but has social connections and friendships within it, which facilitated a degree of familiarity with relevant cultural dynamics while still maintaining an outsider perspective. This dual position—familiar yet not embedded—required ongoing reflection on how assumptions about community norms might shape interview prompts or interpretations. The second author, as an experienced qualitative researcher, monitored how their professional expertise and expectations regarding narrative structure might subtly guide participants or influence analytic decisions.

To address these dynamics, the researchers kept reflexive notes during and after interviews, documenting moments of heightened rapport, participant discomfort, or potential power imbalances. These notes were revisited during analysis to assess how interactional dynamics or researcher positionalities may have shaped the data. Reflexive questioning was integrated into coding meetings, encouraging the researchers to consider alternative interpretations and to evaluate whether their analytic decisions were influenced by prior assumptions rather than grounded directly in the participants' accounts. This reflexive engagement strengthened the transparency, credibility, and interpretive rigor of the analysis.

2.6. Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for this study was granted by the Ethics Committee of the first author's University (approval number: 100672675). The research adhered to the ethical standards for psychological research. Participants were fully informed, both verbally and in writing, about the study's aims, their rights, including the option to withdraw at any time without penalty, and the safeguards in place to protect data confidentiality and privacy.

All audio recordings and transcripts were stored securely in encrypted files on password-protected devices accessible only to the authors. Participants were given a period of two weeks post-interview during which they could request withdrawal of their data. After this time, all data were irreversibly anonymized. Following each interview, a debriefing session was conducted to allow participants to express any reflections or emotional responses and to underscore the importance of their contributions. Furthermore, participants were offered the opportunity to receive feedback on the study's findings, fostering transparency and collaborative engagement.

3. Findings

The analysis of interview data revealed that participants' perceptions and experiences of bisexuality within the LGBTQ+ community were complex, multifaceted, and often shaped by intersecting social and cultural factors. Three overarching themes were identified from the narratives, each capturing a distinct dimension of how bisexual identities are perceived, validated, or marginalized within the LGBTQ+ community (Table 2).

3.1. Theme 1: cognitive delegitimization of bisexual identity

This theme was discussed by 9 of the 10 participants, though with varying degrees of certainty and personal investment. Across interviews, bisexuality was frequently constructed not as a stable sexual identity, but as a

Table 2. Overview of Themes Identified in the Findings

Theme	Description
Theme 1: Cognitive Delegitimization of Bisexual Identity	Bisexuality is framed as unstable, transitional, or ambiguous, leading to doubts about its authenticity and coherence as a legitimate sexual identity. These interpretations reflect monosexist assumptions and position bisexuality as incomplete or provisional.
Theme 2: Relational Distancing and Affective Consequences	Perceptions of instability shift into moral evaluations, with bisexuality judged in terms of sincerity, reliability, and commitment. These moralized judgments legitimize emotional guardedness, relational distancing, and the policing of identity boundaries within LGBTQ+ spaces.
Theme 3: Communal and Political Marginalization within LGBTQ+ Spaces	Moralized skepticism extends beyond interpersonal dynamics into community-level exclusion. Bisexual individuals are positioned as peripheral or conditionally included, contributing to patterns of invisibility, reduced authority, and symbolic hierarchy within LGBTQ+ spaces.

provisional, unstable, or strategically ambiguous position. Rather than being recognized as an endpoint of sexual self-understanding, it was interpreted through a monosexual framework that equated fluidity with uncertainty. Participants repeatedly framed bisexuality as a transitional label—a temporary resting point on the way to a more “*authentic*” or socially legible identity;

“Often it is because they have not yet accepted their own identity. They are in a transitional stage and “bi” seems safer, broader to them.” (Eleni)

In this framing, bisexuality functioned as a buffer: a way to acknowledge same-sex attraction while retaining proximity to heterosexual norms. Participants described it as a socially smoother or safer position, particularly in early stages of identity disclosure:

“It can be the first “stop” on a journey of self-discovery. And the bi identity gives you some leeway—it’s like saying “okay, I have a bit of straight in me,” so you feel more secure. Socially. It’s a smoother transition for someone who is still figuring things out.” (Sofia)

Such narratives did not simply describe bisexuality as exploratory; they positioned it as incomplete. The underlying assumption was that sexual identity must eventually stabilize into a singular, monosexual endpoint. Within this logic, fluidity becomes evidence of indecision rather than authenticity. Several participants expressed this skepticism explicitly, particularly when observing perceived discrepancies between self-identification and relationship patterns:

“Many of those who say they’re bi, I actually think they’re gay. They just don’t say it. They’re afraid to admit it.” (Andreas)

"It's usually not a consistent identity. They go with a man, then with a woman, but their actions don't match their words—it's that kind of situation." (Niki)

Here, bisexuality was evaluated through standards of consistency and predictability that privilege fixed attraction. Oscillation between genders was interpreted not as fluidity but as instability. This cognitive framing delegitimized bisexuality by casting it as either a phase preceding homosexuality or a form of confusion awaiting resolution:

"I don't know, but I have the feeling that most people who identify as bi just haven't decided yet what they want and end up either choosing their true identity or going along with convenience and social norms." (Anna)

Gender shaped how this delegitimization operated. Male bisexuality was frequently reframed as latent homosexuality masked by social repression:

"If a guy identifies as bisexual, he is not bisexual. He is socially repressed." (Dimitris)

"The men I've met who claim to be bisexual are generally 90% homosexual." (Niki)

In these accounts, masculinity was positioned within rigid sexual binaries, leaving little room for fluidity. Bisexual identification among men was interpreted as a denial of an underlying "true" gay identity.

In contrast, female bisexuality was often delegitimized through trivialization and sexualization. Rather than being framed as repressed homosexuality, it was cast as attention-seeking or performative:

"Numerous women identify as bisexual just to get attention, whether from men or women." (Maria)

This framing reduced women's sexual fluidity to a strategic aesthetic choice rather than a genuine orientation. In both cases—whether through disbelief (for men) or trivialization (for women)—bisexuality was stripped of ontological stability.

Importantly, these constructions operated at the level of interpretation rather than direct hostility. They reflected cognitive schemas through which participants made sense of bisexuality. However, by repeatedly positioning bisexuality as unstable, experimental, or strategically ambiguous, these narratives functioned as a mechanism of delegitimization. Bisexual identity was rendered conditional, provisional, and perpetually suspect.

3.2. Theme 2: relational distancing and affective consequences

The cognitive delegitimization described above did not remain confined to abstract judgments about identity. Eight participants' narratives revealed that perceptions of bisexual instability shaped relational expectations and emotional investments in intimate and social relationships. When bisexuality was framed as provisional or unreliable, this translated into heightened suspicion, guardedness, and emotional distancing.

A recurring concern was the fear of abandonment or replacement. Several participants described witnessing or experiencing relationships in which a bisexual partner later entered a heterosexual relationship. These events were interpreted not simply as relational breakdowns, but as confirmation of preexisting doubts about bisexual legitimacy:

“I have seen relationships fall apart because at the end, “they were just bisexual,” and subsequently chose a male partner. This leaves a scar, and you don’t trust easily again.” (Maria)

Such accounts reveal how individual relational experiences became generalized into broader assumptions about bisexual unreliability. Rather than being understood as situational dynamics specific to those relationships, they were incorporated into a larger narrative that bisexual partners are inherently inconsistent. In this way, cognitive skepticism hardened into relational distrust.

This distrust also manifested as anticipatory defensiveness. Participants described difficulty fully investing emotionally in bisexual partners due to fears that they were “*just experimenting*” or would ultimately “*choose a side*”:

“They informed me of their bisexuality; however, after being in a relationship with me, they ended up with a man. Although they did not explicitly state it, I sensed that they were only experimenting with me.” (Anna)

“When an individual changes their sides, it evokes the sensation that you were never an actual choice—only a transient phase.” (Maria)

These narratives illustrate how bisexuality was constructed as a threat to relational security. The possibility of attraction to more than one gender was interpreted as increasing the risk of betrayal or replacement. In this framing, bisexuality became associated with emotional unpredictability, reinforcing relational distancing.

For some participants, distrust was not limited to romantic relationships but extended into friendship groups and queer social networks. Bisexual individuals were described as difficult to “*place*” within stable group identities, contributing to a sense of social ambiguity:

“Bisexuals don’t easily fit into a group with lesbians and gays, because they are considered the most ... there is no trust toward them.” (Sofia)

This statement reflects a perception that relational belonging requires perceived stability. When bisexuality was viewed as fluid or inconsistent, it disrupted expectations of shared identity cohesion within lesbian and gay subgroups.

Gender intensified these relational dynamics. As described in Theme 1, male bisexuality was often interpreted as concealed homosexuality. This framing contributed to suspicion that bisexual men were emotionally unavailable or not fully committed to same-sex partners. Female bisexuality,

in contrast, was frequently sexualized, producing a different but equally distancing effect.

Several participants described feeling objectified by bisexual women who were perceived as “experimenting”:

“We have become a kind of “fetish” for many. That it is cool to attempt it. Subsequently, we must confront the emotional part; and then we (the homosexuals) are left to deal with the emotional part.” (Niki)

Here, relational harm was framed not only as abandonment but as emotional instrumentalization. Bisexuality was interpreted as a site of novelty-seeking rather than authentic attachment. In such accounts, distrust was intertwined with feelings of being used or emotionally commodified.

Importantly, participants’ accounts reflect their interpretations of relational events rather than objective patterns of bisexual behavior. Nevertheless, these interpretations shaped interactional dynamics in powerful ways. Once bisexuality was cognitively marked as unstable, relational caution became normalized. Emotional investment was tempered, trust was conditional, and bisexual partners were positioned as inherently risky.

3.3. Theme 3: communal and political marginalization within LGBTQ+ spaces

The interpersonal dynamics described above did not remain confined to private relationships. All participants’ accounts indicated that when delegitimization and distrust became normalized, they extended into broader patterns of communal positioning. Bisexuality was not only questioned at the cognitive and relational levels but was also symbolically and politically marginalized within LGBTQ+ spaces.

A recurring narrative across interviews was that bisexual individuals occupy an ambiguous or liminal position within the queer community—acknowledged in principle, yet not fully embraced in practice:

“It’s like there are the bi people and then the community. Not all together.” (Maria)

This perceived separation suggests that belonging within LGBTQ+ spaces is structured around assumptions of stability, shared struggle, and recognizable identity boundaries. When bisexuality was framed as fluid or strategically adaptable, it disrupted these expectations, positioning bisexual individuals as peripheral or conditionally included.

Participants frequently described bisexual people as being “*between two worlds*,” neither fully accepted in heterosexual contexts nor completely integrated into queer spaces:

“They must constantly validate their sexuality to persuade others that it is not just a “phase” or an “experiment.” It may instill a sense that they don’t belong anywhere, neither in the straight world nor in the queer world.” (Sofia)

Here, the need for continual validation reflects the earlier cognitive delegitimization and relational distrust. What begins as skepticism at the interpersonal level becomes institutionalized as identity fatigue within community life. Bisexual belonging was depicted as requiring ongoing proof of authenticity.

Political legitimacy was another site where marginalization emerged. Some participants suggested that bisexual individuals are perceived as less politically invested or less urgently oppressed due to presumed access to heterosexual privilege:

“If you can align with the heterosexual side, then you lack the same necessity for visibility. You do not fight for it with like fervor.” (Kostas)

In this framing, oppression is measured through visibility and permanence. Because bisexuality was constructed as potentially reversible or strategically flexible, it was seen as less politically authentic. This perception reinforced a hierarchy within the LGBTQ+ community in which monosexual identities were granted greater legitimacy and moral authority.

Representational erasure further consolidated this marginalization. Participants noted the relative invisibility of bisexual voices in activism, pride events, and media spaces:

“Bisexuals are a bit like visitors, not permanent members. You rarely see them represented at pride events, in activism, or on panels.” (Eleni)

The metaphor of “*visitors*” captures the conditional nature of bisexual inclusion. Rather than being positioned as foundational members of the community, bisexual individuals were depicted as transient participants whose commitment remains uncertain. This symbolic positioning reflects the cumulative effect of earlier mechanisms: once bisexuality is cognitively delegitimized and relationally distrusted, communal exclusion becomes easier to justify.

Gender continued to shape these dynamics at the community level. Male bisexuality, framed as latent homosexuality, was often absorbed into gay male spaces only when reinterpreted as “*eventually gay*.” Female bisexuality, while more visible, was frequently sexualized in ways that undermined its political seriousness. In both cases, bisexuality was rendered secondary—either as incomplete homosexuality or as erotic spectacle—rather than as a distinct and equal identity category.

Taken together, these accounts suggest that bisexual marginalization within LGBTQ+ spaces operates as a cascading process. Cognitive framings of instability inform relational distrust; relational distrust shapes patterns of social distancing; and these interpersonal dynamics scale into communal hierarchies and political exclusion. Rather than isolated expressions of

prejudice, these mechanisms collectively structure bisexuality as conditionally legitimate, perpetually suspect, and politically peripheral within the very communities that claim inclusion.

4. Discussion

This study examined how gay men and lesbians within the Greek LGBTQ+ community perceive bisexuality, identifying how these perceptions are shaped by cultural norms, community dynamics, and gendered expectations. In line with existing scholarship, our findings confirm that biphobia remains a pervasive form of intra-community prejudice, manifesting in both overt and subtle ways (Cipollina et al., 2024; Yoshino, 2000). However, rather than treating these expressions as isolated attitudes, the present analysis conceptualizes them as part of a socially reproduced process. Specifically, the findings illustrate a sequence through which relational experiences and anecdotal narratives are transformed into moralized identity judgments, which in turn legitimize relational distancing and community-level marginalization. In this way, binegativity operates not merely as interpersonal bias but as a regulatory mechanism that sustains symbolic hierarchies and boundary maintenance within LGBTQ+ spaces.

4.1. *Bisexuality as transitional, unstable, or inauthentic*

Echoing prior research (Angelides, 2001; Diamond, 2008; Vonlanthen & Roy-Charland, 2025), participants frequently described bisexuality as a temporary or insincere state, a perception deeply rooted in binary models of sexuality. The portrayal of bisexuality as a “stepping stone” toward a gay or lesbian identity, or as a brief experiment before returning to heterosexuality, mirrors findings by Klysing et al. (2024) and Wurthmann and Ortega (2023). Our data reinforce the concept of “double marginalization” (Savin-Williams, 2021), as bisexual people were viewed with suspicion not only by heterosexual society but also within queer spaces, leading to diminished trust and social exclusion. Beyond representing simple misconceptions, these stereotypes serve as boundary-making tools that stabilize the identities of those who deploy them. By framing bisexuality as transitory, participants implicitly affirmed the solidity and legitimacy of gay/lesbian identities—particularly salient in a cultural context where LGBTQ+ identities remain politically contested. Such boundary work aligns with theories of symbolic maintenance (Lamont and Molnár, 2002), suggesting that stereotypes help protect group cohesion by delegitimizing identities perceived as ambiguous.

The Greek context adds a distinctive cultural layer. Limited bisexual visibility in Greece may amplify these “transitional” narratives, as suggested

by participants' accounts. The Orthodox Church's moral teachings and broader cultural norms provide a backdrop against which gay and lesbian community members internalize heteronormative binaries. Through socialization in religiously influenced moral frameworks, participants may unconsciously evaluate bisexuality using principles of exclusivity and clarity—perceiving ambiguity as morally and socially unstable. Where bisexual identities are seldom openly represented, the absence of positive role models appears to sustain perceptions of bisexuality as temporary or opportunistic.

This dynamic is further reinforced by Greece's sociopolitical climate, where legal recognition of LGBTQ+ rights has progressed slowly and often only under external pressure (e.g., civil partnership equality achieved in 2015 following a European Court of Human Rights ruling) (Giannou & Ioakimidis, 2020). Persistent influence from the Orthodox Church and conservative political forces continues to uphold heteronormative ideals, reinforcing binary understandings of sexuality and marginalizing non-monosexual identities (Ayoub, 2015; Trihas, 2018). Bisexuality's invisibility thus stems not only from underrepresentation but also from systemic exclusion in areas such as healthcare (Giannou & Ioakimidis, 2020), the labor market (Drydakīs, 2012), and family policy (Dagkouli-Kyriakoglou, 2022), where LGBTQ+ individuals remain subject to structural discrimination.

These entrenched norms create fertile ground for “transitional” narratives to thrive, as bisexuality is interpreted through a lens shaped by cultural conservatism, limited visibility, and the ongoing pathologization of non-heterosexual identities (Giannou & Ioakimidis, 2020). Crucially, these cultural norms operate not only externally but are also internalized by gay and lesbian community members. The result is a mechanism of intra-community policing: bisexuality is evaluated not only against social expectations but also through internalized moral scripts, leading to suspicion, conditional acceptance, and subtle exclusion. This demonstrates that binegativity in the Greek context is co-constructed, emerging from both structural pressures (legal, religious, social) and personal cognition shaped by those pressures.

4.2. *The contested status of bisexuality within LGBTQ+ spaces*

Consistent with Marcus (2018) and Chan and Yip (2021), participants described bisexual people as peripheral to queer community life, accepted rhetorically but not fully included in relational or activist networks. This marginalization reflects both social identity processes and culturally reinforced moral norms, which shape how bisexuality is interpreted and judged within the Greek LGBTQ+ context. Participants appear to evaluate

bisexuality in terms of perceived commitment and authenticity, internalizing socially and culturally informed expectations to preserve group coherence.

Although similar marginalization patterns are documented in Western contexts, the Greek sociocultural environment may amplify perceptions of bisexual instability. Orthodox-influenced norms emphasizing sexual clarity, moral propriety, and fidelity appear to inform both interpersonal evaluations and internalized judgments within the community (Bakas, 2024; Spina, 2016). In this sense, the Greek context may intensify moralized perceptions and reinforce behaviors that maintain boundaries between “authentic” queer identities and those perceived as ambiguous. This perspective allows us to interpret observed exclusion as shaped not solely by interpersonal bias but also by broader sociocultural pressures, including structural invisibility of bisexuality in policy, activism, and public life.

Cultural norms intersect with social identity processes: participants assess bisexuality through a lens of perceived commitment and legitimacy, internalizing dominant expectations of queer behavior to safeguard ingroup coherence. By framing bisexuality as “less committed,” participants reproduce hierarchies that reflect both societal moral standards and internalized binary logic. This pattern illustrates how interpersonal judgments are embedded within culturally shaped moral frameworks.

This echoes the documented structural invisibility of bisexuality in LGBTQ+ advocacy and policy (Vonlanthen & Roy-Charland, 2025), but our findings extend this argument by showing how exclusion is rationalized interpersonally. Participants often framed bisexual individuals as “less committed” to LGBTQ+ struggles, thereby legitimizing their marginalization as a form of boundary maintenance within the community. Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 2012) helps explain this dynamic, as even marginalized groups reproduce hierarchies that mirror dominant social orders. Gay and lesbian identities—more visible, institutionally recognized, and culturally legible—occupy a higher symbolic status in the Greek LGBTQ+ hierarchy, whereas bisexual identities remain structurally and symbolically peripheral. This asymmetry encourages the preservation of status arrangements through exclusionary discourse, portraying bisexuals as insufficiently loyal or politically unstable.

Boundary Maintenance Theory (Bailey, 2008) further clarifies this behavior: by delegitimizing bisexuality, participants perform acts of social differentiation that both protect their own group's coherence and reproduce culturally reinforced sexual binaries. Importantly, the moral weight attributed to these boundaries is informed by internalized Orthodox-influenced norms regarding sexual clarity, fidelity, and authenticity. Gay and lesbian participants thus contribute to the reproduction of binegativity not only as a social act but also as an internalized moral judgment.

These accounts align with prior research showing that bisexual people frequently experience discomfort or alienation in LGBTQ+ spaces, sometimes choosing to “blend in” by not disclosing their bisexuality, or avoiding such spaces altogether due to fears of ostracism (McLean, 2007, 2008a, 2008b). Similar patterns have been observed among LGBTQ+ young adults whose identities are policed for “authenticity,” particularly when they do not conform to visual or behavioral stereotypes, or when they hold intersecting marginalized identities (McCormick & Barthelemy, 2021).

Interestingly, some participants expressed conditional sympathy, acknowledging that bisexual identity might be constrained by external pressures such as workplace discrimination. While superficially empathetic, these narratives often reinforced the perception that bisexuality is a strategic adaptation rather than an authentic orientation—a tension also observed in higher education contexts, where bisexual students report bisexual-specific stress, reduced participation, and a sense that their voices are unwelcome in LGBTQ+ organizations (Tavarez, 2022). Conversely, other research indicates that bisexual people may increasingly access support and resources from LGBTQ+ communities, reporting partial to near-total acceptance despite ongoing stigma (Price et al., 2020). Together, these findings indicate that bisexual exclusion is neither universal nor uniform but is shaped by the interplay of interpersonal perceptions, structural norms, and the specific social contexts in which community life unfolds, with the Greek cultural and moral landscape serving as a distinct shaping factor.

4.3. Moralized biphobia: from identity evaluation to ethical judgment

Our data capture the emotional intensity behind intra-community biphobia, with distrust emerging as a central motif. However, participants’ accounts did not stop at describing bisexuality as “unstable” or “transitional.” Rather, their evaluations frequently shifted from characterizing bisexuality as an identity category to judging it in explicitly moral terms. Bisexuality was not only framed as inconsistent but as ethically suspect—associated with insincerity, emotional irresponsibility, or strategic ambiguity.

For example, when participants described bisexual partners as “just experimenting” or as people who “had not yet decided what they want,” the critique moved beyond identity clarity and into questions of authenticity and accountability. The concern was not merely that bisexuality is fluid, but that such fluidity signals a lack of seriousness or moral commitment. Similarly, when individuals were described as “using bisexuality as a safer option” or as aligning with “convenience and social norms,” the implication was that bisexual identification reflects opportunism rather than integrity.

This discursive shift is significant. What begins as skepticism about stability becomes reframed as a judgment about character. Bisexual individuals were implicitly evaluated according to moral criteria such as sincerity, reliability, and fidelity—traits culturally valorized within both Greek society and LGBTQ+ relational norms. When bisexuality was perceived as deviating from these expectations, it was not only misunderstood but morally downgraded.

In the Greek sociocultural context, this moralization appears particularly salient. Orthodox-influenced cultural norms emphasizing exclusivity, relational loyalty, and categorical clarity (Bakas, 2024; Spina, 2016) may heighten sensitivity to perceived ambiguity. Participants' language reflected these moral standards: bisexual partners were described as difficult to "trust," as leaving "emotional scars," or as failing to demonstrate consistent commitment. These are not neutral descriptions—they frame bisexuality as violating culturally endorsed virtues.

We conceptualize this process as moralized biphobia, defined here as the transformation of identity-based skepticism into moral evaluation. Rather than simply expressing discomfort with bisexuality, participants invoked moral reasoning to police sexual boundaries. This aligns with social psychological research on moralization (Skitka et al., 2009), which demonstrates that moral framing intensifies judgment and legitimizes exclusion by positioning disagreement as a violation of shared ethical norms.

Importantly, moralized biphobia does more than generate negative attitudes; it functions to justify distancing. When bisexuality is framed as ethically unreliable or emotionally unsafe, relational withdrawal becomes reasonable rather than prejudicial. Distrust is recast as prudence. Emotional guardedness appears as self-protection. Community boundary maintenance becomes framed as safeguarding shared values. In this way, moral evaluation converts suspicion into socially sanctioned exclusion.

These dynamics also operate symbolically. By contrasting themselves with an "ambiguous" bisexual Other, participants reinforced their own moral and identity certainties. As McLean (2008b) and Alarie and Gaudet (2013) note, monosexist assumptions treat bisexuality as inherently deceptive or unstable. Our data suggest that this instability becomes moralized: ambiguity is equated with dishonesty; fluidity with irresponsibility; openness with opportunism. Through this moral reframing, bisexuality is positioned not merely as different, but as ethically inferior.

Furthermore, fetishization—particularly of bisexual women—illustrates how moralization intersects with gendered power. When bisexual women were described as "trends," "experimenters," or attention-seeking, their sexual agency was reframed as superficial or performative. This not only

trivializes bisexual identity but morally delegitimizes it by portraying it as lacking seriousness or authenticity. Such framing echoes heteronormative and patriarchal tropes (Tavarez, 2022; Yoshino, 2000; Angelides, 2001), suggesting that queer spaces may reproduce dominant moral scripts rather than resist them.

Therefore, these patterns demonstrate that biphobia in our data is not limited to interpersonal prejudice. It is structured through moral reasoning that transforms identity ambiguity into ethical violation. This moralization process legitimizes relational distancing and symbolic exclusion, reinforcing intragroup hierarchies while preserving monosexual norms as morally coherent and socially stable.

4.4. Gendered patterns of biphobia: male dismissal and female objectification

One of the most striking contributions of this study is its illumination of the gendered and culturally mediated dimensions of biphobia. These gendered patterns are not only interpersonal but psychologically mediated: participants deploy binary gendered logics to interpret sexual identity, associating male bisexuality with latent homosexuality and female bisexuality with erotic spectacle. In doing so, they reinforce gendered hierarchies while negotiating their own moral and social positions within the community.

In the Greek context, internalized conservative gender norms amplify these patterns. Male bisexuality is often delegitimized for threatening hegemonic masculinity, while female bisexuality is tolerated only insofar as it aligns with heteronormative fantasies and culturally specific expectations of femininity (Dendrinou, 2008; Fygetakis, 1997). These mechanisms illustrate how structural moral norms are embodied in individual cognition, producing intra-community exclusion that is both gendered and morally coded. The interaction between internalized social norms, religiously influenced moral frameworks, and cultural expectations of gender creates a uniquely Greek configuration of moralized binegativity. This framework illustrates that biphobia in Greece is both gendered and morally coded, emerging from the interaction between internalized cultural norms and individual cognitive evaluations. While similar asymmetries are reported in Western contexts, the Greek sociocultural environment—shaped by Orthodox-influenced moral norms and conservative gender expectations—may uniquely heighten the moral and symbolic salience of these judgments.

Consistent with previous studies (Feinstein et al., 2021; Ross et al., 2018), male bisexuality was often delegitimized as latent homosexuality or a product of social repression. This aligns with broader research showing that same-sex behavior in men is more likely to be interpreted as proof

of homosexuality, whereas similar behavior in women may be read as heterosexual experimentation (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013; Herek, 1986). Such asymmetry is reinforced by monosexist beliefs and culturally specific constructions of masculinity, which limit space for sexual fluidity without threatening social status (Roberts et al., 2015; Morgenroth & Ryan, 2021).

Quantitative findings from other contexts indicate that these patterns are not unique to Greece. Yost and Thomas (2012) show that heterosexual men tend to be less accepting of bisexual men than of bisexual women, partially explained by the eroticization of women's same-sex behavior. Our findings suggest that within Greek LGBTQ+ spaces, similar gendered patterns of binegativity operate in culturally inflected ways: male bisexuality is delegitimized as covert homosexuality and linked to gender nonconformity, while female bisexuality is positioned as attractive yet performative, aligning with normative gender and sexual scripts.

Female bisexuality, in contrast, is often tolerated conditionally, through the lens of sexual availability and male-oriented fantasies, echoing Angelides (2001) "metrosexualization of female bisexuality." These patterns illustrate that symbolic capital is unevenly distributed across gendered expressions of bisexuality: male bisexuality carries low symbolic capital for threatening normative masculinity, whereas female bisexuality carries conditional capital when aligned with heteronormative expectations. Thus, biphobia emerges as both identity policing and gendered power enforcement, reflecting a convergence of moral, cultural, and social norms specific to the Greek context.

Previous research has shown that bisexual women are frequently imagined as equally attracted to men and women yet remain subject to eroticization that undermines the authenticity of their identity (Morgenroth et al., 2022). Importantly, our findings suggest this dynamic persists within LGBTQ+ spaces themselves, where internalized patriarchal and cultural norms contribute to the perception of female bisexuality as experimental or unreliable. This challenges assumptions that queer spaces inherently provide refuge from heteronormative objectification and highlights the persistence of gendered moralized scripts across sexual minority contexts.

4.5. Novel contributions and implications

This study addresses two key gaps identified in the introduction. First, it centers the voices of gay and lesbian individuals in examining biphobia—a perspective less frequently explored than heterosexual attitudes (Stotzer, 2009). Second, it provides culturally specific insights from Greece, where LGBTQ+ discourse is shaped by entrenched heteronormativity and where bisexuality remains structurally invisible (Pavlou, 2008; Hindenlang et al., 2025). By documenting both parallels and divergences with Western

findings, our analysis demonstrates that stereotypes are not merely inherited cultural artifacts but actively reproduced through power, hierarchy, and symbolic boundary-making.

Four interrelated contributions emerge. First, the study reframes biphobia as a moralized form of intra-group regulation rather than simple prejudice. Participants did not merely describe bisexuality as unstable; they transformed perceived instability into ethical claims about sincerity, responsibility, and relational reliability. These moralized judgments functioned as boundary-policing mechanisms, reinforcing distinctions between “legitimate” and “ambiguous” sexual identities. In this way, biphobia operates as a form of moral governance within queer spaces, aligning with boundary maintenance theory (Bailey, 2008; Knee, 2019) while extending it by foregrounding moral reasoning as the regulatory tool.

Second, we demonstrate that emotional and relational experiences play a crucial catalytic role in this process. Narratives of perceived betrayal, experimentation, or relational uncertainty were generalized into identity-level conclusions about bisexuality. Affective responses—hurt, distrust, insecurity—became reframed as evidence supporting moralized stereotypes. Extending Tavarez’s (2022) findings, our analysis shows how such affective interpretations do not merely sustain prejudice but actively consolidate symbolic hierarchies within LGBTQ+ communities.

Third, we identify the intersection of gender norms and bisexual erasure as a political mechanism through which symbolic authority is reproduced. Gay and lesbian identities benefit from comparatively greater cultural visibility and institutional recognition in Greece, granting them discursive authority to define community norms. Bisexual identities, by contrast, remain structurally and symbolically subordinate. As a result, moralized judgments are not neutral evaluations but exercises of symbolic power that regulate who is granted full membership, credibility, and political legitimacy within LGBTQ+ spaces.

Fourth, and most centrally, we advance a process-oriented model of how biphobia is socially reproduced. Our findings suggest a sequence linking (a) relational experiences and anecdotal narratives, (b) moralized identity judgments, (c) relational distancing and guardedness, and (d) community-level marginalization and invisibility. These stages are mutually reinforcing rather than linear. Community exclusion sustains bisexual invisibility, which in turn limits counter-narratives and reinforces interpretive frameworks that moralize new relational experiences. Through this feedback loop, binegativity is maintained not as a static attitude but as an ongoing regulatory process embedded in emotional interpretation, moral evaluation, and symbolic boundary enforcement.

While the findings inevitably reflect well-documented stereotypes surrounding bisexuality (Cipollina et al., 2024; Wurthmann & Ortega, 2023),

the purpose of this study is not simply to reaffirm their persistence. Rather, the analysis demonstrates the social work that these stereotypes perform within the Greek LGBTQ+ community. Instead of treating biphobic tropes as residual cultural artifacts, we conceptualize them as active mechanisms that structure intragroup hierarchies and reproduce inequalities of visibility, authority, and belonging.

By unpacking these mechanisms, our findings extend bisexual theory by illuminating how intragroup moral norms, emotional narratives, and gendered expectations converge to regulate identity boundaries. Binegativity thus emerges not only as interpersonal bias but as a socially and morally mediated practice through which queer communities reproduce symbolic power structures, even while resisting heteronormativity externally.

4.6. Strengths, limitations, and future research

This study makes a significant contribution to LGBTQ+ scholarship in Greece by addressing a topic that has received little to no prior empirical attention. The qualitative approach, based on in-depth interviews, enabled the collection of rich, detailed narratives that captured the complex ethical, emotional, and gendered dimensions of biphobia. This allowed the research to move beyond the descriptive patterns and foreground locally specific dynamics. By situating participants' experiences within global scholarship and Greece's unique socio-cultural context, the study reveals that biphobia is a multifaceted phenomenon, combining common global patterns, such as delegitimization, sexualization, and enforcement of binary categories, with distinct local features, including moralized reasoning, heightened emotional responses, and intensified gendered biases. These insights highlight the critical need for culturally sensitive interventions within LGBTQ+ communities and advocacy organizations, aiming to dismantle moralistic justifications of exclusion, foster authentic bisexual visibility, and promote intersectional solidarity. Ultimately, addressing these locally specific forms of biphobia can enhance community cohesion, broaden the inclusiveness of LGBTQ+ spaces, and strengthen the movement's capacity to represent and support all sexual minorities effectively.

Nonetheless, the study's scope and sampling strategy present certain limitations. The participant pool consisted exclusively of self-identified gay men and lesbians from urban centers, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to LGBTQ+ populations in rural areas or smaller cities. Rural contexts in Greece, with differing levels of LGBTQ+ visibility and social conservatism, may produce distinct patterns of biphobia. Furthermore, the sample size was relatively small ($N=10$), which is a common feature of qualitative designs but nonetheless restricts the breadth of viewpoints represented. While the study prioritizes depth and interpretive richness over numerical representativeness, the limited number of participants should be acknowledged as a

constraint on the transferability of the findings. The exclusion of non-binary individuals and bisexual participants themselves also restricted the range of perspectives considered, leaving unexplored the voices of those most directly affected by intra-community biphobia. Additionally, while the qualitative design captured depth and nuance, it does not allow for the estimation of the prevalence of these attitudes across the broader Greek LGBTQ+ population.

Future investigations could expand on the present findings in several ways. First, mixed-methods designs combining qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys could measure the prevalence of biphobic perceptions among gay and lesbian individuals, while also documenting their subjective experiences. Such studies should strive for geographic diversity, incorporating participants from rural areas and smaller towns, to explore how local cultural norms influence these attitudes. Second, research should include bisexual and non-binary voices within the Greek LGBTQ+ community. Adopting a polyphonic approach could reveal how lived experiences of marginalization shape bisexual individuals' interpretations of intra-community prejudice, providing a more balanced and multi-perspective account. Comparative work across age cohorts could also illuminate generational differences in biphobic perceptions.

Third, future studies might evaluate the effectiveness of interventions aimed at reducing biphobia within LGBTQ+ spaces in Greece. This could include awareness campaigns, educational workshops, or peer-led dialogue initiatives. Longitudinal research could further examine whether such initiatives, alongside broader societal changes and increased bisexual visibility, lead to measurable shifts in attitudes over time. By integrating these research directions, scholars and practitioners can deepen understanding of the social, moral, and emotional roots of biphobia, and inform strategies to strengthen solidarity within the Greek LGBTQ+ movement. Such work is essential for fostering an inclusive community in which bisexuality is recognized as a legitimate and complex identity, free from the constraints of monosexual norms.

5. Conclusion

This study offers critical insights into how biphobia is socially reproduced within Greek LGBTQ+ communities. Rather than operating solely as interpersonal prejudice, binegativity emerges as a moralized regulatory process shaped by local cultural norms, gendered expectations, and symbolic hierarchies. By centering gay and lesbian voices, the findings reveal how relational experiences are transformed into moralized identity judgments, which in turn justify emotional distancing and community-level marginalization. In this way, bisexual exclusion is sustained through interconnected mechanisms of affect, moral reasoning, and boundary maintenance.

By situating these dynamics within the Greek sociocultural context—including Orthodox-influenced moral norms, heteronormative expectations,

and structural bisexual invisibility—this study extends global scholarship by demonstrating how intragroup inequalities are culturally mediated and politically consequential. The findings underscore the need for inclusive advocacy and reflexive community practices that challenge monosexist assumptions and disrupt the feedback loops sustaining bisexual marginalization. Fostering solidarity across sexual identities requires not only representation but critical engagement with the moral frameworks and boundary practices through which exclusion is reproduced. Strengthening bisexual visibility and legitimacy is therefore essential to enhancing cohesion, equity, and political effectiveness within LGBTQ+ movements in Greece and beyond.

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Data availability statement

Data can be made available upon reasonable request.

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