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DEVALUATION OF WOMEN'S BISEXUAL IDENTITY: THE ROLE OF GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND AMBIVALENT SEXISM³

The focus of this research is devaluation of bisexuality, which is a belief that bisexuality is an unreal and unstable identity. So far scholars have described four devaluation strategies: bisexuality as a phase, bisexuality as promiscuousness, bisexuality as a male gaze, and bisexuality as internalized homophobia. Based on empirical research (N = 2338) conducted on a Russian sample, we evaluated gender, sexual orientation, and ambivalent sexism (hostile and benevolent) as predictors of different devaluation strategies. The results showed that for all devaluation strategies women with monosexual identity (gay and heterosexual women) devalue women's bisexuality stronger than non-monosexual persons (bisexual women). Moreover, hostile and benevolent sexism independently predicts devaluation of women's bisexual identity in all cases. The obtained results are discussed in the context of bisexuality's nature and deviation from gender roles.

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Introduction

While being a part of LBGTQ+ community, bisexual individuals and bisexuality itself are rarely studied across sciences: the queer theory ignores bisexuality because it somewhat breaks the concept of monosexual identities prevalent in the queer theory (Mitchell & Erickson-Schroth, 2009), whereas in psychology and other social sciences bisexuals are rarely analyzed as an independent group from the lesbian and gay (LG) sample (Monro et al., 2017). The invisibility of bisexual identity exists not only in science but also in real life, for example, it is rarely present in the media (Eisner, 2013). Discriminatory practices towards bisexuals are usually referred to as biphobia, which is defined as negative attitudes about bisexuality and bisexual individuals (Bennett, 1992), however, there are two ways in which biphobia is described (Mulick & Wright, 2003). In the given definition, biphobia is a prejudice towards people because of their bisexuality. In other words, individuals recognize that bisexuality exists and negatively relate to it. However, some scholars argue that the denial of bisexuality and bisexual identity as a real phenomenon is also a form of biphobia in itself. Thus, Mohr & Rochlen, 1999 included in their Attitudes Regarding Bisexuality scale the two different subscales: tolerance of bisexuality and legitimacy of bisexuality as a sexual orientation. The last subscale describes the belief that people cannot be truly bisexual because there are only two true sexual orientations: homosexuality and heterosexuality. To describe the tendency to deny the existence of bisexual identity in our work we use the term 'devaluation' as opposed to the concept 'external validation' that means emphasizing and affirming one's identity in the eyes of other people (Eliason & Schope, 2003). We do not use the more well-established term invisibilization (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013), since our work focuses on conscious strategies of denying the existence of bisexual identity and not on ignoring bisexual identity.

Research has demonstrated that practices of exclusion and devaluation of the bisexual identity are positively associated with the spread of discriminatory behavior toward bisexuals among heterosexuals (Popova, 2018), homosexuals (McLean, 2008) and the spread of internalized biphobia and denial of their own identity among bisexuals (Hoang et al., 2011; Roberts et al., 2015). It also has been shown that devaluation of bisexual identity can have a negative impact on bisexuals' psychological and social well-being (Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Dyar et al., 2014; Hoang et al., 2011).

According to several studies (Fahs, 2009; National Health Interview Survey, 2015), there are differences in the manifestations of bisexual behavior, in particular, women tend to adopt bisexual behavior more often than men. Moreover, studies indicate that there are more women than men, who identify themselves as bisexual in the population, at least in the US (Diamond,

1993; Ward et al., 2013). Consequently, the chance of women facing biphobia in the form of devaluation of their sexual identity is higher. Therefore, they can be more likely to experience the negative social and psychological consequences of devaluation. For this reason, in our work, we have focused on the study of the devaluation of bisexuality in women.

Despite the fact that devaluation could be considered as a form of biphobia, still little is known about the ways, which individuals use for devaluation of bisexual identity. Our study seeks to fill this gap and analyze the various strategies of devaluation of women's bisexual identity and their predictors. Our study aims to understand what demographic and psychological variables predict different strategies of devaluation of women's bisexuality.

Strategies of devaluation of women's bisexual identity

Based on the studies where devaluation was described at the theoretical level (Barker & Langdrige, 2008; Diamond, 2005; Eisner, 2013; Israel & Mohr, 2004) or as part of the biphobia scales (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013; Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Eliason, 1997; Fahs, 2009; Friedman et al., 2014; Lannutti & Denes, 2012; MacDonald, Jr., 1981; Mohr & Rochlen, 1999; Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2000) we have highlighted four different strategies of devaluation of women's bisexual identity.

According to the first strategy entitled 'Bisexuality as a phase' bisexual identity does not exist because bisexuality is considered as a temporary phase, after which one would come back or transit to their true identity, which can be both heterosexual and homosexual (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013; Barker & Langdrige, 2008; Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Diamond, 2005; Friedman et al., 2014). In this case, devaluation represents the idea that women's bisexual experience does not matter and women do not need to form an identity around a temporary label, culminating in a perception of bisexual women as either heterosexual or homosexual.

The second strategy 'Bisexuality as promiscuousness' includes the conviction that bisexuality is a synonym for high sexual activity and unfaithfulness to one's partner (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013; Spalding & Peplau, 2006). MacDonald (MacDonald, Jr., 1981) stated that the most popular belief about bisexuals is that they are extremely promiscuous. The beliefs that bisexual individuals have an obsession with sex (Brewster & Moradi, 2010), that they are interested in threesomes (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013), and sex with anyone (Armstrong & Reissing, 2014) are also related to this strategy. In other words, in this case, bisexual women are not perceived as individuals with a unique social identity, but only as sexually fluffed heterosexuals.

The third strategy can be called 'Bisexuality as a way to get (men's) attention'. In this case bisexuality is perceived as an act that heterosexual women perform in order to satisfy men's sexual

desires. This strategy is supported through practices of eroticization (Yost & Thomas, 2012), male gaze (Eisner, 2013) and an idea of compulsory bisexuality (Alarie & Gaudet, 2013; Fahs, 2009) that suggests that heterosexual women engage in homoerotic behavior with other women usually in front of men and in social settings such as student parties, bars, and clubs (Laumann et al., 1994). Fahs (2009) considered compulsory bisexuality a result of pressure that women feel when it comes to satisfying straight men. Bisexual behavior, in this case, does not seem significant in the context of sexual orientation, and is rather looked upon as a practice in which women are still read as heterosexual.

The fourth strategy can be named 'Bisexuality as an internalized homophobia'. According to this type of devaluation, bisexual women are simply lesbians, who are afraid to admit that (Eliason, 1997; Fox, 1996; MacDonald, Jr., 1981; Mohr & Rochlen, 1999). In lay thinking the perceptions of bisexuals include the idea that homosexuals 'pretend' to be bisexuals because they want to pass as heterosexuals and thus avoid extremely negative attitudes towards themselves (Hoang et al., 2011; Nichols, 1988).

Besides noticeable semantic differences between the strategies, there are several other variations that are important. First and foremost, despite the common emphasis on the belongness of women who perform bisexual behavior to one of the monosexual categories, e.g. bisexual women could be perceived as heterosexual (promiscuous strategy), or as homosexual (internalized homophobia strategy). Due to objective differences in the attitudes towards homosexual and heterosexual people (Herek, 2004), this variation is important to note as something that affects the perception of bisexual women. Secondly, in some situations bisexual behavior could be perceived as something coherent with some group norms (e.g. heterosexual group), as posed in the male gaze strategy. The core meaning of this strategy is that it describes women's bisexual behavior as normative, especially for groups with a high level of gender hierarchy and masculinity (Yost & McCarthy, 2012).

To conclude, it is possible to assume that in everyday thinking these strategies of bisexual identity devaluation might be used separately or in different combinations. The next question of our study is what predicts the utilization of certain devaluation strategy?

Gender and sexual orientation as predictors of devaluation of bisexual identity in women

Previous studies have demonstrated that gender is essential in the perception of others, including the perception of sexual orientation. In general, it was consistently found that men are

more likely to have negative attitudes toward homosexuals than women (Gormley & Lopez, 2010; Nagoshi et al., 2008). Additionally, numerous studies have shown that men's attitudes towards bisexuality are more negative than women's attitudes (De Bruin & Arndt, 2010; Dodge et al., 2016; Heath & Goggin, 2009; Hinrichs & Rosenberg, 2002; Steffens & Wagner, 2004), and men often have more negative attitudes toward bisexual men than towards bisexual women (Yost & Thomas, 2012). Gender is critical in the perception of others because being part of a gender group leads to the acceptance of a gender belief system as a 'set of beliefs and opinions about males and females and about the purported qualities of masculinity and femininity' (Deaux & Kite, 1987, p. 97). This system includes the beliefs in gender binary (what is not feminine is masculine and vice versa) and expectations about gender roles, appearance, behavior, and sexual preferences. According to it, women must be feminine (look and behave like a woman) and sexually prefer men. Bisexual women violate the gender belief system in terms of desired partner's gender, therefore, within the binary system their bisexuality is perceived as a deviation from the norms of femininity and masculinity, consequently leading to a negative evaluation. At the same time, some studies have shown that it is sexual orientation rather than gender that can be more associated with the attitudes towards bisexuals (Hertlein et al., 2016).

Sexual orientations are usually put into a dichotomy, which is based on the gender of one's partner: heterosexual and homosexual categories are monosexual, since emphasizing that partner must have different from one's (for heterosexual), or the same (for homosexual) gender. Monosexual system supports people's basic desire to simplify information and keep a clear distinction between social categories (Burke et al., 2017; Mohr & Rochlen, 1999). This binary system simplifies the existing variations of sexualities, making bisexuality (and other non-monosexual identities) invisible (Roberts et al., 2015). Due to the fluid nature of bisexuality and its transgression of gender binarism, bisexuality provokes stress, fear, unease, and confusion among monosexual individuals (Bucholski, 2015; Worthen, 2013). As a result, while countering bisexuality, monosexual individuals express monosexism, the believe that monosexuality is the only norm, therefore leading to the denial of one's bisexual identity (Bucholski, 2015; Rodriguez Rust, 2003). Several studies have shown that heterosexuals and homosexuals held more negative attitudes towards bisexuality than other-identified (non-monosexual) individuals (e.g., asexuals) (De Bruin & Arndt, 2010; Dodge et al., 2016; Mulick & Wright, 2003).

It is important that not only gender and sexual orientation in themselves, but also the interaction of these categories predict the perception of bisexuality and attitudes towards bisexuals. In particular, the scholars demonstrated that, in comparison to bisexual men, heterosexual men rate bisexual women more positively (Herek, 2002; Yost & Thomas, 2012) while homosexual

women rate bisexual women more negatively than individuals with another sexual orientation (Hutsell, 2012).

Overall, individuals' gender and sexual orientation may be related to the attitude towards bisexual women, in particular, to whether bisexual identity is devalued or not. In particular, it is logical to assume that people who support monosexism would show a higher level of devaluation than non-monosexual individuals, especially through strategies that emphasize bisexual behavior as a deviation from gender norms. As a result, the first research question of this study is the following: are gender, sexual orientation and the interaction of the two significant predictors for the choice of the devaluation strategies?

Ambivalent sexism as a predictor of devaluation of women's bisexual identity

For people who display biphobia, bisexual behavior is often perceived through gender binary lenses. For its part, the beliefs in gender binarism increase support of traditional gender roles and expectations, and, therefore, enhance sexist attitudes. Actually, in meta-analysis (Whitley, 2001) has shown that sexists are likely to associate men with masculinity and women with femininity and that traditional gender expectations are moderately associated with negative attitudes toward persons who violate them (e.g., gays and lesbians).

At the same time, in recent years, it has been shown that sexism is a heterogeneous attitude, which includes not only negative but also subjectively positive attitudes towards women. (Glick & Fiske, 1996, 2001) in their Ambivalent sexism theory have described two complementary yet different forms of sexist attitudes toward women: hostile and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism is the subjectively negative attitudes toward nontraditional female types who are perceived as insubordinate to men and as rivals in the struggle for power (e.g., feminists). Benevolent sexism is the subjectively positive attitudes toward traditional female types who fit gender stereotypes (e.g., housewives) (Gaunt, 2013; Glick et al., 2015). Despite the apparent differences between the two types of sexism, they are both interconnected and contribute to the maintenance of gender inequality (Glick et al., 2004), justifying the existing system of gender relations (Jost et al., 2004; Napier et al., 2010; Sibley & Duckitt, 2008), and hence to the consolidation of gender binarism. Taken together both types of sexism reinforce gender expectations from women through rewarding those women who meet the expectations and punishment of those who do not. As a result, individuals with a high level of hostile sexism may devalue bisexuality, especially with strategies that present the behavior of bisexual women as a violation of gender norm. For example, according to hostile sexism believes, a woman must know her place beside a man in a heterosexual relationship, she cannot have the same amount of freedoms (including demonstration of sexuality),

therefore, in cases where bisexual women do not know their 'place' (phase strategy) or when bisexual behavior is perceived as promiscuity (promiscuous strategy), devaluation might be connected to the manifestation of hostile sexism. In their study, (Zaikman & Marks, 2014) have shown that women with high hostile sexism negatively evaluated highly sexually active women, therefore, supporting the sexual double standards for men and women. Specifically, hostile sexism demonstrated towards women who deviate from gender expectations should ensure that they return to normative behavior (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In turn, high benevolent sexism might be connected with the use of the 'male gaze' strategy, because it does not imply the violation of gender norms. In particular, benevolent sexism includes the belief that women must satisfy men's sexual desires and needs, in particular, in a marital relationship (Duran et al., 2011), therefore, bisexual behavior predominantly might be considered as a way to satisfy men's fantasies.

As a result, we assume that sexism (both hostile and benevolent) might predict the choice of different strategies of devaluation independently from demographic characteristics (gender and sexual orientation). Therefore, the second research question of this study is as follows: do benevolent and hostile sexism independently predict devaluation of women's bisexuality?

Method

A prior power analysis

We conducted a power analysis to compute the required sample size using the G*Power 3.1 program (Faul et al., 2009). Since there are no relevant findings for predictors of devaluation strategies, we used the (Cohen, 1988) recommendation about small effect size ($f^2 = 0.02$) to compute the required sample size with sufficient power ($1 - \beta > 0.80$). The total sample size was estimated at 311 participants. Due to the data analysis procedure, we have applied the estimated sample size to gender and sexuality based demographic groups, forming the sample to include at least 311 respondents in each gender and sexuality group.

Participants

A total of 2697 Russians completed the survey. Some 272 respondents who identified their gender as 'other' and 87 respondents who identified their sexual orientation as 'other' were excluded from the sample since one of the predictors of bisexuality devaluation that we are interested in is sexism (which is based on gender binarism), and it is impossible to correctly measure it in non-binary people. As a result, the final sample consisted of 2338 Russians who

participated in the study ($M_{age} = 22.86, SD = 6.33$), among which there were 368 men, 1910 women, 49 – trans*men, 11 - trans*women ; 707 respondents identified themselves as heterosexuals, 520 - homosexuals, 694 – bisexuals, 417 – other (pansexuals and asexuals). Full description of the sample is presented in Table 1.

The comparisons of gender groups by the Tukey HSD test demonstrated that male respondents ($M = 24.12, SD = 7.65$) are older than female ($M = 22.66, SD = 6.07$) ($p < .001$, Cohen $d = -.23$) and trans*men ($M = 21.08, SD = 4.50$) ($p = .009$, Cohen $d = -.413$) and there are no other differences in age between the gender groups. Homosexuals ($M = 24.39, SD = 7.07$) are older than all other respondents (all $p \leq .004$) and heterosexuals ($M = 23.13, SD = 7.37$) are older than bisexuals ($M = 22.01, SD = 5.16$) ($p = .008$, Cohen $d = -.211$).

Table 1. Full description of the sample

Age ($M_{age} = 22.86, SD = 6.33$)		N	%
18 - 20		1175	50.3
21-30		901	38.5
31-40		209	8,9
41+		53	2,3
Sex	M_{age} (SD)	N	%
Men	24.12 (7.65)	368	15.7
Women	22.66 (6.07)	1910	81.7
Trans*men	21.08 (4.50)	49	2.1
Trans*women	23.45 (4.41)	11	0.5
Sexual orientation	M_{age} (SD)	N	%
Heterosexuals	23.13 (7.37)	707	30.2
Men		207	29.3
Women		500	70.7
Homosexuals	24.39 (7.03)	520	22.2
Men		102	19.6
Women		405	77.9
Trans*men		11	2.1
Trans*women		2	0.4
Bisexuals	22.01 (5.16)	694	29.7
Men		36	5.2
Women		645	92.9
Trans*men		10	1.4
Trans*women		3	0.4
Pansexuals	21.99 (4.64)	335	14.3
Men		20	6.0
Women		283	84.5
Trans*men		26	7.8
Trans*women		6	1.8
Asexual	21.62 (4.90)	82	3.5

Men	3	3.7
Women	77	93.9
Trans*men	2	2.4

Procedure

The study was conducted in Russia. The link to the survey was spread through the Russian social network (Vkontakte - Russian equivalent of Facebook, the average daily audience of Vkontakte is over 80 million visitors, over 460 million users are registered (51 % women, the most represented age group of users is those aged from 18 to 34)) and since the sample had to include LGBTQ+ participants, the link to the survey was also posted in LGBTQ+ Telegram-channels (e.g., ‘Okay. Sobi’, ‘Resurs’) that write about LGBTQ+ in Russia. Before filling out the questionnaire, the participants read a short description of the study there they were informed that the study is completely anonymous, voluntary, does not carry any psychological or other threats to the individual, and has an age restriction (18+). The respondents agreed to participate in the study by going to the next page of the questionnaire. The first page contained the general demographics questions (gender, age, sexual orientation). The second page included questions related to the strategies of devaluation of women’s bisexual identity. On the third page, participants responded to Ambivalent sexism inventory, and on the last page, they were thanked.

Measures

Demographic. Participants completed the questions about their gender (man, woman, trans*man, trans*woman, and other), age, and sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, and other).

Devaluation of women’s bisexual identity was measured by four items, which corresponded to the main devaluation strategies described above (‘Female bisexuality is only a temporary phase’, ‘Female bisexuality is just synonymous with sexual promiscuity’, ‘Bisexual women are lesbians who afraid to admit it’, ‘Female bisexuality is just another way to attract the men’s attention’). Ratings were made on a 7-point scale from 1 (*absolutely disagree*) to 7 (*absolutely agree*). The mean and standard deviation for each strategy is presented in Table 2.

Sexism was measured by Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996) adapted to the Russian context by (Agadullina, 2018). The statements about Hostile sexism (HS) (e.g., ‘women seek to gain power by getting control over men’) and Benevolent sexism (BS) (e.g., ‘women should be cherished and protected by men’) were rated on a scale from 0 (*disagree strongly*) to 5 (*agree strongly*) ($\alpha = .90$ and $.89$ for HS and BS respectively).

Data analysis

Categorical variables (gender and sexual orientation) were dummy-coded. The reference category for gender was ‘women’, for sexual orientation – ‘bisexuals’. These subgroups were chosen since the ‘bisexual women’ group is an in-group for women and bisexuals; therefore, their level of devaluation may differ from those obtained from respondents with another gender and sexual orientation. Trans*men were merged with men and trans*women with women, also pansexual and asexual individuals were merged into the group of ‘other non-monosexual identity’. In order to determine whether demographic variables and ambivalent sexism uniquely predict different strategies of bisexuality devaluation, we used a hierarchical regression analysis (an ordinary least-squares method). Strategies of devaluation were used as dependent variables, demographic variables (gender, sexual orientation, and the interaction between gender and sexual orientation) and ambivalent sexism (hostile and benevolent) as the predictors. Gender and sexual orientation were entered at step 1, the interaction between gender and sexual orientation were entered at step 2, and hostile and benevolent sexism were entered at step 3. To assess the quality of the models Wald tests and the Akaike information criterion (AIC) (Byrne, 2011) were used.

Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics and correlation among the variables studied. The correlations between different strategies of devaluation of women’s bisexual identity are positively and moderately interrelated (all coefficients $<.50$). These findings mean that participants can simultaneously use different strategies for devaluation, even though they may contradict each other (e.g., the belief that bisexual women are lesbians and that bisexuality in women is a way to attract male attention). In line with previous research, there is a strong link between the hostile and benevolent sexism ($r = .650, p < .01$).

Predictors of the bisexuality devaluation strategies

The regression results are shown in Table 3-6. At step 1 and 2, demographic characteristics significantly predicted the devaluation of women’s bisexuality (R^2 from 0.044 to 0.135 depending on the devaluation strategy). At step 3, the inclusion of hostile and benevolent sexism in the regression equations significantly increased the quality of the models in all cases (ΔR^2 from 0.09

to 0.16 depending on the devaluation strategy). Wald tests and changes in the AICs confirm that models in the third steps are significantly better than in the first and second steps.

The results of regressions demonstrated two common patterns for different strategies of devaluation. First, monosexual women (lesbians and heterosexual women) more than bisexual women devalued women's bisexual identity based on all strategies of devaluation. Second, both hostile and benevolent sexism are strong predictors of devaluation of women's bisexual identity. In particular, a higher level of hostile and benevolent sexism independently predicted a higher level of approving all devaluation strategies.

Bisexuality in women as a phase and promiscuous behavior

These strategies of devaluation are similar in their predictors (see Table 3-4). Bisexual men more than bisexual women devalued women's bisexuality based on both these strategies, but after the inclusion of hostile and benevolent sexism in the model these differences became insignificant ($p = .687$). At the same time, non-monosexual women (pansexual and asexual) devalued women's bisexuality less, but these differences also disappeared after the inclusion of sexism in the model. Monosexual (gay and heterosexual) and non-monosexual men (pansexual and asexual) did not differ in their perceptions of women's bisexuality as a temporal phase from bisexual women. Non-monosexual men more rarely devalued women's bisexuality based on the 'bisexuality as promiscuous' strategy than did bisexual women.

Women's bisexuality as a 'male gaze'

In addition to common patterns for all strategies of devaluation, in this case, we found that in comparison to bisexual women, non-monosexual (bisexual) men more often perceived bisexuality in women as a way to get men's attention. While monosexual (gay) men and non-monosexual (pansexual and asexual) men showed less support of this strategy than bisexual women. Importantly, these differences remained significant even after the inclusion of hostile and benevolent sexism in the model (see Table 5).

Women's bisexuality as an internalized homophobia

Table 6 shows that monosexual women (lesbians and heterosexual) in comparison to bisexual women are more likely to believe that bisexual women are actually lesbians. As well as in all other cases, hostile and benevolent sexism is a significant independent predictor of this devaluation strategy.

Table 2. Mean, standard deviation, internal consistency and correlations among variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.BI as a phase	1.98	1.07		–						
2.BI as promiscuous	2.37	1.22		.505**	–					
3.BI as a male gaze	1.58	0.86		.496**	.493**	–				
4.BI as an internalized homophobia	1.99	1.11		.341**	.319**	.455**	–			
5.BS	2.10	0.98	.89	.421**	.434**	.466**	.283**	–		
6.HS	2.20	1.00	.90	.426**	.448**	.443**	.315**	.650**	–	
7.Age	22.86	6.33		.111**	.098**	.132**	.062**	.022	.070**	–

Note: BI – bisexual identity, BS – benevolent sexism, HS – hostile sexism; **p < .01

Table 3. The results of hierarchical regression analysis for strategy ‘Bisexual identity as a phase’

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Step 1</i>			<i>Step 2</i>			<i>Step 3</i>		
	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	1.37	1.215, 1.535	< 0.001	1.37	1.205, 1.528	< 0.001	0.51	0.335, 0.684	< 0.001
Sex (men)	0.19	0.079, 0.297	0.001	0.34	0.046, 0.642	0.024	0.06	-0.221, 0.335	0.687
SO (hetero)	0.75	0.645, 0.860	< 0.001	0.75	0.631, 0.863	< 0.001	0.43	0.314, 0.542	< 0.001
SO (homo)	0.25	0.136, 0.367	< 0.001	0.29	0.164, 0.413	< 0.001	0.34	0.228, 0.459	< 0.001
SO (other)	-0.16	-0.278, -0.036	0.011	-0.14	-0.263, -0.008	0.037	-0.06	-0.177, 0.061	0.338
Inter: hetero men				-0.10	-0.440, 0.238	0.558	-0.07	0.218, 0.319	0.665
Inter: homo men				-0.28	-0.640, 0.086	0.135	-0.19	0.148, 0.258	0.268
Inter: other men				-0.25	-0.664, 0.170	0.245	-0.05	-0.385, 0.246	0.818
HS							0.27	-0.528, 0.147	< 0.001
BS							0.20	-0.433, 0.342	< 0.001
R ² / adjusted R ²	0.135 / 0.133			0.136 / 0.133			0.256 / 0.253		
AIC	6622.712			6625.528			6277.947		
Wald test				<i>F</i> = 1.058, <i>p</i> = .3658			<i>F</i> = 188.8, <i>p</i> = < 0.001		

Note: SO – sexual orientation, inter – interaction between gender and sexual orientation, BS – benevolent sexism, HS – hostile sexism, AIC - Akaike Information Criterion

Table 4. The results of hierarchical regression analysis for strategy ‘Bisexual identity as promiscuous’

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Step 1</i>			<i>Step 2</i>			<i>Step 3</i>		
	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	1.81	1.629, 2.001	< 0.001	1.80	1.615, 1.990	< 0.001	0.73	0.534, 0.933	< 0.001
Sex (men)	0.34	0.217, 0.470	< 0.001	0.60	0.254, 0.944	0.001	0.24	-0.077, 0.560	0.137
SO (hetero)	0.66	0.535, 0.784	< 0.001	0.64	0.505, 0.774	< 0.001	0.24	0.111, 0.371	< 0.001
SO (homo)	0.12	-0.009, 0.259	0.067	0.17	0.022, 0.310	0.024	0.24	0.103, 0.367	< 0.001
SO (other)	-0.26	-0.400, -0.119	< 0.001	-0.19	-0.337, -0.041	0.012	-0.09	-0.228, 0.044	0.184
Inter: hetero men				-0.13	-0.337, -0.041	0.517	-0.09	0.275, 0.390	0.619
Inter: homo men				-0.36	-0.785, 0.057	0.090	-0.26	0.193, 0.319	0.193
Inter: other men				-0.69	-1.177, -0.210	0.005	-0.44	-0.452, 0.269	0.050
HS							0.33	-0.642, 0.130	< 0.001
BS							0.26	-0.886, 0.000	< 0.001
R ² / adjusted R ²	0.109 / 0.107			0.113 / 0.110			0.257 / 0.253		
AIC	7317.605			7312.501			6904.452		
Wald test				$F = 3.6956, p = .01139$			$F = 224.24, p = <0.001$		

Note: SO – sexual orientation, inter – interaction between gender and sexual orientation, BS – benevolent sexism, HS – hostile sexism, AIC - Akaike Information Criterion

Table 5. The results of hierarchical regression analysis for strategy ‘Bisexual identity as a male gaze’

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Step 1</i>			<i>Step 2</i>			<i>Step 3</i>		
	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	1.05	0.915, 1.177	< 0.001	1.04	0.910, 1.174	< 0.001	0.23	0.092, 0.369	0.001
Sex (men)	0.31	0.219, 0.397	< 0.001	0.49	0.244, 0.730	< 0.001	0.24	0.018, 0.461	0.034
SO (hetero)	0.46	0.368, 0.544	< 0.001	0.42	0.322, 0.512	< 0.001	0.11	0.015, 0.195	0.023
SO (homo)	0.14	0.041, 0.230	0.005	0.19	0.090, 0.293	< 0.001	0.25	0.153, 0.337	< 0.001
SO (other)	-0.11	-0.210, -0.012	0.028	-0.06	-0.161, 0.047	0.284	0.02	-0.071, 0.118	0.625
Inter: hetero men				-0.00	-0.281, 0.272	0.975	-0.00	0.153, 0.233	0.974
Inter: homo men				-0.38	-0.675, -0.082	0.012	-0.29	0.208, 0.295	0.034
Inter: other men				-0.52	-0.865, -0.185	0.003	-0.35	-0.255, 0.247	0.025
HS							0.19	-0.558, -0.021	< 0.001
BS							0.25	-0.660, -0.043	< 0.001
R ² / adjusted R ²	0.113 / 0.111			0.122 / 0.119			0.280 / 0.277		
AIC	5686.775			5670.488			5208.736		
Wald test				<i>F</i> = 7.4356, <i>p</i> = < 0.001			<i>F</i> = 256.48, <i>p</i> = < 0.001		

Note: SO – sexual orientation, inter – interaction between gender and sexual orientation, BS – benevolent sexism, HS – hostile sexism, AIC - Akaike Information Criterion

Table 6. The results of hierarchical regression analysis for strategy ‘Bisexual identity as an internalized homophobia’

<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Step 1</i>			<i>Step 2</i>			<i>Step 3</i>		
	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Estimates</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	1.64	1.463, 1.811	< 0.001	1.63	1.451, 1.804	< 0.001	0.86	0.663, 1.053	< 0.001
Sex (men)	0.05	-0.070, 0.167	0.422	0.20	-0.126, 0.523	0.231	-0.06	-0.375, 0.246	0.686
SO (hetero)	0.42	0.304, 0.537	< 0.001	0.42	0.298, 0.551	< 0.001	0.14	0.013, 0.266	0.031
SO (homo)	0.39	0.264, 0.515	< 0.001	0.42	0.289, 0.560	< 0.001	0.47	0.345, 0.603	< 0.001
SO (other)	-0.07	-0.204, 0.060	0.282	-0.06	-0.204, 0.074	0.362	0.00	-0.129, 0.136	0.959
Inter: hetero men				-0.13	-0.498, 0.241	0.496	-0.09	0.197, 0.309	0.600
Inter: homo men				-0.27	-0.663, 0.128	0.185	-0.19	0.110, 0.232	0.319
Inter: other men				-0.13	-0.586, 0.322	0.569	0.05	-0.446, 0.258	0.811
HS							0.25	-0.567, 0.185	< 0.001
BS							0.17	-0.380, 0.485	< 0.001
R ² / adjusted R ²	0.044 / 0.042			0.045 / 0.041			0.137 / 0.133		
AIC	7019.024			7023.087			6790.526		
Wald test				$F = 0.6434, p = 0.5871$			$F = 123.89, p = <0.001$		

Note: SO – sexual orientation, inter – interaction between gender and sexual orientation, BS – benevolent sexism, HS – hostile sexism, AIC - Akaike Information Criterion

Discussion

The present study explored devaluation of women's bisexuality and assessed its possible psychological and demographic predictors. The literature to date explores and describes different strategies of devaluation of bisexual identity, however, no systematic understanding of this process exists and very little is known about the relationship between these strategies and their predictors.

In our study, we identified and described 4 substantively different strategies for the devaluation of women's bisexuality, which vary in the perception of the woman (as heterosexual or homosexual) and in the perception of bisexual behavior as an action that either violates or matches gender expectations.

The first important result of our study is that it is the interaction of gender and sexual identity that is significant as a predictor of the devaluation of women's bisexuality. In particular, the results show that not all monosexual individuals, but only monosexual women (heterosexual and lesbians) devalue to a higher extent than bisexual women across all strategies. Those results are somewhat in line with previous research, which shows that strongly heterosexual women rate bisexuality less favorably than homosexuality (Steffens & Wagner, 2004), and lesbians view bisexuality in women as less stable, than bisexuality in men (Mohr & Rochlen, 1999) leading to more bi-negativity, and therefore, devaluation of women's bisexuality.

Monosexual men do not show any differences with bisexual women in the devaluation of women's bisexuality, with the exception of the male gaze strategy. In this case, homosexual devalue bisexuality less than bisexual women and heterosexual men did not differ from bisexual women on the devaluation based on this strategy, which means that men agreed with the given statement in the same capacity as bisexual women.

Despite the fact that for non-monosexual individuals, the binary gender system is not something essential, and therefore it should be easier for them to perceive bisexual women as someone with a unique social identity, we did not find any clear confirmation of the fact that non-monosexual individuals (both men and women) are less likely to devalue bisexuality in women. Even in cases where non-monosexual individuals showed lower scores of devaluation than bisexual women (phase and promiscuous strategies), these differences disappeared after the inclusion of sexism in the model. Once again, the exception is the male gaze strategy, for which bisexual men devalue bisexuality more in comparison to bisexual women, while some non-monosexual men (pansexual and asexual) devalue bisexuality less than bisexual women.

Since gender binarism, like monosexism alone, does not predict the devaluation of female bisexuality, we associate the results with the effects of intergroup perception. Within the framework of binary gender perception, bisexual women are women in the first place, i.e., an

ingroup for both heterosexual women and lesbians. One of the effects which is present during the in-group comparison process is the in-group homogeneity effect, which is usually described as the perception of in-group members as similar (Brewer, 1993; Lee & Ottati, 1995). This perception of homogeneity makes people act according to prescribed normative group behaviors and expect others to do the same (Flanders, 2014). At the same time bisexual women violate both heterosexual norm, and the norms related to lesbians' community. For heterosexuals, bisexual women are those who violate the gender belief system, in particular, in the matter of sexual preferences. For lesbians, bisexual women are those who 'sleep with an enemy' (Rust, 1993) or those who intermingle with lesbian politics (Eisner, 2013). As a result, bisexual women, 'cast a shadow' on lesbian and heterosexual women, and they need to protect their positive group identity. According to the theory of social identity, maintaining a positive social identity and protecting it against identity threats is one of the basic needs of individuals (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). One way to protect one's identity is to exclude a person who violates group norms from the group. But within the framework of the gender binarism, to exclude bisexual women in a separate category means to recognize that there are other norms that can also be considered valid and right. The community of lesbians (and homosexuals in general) had to wage a long struggle, which continues to this day, in order to form an idea in the ordinary consciousness of them as a separate group with their own norms. At the same time, things are better with the recognition of homosexuals as a separate group, than with the adoption of their norms as "right" (Anderson & Holland, 2015; Seidman et al., 1999). The situation with bisexual women is more complicated, as they only partially violate the norm of partner's gender. Putting bisexual women into a separate group in order to maintain their own positive identity is not profitable, since then the idea of possible variants of the "right" norm is further eroded, which generally threatens the integrity of the group. Therefore, denying the existence of bisexuality is a way of preserving one's own positive identity by emphasizing the right gender norms that bisexual women do not meet, and possibly "punishing" them (e.g., through explicit biphobia) as a way to return bisexual women to "right norms", first of all those, which correspond to the gender belief system.

This way of thinking could be confirmed by the fact than men do not show differences in devaluation because their identity is not threatened by the bisexual behavior in women. The only exception is the male gaze strategy, where men's scores are differed from bisexual women. This is probably due to the fact that the very wording of this strategy suggests that men are the reason why women behave bisexually. Such an emphasis on the role of men in demonstrating non-normative behavior can negatively affect the identity of men and, consequently, make them more likely to disagree with the statement.

Another important result of our study is the confirmation of the role of ambivalent sexism (both hostile and benevolent) as a significant independent predictor in the devaluation of bisexuality in women. As far as we know, this study is one of the first to examine the role of sexism in the context of biphobia. We found that benevolent and hostile sexism types both lead to the usage of all devaluation strategies, supporting the theoretical argument for ambivalent sexism as a uniform factor (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Since sexism itself constructs a reality in which feminine roles and behavioral expectations from women are strictly fixed and any deviations from these norms are strictly punished (e.g., through the use of hostile sexism), bisexual women automatically become the subject of a hostile attitude. They cannot depend on the paternalistic protection offered by benevolent sexism to women who strictly correspond to gender roles. A number of studies have shown that benevolent sexism is strongly associated with aggression and violence towards non-normative women (Abrams et al., 2003; Sakalli-Uğurlu et al., 2007). As a result, sexism (both hostile and benevolent) contribute to biphobia overall, and to the devaluation of women's bisexuality in particular.

The role of sexism is also emphasized by the fact that some differences (e.g., greater devaluation of women's bisexuality by bisexual men than bisexual women) disappear after the inclusion of sexism in the model. The lack of differences in the devaluation between bisexual men and women after controlling the sexism can be explained by the fact that, rather often men are more sexist than women (Glick et al., 2000). Within the binary gender system frame, sexism reflects one's adherence to this system better than gender, since the mere fact that someone identifies as a man or as a woman does not mean that a person supports the GBS, whereas the level of sexism is strictly connected to the GBS. Our initial assumption that different types of sexism can predict different devaluation strategies has not been confirmed. In particular, hostile sexism along with benevolent sexism predicts the use of the male gaze strategy. This is probably due to the fact that hostile sexism includes the belief that women use their sexuality in order to control and manipulate men (Glick & Fiske, 2001), therefore, trying to please a man by demonstrating bisexual behavior, women can try to achieve their goals. That is, in both cases, bisexual behavior is seen as a tool (either to satisfy men's desires, or to achieve women's own goals), and not as a unique identity. In general, our results show that people with a high level of benevolent and hostile sexism might use the strategies of devaluation altogether, despite a notional contradiction between some of them ('internalized homophobia' is conflicting with all other strategies). This result may be related to the notion that devaluation, despite possible theoretical division in strategies, is in reality a common, one-factor belief. In other words, people who do not believe that bisexuality is a unique identity, and that bisexual individuals represent a separate social group (sexism contributes to this belief), will deny the existence of bisexuality in all possible, even illogical,

ways. In general, the lack of a clear logic in everyday perception is quite common (Macrae & Bodenhausen, 2000). More research is needed to better understand the relationship between the various strategies for devaluation.

Limitations

The current study meets some limitations. First, the used sample was unbalanced and mostly consisted of bisexual women. Previous research suggested that women have more tolerant attitudes towards bisexual individuals than men (Dodge et al., 2016; Rubinstein et al., 2013; Yost & Thomas, 2012). Moreover, when it comes to the perception of bisexuality in women, 36% of the sample answered the questions about their in-group, as a result, the in-group favoritism effect can impact on the results obtained. In general, our sample can be more tolerant than general population because of the specificity of data collection. The link to the questionnaire was also distributed through LGBTQ+ related sources, and it can be assumed that most of the participants were in some way familiar with bisexuality and the issues implied.

Second, the list of the devaluation strategies of women's bisexuality cannot be considered comprehensive. Probably, individuals can use other strategies of devaluation, for example, (Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2000) have described the strategy of devaluation, which supports the idea of women's bisexuality as fluid by nature, but it was not included in our study due to the lack of researchers that support that explanation.

Lastly, when completing the questionnaire, the participants saw all the strategies at the same time, which might have led to a response bias, where participant did not choose their prevalent strategy but rather had a tendency to either agree or disagree with all the devaluation strategies. We found that there are moderate correlations between all the strategies; it might be assumed that it was the result of a response bias.

Conclusion

The findings of the current study have significant implications for understanding attitudes towards bisexual women in the context of perceptions of bisexuality in women. Despite being conducted on a sample, which mostly consists of members of the LGBTQ+ community, the data shows that overall people tend to devalue bisexuality in women, which supports the existing discourse of the so-called 'invisibilization' of the bisexual identity and its cross-cultural nature.

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