

Between Oppression and Affirmation in (In)Conformity: LGB Family Notions and Experiences

Mónica Carneiro, Psychology Master & Conceição Nogueira, PhD

Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences of the University of Porto

monica.spcarneiro@gmail.com

Rationale/Background: The family has evolved throughout history, starting with a concept of categorization and social organization, passing through the traditional conception during modernity, and being today on the way to a postmodern vision, which includes multiple forms of organization, composition and functioning. This continuous evolution led to the emergence of family diversity, encompassing populations with different specificities at the level of ethnicity, social class, race, gender expression or sexual orientation. In this work, the focus was the LGB families, their notions of family, and the experiences and social challenges experienced.

Research Questions: What is the LGB family design for the people who identify themselves as LGB; What is the importance of this designation for people from LGB families; Has their experience in society as LGB family, specifically, challenges, benefits and / or impacts that mark this identification; What is the impact of living as a LGB family in a heteronormative society; What new ways exist to reconcile family and what can be done to make the new forms of family as such.

Methods: Eight semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with people who consider themselves members of this type of family. Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to systematize the collected data.

Results: The following topics were identified as main themes of the Thematic Analysis: (1) (in) conformity; and (2) between oppression and affirmation. Regarding the first theme, contents related to the notions of family and members that people consider an integral part of the same has been interpreted taking into account more traditional conceptions, "normative", and that, therefore, they approach the conform, and conceptions that break with, or they extend beyond the norm, being considered nonconformist. The second theme is the result of an analysis of a set of contents that characterize collective and personal / relational experiences that can be interpreted as expressions of oppression or affirmation.

Conclusions: LGB population is contributing to new forms of family, making it more diverse and inclusive. In addition, there is evidence that the influence of power systems on the social acceptance of these families leads to various situations of oppression of their free expression of identity as LGB individuals and / or families.

Key Words: LGB families, family diversity, postmodernity, social constructivism, (in)conformity, oppression, affirmation.

Funding Sources: None.