

Symposium:

Lesbian and Gay Parent Families Navigating Heteronormativity: International, Interdisciplinary and Multimethodological Approaches

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Comparative research has mainly provided evidence of similarities between heterosexual and lesbian and gay parent families. However, the latter face specific challenges as they must contend with heteronormativity. Prejudice and discrimination remain in the general population, as well as in sectors that are supposed to promote the welfare of children, youth, and adults. This symposium aims to analyse how prejudice towards lesbian and gay parent families is still apparent in different social domains, which factors underlie this type of prejudice, and how social and legal changes can promote these families' wellbeing. This theme will be explored using different perspectives (academia and activism), theoretical frameworks (psychology and anthropology), and research methodologies (quantitative and qualitative). The responsibility of institutions and professionals in promoting the wellbeing and eliminating discrimination against LGBT-headed families is highlighted. Results of a quantitative study about attitudes towards lesbian and gay headed families, evidenced in a sample of Portuguese future professionals of the social network will be presented. In the same line, a qualitative study conducted in Mexico will depict a group of psychologists' negative assumptions about homosexuality and lesbian and gay parents. The positive effect of legislative changes (same-sex-marriage) on lesbian and gay headed families' wellbeing will be evidenced by a quantitative research conducted in Spain. A Portuguese LGBT rights organization will highlight the beneficial role of diversity ethics in schools. Finally, individual contributions will be integrated by the discussant.

What Matters to Attitudes Towards Lesbian and Gay Parenting?

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Using a quasi-experiment, factors underlying negative attitudes towards the parental competence of lesbians and gay men and the development of their children were explored in a Portuguese sample of future professionals from areas such as psychology, medicine or teaching ($n = 1,288$). The role of negative attitudes towards lesbians and gay men was especially evident. A consensus regarding the possibility of social discrimination of a child adopted by non-heterosexual parents was also apparent. These results contributed to a better understanding of the factors underlying prejudice and discrimination still observed against lesbians and gay men, particularly with respect to their parental rights.