

TOPIC
THE PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE STUDENTS ON GAY ADOPTION: A SOCIAL WORK EXPLORATION PRACTICE IN THE AMATHOLE
DISTRICT,
EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE.

LULAMA JUSTICE NOMBOLA
&
RUNWORK MHARADZE



INTRODUCTION

Social work is at the interface of a researching, monitoring, evaluating and does diagnosis to the prevailing social ills. So, in this context on gay adoption social work practice holistically strives to provide relevant solutions by challenging the traditional attitudes, perceptions and opinions. In doing so social work is striving to fulfil the stipulation imbedded in the South Africa Constitutional that everyone is equal before the law and no one should discriminated against based on sexual orientation, gender, sex, religion, culture etc. The Amathole District is the community where you find traditional black community, with attitudes that are against gayism. So, they can not even buy the idea of gay adoption.



AIM OF THE STUDY

- The aim of this study was to explore the perceptions of the University of Fort Hare students on gay adoption.

OBJECTIVES

- To attain the aim of the study the researchers utilised the following objectives.
- To explore the perceptions of the students of the University of Fort Hare on gay adoption.
- To determine social work practice on gay adoption



BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

- Same sex parenting is a phenomenon that is gaining popularity all over the world, especially in European and American society. In 1999 Canada was the first to legalize adoption for gay couples, followed by Sweden and in 2002 South Africa became the 3rd country worldwide to legalize same sex adoption (Cody, 2013).
- The legalization of same sex parenting in South Africa has seen some gay men wanting to become parents via adoption. In some cases, it happens that either one of the partners or even both partners come into the same sex marriage with children from previous relationships.
- However, the legalization of gay adoption in South Africa was not a welcomed phenomenon since traditional norms and values outweighs the same sex marriage
- The Department for Education (2013) in England displayed that there could be up to 4 million people likely to contemplate adopting or fostering at some point in the future, yet there are still thousands of children waiting for a safe, loving home.




PROBLEM STATEMENT

- The South African Constitution defends the rights of every citizen by endorsing that everyone has a right to freedom of association, freedom of movement, freedom of expression, and freedom of religious affiliation, just to mention but a few.
- Therefore, the legalization of same sex marriage and gay adoption in South Africa was a step towards the protection of the right to freedom of association and freedom of expression.
- Consequently, Social Work in its practice sought to eradicate the social injustices associated with the discrimination of a particular group of people, community, or individuals based on sexual orientation, gender, etc
- Conversely, as the Government of South Africa through Social Work profession welds its armoury against the social ills, gay adoption remained a controversial issue
- The controversy surrounding gay adoption resulted in poor reception and acceptance of the gay people nationwide
- Traditionally and religiously the gay are side-lined based on their sexual orientation



PROBLEM STATEMENT (CONT)

- Policies
- myths



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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY



- The study applied a mixed method, using quantitative and qualitative research methods simultaneously to strengthen the findings of this study by avoiding the biases associated with using a single method.
- Quantitatively, researchers systematically sampled twenty-five respondents and disseminate questionnaires
- Qualitatively, researchers purposively used focus group discussions and in-depth interviews to collect data
- The unit of analysis comprised of University of Fort Hare students from the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities and the Gay Netball Team.



ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study was informed by the following ethical considerations:

- **Avoidance of harm**

- Researchers will ensure that no participants will be harmed whether physically, emotionally and psychologically.

- **Confidentiality**

The researchers intended to keep all information given by participants confidential.

- **Informed consent**

- The researchers informed and made sure that participants are aware of what they were part of.

- **Anonymity**

- When conducting the study the researchers protected the identities of the participants/respondents by using pseudo names instead of revealing their true identities



RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

- This study was necessitated by the need to establish the knowledge levels, attitudes, opinions and feelings of students on gay adoption. Secondly, the study sought to explore social work practice considering the growing numbers of orphaned children or otherwise needing to be adopted. Seemingly, Social Workers are under more pressure than before.
- Social workers need to put aside their personal emotions or judgments and make rational decisions informed by social work theories and approaches.



PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

- Findings indicated that students have a clear understanding of sexual orientation.
- Therefore, student's attitudes, opinions, feelings and knowledge level towards gay adoption is informed by their understanding of the constitution.
- This finding indicates that students are receptive, accept and accommodate the gay adoption concept.
- Findings indicated that students have a positive attitude towards gay adoption simply because there is a belief that gays with stable income and stable jobs are able to provide a safe environment for the adopted child.
- Although majority of students showed a positive understanding on gay adoption, however some students indicated scepticism towards gay adoption
- These students according to the findings show influence of religious, cultural and traditional values and norms
- Findings indicated that social work profession is crucial in facilitating gay adoption
- Findings also established that social work does the processing monitoring, evaluation as well as follow up in adoption



PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS (Cont)



- The study established that social work practice is faced with traditional, religious, and cultural challenges in the context of gay adoption
- Among traditional, religious and cultural challenges there are myths associated with gay adoption
- The study finds out that social work practice faces challenges in processing and placing children for gay adoption
- The study concludes that although there are significant efforts and changes towards gay adoption, however, gays are still facing discriminatory tendencies in society nationwide.




RECOMMENDATIONS

- There is need of educational campaigns in the communities to demystify the traditional, religious and cultural myths on gay adoption.
- There is a need for improvement in the processing and placing of children to be adopted
- Thus the procedures and policies should be clear and easy to understand.
- There is need for adoption of a rational social work decision making that is academically informed by the practice
- There is need for consideration of the best interest of the child
- There is need for further studies on the field of gay adoption



Thank you !!!!!!!!!!!



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