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## Research Article

### Child Rearing Styles of Queer Parents in Relation to Child Adjustments

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## ABSTRACT

This study focused on determining the child rearing styles of queer parents about child adjustment. The case study was used to determine the unique experiences of the subject participants. Eight queer parents and eight children of queer parents participated in the study. Further, the researcher used unstructured interviews in collecting the research data. The results revealed that most of the queer parents belonged within the age range of more than 40, gay men and lesbian women, unmarried and living with no partner, Roman Catholic, *Ilokano* and *Tagalog*, college graduate, self-employed with a monthly family income of 20,001 – 30,000, and with one child. Moreover, most of the male and female child participants were under 17, first-born child with one sibling belonged to household members of three, nephews of queer parents and lived with their non-biological parents for more than 14 years. There is an emerging theme derived from the experiences of queer parents, such as their experiences in various aspects of parenthood. The queer parents' child rearing styles were lax parenting style and disciplinarian style. Two emerging themes derived from the participants' experiences, such as their lived experiences consisting of three sub-themes: being raised by non-biological parents, being bullied and having conflict with parents. Similarly, two sub-themes were derived from the theme description of the present life, such as comfortable life and crossing to life challenges. The child adjustment that emerged was psychosocial. The emerging well-being of the child participants was life contentment. The emerging sub-themes under the description of parents' way of rearing a child were composed of imposition of discipline, provision of basic needs and inculcation of the value of education. The child participants were appreciative and satisfied with the kind of life they had. Since most of the parents were single, the government through the local government units may properly disseminate the Solo Parent Act as to benefits and privileges under the law through series of

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orientation and assist the queer parents to have their Solo Parents card. Non-government organization, civic organization and the church may conduct series of guidance and counselling, psychological intervention and spiritual nurturing programs and activities to enhance the quality of life among child of the queer parents.

**Keywords:** *Child adjustment, Parenting style, Queer parents, Well-being*

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## **Introduction**

The Philippine Supreme Court has heard a long-awaited argument that could open the door to same-sex marriage in the overwhelmingly Catholic country. The case, filed by a gay male lawyer named Jesus Falcis in 2015, urges the court to declare the marriage restriction in the country's Family Code – which limits marriage to one man and one woman – unconstitutional. It also asks the court to recognise marriage equality in the Philippines. Falcis argues that the marriage restrictions violate his rights to due process, equal protection, and family formation under the Philippine Constitution. However, in the Philippines, the Anti-Discrimination Law, which should provide everyone with fundamental legal protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE), is the longest-running bill in the interpellations era (Casal, 2019).

Despite the 1987 Philippine Constitution's promise of separation of church and state, various legal and political issues were addressed based on religious and moral principles. These discussions can also be attributed to the Filipinos' healthy reverence for religion and conservatism (Manalastas et al., 2013). In the Philippines, this is exemplified by the topic of same-gender marriage. Unlike international law, which specifies marriage as a right for all citizens, the Philippine Constitution provides a limited right to marriage. Articles 1 and 2 of the Constitution prohibit marriage between a man and a woman. As a result, Articles 46(4) and 55(6) state that homosexuality and lesbianism are legitimate grounds for annulment. However, a petition to nullify these documents is pending (Gonzales, 2015).

In 2015, House Speaker Feliciano Belmonte Jr. spoke to the media on the Philippines' ambiguous attitude toward same-sex marriage. He

predicated his stance that same-sex marriage is against the essence of Filipino society from the community's cultural perspective. The Philippine Constitution does not boost the queer community's desire to claim their right to marry because it is created to live and absorb Filipino culture. Furthermore, Belmonte does not believe there will be a strong legislative effort to approve the divorce bill, so including the subject of same-sex marriage is improbable (Diaz, 2016).

Meanwhile, the majority of gay men and lesbian women parenting research has been focused on attitudes regarding co-parenting with heterosexual parents (Farr & Patterson, 2013), queer parenting (Pennington & Knight, 2011), and the consequences of gay men and lesbian women marriage (Pennington & Knight, 2011). The impact of parenting on the well-being of children (Goldberg & Smith, 2013; Reed, 2013; Vargas, 2013). Miller et al., 2012) mentioned that in terms of study topics, they are becoming more diverse regarding parenting for gay men and lesbian women couples. Nonetheless, numerous aspects of queer parenting remain unexplored compared to inquiries about heterosexual relationships. Family scholars pay little attention to them.

Today, being a single parent was already a challenge, as you may have heard. What is more, what if the single mother or father parenting her child is a member of the queer community? Many people will most likely criticize them and give them a disgusted look for having a child, and society may be surprised and bewildered as to why queer parents had a child. There is a good chance these queer parents' parenting abilities will be questioned. As Social Science teachers, we must consider that queer is part of our society; they are citizens with distinct identity. They can also handle responsibilities as parents and rearing a child.

Even though there is a large amount of study on the social and psychological development of families led by queer parents, there is a gap in the literature documenting the everyday life experiences of same-sex parents. This is especially true in the context of the Philippines. Local studies frequently have to rely on the findings of other investigations. Although specific international literature can be applied to the Philippine environment to some level, there is still a dearth of research on Philippine culture. As a result, the researchers identified a need for more research in this area, particularly in the Philippines.

Finally, the above accounts provide a framework of information for this study. This study would determine the parenting style of queer partners regarding child adjustment in San Jose City. This study will also provide sufficient information on the factors influencing the parenting style of lesbian women and gay men partners. Moreover, this study would pursue specific measures based on facts that could be adopted to solve such problems related to child adjustment and parenting style of genders belonging to queer.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

Generally, this study explored and described the parenting styles of queer partners in relation to child adjustment at San Jose City, Nueva Ecija. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. How may the profile and social features of queer partners be described?
2. What are the experiences of the queer parents?
3. How may the queer parent's style in rearing their child/children be described?
4. How may the child's experiences with queer parents be described?
5. How do these experiences affect their social development and psychological well-being?
6. What insights can be drawn based on the findings of the study?
7. What parental programs may be formulated based on the findings of the study?

## **Methods**

### ***Research Design***

The researcher used case study as this is the most appropriate means of describing and exploring the parenting style of queer partners in relation to child adjustment.

The study used purposive sampling. The selection of the population was based on characteristics of the population and the objectives of the study.

### ***Sample and Sampling Procedures***

This study was conducted in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija during the school year 2021-2022 among queer partners who have raised or adopted child or children, or have children with them and serve as guardians and children who have been raised by queer parents.

The participants of the study were eight queer parents and eight children of queer parents. The following inclusion criteria were used to determine the respondents of the study: (1) parents had to declare whether or not they were queer without a partner; (2) participants have to be able to care for a child of any age, (3) child is legally adopted, and (4) willing to participate in the study.

### ***Scope and Delimitation***

This study focused on determining the parenting styles of queer partners in relation to child adjustment. Qualitative research design specifically, the case study was used to determine the unique experiences of the subject participants. Eight queer parents and eight children of queer parents participated in the study.

### ***Research Instrument***

The instrument was composed of two parts. The first part contains the profile and social features of the participants. The profile of the queer partners depicted in the first box includes familial-related variables such as age, gender, religion, ethnicity, educational attainment, occupation, combined family income and number of children. The child-related variables include age, sex, birth order, number of siblings, and number of household members. Finally, the child-related information includes child relationship with queer parents and the number of years as a child of queer parents.

The second part of the instrument was comprised of open-ended questions pertaining to the lived experiences and parenting styles of the queer partners. Moreover, the third part was composed of open-ended questions focused on the adjustment of child with regards to their adjustments.

### **Validity Test**

To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the researcher presented these to the research adviser, and rater and posted them in the group chat for the approval of the researcher panel of evaluators. After consolidating the comments and suggestions, the researcher presented the instrument to the adviser and rater for the instrument's final face validity.

### **Data Analysis**

The level of information offered in a qualitative research study is a problem in acquiring and arranging data. Identifying key patterns and themes was also time-consuming. The researcher assigned alphanumeric numbers to the subjects' responses to categorize them according to the study's conceptual framework categories. The researcher created massive documents that were tagged to conform to the codes. Additional data sheets and codes were added as needed as the researcher sorted the data using the codes. After all of the data had been assigned, the researcher wrote narratives for each document.

The researcher's overall strategy was to come up with a number of patterns, clusters, or themes that connected and characterized the research topic. The procedure was broken down into three parts, the first of which was to look at the common themes and patterns in each category. Second, the researcher looked at trends in all of the categories and compared them. Finally, the current study was evaluated, and topics raised in the queer literature were compared and contrasted.

### **Ethical Considerations**

To ensure ethical ideals and obligations, the researcher observed the following during the study's conduct.

**Responsibilities and obligations in research.** The steps of conducting a research project are guided by high moral and ethical values and are supervised and guided by the researcher's adviser to ensure that the study stays on track.

**Consent that has been informed.** The informed consent covers the research goals, data collection technique, and analysis, as well as the fact that the study is voluntary. As a result, only those participants who were able to complete the consent form were allowed to participate in this study.

**A potential conflict of interest exists.** A deliberate sampling of the participants who took part in this study was used to address potential conflicts of interest. The researcher assured that the respondents would not be in dispute.

**Others' acknowledgement.** Those who contributed to the study were properly acknowledged and credited by the researcher. It was appropriately cited and listed on many pages of this study, including the study's background, literature review, and methods.

## **Results and Discussion**

### *1. Profile and Social Features of the Queer Parents*

#### *1.2 Familial-related variables*

**Red** is a 58-year old gay man, unmarried and living with no partner, Roman Catholic, an *Ilokano* who finished vocational short-term courses, beautician and earned an income ranging from 10,001 – 20,000. He has one adopted child.

**Yellow** is a 37-year old gay man, unmarried and living with no partner, Roman Catholic, an *Ilokano*, college graduate. He is currently teaching with a salary ranging from 20,001 – 30,000, He is currently taking care of his five nephews.

**Blue** is a 27-year old bisexual male, Roman Catholic. He belonged to Tagalog and Bisayan ethnicity, is an HRM graduate and currently working in a hotel with a monthly salary ranging from 10,001 – 20,000 income. He has one nephew under his care.

**Pink** is a married but living with no partner, gay man, Roman Catholic, an *Ilokano*, an education graduate and currently teaching, with a

monthly income ranging from 20,001 – 30,000. He has one child.

**White** is a 51-year old lesbian woman, unmarried and living with no partner, Roman Catholic, an *Ilokano*, college graduate and currently work as nanny, with a monthly income ranging from 20,001 – 30,000. She has one nephew under her care.

**Green** is a 44-year old lesbian woman, unmarried and living with no partner, Roman Catholic, a *Tagalog*, a criminology graduate, she currently unemployed and plan to run for as a Barangay Captain. She has two children who are children of her live-in partner.

**Orange** is a 34-year old married but separated and living with no partner, bisexual female, Roman Catholic, a *Tagalog*. She is a college undergraduate and currently working a customer center representative with a family income ranging from 10,001 – 20,000. She has two children.

**Violet** is a 40-year old married but separated and living with no partner, lesbian woman, Roman Catholic, and a *Tagalog*. She is a High School graduate, a businesswoman with a family income ranging from 20,001 – 30,000. She has two children.

### 1.3 Child-Related Variables

**Child 1** is a 22-year old, female she is the first child of her biological parent, with one sibling. She is an adopted child by her gay

parent and she is living with his parent for 22 years.

**Child 2** is a 16-year old male and he is the fifth child of his biological parent. He has five siblings and belonged to a household which is comprised of eight members. He is the nephew of his gay parent. He lived with him for about ten years.

**Child 3** is an 18-year old male, third child of his biological parent with five siblings. He belonged to seven household members and a nephew of his gay parent. He lived with his gay parent for about nine years.

**Child 4** is a 14-year old male, the only child of his gay parent. He lived with his father for about 14 years.

**Child 5** is a 21-year old male, he is the first child of his biological parent. He is the nephew of his lesbian parents. He lived with his current parents for about 21 years.

**Child 6** is an 11-year old female, second child of her biological parent and belonged to five household member. She is the child of the lived-in partners of her parent. She lived with her lesbian parent for two years.

**Child 7** is a 14-year old female, she is the first child of her separated biological parents. She lives with her lesbian mother for 14 years.

**Child 8** is a 23-year old female, she is the second child of her separated biological parents. She lives with her lesbian mother for 23 years.

## 2. Experiences of Queer Parents into the Various Aspect of Parenthood

Experiences of Queer Parents into the Various Aspect of Parenthood	Participants
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	
Becoming a parent by accident	Yellow, White & Red
Parental Roles (being provider and (disciplinarian)	Red, Pink, White & Green
Parental Challenges	Red, Yellow, Pink & Violet

### Sub-Theme 2.1: Becoming a Parent by Accident

Most of the participants was served as guardian to their niece and nephews, offered to adopt a baby, had their own child then separated due to various reasons.

### Sub-Theme 2.2: Parental Roles

Under this theme, there are two emerging sub-themes emerged from the participants

interview namely: **being a provider and disciplinarian**. Of the 8

### Sub-Theme 2.3: Parental Challenges

One of the participant's parental challenges was the caring role, according to them, they experienced difficulties in rearing the child.

### 3. Queer Parenting Style

QUEER Parenting Style	Participants
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	
Parenting Style (Lax Parenting Style) Disciplinarian Style	Red, Blue, Pink & Violet Orange & Violet

The lax parenting styles and disciplinary measures used in relation to their current parenting are the sub-themes.

They imposed disciplinary measures when their child committed mistakes they remind

and reprimand them for next time they won't do it again.

The verbal scolding is a typical kind of punishment among the participants. Only two of the eight contestants use this type of measures.

### 4. Child Experiences with Queer Parents

Lived Experiences	Participants
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	
Raised by good non-biological parents	Child 1, 2, 3, 7 and 8
Being bullied	Child 4 and 5
Conflict of parents	Child 6 and 7

#### Sub-Theme 4.1.1: Raised by good parents

Five of the participants shared that they were raised by a good foster parent (queer parents). The parents of *Children 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8* provided a firm concept of love, familial responsibilities, and equitable relationships. However, when it comes to parenting duties, they frequently rely more on each other's qualities and abilities than on socially constructed notions of who is more "motherly" or "fatherly."

#### Sub-theme 4.1.2: Being Bullied

This hostile behavior is when someone continuously hurts or annoys another individual on purpose. Bullying can occur through verbal abuse, physical aggression, or more covert tactics.

#### Sub-theme 4.1.3 Conflict of Parents

The statement of child 6 reflected that misunderstandings between parents are natural, they fight due to problems that caused family relationships resulting to a negative family perspective.

### 4.2 Description of Present Life

#### 4.2.1 Comfortable Life

Description of Present Life	Participants
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	
Comfortable life Crossing to life challenges	Child 2, 3 and 6 Child 1, 4 and 5

According to the accounts of the child participants, two sub-themes was generated based on their transcribed interview. *Child 2, 3 and 6* found contentment in their present life with their queer parents.

#### 4.2.2 Crossing Life Challenges

Aside from their parents' provision of life sustenance still they experience life challenges that they need to overcome. *Child 1* still hoping to find his biological parents, *Child 4* had hard times due to the current family set up and *Child 5* was living alone because his father was working, and he is working too.

## 5. Child Adjustment and Well-being

### 5.1 Psychosocial Adjustment

Child Adjustment and Well-being	Participants
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	
<b>Psychosocial adjustment</b>	
(emotional, denial, identity acceptance of the parents)	Child 1, 4 and 6
Well-being (life contentment)	Child 5, 7 and 8

One of the recurring themes that appeared in the participants' transcripts is the psychosocial adjustment of the participants which includes the emotional, denial and identify acceptance of the parents.

### 5.2 Well-being

Most of the child participants expressed that they have life contentment with their

parents. *Child 5, 7 and 8* stated their sentiments that having an opportunity to have different kinds of parents is an opportunity that others do not experience. According to them, they felt profound feelings of unconditional love received from their respective parents.

### 5.3 Description of Parent's Way of Rearing a Child

#### 5.3.1 Imposition of Discipline

Description of Parent's Way of Rearing a Child	Participants
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	
Imposition of Discipline (Stricter, teaching of good manners)	Child 1, 2 and 5
Provision of Basic Needs	Child 4 and 5
Inculcation of value of education	Child 1, 2 and 6

The narrative accounts of the child participants reflected that their parents imposed stricter discipline among them.

#### 5.3.3 Inculcation of value of education

The first people to have an impact on a child's values are typically its parents.

#### 5.3.2 Provision of Basic Needs

Despite the fact that children's requirements can vary, they all share several needs in common. The basic needs of a kid, such as those for food, water, housing, education, consistency, structure, and guidance, should be understood by parents.

#### 5.4 Learnings of Having Queer Parents

##### 5.4.1 Appreciation

The parents are the foundation of the family and the children. They serve as a child's unending supply of unselfish love and support as well as their beacon for a brighter future. As a result, the child of the queer parents is appreciative to the parenting quality extended by their parents. Their kindness and unconditional love are acknowledged gratefully by their child.

Child Learnings of Having a Queer Parents	Participants
<b>Sub-Theme</b>	
Appreciation (blessed to have a loving, kind queer parent)	Child 1, 2, 6 and 7
Satisfaction and Rewarding	Child 3 and 4

##### 5.4.2 Satisfaction and Rewarding

Most of the child participants are satisfied to their parents doing good job in rearing and

raising them. They are satisfied to the caring role, the provision of guidance and support and

incomparable life because of their parents' genuine love and affection.

#### 6. *Insight from the findings of the Study*

This study may provide some clarity and assist gay men and lesbian women parents in improving their family and parental lives. This

study will aid in the society's increasing acceptance of gay men and lesbian women parents because the Filipino conception of a family is mainly centered on the traditional kind of family.

#### 7. *Proposed Parental Programs*

Key Indicators	Program/ Activities	Objective/s	Persons Involved	Source of Fund	Time Frame	Expected Results/ Outcomes
1. Parenting Support Program	1. Parent information classes and support groups 2. Parental assistance given in response to worries about child raising	. To improve current parenting skills and foster the growth of new ones so that parents have the knowledge and abilities required to fulfill their parental duties and give their kids experiences and opportunities that foster learning and development.	Trainors Facilitators Parents	NGOs other government agencies	Year round	100 percent implemented programs
2. Community-based support programs	1. Seminars and Trainings to enhance parenting competence and capacity-building and help giving practices	To improve the knowledge and parenting abilities of queer parents with the assistance of official and informal social support network members.	Trainors Facilitators Parents	NGOs, LGUs	Year round	100 percent implemented community-based support programs
3. Help-Giving Programs for Building Capacity	1. Seminars and Trainings to support and enhance parents competence and confidence to promote the development of their children on the social competence and development	To assist queer parents in developing their ability to acquire the knowledge and abilities necessary to access resources, supports, and services.	Trainors Facilitators Parents	NGOs, LGUs	Year round	100 percent implemented help giving programs

Key Indicators	Program/ Activities	Objective/s	Persons Involved	Source of Fund	Time Frame	Expected Results/ Outcomes
4. <b>Programs for Social-Emotional Development and Behavior</b>	1. Participatory activities that help to facilitate child social-emotional behavior	To enhance parents abilities to handle and facilitate social and emotional development of their child	Trainors Facilitators Parents	NGOs, LGUs	Year round	100 percent implemented programs on social and emotional development and behavior.

## Conclusion

Most of the queer parents belonged within the age range of more than 40, gay men and lesbian women, unmarried and living with no partner, Roman Catholic, belonged to *Ilokano* and *Tagalog*, college graduate, self-employed with a monthly family income of 20,001 – 30,000 with one child. Most of the child-respondents belonged within the age range of less than 17, male and female, first-born child with one sibling, belonged to household members of three, nephew of the queer parents and lived with their non-biological parents for more than 14 years. Experiences of queer parents into various aspect of parenthood emerged as the theme which was comprised of three sub-themes such as becoming a parent by accident, parental roles and parental challenges. The queer parenting styles of the queer parents were lax parenting style and disciplinarian style. There were two emerging themes derived from the experiences of the child participants. First is that their lived experiences were consisted of three sub-themes such as raised by non-biological parents, being bullied and conflict of parents. Second is description of present life which has two sub-themes such as comfortable life and crossing to life challenges. The child adjustment that emerged was psychosocial adjustment which was composed of emotional, denial, and identity acceptance of parents. The emerging well-being of the child participants was life contentment. The emerging sub-themes under the description of parents' way of rearing a child are imposition of discipline, provision of basic needs and inculcation of value of education. Child participants were appreciative and satisfied with their kind of life they had.

## Recommendations

Since most of the parent were single, the government through the local government units may properly disseminate the Solo Parent Act as to benefits and privileges under the law through series of orientation and assist the queer parents to have their Solo Parents card. The non-government organization, civic organization and the church may conduct series of guidance and counselling, psychological intervention and spiritual nurturing programs and activities to enhance the quality of life among child of the queer parents. Future studies would be able to determine whether there is a difference in the parenting strategies employed by gay men and lesbian women families across various socioeconomic statuses, religions, and ages with a larger sample.

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