



## Feeling good mother/father and other regimes. LGBT people's emotions and parenthoods

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**Título:** Sentirse buena madre/buen padre y otros regímenes. Emociones y parentalidades de personas LGBT.

**Resumen:** En el presente artículo analizamos y discutimos la dimensión emocional que las personas LGBT asocian al ejercicio de la maternidad/paternidad. Basadas en las teorías feministas y las contribuciones de la subalternidad y la interseccionalidad, aplicamos el método biográfico, en un proceso de investigación dialógico-recursivo. Las personas participantes fueron 21 personas LGBT e informantes clave, pertenecientes a la academia, la psicoterapia, la política, y el activismo de la diversidad, de Chile (16), México (4), y Colombia (1); entre 21 y 57 años, con una media de edad de 37.19 y una desviación estándar de 10.03. Encontramos emociones relacionadas al mandato social de "ser una buena madre/un buen padre"; emociones resultantes de la situación de desprotección social y legal; y emociones venidas de la experiencia de parentalidad. Concluimos que las dinámicas de represión/resistencia atraviesan los cuerpos y las emociones son un aspecto fundamental de esta en-carnación; dado ello, el desarrollo de investigaciones enfocadas en emociones puede abrir caminos para alcanzar sociedades más justas a través del cultivo de la sentimentalidad como elemento base de las relaciones que nos mantienen como miembros dignos de la sociedad y considerando el efecto performativo de las demandas emocionales.

**Palabras clave:** Maternidad. Paternidad. Parentalidad. LGBT. Emociones.

**Abstract:** In this article, we analyze and discuss the emotional dimension that LGBT people associate with the exercise of motherhood/fatherhood. Based on feminist theory and subalternity and intersectionality theory contributions, we applied the biographical method to a dialogical-recursive investigative process. Participants were 21 LGBT people and key informants, belonging to academia, psychotherapy, politics, and diversity activism, over 18 years old, from Chile (16), Mexico (4), and Colombia (1); the participants were people between 21 and 57 years of age, with a mean age of 37.19 and a standard deviation of 10.03. We found emotions related to the social mandate to "be a good mother/father"; emotions resulting from social situations such as discrimination and legal lack of protection, and emotions derived from the parenting experience. We conclude that repression/resistance dynamics go through the bodies, and emotions are fundamental to this incarnation. Given this, the development of research focused on emotion can open ways to achieve more just societies through cultivated sentimentality, societies aware of the type of bonds that keep us as worthy members of a society and the performative effect of our emotional demands.

**Keywords:** Motherhood. Fatherhood. Paternity. Parenting. LGBT. Emotions.

### Introduction

LGBTIQ+ people are estimated to constitute approximately 10-12% of the world's population (Movimiento de Integración y Liberación Homosexual (MOVILH), 2018). Several studies conclude that the dynamics of families formed by LGBTIQ+ people do not differ from those of families formed by Cisgender Heterosexual Couples (CHC) in several relevant aspects (Borneskog et al., 2014; Ducharme & Kollar, 2012; Kurdek, 2005, 2008; Quam et al., 2010). Couples formed by LGBTIQ+ people present better indicators than couples formed by CHC in variables such as negotiation on the distribution of housework and forms of conflict resolution (Kurdek, 2005, 2007).

Previous studies have pointed out that sociocultural factors such as support from state institutions, limited access to legal recognition of relationships, discrimination, asylum, lack of support from the family of origin, and need for concealment undermine the level of satisfaction in LGBTIQ+ people (Butterfield & Padavic, 2014; Claire & Williams, 2017; Frost, 2013; Glass & Few-Demo, 2013; Graham & Barnow, 2013; Szymanski et al., 2015; Zoe, 2014). These difficulties have been related to the constant challenging of

gender roles that LGBTIQ+ people perform in heterocisnormative cultures (Goldberg & Smith, 2011; Kurdek, 2008; Lannutti, 2011), and to the specific negative mental health indicators present in LGBTIQ+ populations caused by constantly dealing with homo/lesbo/bi/transphobia and discrimination (Citation omitted, 2021a, 2021b; Barrientos & Cárdenas, 2013; Martínez et al., 2017; Tomicic et al., 2016).

Heterosexual parenthood is considered the foundational core of the family (Libson, 2009; Robaldo, 2011). The heteronormative conception of the family does not consider LGBTIQ+ people, as it confuses parenthood with fecundity, assimilating Sex-Affective and Gender Diversity (SAGD) with sterility and arguing that a same-sex couple cannot reproduce "naturally" and, therefore, could not exercise parenthood (Leyton & Trabucco, 2014).

This heteronormative conception of the family constitutes the justification for not establishing legal/social structures that allow LGBTIQ+ people to exercise parenthood on equal terms with CHCs; which (re)produces symbolic violence through the normalization/validation of the heterocisnormative dominant position and the exclusion/marginalization of the subaltern group (Alberdi & Mardones, 2016, 2021a; Díez, 2015, 2016; Laguna, 2016; Lui, 2020).

Despite the current social/legal lack of protection and resisting these limitations, LGBTIQ+ people exercise parenthood under these adverse circumstances (Alberdi &

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Mardones, 2016; 2021a; Buendía & Douglas, 2012; Díez, 2015, 2016; Herrera, 2009). Internationally, studies on LGBTIQ+ families have focused mostly on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual individuals (Condat et al., 2020). The study of families formed by LGBTIQ+ people is still an emerging area (Condat et al. 2020; Imrie et al., 2020), so qualitative methodologies approached has been recommended (Imrie et al., 2020; Lerner et al., 2015; Zadeh et al., 2019).

We are specifically interested in highlighting the discourse of LGBTIQ+ people concerning the emotions generated regarding the possibility or the exercise of parenthood. The aim is to place at the center of the analysis the "sentient actor[/actress], the body and affectivity" (Ariza, 2016, p. 9) within the framework of the structures and relationships in which they insert their practices, and which endow them with meaning, recognizing that emotions have a fundamental role in all social phenomena (Ariza, 2016; Bericat, 2016). Following the feminist postulate "the personal is political", emotions should be considered as politicized relationships (Lui, 2020).

Following Eduardo Bericat (2016), we understand emotions as the embodied of the importance that an event in the world has for a person. We postulate that parenthood is an experience that must be understood considering the emotions that emerge when evoking its possibility and its exercise, likewise, the meanings associated with it.

We framed this research within the epistemological shift called the affective turn (Ariza, 2016; Clough & Halley, 2007; Crespo, 2018), which to recognize emotions as part of a system of interaction of people towards their environment that constitutes an effective and intelligent response (Ariza, 2016; Bericat, 2016; Crespo, 2018).

We seek to contribute to the challenge of implementing theories of emotions in the empirical field (Ariza, 2016), showing an alternative methodological approach in studying complex psychosocial phenomena (2021a).

We believe that people located on the margins of the established order, in their struggle for recognition and the exercise of rights, question the hegemonic currents of thought and practice (2021a; Cabello, 2018; Crespo, 2018). The study of emotions in LGBTIQ+ persons is relevant because it allows for the analysis of the daily experiences of subalternity, exclusion, and discrimination to which they are subjected.

In this article, we present part of the results of research conducted from a feminist perspective, in which we seek to make visible the exercise of parenthood from the SAGD and the emotions around it. We intend to nourish the local-situated analysis with knowledge generated in Latin American environments regarding the question: How are the emotional/affective experiences of parenthood of LGBTIQ+ people?

### Methods

Participants were LGBTIQ+ people and key informants from academia, psychotherapy, politics, and SAGD activism. The inclusion criterion for the sample in general was being over 18 years of age; for LGBTIQ+ persons an additional inclusion criterion was belonging to the SAGD community; for key informants, the additional inclusion criterion was having training or working in fields that allowed them to generate a structured discourse on the life experiences of LGBTIQ+ persons. Refusal to sign the informed consent form was considered as an exclusion criterion. We followed Julio Mejía's (1999, 2000) socio-structural sampling format.

Socio-structural sampling derives from the logic of selection of negative cases applied in comparative case studies (Neiman, & Quaranta, 2006; Stake, 1999; Yin, 2008). Negative cases are those located at the opposite pole of a certain condition that appears to be relevant. For example, if the people interviewed -who live in an environment where an same-sex marriage law has not been proclaimed- state that the existence of such a law is necessary for the exercise of rights, a case is sought that can account for the effects that the existence of such a law has in their specific context. Given that data production and analysis occur jointly in the recursive research process, methodological decisions regarding the sample can be generated under a flexible projective model (Yin, 2008).

We considered socio-structural conditions (Montañés, 2012; Montañés & Lay-Lisboa, 2019), such as the experience of having children and the social/legal regulations related to conjugality/affiliation in the place of residence-for which we interviewed 21 LGBTIQ+ people from Chile, Colombia and Mexico, between 21 and 57 years old, with a mean age of 37.19 and a standard deviation of 10.03. The socio-structural sampling scheme is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1**  
Socio-structural sampling (Source: 2021b)

Discurso	Estructurado				No estructurado												
	Activistas	Academia	Investigación	Psicoterapia													
	1	2	3	4													
					Estructura social												Baja
					Media alta												6
					Estructura legal												
					Con matrimonio igualitario												
					7												
					Parentalidad	En ejercicio						No ejercicio					
					Identidad de género	Cis			Trans			Cis			Trans		
						Hombre	Mujer	Masculino	Femenino	Hombre	Mujer	Masculino	Femenino				
					Orientación sexo-afectiva												
						Homosexual	Bisexual	Lesbiana	Bisexual	Homosexual	Bisexual	Lesbiana	Bisexual	Homosexual	Bisexual	Lesbiana	Bisexual
						12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11		

The search for negative cases generated that the sample included people of low, medium and high socioeconomic level; with primary, secondary, technical, university, master and doctorate education; from rural areas, small cities, regional capitals and national capitals; Catholics, evangelicals, non-practicing of any religion, atheists and agnostics; people of different age ranges and phenotypes; of right, center and left political tendency; unemployed, with sporadic work and with stable work; people who lived in environments with gender identity law, without equal marriage and without adoption; without gender identity law, with equal marriage and without adoption; without gender identity law, without equal marriage and without adoption; with gender identity law, with equal marriage and with adoption.

This research was approved by the authorized Scientific Ethical Committee, complying with legal safeguards. To ensure confidentiality, we coded the participants according to their initials or a self-assigned pseudonym and characterization variables (gender identity, age, place of residence, number of children); they were identified with the same code in all instances of the research. Table 1 shows the codes corresponding to the interviews reproduced in this article.

**Table 1**  
*Participating codes (Source: Own elaboration)*

Participant	Code
Trans man, Activist, Chile, 21 years old, 0 children	J.O.
Lesbian woman, Psychologist, Chile, 37 years old, two children	Saau
Gay man, Researcher, Colombia, 47 years old, 0 children	M.R.
Lesbian woman, Physician, Chile, 24 years old, 0 children	Na
Bisexual man, Self-employed, Chile, 34 years old, one child	Sebastian
Bisexual woman, Therapist, Chile, 34 years old, 0 children	C.V.
Trans woman, Activist, Chile, 52 years old, two children	N.O.
Bisexual woman, Self-Employed, Chile, 35 years old, one child	Alicia
Gay man, Dependent Worker, Chile, 45 years old, three children	Albus

We conducted 24 open-ended interviews (Josselson & Lieblich, 1993/2007), which were analyzed using a tactic called "Intersectional Loom" (2021a), with which different social identities exercised by the participants are identified/analyzed (Choo & Ferree, 2010) seeking to understand the multiplicity of experiences of oppression they live (Viveros, 2016) by evoking emotions through biographical accounts (Ariza, 2016).

In the interview, the open-ended question "What emotions do you associate with the experience of being a mother/father from the SAGD?" was posed, whose answers were transcribed and grouped in an analysis grid. Following Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2011), we sought to validate the participants' discourses by presenting their spontaneous answers to this question; even when the answer provided does not fit the emotions described by hegemonic science, since the authenticity of the accounts seems to us worthy of being relieved. Text excerpts were analyzed under the phe-

nomenological paradigm and through the constant comparative method (Vasilachis, 2006).

## Results

According to Ariza (2016), emotions can be analyzed due to social situations, as a cause of these, or as an intervening variable. In the present study, participants analyze the implications of emotions concerning the possibility or exercise of parenthood.

It is essential to point out that in the analysis of our informants' discourses, we have distinguished between basic emotions and moral emotions derived from the cultural context and the available referents. Thus, representations related to the "good mother/good father", the welfare of children, the traditional family, and its legitimizing legal frameworks, with the whole set of values they contain, integrate the cultural frameworks in which emotions linked to morality, such as shame, anguish, pride, among others, are experienced.

Basic emotions would be highly linked to the experience of parenthood, while moral emotions would be present to a greater extent in the narratives related to the possibility of parenthood and the assessment between pros and cons in a situated manner.

### Emotions arising from the social mandate to be a "good mother/good father"

The demands regarding the exercise of parenthood have increased in recent decades, which has become a professionalization of motherhood (Castañeda-Rentería, 2016; Palomar, 2005; Sanhueza-Morales, 2005). The cultural change implied by the crisis of hegemonic masculinity has led to new demands on fatherhood (Montesinos, 2004).

These new demands that appear concerning the exercise of parenthood are added to the responsibility assumed by mothers/fathers of the SAGD:

To be a parent, you have to have a lot of patience and self-control and, as I was telling you just now, people say, "Oh, I want to be a good father, a good mother. First-timers are always kind of afraid of everything, and I think, being from diversity, there is that other fear ... There comes the "Will we be prepared?" Emotionally, financially, "will we be able to achieve what we are setting out to achieve? Won't it affect us if we do not make it?". Emotions change as you get closer to being able to do it [have a child]. (J.O., personal communication, 23 April 2019).

Specifically referring to the internalized stigma that some LGBTIQ+ people have (Herrera, 2007, 2009; Pantoja-Bohórquez et al., 2020), adverse judgments against oneself appear, where a feeling of degradation, disadvantage, or the idea that the person is not what he/she should be or is seen as inappropriate by another observer is glimpsed (Hansberg, 1996):

Above all, I believe that there are reasons that may be linked to the fear of being judged as a bad father or bad mother for being gay, bisexual, lesbian, or trans, for being a violator of children's rights ... fear, yes, fear, fear of making a mistake with children, of not knowing what to do in moments of crisis, whatever it may be, to whether I am going to be a good father or a good mother. (M.R., personal communication, 31 May 2019).

Faced with the mandate of parenthood in societies where the heterosexual-cisgender couple forming a family institution is constituted as the ideal framework for the birth and upbringing of children, emotions of guilt are generated:

Feelings of guilt also ... For being the way they are. Often, that complicates the rest, and they tend to blame themselves because the other might feel bad in front of the situation in which they find themselves. Guilt for not having been "normal", and for having exposed themselves to complex situations, and for having exposed their children to complex situations. From there, much guilt. (C.V., personal communication, 16 December 2019).

As a counterpart, the pride of being recognized as a good mother/good father also appears, but leaving out the sex-affective dimension of the father/mother subject:

I am strict, I feel... with my son. Not mean or harsh. Moreover, he likes that. Because mom is a little bit relaxed, he feels that I am a little stricter, and he feels that "Well, dad, you are right". And that is good... that is what I am strict about: transmitting things and transmitting values. I think it has influenced them well. My son feels that influence, and my ex-partner, his mother, sometimes tells me, "He sees you as a reference, the one who tells him things" and she kind of recognizes that positively. (Sebastian, personal communication, 10 January 2020).

### **Emotions resulting from social situations: discrimination and lack of legal protection**

#### *Emotions that appear when faced with the possibility of suffering discrimination*

LGBTIQ+ people constantly deal with discrimination (2021a; 2021b; Barrientos et al., 2019; Barrientos et al., 2012; Barrientos et al., 2016; Tomacic et al., 2016). Such discrimination impacts environments, leading them to experience emotions such as fear of discrimination and anguish, above all, referred to transferring the effects of that discrimination to their children.

Fear of discrimination:

The issue is when you go outside, and that is a fear that one has more than for oneself, but for one's

children. That they will be rejected, too... So, that is the main obstacle. One's fear ... is a fear that I do not know ... more than anything for my son. Because, finally, if they say something to me ... I leave, I do not talk to that person again. But with my children, what would that father say to that son? "Hey, do not get together with S. because he...[has two mothers]".(Saau, personal communication, 3 February 2020).

Some testimonies point to the feeling of "anguish" related to the fear of discrimination, to injustice, and nostalgia associated with the impossibility of having access to live as a mother/parent without being exposed to discrimination or violence.

Sometimes I feel anguish, like pain, you know? It makes me feel sorry. I do not know. Anguish suddenly. It has happened to me, and suddenly I feel anguish to hold hands in the street as a couple ... To walk together as a couple with my son and that people look at us strangely. (Sebastian, personal communication, 10 January 2020).

#### *Emotions associated with lack of legal protection*

The lack of legal guidelines that regulate their parent relationships generates invisibilization, social/legal unprotection and may result in LGBTIQ+ people deciding not to have children under these circumstances (Alberdi & Mardones, 2016; 2021a; Díez, 2015, 2016; Herrera, 2009; MOVILH, 2018; Rodríguez, 2011; Spauldo, 2017), based on a series of emotions associated with such unprotection.

Fear:

I am also afraid of that. For example, that my son is angry and says, "But you are not my mom, really" and there, of course, the fact that mom or dad is the one who raises the child, yes, but it is still complex to think that, legally, you are not going to be. (Na, personal communication, 17 May 2019).

A specific fear that arises in this area is that - since there are more significant legal safeguards for the parents of a child than for the foster mothers/fathers - certain forms of access to parenthood are restricted by the fear of losing the child in the hypothetical future litigation against the biological mother/father:

The option was always [donor] not known because the same-sex relationship is not valid. So, what if they want to take your child away from you? Imagine, even if it is your best friend. There are cases, even that they do it between cousins, who are donors. The thing is that you don't know what might happen tomorrow. So, we said "No". It is better to do it the other way [with an unknown donor] so that tomorrow they do not come and

want to take it away from you or something like that. (Saau, personal communication, 3 February 2020).

Fear also has an essential reference in the suffering experienced by foster mothers/fathers. Some participants reported having suffered the experience of losing their children because of the request of the biological mother/father, "Yes, you suffer when they are taken away from you, because it is like something of yours, something that you had a hard time with, do you understand? To teach him/her to talk, to teach him/her to walk". (N.O., personal communication, 5 May 2019).

#### Frustration:

Moreover, as for the [equal marriage] law, nothing will happen because what was proposed by X candidate is not going to happen. And now, obviously, one knows that with the new [right-wing conservative government] that is coming, it is not going to happen either. I mean, I feel that, in Chile, [egalitarian] marriage is not going to happen either... I try not to think about those things. I try to be very aware of what happens with the laws, I really worry about that, I worry that there is no change now or in the next few years and it is like: "What a pity". (Na, personal communication, 17 May 2019).

#### Hope:

"Anyway, I am very happy when in other countries it is already possible, I celebrate it internally, and I hope it will happen in Chile as well". (Na, personal communication, 17 May 2019).

### Emotions derived from the parenting experience

#### *Emotions associated with the expectation of the exercise of parenthood.*

Robaldo (2011) points out that the imperative of heterosexual parenthood (re)produces a notion of kinship founded on procreation, which promotes that non-traditional families are seen as something undesirable that deserves to be rejected (Pantoja-Bohórquez et al., 2020). Stigma and prejudice become informal mechanisms of social control of gender constructions/sexual orientations that depart from the heterocisnormative (Pantoja-Bohórquez et al., 2020). Furthermore, they are incorporated by LGBTIQ+ people, leading them to question their right to access and exercise parenthood (Herrera, 2007, 2009; Spauldo, 2017).

#### Uncertainty:

I feel that nowadays, I do not know if I am uncertain or cannot see a glimpse of the future. I am uncertain because I do not know if I will be able to get married and maybe have our son [who currently lives with his ex-partner] live with us. I do not know how what is

coming. (Sebastian, personal communication, 10 January 2020).

#### Anxiety:

[Anxiety] is what happens to all parents, and I think that anxiety will never stop increasing because: you will have the anxiety to be able to apply to have the child, you will have the anxiety to get the child, you will have anxiety because the child will grow, you will have anxiety because he will learn this and that, so, being a parent creates constant anxiety about the baby. (J.O., personal communication, 23 April 2019).

Much anxiety. Because we wanted so much for him [her son] to be born, we wanted so much to be moms... we had so much, so much, so much... anxiety, that we planned everything to be with our son all the time; for example, I worked part-time, my partner had a job that allowed her to be at home and work the schedule is not so strict and with our son, we were with him until he was three and a half years old, he was never alone. In the morning, he was with me, and in the afternoon, he was with my partner. (Saau, personal communication, 3 February 2020).

#### Wishful thinking:

I think that, perhaps, when you do not have something, you want it so badly that you will take care of it [a child] much more than someone who can have it just for the sake of having it. (N.O., personal communication, 5 May 2019).

In a heterosexual couple, these unforeseen, unplanned pregnancies appear, but not in other couples, so it is a different issue, like "Hey, let us have a child" and you have to plan, you have to pay for it... that is how it is, it is different, in that sense. Moreover, I think it is nice, in my opinion, to plan and want something and make it happen, that is, not to demean pregnancies... not at all... [laughs] but, it is different... Making plans, trips, parties, birthdays, that is the same. Teaching them how to do ridiculous things like tie their shoes, brush their teeth. "Wow". And in the end, being old and seeing that they also have their own life and you did your job well. (Na, personal communication, 17 May 2019).

#### Hope:

I feel that it motivated me; I find it extraordinary that one can create life. And that you can bring something into the world even though the world is so complicated. Sometimes you say, "Why did I bring him into this troubled world?" However, I think that, for the same reason, I have hope that my son will contribute to making this world a better place. (Sebastian, personal communication, 10 January 2020).

*Emotions associated with parenting experiences.*

Heterosexual parenthood is considered the foundational core of the family (Libson, 2009; Robaldo, 2011), so Latin American States have (re)produced hegemonic conventions, turning laws regarding marriage/filiation into guardians of heterosexuality as the pattern of "normal" sexual practices (Alberdi & Mardones, 2016; Laguna, 2016; Olavarría, 2014; Salazar, 2012).

Despite the existing social/legal unprotection and resisting these limitations, LGBTIQ+ people exercise parenthood under these adverse circumstances (Alberdi & Mardones, 2016; 2021a; Buendía & Douglas, 2012; Díez, 2015, 2016; Herrera, 2009), which results, according to the accounts of our participants in several emotions.

*Meaning of life:*

It gives a meaning to life, you know, for me before I became a father, I do not know, even Christmas was not meaningful, it was like, I do not know, just any other holiday. On the other hand, when my son was born, everything was different. (Albus, personal communication, 11 February 2020).

You can learn from your children. So, they can give you life lessons, inspire you, and give meaning to your life as well. I mean, suddenly, it has happened to me that I have gone through moments of anguish and pain, and I also feel that my son is like an inspiration. Well, for him, I must be well to get ahead. I must leave him a better society. He also motivates me to fight for the society I want. I feel that he is a new motivation for something I had, which was ideal. To fight for justice, to fight against injustice. As if, from now on, my son is part of that inspiration for many things. He taught me to have a stronger motive to fight for what I believe in. (Sebastian, personal communication, 10 January 2020).

*Concerns:*

"Obviously, maybe you have more worries when you have two, in terms of 'Oh, I hope something bad is not going to happen to them'. Well, that is always there when you are a mom. You are always kind of worried". (Saau, personal communication, 3 February 2020).

It gives you worries, terrible worries, you want... the only thing I want is for this one to grow, but they grow, and the worries are different, you know, you feel responsible for the fact of guiding them, so, just as there are joys, there are also worries... you have those worries, the worries that they are well, that they arrive well, that something does not happen to them in the street, that... they find their way in life, you

know, that they find their happiness. (Albus, personal communication, 11 February 2020).

*Fear:*

One has all those fears, fear of, when they go out, that they arrive safely, one is always worried about them, one way or another, my son goes out partying, and I do not know anything about him, before I was more worried, before I could not even sleep, now at least I sleep, but still when he has not arrived home at a certain time I start: "Where are you? where are you?". (Albus, personal communication, 11 February 2020).

A specific fear arises in association with the possibility that the children - being engendered by different assisted reproduction techniques and being adopted - may not have the same genetic load and that this may harm them in the event of developing some pathology in the future:

"If something happens to them concerning health, if they are all siblings with the same genetics, all the better, or not?" I was telling you it is a thought that sometimes one also has, you know? For example, if they need a donor, I hope it does not happen, but if they need a bone marrow or blood donor, they are not siblings [could be a problem]. (Na, personal communication, 17 May 2019).

*Despair:*

Based on the difficulties experienced by diverse families in raising their children, participants recognize the need for social support, which, when absent, generates feelings of despair: "The desperation of being alone, as of not having a tribe or someone to physically support". (Alicia, personal communication, 11 February 2020).

*Responsibility:*

Everything you do, say, and behave influences your child. Because they are so small, and they are processing all the information for themselves, and they are a model of you too. And you try to get the best out of yourself, even though you have, and you know you have, millions of bad things; but you try to set an example that is the best of you. (Saau, personal communication, 3 February 2020).

*Vulnerability:*

After my son was born, it was the first time I felt vulnerable, I felt... with certain impotence, you know, the fact of not having control over certain things because when my son went to the hospital [due to an illness], it was like this: "Ah!", my world fell apart, like all that hardness that you have, with them you lose it, you know? they make you vulnerable... they are your

weakness, because... you continue... you have to be strong for them, but everything that affects them affects you twice as much. (Albus, personal communication, 11 February 2020).

#### Happiness/Joy:

"I am happy being a father and having a son. Despite all the complexities I tell you about, I am happy... Sure, it makes me happy and generates joy, but sometimes uncertainty". (Sebastian, personal communication, 10 January 2020).

That share of happiness when the children get to see them as they are [after the parent makes a transition]. They feel happy, besides, for example... I have a patient who arrived as a man and transitioned into a woman in the [therapeutic] process. She tells me that, for her, she was able to be a mother, deep down, and that generates enormous happiness for her; even though she was born a man, she made the transition after she had two children and that for her was like a gift ... So, she is very happy to be a mother. To have been able to be a mother, because today she is... like her two children call her "Ami" [from "mami", in Spanish, an affectionate way of referring to mom], which would be like mom. In that sense, it is lovely. (C.V., personal communication, 16 December 2019).

To really build something from the beginning, which is to raise someone, to teach someone, to give them opportunities, at least, it happens to me that I want to give them opportunities that I did not have when I was younger, and to do that together with the person that one decides, seems super nice and it makes me happy to think about it and say "Independently, at the end of the day, I hope my children will be happy with what I can give them and with the capabilities that they will develop later on". (Na, personal communication, 17 May 2019).

#### Pride:

"[It gives] pride to know that you are in life with another human being who is a little smaller and a little less expert in certain things, but who can teach you many things as well". (M.R., personal communication, 31 May 2019).

#### Love:

Love, very intense love ... love. To love and feel a different emotion is super cliché because everybody says, "You have to feel it". And you are like, "Yeah, yeah." But it is like such a deep love, which also comes with responsibility, which implies maturity, and as I was saying, you become empowered. (Saau, personal communication, 3 February 2020).

[One] learns to love one's children with their defects and their virtues; because even though they are young, they still have things, they have their own habits, they are messy, they are stubborn, their ideas drive them, they are bad-tempered, and one learns to know them and has to learn to know them with all those things, and to love them with all those things it is delicious. (N.O., personal communication, 5 May 2019).

#### Empowerment:

It happens that it gives you much power to be a mother; you feel powerful. It does not really matter what happens because you must care for someone who depends totally on you and loves you so much. It is like you become more empowered as a woman, and you have fewer fears. (Saau, personal communication, 3 February 2020).

#### Empathy:

I believe that you must educate your children, but you also must take a step back to remember how you were, you know what I mean? Then you also must understand the reason for your children's behavior, so you also must be empathetic, to have empathy, understanding, and comprehension. (N.O., personal communication, 5 May 2019).

## Conclusions

In this article, we present part of the results of research conducted from a feminist perspective, in which we seek to make visible the exercise of parenthood from the SAGD by answering the question: How are the emotional/affective experiences of parenthood of LGBTIQ+ people?

We identify basic emotions such as joy, fear, sadness, and anger, as well as "moral emotions" (Ariza, 2016) that connect the person with the social structure and culture.

We find on the one hand, emotions arising from the social mandate to "be a good mother/good father" that include tensions between the guilt of "being the way they are" and exposing children to complex situations and the pride of being recognized as a good mother/good father, this tension is attempted to be resolved from the exercise of a careful and responsible parenting that can be recognized as a source of pride in being a good mother/good father for their children; this same intention has been found in trans populations in Anglo-Saxon contexts (Imrie et al., 2020).

We also find emotions resulting from social situations such as discrimination and legal unprotection. Those emotions arise from the possibility of discrimination (such as fear and anguish) and emotions associated with legal unprotection (including fear of not being the child's parent), fear of losing children in possible litigation against the biological mother/father, suffering from having lost children at the request of the parent, frustration when pro-rights legal initia-

tives are held up in the legislative process and hope when legislative advances are made.

Regarding the experience of parenting, we found emotions associated with the expectation of parenting (uncertainty, anxiety, wishful thinking, and hope) and emotions associated with parenting experiences (meaning of life, concerns, fear, despair, responsibility, vulnerability, happiness/joy, pride, love, empowerment, empathy).

We highlight the in-corporation of prejudice (internalized stigma) that results in the impossibility of self-perceiving oneself as a potential parent, even when LGBTIQ+ persons have exercised or are exercising the role; this leads to self-exclusion from the exercise of rights, as described by Barrientos et al. (2016, 2019) in previous research. Also the concern expressed by LGBTIQ+ people regarding transmitting the discrimination they are victims of to their children and violating the rights of children by forming a diverse family. The fear of introducing a new LGBTIQ+ partner also appears when the children were born in previous heterosexual relationships or when the person has made a transition after the birth of the children; the presence of this phenomenon has also been described in non-Latino settings by Condat et al. (2020) and Imrie et al. (2020).

Regarding the contrasts between the experiences of lesbian/gay and trans parenthood; We found similar conditions to those described by Herrera (2007, 2009) and Spauldo (2017) regarding the maternities of lesbian women. The richness provided by the present work is the broader consideration of the phenomenon of parenthood that arises from the participation of GBT population within the sample, which allowed to make visible aspects such as that the higher level of social stress to which trans people are subjected (Barrientos et al., 2019) also appears in relation to their exercise of parenthood, reinforced in the situation of trans women.

Research on emotions has gained relevance, starting from the affective turn, as its evolutionary function is recognized, in the construction of frameworks of meaning and the modulation of social interaction (Ariza, 2016; Bericat, 2016);

emotions are here conceived as an element of psychopolitics, rooted in individual intelligence, but also as a social, cultural, and historical element (Crespo, 2018).

In this sense, we follow Bericat (2016) regarding the relevance of continuing to inquire about the emotions that are interwoven in different social dynamics, above all, from the perspective of subalternized/minoritized people, who can account for the differences in the hierarchical distributions of power and access and exercise of rights (2021a; Cabello, 2018; Crespo, 2018).

The dynamics of repression/resistance traverse bodies, and emotions are a fundamental aspect of that in-carnation. Emotional meaning is an object of conflict that can be approached from the conception of otherness through dialogic processes, where struggles for emotional meanings (e.g., the subversive use of the phrases gay pride/gay shame) can open paths to achieve more just societies through the political strand of the demand/demand for dignity based on what Crespo (2018) posits as a cultivated sentimentality. Society needs to be aware of the kind of bonds that keep us as worthy members of a society and the performative effect of our emotional demands (Crespo, 2018; Liu, 2020).

As a limitation of the research, we consider the difficulty we had in contacting and including intersex and queer people in the research; although the circumstances experienced by people of diversity have some shared aspects, it would have been interesting to have first source accounts; although we had the perspective of participants who had accompanied intersex people in relation to their maternity/paternity, which was included in the analysis carried out.

## Complementary information

**Authorship.** The authors of this manuscript declare that all have participated in the gathering of data, analysis of results and drawing up the report.

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