

The Gypsy Community Facing the Sexual Orientation: An Empirical Approach to the Attitudes of the Gypsy Population of Granada Towards Homosexual Sex-Affective Relationships

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Abstract : The gypsy community has been a mistreated and rejected group since its arrival in the Iberian Peninsula in the 15th century. At present, despite being the largest ethnic minority group in Spain as well as in Europe, the different legal and social initiatives in favour of equality continue to suffer discrimination by the general society. This has fostered a strengthening of the endogroup accompanied by cultural conservatism as a form of self-protection. Despite the current trend of normalization of sexual diversity in modern societies, LGB people continue to suffer discrimination, especially in more traditional environments or communities. This rejection for reasons of sexual orientation within the family or community can hinder the free development of the person and compromise peaceful coexistence. The present work is intended as an approach to the attitudes of the gypsy population towards non-heterosexual sexual orientation. The objective is none other than 'to know the appreciation that the gypsy population has about homosexual sex-affective relationships, in order to assess whether this has any impact on family and community coexistence'. The following specific objectives are derived from this general objective: 'To find out whether there is a relationship between the dichotomous Roma gender system and the acceptance/rejection of homosexuality'; 'to analyse whether sexual orientation has an impact on the coexistence of the Roman family and community'; 'to analyse whether the historical discrimination suffered by the Roman population favours the maintenance of the patriarchal heterosexual reproductive family'; and lastly 'to explore whether ICTs have promoted the process of normalisation and/or acceptance of homosexuality within the Roma community'. In order to achieve these objectives, a bibliographical and documentary review has been used, as well as the semi-structured interview technique, in which 4 gypsy people participated (2 women and 2 men of different ages). One of the main findings was the inappropriateness of the use of the homogenising category "Gypsy People" at present, given the great diversity among the Roma communities. Moreover, the difficulty in accepting homosexuality seems to be related to the fact that the heterosexual reproductive family has been the main survival mechanism of Roma communities over centuries. However, it will be concluded that attitudes towards homosexuality will vary depending on the socio-economic and cultural context and factors such as age or professed religion. Three main contributions of this research are: firstly, the inclusion of sexual orientation as a variable to be considered when analysing peaceful coexistence; secondly socio-historical dynamics and structures of inequality have been taken into account when analysing Roma attitudes towards homosexuality; and finally, the processual nature of socio-cultural changes has also been considered.

Keywords : gender, homosexuality, ICTs, peaceful coexistence, Roma community, sexual orientation

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