The Family Lives of Australian Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People: A Review of the

Literature and a Research Agenda

Abstract

Families and relationships are important social domains in which the circumstances of

lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people often differ from those of heterosexual people.

Gaining a better understanding of the family experiences of Australian LGB populations has

important implications for developing our knowledge about the changing demography and

dynamics of Australian family life, as well as informing policy, practice, and public debate.

This paper reports the findings of a review of empirical scholarship on the family experiences

and outcomes of Australian LGB people published between 2000 and 2016, including

academic publications and grey literature. The search yielded 99 outputs concerned with

union formation, intimate partner relationships, pathways to and experiences of parenthood,

child wellbeing, 'coming out', relationships with family-of-origin, social networks and

support, and access to family services. There was wide coverage and a marked increase in

LGB family scholarship over time, and a predominance of qualitative over quantitative

studies. We identified several areas in which further Australian evidence is needed, including

union dissolution, child adoption, relationships with extended family, and interactions with

institutions providing family services. Australian scholarship would also benefit from

leveraging new panel datasets and probability samples, considering intersectionality, and

contributing to cross-national comparative studies.

Keywords: Australia; bisexual; families; gay; lesbian; review; same-sex couples

The Family Lives of Australian Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People: A Review of the

Literature and a Research Agenda

Increases in the visibility and social acceptance of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB)

people over the past few decades have been accompanied by a recognition of the need to

account for their experiences in social science scholarship (de Lira & de Morais, 2018;

Newman et al., 2018; Peplau & Fingerhut, 2007; Rothblum, 2009; Umberson, Thomeer,

Kroeger, Lodge, & Xu, 2015). Families and relationships are an important social domain in

which the experiences of LGB people may differ from those of their heterosexual peers

(Rodrigues, Lopes, & Prada, 2018). For example, being LGB is often at odds with the ability

or willingness to satisfy the heteronormative family model—where families are defined as

comprising a man, a woman and one or more children (Soler, Caldwell, Cordova, Harper, &

Bauermeister, 2018). Yet, despite increasing recognition of LGB populations in the

Australian legal, political and public arena, we know comparatively little about their family

dynamics and outcomes.

The Australian cultural and legal context concerning LGB issues is internationally

distinctive. OECD data indicates that Australia ranks 10th out of 35 OECD countries in

average acceptance of homosexuality (Valfort, 2017), while Perales and Campbell (2018)

document a rapid increase in public support of equal rights for same-sex couples in Australia

(from 39% in 2005 to 66% in 2015). Based on earlier data, Perales (2016) noted that in 1983

76% of Australians believed that homosexuality was 'unjustifiable', and 32% did not want to

have 'homosexuals' (sic) as neighbours. By 2012, these figures had fallen to 38% and 14%

respectively. The legislative environment in Australia has also shifted in recent years. Upon

British settlement in 1788, English laws regulating sexual behaviour were brought into

Australia. In subsequent decades, each of Australia's eight mainland states and territories

implemented their own legal codes, introducing significant legislative variation that lasted

until the 2010s. By 1997, all states and territories had decriminalised homosexuality, and by 2017 all but the Northern Territory had legalised adoption by same-sex couples. In 2008, the Australian Government introduced nationwide legislation that equalised the rights of *de facto* same-sex and opposite-sex couples in areas such as pensions, taxation, social security, citizenship, and child support. In 2013, further changes made it unlawful to discriminate individuals based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status. Concerning marriage, the 2004 Marriage Amendment Act changed national law to effectively ban same-sex marriage. This situation lasted until December 2017, after 61.6% of the population expressed support for same-sex marriage in a national postal vote taking place in November 2017 (Perales & Todd, 2018).

Gaining a better understanding of the family experiences of LGB Australians has important implications for policy and practice. First, LGB people constitute a sizeable portion of the Australian population. Estimates suggest that in 2016 there were nearly 600,000 non-heterosexual adults in Australia—which amounts to 3.2% of the general Australian adult population (Wilson & Shalley, 2018). In the 2016 Australian Census, there were 46,800 same-sex couples, a 39% increase from the 33,700 recorded in the 2011 Census (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018b). Approximately 8,400 children ages 0 to 15 are being raised within these families (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018b; see also Crouch, McNair, Waters, & Power, 2013). Second, a key Government-commissioned review recommended major reforms to the Australian Welfare System because it often fails to identify social collectives, such as LGB people, at risk of social exclusion (Department of Social Services, 2015). Evidence suggests that LGB people experience comparatively high levels of socio-economic disadvantage, including elevated rates of health problems, material deprivation, and victimization (see e.g., Institute of Medicine, 2011; Perales, 2016; Uhrig, 2015; Williams & Mann, 2017). Since the delivery of services by the Australian income-support system is

structured around families, evidence on the family lives of Australian sexual minorities can facilitate efficient and effective service delivery to this at-risk population. Third, LGB people have been and remain the subject of intense media and political discussion, chiefly in relation to their rights to marry and raise children within same-sex couples. In the US, federal judiciaries have relied on evidence from social science research to make legal decisions about marriage and adoption in same-sex couples (Peplau & Fingerhut, 2007; Rothblum, 2009; Umberson et al., 2015). In Australia, the arguments held by different sides of the public debate preceding the 2017 national vote on marriage equality were often structured around their respective perceptions of the family relationships and dynamics of LGB people (see e.g., Windschuttle, Walsh, & Cowen, 2017). Yet these arguments rarely had robust empirical groundings.

For these reasons, documenting and synthetising the available scholarship on the family lives of Australian LGB people and identifying gaps in knowledge constitutes an important exercise. It is also vital to progress our knowledge of current and emerging developments in Australian family life. This article fills a gap in knowledge by reviewing Australian literature published between the turn of the 21st Century up to the onset of recent debates leading onto the 2017 marriage equality national vote. While previous literature reviews on family studies of Australian LGB people exist, conducting a new review is important. First, previous reviews were typically thematically narrower than the present one. Second, because the Australian literature was less developed, these reviews usually involved lengthier discussions of international than Australian studies. Third, as explained before, there has been rapid attitudinal and legislative change concerning LGB issues in Australia since 2000, and further change is likely to occur. Fourth, earlier reviews are becoming dated and, as we show below, scholarship on the family lives of Australian LGB people has gained momentum over the past five years.

Search Protocol

This is a 'critical' or 'narrative' review involving a systematized search process (see e.g., Borawska-Charko, Rohleder, & Finlay, 2017). We undertook a search of scholarship published in print or online between January 2000 and December 2016. We searched for materials available in key scholarly databases for social science research in Australia: Web of Science, Scopus, Journal Storage (JSTOR), and Australian Public Affairs Full Text (APA-FT). These databases were chosen because they (i) were deemed the most likely to contain social scientific studies focusing on family relationships, processes and outcomes, and (ii) are routinely employed in systematic reviews within the social sciences. In each of these databases, we searched using the key terms "Australia" or "Australian" plus "gay", "lesbian", "bisexual", "homosexual", "non-heterosexual", "same-sex", "sexual orientation" or "sexual identity" within the *title*, *abstract* and *keywords*. Inclusion of "grey literature"—i.e., research published in non-commercial form—was deemed important because Australian scholarship on LGB issues is often made publicly available as research reports commissioned by government and third-sector organisations. As such, additional searches for "grey literature" were undertaken within sites in which material on LGB people and their families was likely to be located. Specifically, we searched the websites of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Parliament of Australia, Australian Government Department of Social Services, Australian Institute of Family Studies, Australian Human Rights Commission, Social Policy Research Centre, National LGBTI Health Alliance, BeyondBlue, and Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society. We discarded: (i) publications that were not about Australia or based on Australian data; (ii) conference abstracts, book reviews, opinion pieces, commentaries and editorials; (iii) studies focusing solely on sexual practices or medical outcomes (e.g., research on sexually-transmitted diseases), (iv) studies focusing solely on family law (e.g., research on same-sex marriage legislation), (v) outputs concentrating on the

perspectives of non-LGB individuals (e.g., childcare centre directors in Cloughessy & Waniganayake, 2015); (vi) reports with the sole purpose of introducing or describing a dataset (e.g., an outline of the *Work, Love, Play* [WLP] study in Power, Perlesz, Schofield, et al., 2010); and (vii) pieces that included no new empirical evidence (e.g., McLean's (2011) reflections on bisexuality and monogamy). We retained reviews of *Australian* research, as these offer useful critical reflections and appraisals about the state of the field or subfields at a point in time. As a final step, we selectively screened the references of the retrieved outputs to identify additional suitable outputs that may not have been captured in the initial search. This occurred, for instance, where the abstract contained an Australian city name rather than "Australia" (e.g., Lindsay et al., 2006). Eleven additional outputs were added to the review at this stage. The characteristics of the resulting outputs (year, theme, subtheme, publication type, methodology, and data collection method) were coded by team members, and consolidated through team discussions. The outputs were subsequently allocated to themes through a process involving multiple readings by the team members and ensuing discussions. Themes were selected on the basis of: (i) their inclusion in previous critical/narrative reviews of the international, US, and Australian evidence (e.g., Patterson, 2000; Rothblum, 2009; Umberson et al., 2015), and (ii) the family processes that were most salient in the identified outputs. While this search process was systematised, our review differs in several ways from systematic reviews. For example, we deliberately set up broad criteria concerning the family processes that are in scope, we focused on critically assessing the themes and gaps in knowledge in the literature, we chose to include "grey literature" and book chapters, and we did not use systematic criteria for appraisal.

Of note, while researchers sometimes consider lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer individuals as a combined category (as per the LGBTIQ acronym), we intentionally restricted the review scope to gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals. This

decision responds to two reasons. First, while smaller in size, the literatures on gender non-conforming, intersex, and transgender people address different sets of issues—to which we cannot do justice within the confines of this manuscript. Second, this course of action aligns with arguments that *sexual orientation* is distinct from *gender identity* and *gender characteristics* (see e.g., Altman, 2018).

Search Results

A total of 99 outputs met the inclusion criteria: 83 journal articles, 5 book chapters, 10 research reports, and 1 working paper. Because not all of these are journal articles or "published" pieces in a strict sense, we refer to them as "outputs"—rather than "articles" or "publications". Bibliographic details and metadata for the reviewed outputs are presented in Table 1 in the Online Appendix. Figure 1 shows the number of outputs per year, highlighting a clear upwards trend in the amount of research on Australian LGB families. As seen in Figure 2, there were more than twice as many empirical outputs based on qualitative research methods (n=57; 57.6%) than quantitative methods (n=27; 27.3%)—although the share of outputs using quantitative methods increased over time (see Figure 3). Nine outputs (or 9.1%) used a mixed-method approach, and a further six (or 6.1%) were literature reviews. Qualitative outputs relied on methods such as semi-structured or unstructured interviewing (n=49; 45.8%), focus groups (n=6; 5.6%) and discourse analysis (n=7; 7%). Quantitative outputs were based on analyses of survey data (n=30; 28.0%) or administrative datasets (n=7; 6.5%). Several studies used more than one data collection method. For example, Riggs (2011) used a combination of semi-structured interviews and focus groups.

[FIGURES 1 & 2 HERE]

Quantitative scholarship relied heavily on two survey datasets: six outputs used data from the WLP study, a mixed design, three-wave, longitudinal study of same-sex-attracted parents conducted between 2008 and 2012 (n=445) (Power, Perlesz, McNair, et al., 2012),

and three outputs used data from the *Australian Study of Child Health in Same-Sex Families* (ACHESS) (Crouch, Waters, McNair, Power, & Davis, 2012), a national study of the wellbeing of Australian children with same-sex attracted parents (*n*=315 parents & 500 children). Multipurpose surveys used by fewer outputs included *Writing Themselves In* (Hillier et al., 1998), *LifeTimes* (Lyons, Pitts, & Grierson, 2013), the *Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey* (Summerfield et al., 2017), and *Private Lives 2* (Leonard et al., 2012). The remaining survey-based quantitative outputs used small community samples collected specifically for the purpose of the research. For example, McLaren (2016) collected and analysed data from a sample of 160 Australian gay men aged 65-92 years to examine the relationships between living alone and depressive symptoms. Seven outputs used administrative data sources (i.e., data collected for administrative rather than research purposes). Of these, four leveraged information from the 2001, 2006 and/or 2011 iterations of the *Australian Census of Population and Housing* (e.g., Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). The remaining three outputs used records from the Monash *in-vitro* fertilization (IVF) hospital patient database (Fiske & Weston, 2014), gay and lesbian foster-care applicants' assessment reports (Riggs, 2007), and the *National Homicide Monitoring Program* database (Cussen & Gannoni, 2014).

Literature Themes

The in-scope outputs covered a wide array of topics pertaining to the family lives of Australian LGB people. We discuss their findings by grouping them into ten overlapping subthemes within the broad themes of (i) intimate partner relationships, (ii) parenthood, and (iii) other family and institutional relationships. Outputs were categorised based on their dominant theme, although their contents sometimes cut across themes. The distribution of in-scope outputs across subthemes can be seen in Figure 4. This reveals a predominance of outputs on topics such as pathways to parenthood (*n*=24), experiences of parenthood (*n*=16),

and relationship experience and outcomes (*n=12*), compared to topics such as union formation (*n=4*), domestic violence (*n=4*), and rest-of-family relationships (*n=3*) (see Figure 3). There were however no major shifts over time in the relative prevalence of different research themes (see Figure 5).

[FIGURE 3 HERE]

Theme 1: Intimate partner relationships

Union formation. Intimate partner relationships are amongst the most significant and lasting personal relationships entered by individuals, and are a common pathway to parenthood. As such, the ways in which individuals form unions have received substantial attention in family research. The search identified just four outputs relating to LGB union formation in Australia. Some of these outputs pertained to the incidence of same-sex unions: Census data showed that the number of same-sex couples in Australia increased by 32% between 2006 and 2011, although they only represented 0.7% of all couples in 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012; 2013). Of note, 96% of the same-sex couples recorded in the 2011 Census described themselves as being in a *de facto* relationship rather than a marriage (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). This is not surprising, given that same-sex marriage provisions were not introduced in Australia until late 2017. Fewer outputs focused on processes leading to relationship formation: Prestage and colleagues (2015) reported that the most popular way for gay men in Australia to meet partners was via mobile and other online applications, and Callander, Newman, and Holt (2015) documented that ethnicity was important to LGB individuals when selecting a partner.

Relationship experiences and outcomes. A wealth of family scholarship is devoted to documenting and explaining heterogeneity in the experiences and outcomes of individuals within partnerships. The search identified 12 outputs focusing on positive and negative aspects of LGB intimate partner relationships. A recurrent topic within this literature was that

9

of exclusivity within relationships. Despite stereotypes of LGB people as 'promiscuous' and sexual exploration within the gay community being perceived as a 'rite of passage' (McLean, 2004), a majority of gay men in one study (22 of 26 participants) aspired to a monogamous relationship (Duncan, Prestage, & Grierson, 2015; see also Hosking, 2013). Yet results from an anonymous online survey of gay men revealed that 45% of those who considered themselves in a relationship with their primary regular partner had a non-monogamous arrangement (Philpot et al., 2016, p. 1354). McLean (2004) documented a higher prevalence of non-monogamy amongst bisexual people, with 52.5% of bisexual women and 60% of bisexual men in her study broadly describing their relationships as 'open'.

Concerning living arrangements, Prestage et al. (2014) found that partnered gay men who considered themselves to be in a relationship were more than twice as likely to live together full-time (63.6%) than those who did not (27.1%) (see also Power, Perlesz, McNair, et al., 2012). Being in a formalised same-sex relationship compared to an informal or not legally recognised relationship was found to be a protective factor for the mental health of LGB people aged 16-40 years (Bariola, Lyons, & Leonard, 2015). However, the higher prevalence of HIV/AIDS for individuals in same-sex relationships was a factor contributing to increasing care burdens amongst LGB people—an experience which was often complicated by factors such as stigma and isolation (Munro & Edward, 2010).

Drawing on HILDA Survey data, Perales and Baxter (2015) documented that gay/lesbian people reported higher relationship quality than heterosexual people, with relationship quality being lowest amongst bisexual men and women. This gay/lesbian premium in relationship quality may stem from the fact that same-sex couples display more egalitarian domestic labour arrangements than heterosexual couples (Bauer, 2016). This has been attributed to opportunities for same-sex couples to escape traditional gender norms and negotiate alternative housework sharing styles (Rawsthorne & Costello, 2010). Lesbian

couples in particular organised domestic work based on gender identity, task preference, aptitudes, and breadwinner status, with some lesbian couples adopting more flexible, creative and adaptable arrangements aimed at promoting equal sharing (Rawsthorne & Costello, 2010; see also Hayman & Wilkes, 2017). Yet other factors added further nuance to the overall picture. For instance, other research showed that gay couples had less egalitarian parenting arrangements than both lesbian and opposite-sex couples (Perlesz et al., 2010), and housework sharing styles within same-sex couples were found to be highly variable (Kentlyn, 2007). Overall, the distribution of household labour was important to LGB people, with Prestage et al. (2014) reporting that practical domestic issues were the main source of conflict within gay, monogamous couples.

Domestic violence. Domestic violence (or the existence of violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour by an individual towards their partner) is a 'wicked problem' in contemporary societies, and has been the focus of substantial social science scholarship. Four outputs in our search examined conflict and intimate partner violence within LGB couples. Emotional and psychological abuse was the most common type of intimate partner abuse amongst LGB people (Davis & Glass, 2011; Irwin, 2008; Leonard, Pitts, Mitchell, & Patel, 2008), no different to research on general populations (AIHW, 2018). As for other cohorts, LGB people were found to underreport domestic violence. For example, in a sample of 390 LGB and transgender individuals in Victoria (Leonard et al., 2008), 31% (*n*=120) had experienced abuse by a partner, of which 66% (*n*=80) did not report it. As a comparison, Australian general population figures indicate that 46% of women and 68% of men experiencing violence from a current partner did not seek advice or support (AIHW, 2018).

Minority stress was consistently identified as a unique factor contributing to the underreporting of violence amongst LGB couples—for example, due to a belief that they would not be treated fairly or sympathetically when disclosing such violence in official

settings (Leonard et al., 2008). Gannoni and Cussen (2014) examined intimate partner homicides in same-sex relationships, concluding that these shared many features with those in opposite-sex relationships (including motives and cause of death) and that observed differences were generally reflective of gender norms (e.g., more men than women committing homicide).

Theme 2: Parenthood

Pathways to parenthood. Parenthood is one of the most significant personal and social roles individuals may perform over the course of their lives and a key element of the traditional heterosexual family model. The search identified 24 outputs focusing on the experiences of LGB people as parents. The decision to become a parent was portrayed as 'deliberate' and 'conscious', but also as 'more complex' than for heterosexual couples (Hayman, Wilkes, Halcomb, & Jackson, 2015). For instance, LGB pathways to parenthood typically involved additional choices about conception method, who would become a biological parent (Hayman et al., 2015; Hayman, Wilkes, Jackson, & Halcomb, 2013) and whether the donor would be anonymous or a known person (Riggs, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Ripper, 2008). Analyses of WLP data revealed a further layer of complexity in the family arrangements of LGB people: 34% of LGB parents had conceived at least one child in a previous heterosexual relationship (Power, Perlesz, Brown, et al., 2010). This figure is substantially higher than current estimates for the general population, where only 7% of children under the age of 15 lived with a step-parent or another relative, and 20% of children aged 4-17 years were in shared-time arrangements (Baxter, 2016).

Conception methods used by Australian LGB parents differed by sex. Lesbian couples usually opted for vaginal self-insemination at home (Hayman et al., 2015; McNair, Dempsey, Wise, & Perlesz, 2002) or intrauterine insemination and IVF at a clinic (Fiske & Weston, 2014). Gay men predominately chose surrogacy (Dempsey, 2013b; Murphy, 2013; Riggs,

Due, & Power, 2015) or foster care (Riggs, 2007, 2009, 2011; Riggs & Augoustinos, 2009).

Due to the complex socio-legal framework in Australia (Hammarberg, Johnson, & Petrillo, 2011; Millbank, 2011), gay male couples often accessed surrogacy in countries such as India (Riggs et al., 2015) or the US (Dempsey, 2013b; Murphy, 2013; Tuazon-McCheyne, 2010)—although Dempsey (2010, p. 1151) provides anecdotal evidence of informal surrogacy arrangements within Australia.

Sperm donation amongst gay men was common, and was provided anonymously via clinics and as known donors—sometimes to lesbian couples (Dempsey, 2010, 2012b; Riggs, 2009). Reasons reported by gay men to donate their sperm included a desire to co-parent with the mother (Dempsey, 2010; Riggs, 2008a), a desire for 'genetic immortality' (Riggs, 2008a, 2008b) and altruism (Riggs, 2008b). According to Riggs (2009), sperm donation by gay men was closely linked to normative constructions of masculinity, particularly in relation to agency ascribed to men via their reproductive capacity. Lesbian couples approached and selected sperm donors based on factors such as the desired donor degree of involvement in the child's life (Dempsey, 2010; McNair et al., 2002; Ripper, 2007), whether donor sperm could be retained for additional children (Chapman, Wardrop, Zappia, Watkins, & Shields, 2012; Dempsey, 2012a), and whether the donor's physical characteristics resembled those of the non-birth mother (Dempsey, 2015).

Journeys to parenthood amongst Australian LGB people were often perceived as being complicated by heteronormativity and homophobia (Hayman et al., 2015; Riggs, 2009, 2011; Scholz & Riggs, 2014), including media portrayals of LGB people as incompatible with parenting (Zanghellini, 2007). For instance, lesbian parents anticipated less acceptance and support from community services and health or education staff (McNair et al., 2002), and gay foster carers feared a backslash if they raised concerns about marginalising practices in the foster-care system (Riggs, 2012a; 2012b). Gay foster parents also tended to put the foster

child's needs ahead of their needs—for example, by refraining from correcting homophobic language use (Riggs, 2010, 2011). For many LGB couples, the decision to become parents became a political act as they negotiated structural and systemic barriers, such as service refusal by health practitioners (Chapman, Wardrop, Zappia, et al., 2012) and laws about the child's rights to know the biological father (Dempsey, 2005).

LGB experiences of parenthood. As a major life-course stage, parenthood has been documented to have transformative and often gendered effects on individuals and couple relationships. The search identified 16 outputs concentrating on the experience of parenthood by LGB people—including targeted reviews by Dempsey (2015), Millbank (2003), and Short, Riggs, Perlesz, Brown, and Kane (2007). Most empirical contributions deployed qualitative research methods (*n*=12). In addition, some studies classified under other themes also discussed parenthood experiences (e.g., McNair et al., 2002; Short, 2007). Data from the 2011 Census indicate that 89% of children living in same-sex households resided in female same-sex couple families (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). It is therefore unsurprising that most Australian studies on LGB parenthood focus on mothering.

The most prominent challenge reported by lesbian mothers was a lack of legal and social recognition of their status as a family, particularly the status of the non-birth mother (Brown & Perlesz, 2007; du Chesne & Bradley, 2007; Hayman & Wilkes, 2017; Hayman, Wilkes, Jackson, et al., 2013; Luzia, 2013; McNair et al., 2002; Perlesz & McNair, 2004; Rawsthorne, 2009). For some non-birth mothers, this gave them an opportunity to construct their own notion of motherhood, one which did not conform to standard heterosexual family norms (Hayman & Wilkes, 2017). Perceptions of prejudice against their children were also a concern amongst lesbian mothers, including via symbolic norms—for example, listing 'father' or 'mother' rather than 'parent' on official documents (Hayman & Wilkes, 2017; Rawsthorne, 2009).

In the WLP study, 45% of fathers in same-sex parents families reported that they cared full-time for at least one child in their household; this increased to 100% if parenthood was reached through surrogacy and 80% for foster care (Power, Perlesz, McNair, et al., 2012; see also Tuazon-McCheyne, 2010). Amongst bisexual people, 80% reported parenting their own biological children, while 4% reported parenting both biological and non-biological children (Power, Perlesz, Brown, et al., 2012). Other qualitative studies document the experiences of gay fathers who co-parent with lesbian couples, particularly where there is a biological connection via sperm donation (Dempsey, 2012a).

Parenthood experiences differed between gay fathers who had children from previous heterosexual relationships, and those who had become fathers while openly identifying as 'gay'. Those with children from previous relationships were primarily concerned about the impact of 'coming out' on their children (Power, Perlesz, McNair, et al., 2012). Male gay participants in the WLP study felt that having children 'legitimised' their relationship with their partner, and 33% reported that it brought them closer to their family-of-origin (Power, Perlesz, McNair, et al., 2012). However, other studies document non-acceptance of LGB people's status as parents by their families-of-origin (du Chesne & Bradley, 2007; Rawsthorne, 2009). In addition, just 51% of gay and bisexual fathers in the WLP study perceived the LGB community as being supportive of them as parents, compared to 58% believing that they were supported as parents by the heterosexual community (Power, Perlesz, McNair, et al., 2012; Rawsthorne, 2009).

LGB experiences of parenthood were influenced by the prominence—and, more recently, the decline—of beliefs around the nuclear family being the 'ideal' family form (Short et al., 2007). For some LGB people, becoming a parent became a political experience for example, by having to engage in awareness-raising and legitimising of non-traditional families in their interactions with service providers and other families (du Chesne & Bradley,

2007; Jennings, 2016; Tuazon-McCheyne, 2010). Nevertheless, the majority of LGB parents explicitly described their parenting as being similar to that in heterosexual families, identifying challenges in areas such as discipline, finances, work/family balance and a reduction in social activities (Luzia, 2010; Power, Perlesz, Brown, et al., 2012; Short, 2007). Again, heteronormative social attitudes (Perlesz & McNair, 2004) and a lack of access to both formal and informal support services (Hayman, Wilkes, Jackson, et al., 2013; Rawsthorne, 2009) played a major role in shaping LGB experiences of parenthood. For example, LGB parents expressed concerns about the conflation of homosexuality and paedophilia in public discourse (Tuazon-McCheyne, 2010; see also Riggs, 2012b) and societal perceptions that men are not as 'nurturing' as women (Tuazon-McCheyne, 2010).

Child wellbeing in LGB families. One of the most contentious issues pertaining to the family lives of LGB people are the ongoing socio-political debates about their rights and ability to raise children within same-sex couples. Advocates of traditional family models often structure their arguments around the relative wellbeing of children raised by same-sex and opposite-sex couples. The search identified eight outputs focusing on the outcomes of children raised in LGB families, broadly defined—including reviews by McNair (2004) and Dempsey (2013a). In the absence of data that would enable comparisons between children in LGB and heterosexual families within the same study (Dempsey, 2013a), Australian scholarship has resorted to analysing samples of same-sex families and discussing their findings in relation to those of general population studies. In the ACHESS data, children in same-sex families scored higher in measures of mental and physical health than children in general population samples (Crouch, McNair, & Waters, 2016; Crouch, Waters, McNair, Power, & Davis, 2014) with the exception of adolescent peer problems (Crouch, Waters, McNair, & Power, 2015). This is despite these children often being the target of homophobic discrimination and bullying (Hosking, Mulholland, & Baird, 2015; Ray & Gregory, 2001;

Titlestad & Pooley, 2014), and links between perceived stigma and poor mental health amongst children in same-sex families (Crouch et al., 2015; Crouch et al., 2014).

Factors such as area of residence, family stability, parental relationships, or household income displayed similar associations with child health and wellbeing amongst children in same-sex families as those typically observed in general population samples (Crouch et al., 2016). Parental gender and biological relationship to the child, however, were not important predictors of child wellbeing in same-sex families (Crouch et al., 2016). Family-of-origin dissolution and subsequent blending were identified as stressors by adults raised in same-sex couples (Titlestad & Pooley, 2014), no different to individuals raised in dissolved heterosexual unions in the international literature (see e.g., Amato, 2010).

In speaking out within the public domain, individuals raised by LGB parents often found the need to stress that 'no damage was caused' by their parents' gender and sexuality, although they reported feeling politicized and pressured to demonstrate that they were 'normal' and/or 'prospering' (Hosking et al., 2015). They also reported that their upbringing gave them unique advantages, such as a higher appreciation of diversity (Ray & Gregory, 2001; Titlestad & Pooley, 2014) or access to two sets of parents (Crouch et al., 2015).

Theme 3: Other family and institutional relationships

Coming out. The process of disclosing one's non-heterosexual sexual orientation to others, or 'coming out', is a major and distinctive event in the lives of LGB people. The search identified eight outputs concerned with 'coming out' in the Australian context. Comparing the 1998, 2004 and 2010 iterations of the *Writing Themselves In* survey, Hillier et al. (2010) reported an increase in the percentage of young people disclosing a non-heterosexual identity to family members. Disclosure was more frequent to mothers than fathers, and sisters than brothers (Grierson & Smith, 2005; Hillier et al., 2010). Perceptions of parental beliefs of homosexuality as being 'unnatural', 'an illness', or 'a perversion' made

young people reluctant to come out to their families (Hillier & Harrison, 2004) and higher internalized homophobia was associated with a lower likelihood of coming out to parents (Brown & Trevethan, 2010).

Several outputs documented heterogeneity in family responses to young people coming out, including acceptance, reluctant tolerance, and rejection (Hillier et al., 2010; Robinson, Bansel, Denson, Ovenden, & Davies, 2014), with religious and culturally and linguistically diverse families being less accepting of non-heterosexuality (Brown & Trevethan, 2010; Hillier & Harrison, 2004; Hillier et al., 2010). Coming out to parents was reported as a less traumatic event amongst younger than older cohorts of gay men; yet all cohorts reported the experience as tense, emotionally charged, and requiring courage (Grierson & Smith, 2005). Young gay/lesbian people interviewed by Carastathis, Cohen, Kaczmarek, and Chang (2017) differentiated between 'blatant' (abusive remarks, disgust, withdrawal) and 'subtle' (indirect cues, sorrow, denial) expressions of unacceptance by parents. Many reported continued rejection enduring many years following the initial disclosure. They often perceived that parental love was conditional on their heterosexuality, and resorted to identity concealment through self-monitoring and image management.

Unaccepting stances by family members led to negative outcomes amongst LGB people, including loss of support, poor mental health, self-destructive behaviours, poor general self-concept, homelessness, and even self-harm and suicide (Carastathis et al., 2017; Hillier & Harrison, 2004; Hillier et al., 2010; Skerrett, Kõlves, & de Leo, 2016). Positive coming out experiences and parent-child interactions were also documented, as in Gorman-Murray's (2008) analyses of autobiographical narratives. The Australian literature engages to a limited extent with instances of being 'found out' (Grierson & Smith, 2005) or being 'outed'.

Rest-of-the-family relationships. In addition to their relations with partners and children, individuals also have biological and social ties to other family members. Yet only three outputs examined relationships between LGB people and family members other than their partners or children beyond the 'coming out' stage. Two items were concerned with tensions between LGB people and their families-of-origin. Their findings evidenced a greater tendency for strained family relations amongst LGB people (Barrett, Crameri, Lambourne, Latham, & Whyte, 2015), but also that 80% of gay men had more regular contact and closer or re-established relationships with their families-of-origin after becoming fathers (Power, Perlesz, McNair, et al., 2012). A second topic within this literature was perceptions of what constitutes a 'family'. 'Family' was often portrayed as having a different, broader meaning to LGB people. For example, multigenerational family interviews conducted by Perlesz et al. (2006) highlighted the importance of non-traditional 'families of choice' for lesbian mothers. In these 'families of choice', family relationships were not biologically determined; instead, family members were actively chosen from both *kith* and *kin*—that is, biological relatives as well as biologically-unrelated friends. However, the non-biological members of these 'families of choice' (as well as same-sex partners) were reportedly disempowered by not being recognised as 'family' by biological family members and healthcare providers (Hughes & Cartwright, 2014). This was important, for example, when there was a need for family members to make treatment decisions for an unconscious or incapacitated LGB person (Hughes & Cartwright, 2014).

Social support and networks. Social support is a major determinant of individual health and wellbeing, and a lack of support is an important component of the minority stress model used to explain health disparities by sexual orientation. In our search, ten outputs focused on the social support and networks of LGB people. Amongst LGB parents, friendship connections were stronger than family connections (Power et al., 2014) and, as

LGB people aged, their friends became their primary support source (Barrett et al., 2015; Power et al., 2014). Lesbians and gay men reported heavy reliance on social networks (including ties to the LGB community), particularly after being 'cut off' from their biological families or heterosexual friends (Barrett et al., 2015; Power et al., 2015). Young LGB people used online spaces to connect with and seek advice from the LGB community, which in turn increased their sense of belonging (Hanckel & Morris, 2014). Similarly, LGB parents typically relied on other LGB parents as support networks and sources of information and advice (Hayman & Wilkes, 2017; Power et al., 2015). Gorman-Murray (2013) described how straight-gay male friendships had transformative effects on both straight men (e.g., by forcing them to re-think their notions of masculinity) and gay men (e.g., by increasing their social inclusion).

Overall, there was evidence that social support acted as an important protective factor for the mental health of LGB people (Lyons, 2016; Lyons et al., 2013; Power et al., 2014; Power et al., 2015). However, the availability of such support was patterned to some extent by the geographical distribution of LGB people over the Australian territory (Gorman-Murray, Brennan-Horley, McLean, Waitt, & Gibson, 2010; Power et al., 2014). In this regard, different studies documented geographical concentrations of same-sex couple family households in inner-city locations in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane and, for lesbian-headed families, some suburban and regional areas (Gorman-Murray & Brennan-Horley, 2010; Gorman-Murray et al., 2010).

Access to family services. In going about their family lives, individuals are required to interact on a regular basis with public and private institutions that regulate their access to family services, such as the healthcare, education or income-support systems. The search identified ten outputs discussing LGB people's access to and interactions with family services—including one literature review (Shields et al., 2012). Of the remaining nine

outputs, eight relied on qualitative research methods and one on mixed methods. Access to family services was also a side theme in several outputs classified elsewhere (see e.g., Barrett et al., 2015; Perlesz & McNair, 2004; Rawsthorne, 2009).

Experiences with healthcare providers were mixed. On the one hand, 89% of LGB parents reported high satisfaction with the care provided to their children (Mikhailovich, Martin, & Lawton, 2001; see also Shields et al., 2012). Positive experiences often stemmed from how LGB parents—or prospective parents—were treated by individual healthcare professionals. As an example, they reported feeling 'included' when such professionals focused on their reasons to seek care instead of their sexual orientation, or when they acknowledged both parents in a same-sex union as having equal responsibility for the child (Chapman, Wardrop, Freeman, et al., 2012; McNair et al., 2008). On the other hand, 27% of LGB parents reported that they had had problematic interactions with the healthcare system following disclosure of their sexual orientation (Mikhailovich et al., 2001). These included negative experiences due to heteronormative practices (McNair et al., 2008) and discrimination following disclosure of LGB status (Hayman, Wilkes, Halcomb, & Jackson, 2013; Mikhailovich et al., 2001). Hayman and colleagues (2013) identified four types of homophobia experienced by lesbian mothers when accessing health services: (i) exclusion (e.g., when the non-birth mother was not identified as a legitimate parent); (ii) assumptions of heterosexuality (e.g., presuming that two women with the same last name are sisters); (iii) inappropriate questioning (e.g., irrelevant queries about conception methods while being in labour); and (iv) refusal of services based on sexual orientation (e.g., being denied IVF).

LGB family members, including LGB parents, reported similar experiences of feeling stigmatised, marginalised or excluded in education settings (Lindsay et al., 2006; Riggs & Willing, 2013). Examples included children in LGB families being told not to discuss LGB-

related matters at school (Lindsay et al., 2006), or men in same-sex relationships being told they cannot be distinguished from each other by teaching staff (Riggs & Willing, 2013).

LGB people adopted a range of strategies to deal with challenges accessing family services, such as contacting healthcare providers ahead of time to find out their service philosophy (Hayman, Wilkes, Halcomb, et al., 2013). Some LGB individuals decided to actively disclose their sexual orientation or family make-up when introducing themselves (Riggs & Willing, 2013), while others preferred not to reveal their family arrangements unless this was absolutely necessary (Lindsay et al., 2006). Short (2007) described how lesbian women spent substantial amounts of time considering how to best navigate laws, public policies and discourses when making family-formation decisions, and stressed the importance of laws recognizing relationships between non-birth mothers and their children. Having a socio-political understanding of heterosexism helped lesbian mothers cope with any hostility or disrespect encountered, by appraising it as 'prejudice' rather than 'personal antipathy' (Short, 2007). Resilience against minority stressors was also attained through knowledge of academic studies to confront concerns, developing strong and diverse social networks, focusing on the future, being optimistic and mindful of strengths, and feeling proud (Short, 2007).

Throughout the reviewed literature, there was a consistent call for health and education professionals to develop policies, procedures and skills that contribute to recognising the unique needs of LGB families and ensure inclusive practices (Chapman, Wardrop, Freeman, et al., 2012; von Doussa et al., 2016). There was however evidence of improvement over time. Specifically, Rawsthorne (2012) compared the lived experiences of lesbian women before and after a time of rapid social policy reform concerning LGBT rights, documenting decreases in anxiety about family recognition and the rights of non-birth mothers. The

reforms were generally perceived as contributing to visibility, social justice and social inclusion, but also as being largely motivated by economic imperatives.

Gaps in the Australian Scholarship and a Research Agenda

In this study we have reviewed contemporary scholarship on the family lives of Australian LGB people. In doing so, we have synthetised the existing body of evidence in ways that can inform public debate and contribute to the design of evidence-based social policies. This exercise also afforded us the opportunity to 'take stock' and identify areas in which the Australian evidence requires improvement or refinement. In this final section we elaborate on these issues.

The family lives of Australian LGB people: A 'rich' and 'thriving' field of inquiry

Since the turn of the 21st century and in the space of just 16 years, the literature on Australian LGB families has moved from being 'patchy' and 'limited' to being 'rich' and 'thriving', with an upwards trend in the number and quality of contributions. The rise of LGB families challenges dominant discourses about the social institution of the family as both heterosexual and patriarchal (Perlesz et al., 2006), and social attitudes towards LGB issues remain ambivalent (Perales & Campbell, 2018). As a result, a recurrent finding in the reviewed studies was that heteronormativity, homonegativity, and homophobia posed unique challenges to the family lives of Australian LGB people. These processes unfolded in diverse ways: from outright discriminatory laws, practices, or institutions (e.g., Allan, 2010; R. Brown & Perlesz, 2007) to interactions with unaccepting practitioners, neighbours, or family members (e.g., Chapman, Wardrop, Zappia, et al., 2012; Hayman, Wilkes, Halcomb, et al., 2013; Hillier & Harrison, 2004). Yet these circumstances were occasionally found to lead to unexpected benefits and opportunities by increasing reflexivity and agency—for example, by eliciting LGB people to adopt more personal, non-heterosexual modes of parenting (du Chesne & Bradley, 2007) or more egalitarian domestic divisions of labour (Rawsthorne &

Costello, 2010), and to actively extend family boundaries to families-of-choice (Barrett et al., 2015; Perlesz et al., 2006; Power et al., 2014). Despite the distinctive obstacles faced by Australian LGB people, when comparisons to the general population were implicitly or explicitly undertaken, the resulting picture was often one of similarity. Of critical importance for contemporary public debates, evidence was unanimous in indicating that children raised in Australian same-sex couples fared just as well as children raised in Australian opposite-sex couples (Crouch et al., 2016; Crouch et al., 2014) and that the relationship quality of same-sex couples in Australia was at least as high as that of opposite-sex couples (Perales & Baxter, 2015).

The Australian body of evidence featured several areas of strength. These included: the availability of contributions from multiple disciplines—including sociology, psychology, social work, critical studies, public health, and criminology; the availability of both quantitative and qualitative research studies, taking diverse methodological and analytical approaches; a sizeable body of qualitative work following rigorous methodologies (e.g., in terms of their theoretical underpinnings, fit between methodological approach and research questions, and reflexivity); and a rich collection of studies in topics such as pathways to and experiences of parenthood amongst LGB individuals.

New opportunities for Australian quantitative research

Despite the aforementioned strengths, our review also revealed gaps in knowledge and missed opportunities to further our understanding of the diverse ways in which Australian LGB people navigate family life. Methodologically, the reviewed Australian literature displayed an overreliance on qualitative research methods (57.6% of outputs) compared to quantitative research methods (27.3% of outputs). While the qualitative evidence base was rich and rigorous, the paucity of quantitative contributions means that the relative advantages of quantitative methodologies remain underexploited (e.g., the ability to generalize claims or

24

incorporate 'causal thinking'). Furthermore, the available quantitative evidence suffers from several endemic issues stemming largely from the characteristics of the available data.

Critically, most survey datasets used for quantitative analyses are based on non-probability samples, which means that research findings based on these cannot be readily extrapolated to a population. In this regard, the recent availability of sexual identity, behaviour and/or attraction questions in representative datasets also collecting information on family behaviours and outcomes has the potential to spur a new wave of robust, representative findings on the family lives of Australian LGB people. Such datasets include the HILDA Survey, the *Longitudinal Study of Australian Children* (LSAC, Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2015), or the new young cohort of the *Australian Longitudinal Study of Women's Health* (ALSWH, Women's Health Australia, 2018).

The relatively small sample sizes of LGB-focused datasets (or of LGB respondents within broader datasets) poses additional challenges to quantitative studies, limiting researchers' ability to identify statistically significant relationships and precluding nuanced analyses of subpopulations (e.g., comparisons *within* LGB people) and rare outcomes (e.g., union dissolution). Overcoming this issue is no easy task. One possible solution is the collection of new fit-for-purpose data (such as survey data in which LGB groups are oversampled, see e.g., Rosenfeld & Thomas, 2012). However, survey oversampling is a complex and political issue; it is resource intensive and stigmatised groups may be wary of contributing to research led by organisations that they perceive as likely to misrepresent their experiences. As such, this course of action requires deep partnerships between organisations specialised in the collection of large-scale survey datasets, community organisations, and researchers that have built strong relationships of trust with LGB communities (who, in Australia, are largely qualitative researchers).

Another possible solution is the use of administrative datasets (see e.g., the use of Swedish register data in Aldén, Edlund, Hammarstedt, & Mueller-Smith, 2015). In this regard, Australia is witnessing rapid growth in the availability of national administrative data for research purposes—including individual records from the *Australian Census of Population and Housing* and the *Australian Government Department of Social Services' Social Security and Related Information* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018a). These datasets capture very large numbers of individuals, sometimes contain information on same-sex couple status and family-related outcomes, and may be linked to each other. As such, they can be repurposed to gain additional quantitative insights into the family lives of Australian same-sex couples.

Addressing gaps in the Australian evidence base

A comparison of the themes emerging from our review and those featured in reviews of the US and international evidence (e.g., Biblarz & Savci, 2010; Peplau & Fingerhut, 2007; Rothblum, 2009; Schumm, 2016; Umberson et al., 2015) reveals areas in which the Australian evidence is particularly rich. One example is its engagement with the increasingly diverse pathways to parenthood available to LGB people, moving beyond distinctions in the international literature between planned parenthood and parenting children from a dissolved opposite-sex union (e.g., Biblarz & Savci, 2010; Fitzgerald, 1999; Patterson, 2000). By the same token, comparisons to the US or international evidence also revealed areas in which Australian scholarship is incomplete or missing.

Union dissolution. An important omission is the lack of research on LGB union dissolution. Although Prestage et al. (2014) provided base descriptive statistics on the reported reasons for relationship breakdown amongst gay men in Australia, no study has comprehensively examined union duration or the experience, causes and consequences of union dissolution amongst Australian LGB people. This is an important omission, as union

dissolution can have long-lasting effects on individuals and their children; the international literature is mixed about the relative stability of same-sex and opposite-sex couples; and research is largely silent about the experiences of bisexual individuals (Kurdek, 2004; Manning, Brown, & Stykes, 2016). Gathering this evidence for Australia is important to contribute to international debates about the comparative stability of same-sex unions and the role of minority stress as a risk factor for LGB union dissolution.

Child adoption. While the Australian literature on LGB pathways to parenthood was expansive, it failed to engage with the issue of child adoption by LGB couples to the same extent as the international literature (see e.g., Kindle & Erich, 2005). The scarcity of studies on this topic has been linked to a low prevalence of LGB adoption in Australia stemming from historical (direct or indirect) exclusion of LGB people from becoming adoptive parents by law (Allan, 2010), as well as the desire for biogenetic relatedness amongst prospective LGB parents (e.g., Murphy, 2013). However, recent policy changes mean that child adoption by same-sex couples is now legal across all Australian states and territories, and this may become a prominent pathway to parenthood amongst LGB people. In the US, for example, same-sex couples are 4.5 times more likely than opposite-sex married couples to adopt children; yet this process is reportedly complicated by some birth parents and international agencies prohibiting adoption by same-sex couples, and discriminatory stances by adoption professionals (Goldberg, Gartrell, & Gates, 2014). Research that explores how LGB people navigate these processes within the Australian context is needed.

Other institutions. Several Australian studies examined interactions between LGB people and different institutions providing family services, particularly the healthcare and education systems. This literature has thus far neglected the experiences of LGB people and their children engaging with other family-relevant institutions, including the provision and receipt of community services and interactions with the income-support system. The latter is

a significant omission, given that Australia features a complex income-support system that structures family payments in areas such as maternity and paternity leave, early childhood education, carer responsibilities, family tax, or unemployment insurance. Research in the US and the UK, for example, documents that LGB people are more likely to require income support and other social insurance payments over the life course, but often experience barriers to access—such as heteronormative definitions of family (Albelda, Schneebaum, Badgett, & Gates, 2009; Burwick, Gates, Baumgartner, & Friend, 2014; Uhrig, 2015). Future research considering interactions between Australian LGB people and institutions providing other family services, with particular focus on barriers to access, is therefore warranted.

Other family relationships. Fourth, very few studies investigated the relationships between LGB people and family members other than their parents, partners or children (e.g., siblings, grandparents, aunts/uncles, cousins, and acquaintances), which also constitutes a gap in the international literature (see e.g., Patterson, 2000). Gathering new knowledge on these relationships is important, as the extended family may play an ambivalent role in LGB people's lives, both as a potential stressor (e.g., if family members disapprove of their sexual orientation) or a support source (e.g., by helping them counteract the negative effects of structural stigma). For example, recent studies document that extended family members (such as siblings and aunts) are critical support sources to young LGB individuals who experience negative parental stances towards their sexuality (see e.g. Gonzalez, Sinclair, D'Augelli, & Grossman, 2018; Grafsky, Hickey, Nguyen, & Wall, 2018). Further, most Australian and international research on LGB people's relationships with their parents focuses on the 'coming out' phase, with few contributions addressing longer-term exchanges—for example, flows of financial and in-kind help and care from parents to children and *vice versa*, or the closeness of parent-child interpersonal relationships amongst aging LGB people. Recent international studies are beginning to fill this knowledge gap, revealing, for instance, that

individuals who identify as LGB experience more conflictual and detached relationships with their biological families long after 'coming out' (see e.g., Hank & Salzburger, 2015), but still provide large amounts of care and support to aging parents (see e.g., Mankowski & Hash, 2017). Undertaking research in this space would thus contribute to solidifying Australian and international knowledge on the family lives of LGB people.

Broader opportunities for research on the family lives of LGB Australians

There are also broader shortcomings of the reviewed Australian literature.

Comparative designs. While family processes and outcomes amongst LGB populations are interesting on their own, comparisons with those of the heterosexual population (e.g., on child wellbeing or relationship quality in same-sex couples) hold enormous currency in the contemporary public arena. A limitation of the Australian body of evidence on the family lives of LGB people is the very small number of studies that directly compare and contrast outcomes by sexual orientation within the same data source. Exceptions include Perales and Baxter (2015) for relationship quality, Bauer (2016) for domestic divisions of labour, and Gannoni and Cussen (2014) for intimate partner homicide. These comparisons are precluded by reliance on focused datasets that contain information on respondents belonging to a specific group (e.g., gay men or lesbian-parented families) but do not include a comparative sample of heterosexual respondents. Fortunately, datasets that contain the requisite information to undertake comparisons by sexual orientation are rapidly emerging. For example, the HILDA Survey, ALSWH, and LSAC can now be used for such purposes.

Longitudinal designs. Another significant limitation of the reviewed literature is the scarcity of longitudinal research designs—both qualitative and quantitative—that can generate better insights into how LGB family processes are initiated, unfold and end, with the bulk of the available evidence relying on less-informative point-in-time analytic approaches. Of the reviewed outputs, only Rawsthorne (2012)—who interviewed lesbian women on two

29

occasions—deployed a genuinely longitudinal approach tracking the same respondents over time. While longitudinal designs are scarce internationally, there are exemplars of their value. Quantitatively, Sullivan, Feinstein, Marshall, & Mustanski (2017) followed sexual-minority young adults in the US over a period of 12 months. This research design enabled them to document the longitudinal impact of traumatic discrimination experiences on their relationship functioning, and to identify factors fostering resilience. Qualitatively, Flanders, Legge, Plante, Goldberg, & Ross (2018) examined how sexual-minority women in the US approached the gender socialization of their offspring through a series of in-depth interviews over a one-year period. The longitudinal design afforded more nuanced understandings of how parenting practices changed with parenthood experiences and broader social influences. Future studies of Australian LGB families would benefit from incorporating longitudinal qualitative designs and quantitative panel analyses. The latter are now possible thanks to the recent availability of panel data on sexual orientation from the same individuals over time in the HILDA Survey and ALSWH, and their projected availability in LSAC and the *Australian Longitudinal Study of Men's Health* (ALSMH, Currier et al., 2015).

    Intersectionality. The reviewed studies also remain largely silent about the role of intersectionality—or how the concatenation of [dis]advantaged statuses affects individual outcomes (McCall, 2005)—in shaping the family lives of Australian LGB people. Hence, we still know very little about how family behaviours and outcomes diverge *within* the Australian LGB community on the basis of other ascribed and attained statuses, such as country of origin, Indigeneity, or residence in a rural vs. an urban location. Research from other countries, however, hints at the importance of intersectionality in structuring the family relations of individuals who identify as LGB. For example, research in Thailand by Ojanen and colleagues (2018) illustrates how family acceptance of LGB people is highly structured by parental socio-economic status. As international family scholars (see e.g., van Eeden-

Moorefield, 2018) and Australian health scholars (see e.g., Morandini, Blaszczynski, Dar-Nimrod, & Ross, 2015) begin examining these intersections, the road is paved for Australian family scholars to follow suit.

Legislative change. Further, future Australian scholarship should leverage the research opportunities brought about by recent legislation reform to answer important questions. For instance, 'how have recent changes to family policies, such as the 2017 same-sex marriage provisions, affected the lives of LGB people in Australia?'. Existing evidence, dominated by studies of legislative change within the US, indicates that shifts towards inclusive policies are often accompanied by positive flow-on effects on LGB social inclusion (Everett, Hatzenbuehler, & Hughes, 2016), confidence to 'come out' (Charlton, Corliss, Spiegelman, Williams, & Austin, 2016), and individual and family wellbeing (Hatzenbuehler et al., 2012). Research that focuses specifically on the Australian case and appropriately canvasses its institutional features is required.

Cross-national comparisons. Finally, few studies examined the family lives of Australian LGB families *vis-à-vis* those of LGB families in different national contexts. Notable exceptions included research by Bauer (2016) comparing domestic work arrangements between same-sex and opposite-sex couples in seven countries including Australia, and by Perales and Baxter (2015) comparing relationship quality by sexual identity in Australia and Britain. It follows that there is a need for LGB family scholars to undertake more cross-national comparative research that highlights the role of national institutional contexts in shaping the opportunities and constraints of LGB people 'doing family'. Questions such as 'what institutional parameters help inclusion and diversity?' and 'how is Australia similar/different?' should guide this body of work.

Study limitations

While this study has offered a comprehensive overview of research on the family lives of Australian LGB people, some scope limitations must be noted. First, we did not consider research on other vulnerable sexual and gender groups, including transgender, intersex, queer, and gender-non-conforming individuals. Future, dedicated studies should review their experiences. Second, medical and socio-legal research was not considered. This body of work could be the focus of subsequent, more targeted reviews. Third, our study covers the period between 2000 and 2016, stopping short of the 2017 Australian national vote on marriage equality. With the approaching of this landmark event, the volume and tone of literature on the family lives of Australian LGB people may have shifted. Space constraints prevented us from engaging with studies published in 2017 and thereafter. Future reviews should consider whether or not, and if so how, the Australian body of work on the family lives of LGB individuals shifted over this period and beyond, taking the present study as a 'baseline'.

Concluding remarks

To conclude, almost two decades into the 21st century Australian researchers have made important inroads into understanding the family lives of LGB people. But more must be done to gain a robust and holistic understanding that helps answering pressing questions asked by practitioners, policymakers and the general public. Gathering the requisite evidence to facilitate this process should feature as a priority on the agenda of family scholars. This is a social imperative in the space of diversity and inclusion, and a necessary precursor for Australia to become the land of the 'fair go' not just for the heterosexual majority, but also for its sexual minorities.

References *(asterisks denote review outputs)*

AIHW. (2018). *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Albelda, R., Schneebaum, A., Badgett, M. V. L., & Gates, G. (2009). *Poverty in the lesbian, gay, and bisexual community*. Los Angeles: California Centre for Population Research, University of California.

Aldén, L., Edlund, L., Hammarstedt, M., & Mueller-Smith, M. (2015). Effect of registered partnership on labor earnings and fertility for same-sex couples: Evidence from Swedish Register Data. *Demography, 52*(4), 1243-1268.

Allan, S. (2010). Recognition of same-sex parenting in Australia: South Australia the final frontier? *Alternative Law Journal, 35*(4), 227-231.

Altman, D. (2018, January 19). The term 'LGBTI' confuses desire, behaviour and identity – it's time for a rethink. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from https://theconversation.com/the-term-lgbti-confuses-desire-behaviour-and-identity-its-time-for-a-rethink-90175

Amato, P. R. (2010). Research on divorce: Continuing trends and new developments. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*(3), 650-666.

* Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2012). *Reflecting a nation: Stories from the 2011 Census, 2012-2013* (Cat No. 2046.0). Retrieved from

http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0main+features902012-2013

* Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2013, July 25). *Same-sex couples* (Australian Social Trends, Cat. No. 4102.0). Retrieved from

http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features10July+2013

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2018a, July 23). *Available microdata*. Retrieved from

http://abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/Expected+and+available+Microdata

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2018b, January 18). *Reflecting Australia - Stories from the Census, 2016* (Cat. No. 2071.0). Retrieved from http://abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf

/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Same-Sex%20Couples~85

Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2015). *The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children Data User Guide - November 2015*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

* Bariola, E., Lyons, A., & Leonard, W. (2015). The mental health benefits of relationship formalisation among lesbians and gay men in same-sex relationships. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health,*

39(6), 530-535.

* Barrett, C., Crameri, P., Lambourne, S., Latham, J. R., & Whyte, C. (2015). Understanding the experiences and needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans Australians living with dementia, and their partners. *Australasian Journal on Ageing, 34*(Supplement 2), 34-38.

* Barrett, C., Whyte, C., Comfort, J., Lyons, A., & Crameri, P. (2015). Social connection, relationships and older lesbian and gay people. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy, 30*(1), 131-142.

* Bauer, G. (2016). Gender roles, comparative advantages and the life course: The division of domestic labor in same-sex and different-sex couples. *European Journal of Population, 32*(1), 99-128.

Baxter, J. (2016). *The modern Australian family*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Biblarz, T. J., & Savci, E. (2010). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender families. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 72*, 480-497.

Borawska-Charko, M., Rohleder, P., & Finlay, W.M.L. (2017). The sexual health of people with intellectual disabilities: A review. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, 14*(4), 393-403.

* Brown, J., & Trevethan, R. (2010). Shame, internalized homophobia, identity formation, attachment style, and the connection to relationship status in gay men. *American Journal of Men's Health, 4*(3), 267-276.

* Brown, R., & Perlesz, A. (2007). Not the "other" mother: How language constucts lesbian co-parenting relationships. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, 3*(2-3), 267-308.

Burwick, A., Gates, G., Baumgartner, S., & Friend, D. (2014). *Human services for low-income and at-risk LGBT populations: An assessment of the knowledge base and research needs*. OPRE Report Number 2014-79. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

* Callander, D., Newman, C. E., & Holt, M. (2015). Is sexual racism really racism? Distinguishing attitudes toward sexual racism and generic racism among gay and bisexual men. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 44*(7), 1991-2000.

* Carastathis, G. S., Cohen, L., Kaczmarek, E., & Chang, P. (2017). Rejected by family for being gay or lesbian: Portrayals, perceptions, and resilience. *Journal of Homosexuality, 64*(3), 289-320.

* Chapman, R., Wardrop, J., Freeman, P., Zappia, T., Watkins, R., & Shields, L. (2012). A descriptive study of the experiences of lesbian, gay and transgender parents accessing health services for their children. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 21*(7-8), 1128-1135.

* Chapman, R., Wardrop, J., Zappia, T., Watkins, R. & Shields, L. (2012). The experiences of Australian

lesbian couples becoming parents: deciding, searching and birthing. *Journal of Clinical Nursing, 21*, 1878-1885.

Charlton, B. M., Corliss, H. L., Spiegelman, D., Williams, K., & Austin, S. B. (2016). Changes in reported sexual orientation following US states recognition of same-sex couples. *American Journal of Public Health, 106*(12), 2202-2204.

Cloughessy, K., & Waniganayake, M. (2015). "Raised eyebrows": Working with lesbian-parented families experiences of childcare centre directors in Australia. *Children & Society, 29*(5), 377-387.

Crouch, S. R., McNair, R. P., Waters, E. B., & Power, J. J. (2013). What makes a same-sex parented family? *The Medical journal of Australia, 199*(2), 94-96.

* Crouch, S. R., McNair, R., & Waters, E. (2016). Impact of family structure and socio-demographic characteristics on child health and wellbeing in same-sex parent families: A cross-sectional survey. *Journal of Paediatrics and Child Health, 52*(5), 499-505.

* Crouch, S. R., Waters, E., McNair, R., & Power, J. (2015). The health perspectives of Australian adolescents from same-sex parent families: a mixed methods study. *Child Care Health and Development, 41*(3), 356-364.

* Crouch, S. R., Waters, E., McNair, R., Power, J., & Davis, E. (2014). Parent-reported measures of child health and wellbeing in same-sex parent families: a cross-sectional survey. *BMC Public Health, 14*, 635-646.

Crouch, S. R., Waters, E., McNair, R., Power, J., & Davis, E. (2012). ACHESS - The Australian study of child health in same-sex families: Background research, design and methodology. *BMC Public Health, 12*(1).

Currier, D., Koelmeyer, R., Spittal, M. J., Gordon, I., English, D., Gurrin, L., . . . Pirkis, J. (2015). *Ten to Men - Data user manual (Version 1)*. Melbourne: The University of Melbourne.

Cussen, T., & Gannoni, A. (2014). Same-sex intimate partner homicide in Australia. *Trends and issues in crime and criminal justice* (pp. 1-7). Woden: Australian Institute of Criminology.

* Davis, K., & Glass, N. (2011). Reframing the heteronormative constructions of lesbian partner violence: An Australian case study. In J. L. Ristock (ed.), *Intimate Partner Violence in LGBTQ Lives* (pp. 13-36). New York: Routledge.

de Lira, A. N., & de Morais, N. A. (2018). Resilience in lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) populations: An integrative literature review. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, 15*(3), 272-282.

* Dempsey, D. (2005). Lesbians' right-to-choose, children's 'right-to-know'. In H. G. Jones & M. Kirkman

(Eds.), *Sperm wars: The rights and wrongs of reproduction*. Sydney: ABC Books.

* Dempsey, D. (2010). Conceiving and negotiating reproductive relationships: Lesbians and gay men forming families with children. *Sociology, 44*(6), 1145-1162.

* Dempsey, D. (2012a). Gay male couples' paternal involvement in lesbian-parented families. *Journal of Family Studies, 18*(2-3), 155-164.

* Dempsey, D. (2012b). More like a donor or more like a father? Gay men's concepts of relatedness to children. *Sexualities, 15*(2), 156-174.

* Dempsey, D. (2013a). *Same-sex parented families in Australia*. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

* Dempsey, D. (2013b). Surrogacy, gay male couples and the significance of biogenetic paternity. *New Genetics and Society, 32*(1), 37-53.

* Dempsey, D. (2015). Familiarly queer? Same-sex relationships and family formation. In G. Heard & D. Arunachalam (Eds.), *Family formation in 21st century Australia* (pp. 225-240). Dordrecht: Springer.

Department of Social Services. (2015). *A new system for better employment and social outcomes: final report of the reference group on welfare reform to the Minister for Social Services*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

* du Chesne, L., & Bradley, B. (2007). The subjective experience of the lesbian (m)other: an exploration of the construction of lesbain maternal identity. *Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review, 3*(1), 25-33.

* Duncan, D., Prestage, G., & Grierson, J. (2015). 'I'd much rather have sexual intimacy as opposed to sex': Young Australian gay men, sex, relationships and monogamy. *Sexualities, 18*(7), 798-816.

Everett, B. G., Hatzenbuehler, M. L., & Hughes, T. L. (2016). The impact of civil union legislation on minority stress, depression, and hazardous drinking in a diverse sample of sexual-minority women: A quasi-natural experiment. *Social Science & Medicine, 169*, 180-190.

* Fiske, E. & Weston, G. (2014). Utilisation of ART in single women and lesbian couples since the 2010 change in Victorian legislation. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, 54*, 497-499.

Fitzgerald, B. (1999). Children of lesbian and gay parents. *Marriage and Family Review, 29*(1), 57-75.

Flanders, C. E., Legge, M. M., Plante, I., Goldberg, A. E., Ross, L. E. (2018). Gender socialization practices among bisexual and other nonmonsexual mothers: A longitudinal qualitative examination. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, Advance online.*

* Gannoni, A., & Cussen, T. (2014). Same-sex intimate partner homicide in Australia. *Trends and Issues in Crime and Criminal Justice*. Woden: Australian Institute of Criminology.

Goldberg, A.E., Gartrell, N. K., & Gates, G. J. (2014). *Research report on LGB-parent families*. Los Angeles: The Williams Institute, University of California.

Gonzalez, J-M., Sinclair, K. O., D'Augelli, A. R., & Grossman, A. H. (2018). Intersectionality and ell-being among racial/ethnic minority and LGB youth: Extended family members as support against negative parental reactions to coming out. In R. Dimitrova (ed.). *Well-being of youth and emerging adults across cultures: Novel approaches and findings from Europe, Asia, Africa and America* (pp 123-144). Cham: Springer.

* Gorman-Murray, A. (2008). Queering the family home: narratives from gay, lesbian and bisexual youth coming out in supportive family homes in Australia. *Gender, Place and Culture, 15*(1), 31-44.

* Gorman-Murray, A. (2013). Straight-gay friendships: Relational masculinities and equalities landscapes in Sydney, Australia. *Geoforum, 49*, 214-223.

* Gorman-Murray, A., & Brennan-Horley, C. (2010). The geography of same-sex families in Australia: Implications for regulatory regimes. *Law in Context, 28*(1), 43-64.

* Gorman-Murray, A., Brennan-Horley, C., McLean, K., Waitt, G., & Gibson, C. (2010). Mapping same-sex couple family households in Australia. *Journal of Maps, 6*(1), 382-392.

Grafsky, E. L., Hickey, K., Nguyen, H. N., & Wall, J. D. (2018). Youth disclosure of sexual orientation to siblings and extended family. *Family Relations, 67*(February), 147-160.

* Grierson, J., & Smith, A. (2005). In from the outer: Generational differences in coming out and gay identity formation. *Journal of Homosexuality, 50*(1), 53-70.

Hammarberg, K., Johnson, L., & Petrillo, T. (2011). Gamete and embryo donation and surrogacy in Australia: The social context and regulatory framework. *International Journal of Fertility and Sterility, 4*(4), 176-183.

* Hanckel, B., & Morris, A. (2014). Finding community and contesting heteronormativity: Queer young people's engagement in an Australian online community. *Journal of Youth Studies, 17*(7), 872-886.

Hank, K., & Salzburger, V. (2015). Gay and lesbian adults' relationship with parents in Germany. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 77*(4), 866-876.

Hatzenbuehler, M. L., O'Cleirigh, C., Grasso, C., Mayer, K., Safren, S., & Bradford, J. (2012). Effect of same-sex marriage laws on health care use and expenditures in sexual minority men: A quasi-natural

experiment. *American Journal of Public Health, 102*(2), 285-291.

* Hayman, B., & Wilkes, L. (2017). De novo families: Lesbian motherhood. *Journal of Homosexuality, 64*(5), 577-591.

* Hayman, B., Wilkes, L., Halcomb, E. & Jackson, D. (2015). Lesbian women choosing motherhood: The journey to conception. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, 11*(4), 395-409.

* Hayman, B., Wilkes, L., Halcomb, E. J., & Jackson, D. (2013). Marginalised mothers: Lesbian women negotiating heteronormative healthcare services. *Contemporary Nurse, 44*(1), 120-127.

* Hayman, B., Wilkes, L., Jackson, D., & Halcomb, E. (2013). De novo lesbian families: Legitimizing the other mother. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, 9*(3), 273-287.

* Hillier, L., & Harrison, L. (2004). Homophobia and the production of shame: Young people and same sex attraction. *Culture, Health and Sexuality, 6*(1), 79-94.

Hillier, L., Dempsey, D., Harrison, L., Beale, L., Matthews, L., & Rosenthal, D. (1998). *Writing themselves in: A national report on the sexuality, health and well-being of same-sex attracted young people.* Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, LaTrobe University.

* Hillier, L., Jones, T., Monagle, M., Overton, N., Gahan, L., Blackman, J., & Mitchell, A. (2010). *Writing Themselves In 3: The third national study on the sexual health and wellbeing of same sex attracted and gender questioning young people.* Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society.

* Hosking, G., Mulholland, M., & Baird, B. (2015). "We are doing just fine": The children of Australian gay and lesbian parents speak out. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, 11*(4), 327-350.

* Hosking, W. (2013). Satisfaction with open sexual agreements in Australian gay men's relationships: The role of perceived discrepancies in benefit. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 42*(7), 1309-1317.

* Hughes, M., & Cartwright, C. (2014). LGBT people's knowledge of and preparedness to discuss end-of-life care planning options. *Health & Social Care in the Community, 22*(5), 545-552.

Institute of Medicine. (2011). *The health of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people: Building a foundation for better understanding. .* Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press.

* Irwin, J. (2008). (Dis)counted stories: Domestic violence and lesbians. *Qualitative Social Work, 7*(2), 199-215.

* Jennings, R. (2016). The boy-child in Australian lesbian feminist discourse and community. *Cultural & Social History, 13*(1), 63-79.

* Kentlyn, S. (2007). 'Who's the man and who's the woman?' Same-sex couples in Queensland 'doing' gender and domestic labour. *Queensland Review, 14*(2), 111-124.

Kindle, P. A., & Erich, S. (2005). Perceptions of social support among heterosexual and homosexual adopters. *Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Social Services, 86*(4), 541-546.

Kurdek, L. (2004). Are gay and lesbian cohabiting couples really different from heterosexual married couples? . *Journal of Marriage and Family, 66*, 880-900.

* Leonard, W., Pitts, M., Mitchell, A., & Patel, S. (2008). *Coming forward: The underreporting of heterosexist violence and same sex partner abuse in Victoria.* Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society.

Leonard, W., Pitts, M., Mitchell, A., Lyons, A., Smith, A., Patel, S., . . . Barrett, A. (2012). *Private Lives 2: The second national survey of the health and wellbeing of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) Australians.* Melbourne: La Trobe University.

* Lindsay, J., Perlesz, A., Brown, R., McNair, R., de Vaus, D., & Pitts, M. (2006). Stigma or respect: Lesbian parented families negotiating school settings. *Sociology, 40*(6), 1059-1077.

* Luzia, K. (2010). Travelling in your backyard: The unfamiliar places of parenting. *Social & Cultural Geography, 11*(4), 359-375.

* Luzia, K. (2013). "Beautiful but tough terrain': The uneasy geographies of same-sex parenting. *Children's Geographies, 11*(2), 243-255.

* Lyons, A. (2016). Social support and the mental health of older gay men: Findings from a national community-based survey. *Research on Aging, 38*(2), 234-253.

* Lyons, A., Pitts, M., & Grierson, J. (2013). Factors related to positive mental health in a stigmatized minority: An investigation of older gay men. *Journal of Aging and Health, 25*(7), 1159-1181.

Mankowski, M., & Hash, K. M. (2017). Caregiving in the LGBT community. *Annual Review of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, *37*(1), 77-87.

Manning, W. D., Brown, S. L., & Stykes, J. B. (2016). Same-sex and different sex cohabitating couple relationship stability. *Demography, 53*(4), 937-953.

McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *Journal of Women and Culture in Society, 30*(3), 1771-1800.

* McLaren, S. (2016). The relationship between living alone and depressive symptoms among older gay men: The moderating role of sense of belonging with gay friends. *International Psychogeriatrics, 28*(11), 1895-1901.

* McLean, K. (2004). Negotiating (non)monogamy. *Journal of Bisexuality, 4*(1-2), 83-97.

McLean, K. (2011). Bisexuality and nonmonogamy: A reflection. *Journal of Bisexuality, 11*(4), 513-517.

* McNair, R. (2004). *Outcomes for children born of A.R.T. in a diverse range of families.* Melbourne: Victorian Law Reform Commission.

* McNair, R., Brown, R., Perlesz, A., Lindsay, J., De Vaus, D., & Pitts, M. (2008). Lesbian parents negotiating the health care system in Australia. *Health Care for Women International*, *29*(2), 91-114.

* McNair, R., Dempsey, D., Wise, S., & Perlesz, A. (2002). Lesbian parenting: Issues, strengths and challenges. *Family Matters, 63*(Spring/Summer), 40-49.

* Mikhailovich, K., Martin, S., & Lawton, S. (2001). Lesbian and gay parents: Their experiences of children's healthcare in Australia. *International Journal of Sexuality and Gender Studies, 6*(3), 181-191.

* Millbank, J. (2003). From here to maternity: A review of the research on gay and lesbian families. *Australian Journal of Social Issues, 38*(4), 541-600.

Millbank, J. (2011). The new surrogacy parentage laws in Australia: Cautious regulation or '25 brick walls'? *Melbourne University Law Review, 35*, 165-207.

Morandini, J. S., Blaszczynski, A., Dar-Nimrod, I., & Ross, M. W. (2015). Minority stress and community connectedness among gay, lesbian and bisexual Australians: A comparison of rural and metropolitan localities. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, 39*(3), 260-266.

* Munro, I., & Edward, K. L. (2010). The burden of care of gay male carers caring for men living with HIV/AIDS. *American Journal of Men's Health, 4*(4), 287-296.

* Murphy, D.A. (2013). The desire for parenthood: Gay men choosing to become parents through surrogacy. *Journal of Family Issues, 34*(8), 1104-1124.

Newman, C. E., Persson, A., Manolas, P., Schmidt, H.-M. A., Ooi, C., Rutherford, A., & De Wit, J. (2018). "So much is at stake": Professional views on engaging heterosexually identified men who have sex with men with sexual health care in Australia. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, 15*(3), 301-311.

Ojanen, T. T., Burford, J., Juntrasook, A., Kongsup, A., Assatarakul, T., & Chaiyajit, N. (2018). Intersections of LGBTI exclusion and discrimination in Thailand: The role of socio-economic status. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, Advance online*.

Patterson, C. J. (2000). Family relationships of lesbians and gay men. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 62*, 1052-1069.

Peplau, L. A., & Fingerhut, A. W. (2007). The close relationships of Lesbians and gay men. *Annual Review of Psychology, 58*, 405-424.

Perales, F. (2016). The costs of being "different": Sexual identity and subjective wellbeing over the life course. *Social Indicators Research, 127*(2), 827-849.

* Perales, F., & Baxter, J. (2015). *The lives of the others: Sexual identity and relationship quality in Australia and the United Kingdom.* Life Course Centre Working Paper No. 2015-31. Brisbane: The University of Queensland.

Perales, F., & Campbell, A. (2018). Who supports equal rights for same-sex couples? Evidence from Australia. *Family Matters, 100*, 28-41.

* Perlesz, A., & McNair, R. (2004). Lesbian parenting: insiders' voices. *The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 25*(3), 129-140.

* Perlesz, A., Brown, R., Lindsay, J., McNair, R., de Vaus, D., & Pitts, M. (2006). Family in transition: Parents, children and grandparents in lesbian families give meaning to 'doing family'. *Journal of Family Therapy, 28*(2), 175-199.

* Perlesz, A., Power, J., Brown, R., McNair, R., Schofield, M., Pitts, M., Barrett, A., & Bickerdike, A. (2010). Organising work and home in same-sex parented families: Findings from the Work Love Play study. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 31*(4), 374-391.

* Philpot, S. P., Ellard, J., Duncan, D., Dowsett, G. W., Bavinton, B. R., Down, I., . . . Prestage, G. (2016). Gay and bisexual men's interest in marriage: An Australian perspective. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 18(*12), 1347-1362.

* Power, J., Brown, R., Schofield, M. J., Pitts, M., McNair, R., Perlesz, A., & Bickerdike, A. (2014). Social connectedness among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender parents living in metropolitan and regional and rural areas of Australia and New Zealand. *Journal of Community Psychology, 42*(7), 869-889.

* Power, J., Perlesz, A., Brown, R., Schofield, M. J., Pitts, M. K., McNair, R., & Bickerdike, A. (2012). Bisexual parents and family diversity: Findings from the Work, Love, Play study. *Journal of Bisexuality, 12*(4), 519-538.

* Power, J., Perlesz, A., Brown, R., Schofield, M., Pitts, M., McNair, R., & Bickerdike, A. (2010). Diversity, tradition and family: Australian same-sex attracted parents and their families. *Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review, 6*(2), 66-81.

* Power, J., Perlesz, A., McNair, R., Schofield, M., Pitts, M., Brown, R., & Bickerdike, A. (2012). Gay and bisexual dads and diversity: Fathers in the Work, Love, Play study. *Journal of Family Studies, 18*(2-3),

143-154.

Power, J., Perlesz, A., Schofield, M. J., Pitts, M. K., Brown, R., McNair, R., . . . Bickerdike, A. (2010).
Understanding resilience in same-sex parented families: The Work, Love, Play study. *BMC Public Health, 10,* 115-124.

* Power, J., Schofield, M. J., Farchione, D., Perlesz, A., McNair, R., Brown, R., Pitts, M., & Bickerdike, A. (2015). Psychological wellbeing among same-sex attracted and heterosexual parents: Role of connectedness to family and friendship networks. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 36*(3), 380-394.

* Prestage G, D. D., Grierson J, Bradley J, Bavinton B, Smith A. (2014). *Monopoly: A study of gay men's relationships 2014.* Sydney: Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales.

* Prestage, G., Bavinton, B., Grierson, J., Down, I., Keen, P., Bradley, J., & Duncan, D. (2015). Online dating among Australian gay and bisexual men: Romance or hooking up? *Aids and Behavior, 19*(10), 1905-1913.

* Rawsthorne, M. (2009). Just like other families? Supporting lesbian-parented families. *Australian Social Work, 62*(1), 45-60.

* Rawsthorne, M. (2012). How long in the wilderness? Australian lesbian parents and social policy reform. *Critical Social Policy, 33*(2), 266-284.

* Rawsthorne, M., & Costello, M. (2010). Cleaning the sink: Exploring the experiences of Australian lesbian parents reconciling work/family responsibilities. *Community, Work and Family, 13*(2), 189-204.

* Ray, V., & Gregory, R. (2001). School experiences of the children of lesbian and gay parents. *Family Matters, 59*(Winter), 28-34.

* Riggs, D. W., & Willing, I. (2013). "They're all just little bits, aren't they": South Australian lesbian mothers' experiences of marginalisation in primary schools. *Journal of Australian Studies, 37*(3), 364-377.

* Riggs, D.W. (2007). Reassessing the foster-care system: Examining the impact of heterosexism on lesbian and gay applicants. *Hypatia, 22*(1), 132-148.

* Riggs, D.W. (2008a). Lesbian mothers, gay sperm donors, and community: Ensuring the well-being of children and families. *Health Sociology Review, 17*(3), 226-234.

* Riggs, D.W. (2008b). Using multinominal logistic regression analysis to develop a model of Australian gay and heterosexual sperm donors' motivations and beliefs. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Society, 6*(2), 106-123.

* Riggs, D.W. (2009). The health and well-being implications of emotion work undertaken by gay sperm donors. *Feminism & Psychology, 19*(4), 517-533.

* Riggs, D.W. (2010). Pragmatic imbalances: Australian lesbian and gay foster carers negotiating the current legal context. *Law in Context, 28*(1), 65-77.

* Riggs, D.W. (2011). Australian lesbian and gay foster carers negotiating the child protection system: Strengths and challenges. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, 8*, 215-226.

* Riggs, D.W. (2012a). Non-Indigenous lesbians and gay men caring for Indigenous children: An Australian case study. In C.N. Phellas (ed.), *Researching non-heterosexual sexualities* (pp 201-213). Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate.

* Riggs, D.W. (2012b). Perceptions of support among Australian lesbian and gay foster carers. In T.G. Morrison, M.A. Morrison, M.A. Carrigan & D.T. McDermott (eds). Sexual Minority Research in the New Millennium (pp 93-106). New York: Nova Science Publishers.

* Riggs, D.W. & Augoustinos, M. (2009). Institutional stressors and individual strengths: Policy and practice directions for working with Australian lesbian and gay foster carers. *Practice, 21*(2), 77-90.

* Riggs, D.W., Due, C. & Power, J. (2015). Gay men's experiences of surrogacy clinics in India. *Journal of Family Planning and Reproductive Health Care, 41*, 48-53

* Ripper, M. (2007). Fishing for taddies: Emotion work in lesbian women's search for sperm donors in South Australia. *Gay and Lesbian Issues and Psychology Review, 3*(1), 15-24.

* Ripper, M. (2008). Australian sperm donors: Public image and private motives of gay, bisexual and heterosexual donors. *Health Sociology Review, 17*(3), 313-325.

* Robinson, K. H., Bansel, P., Denson, N., Ovenden, G., & Davies, C. (2014). *Growing up queer: Issues facing young Australians who are gender variant and sexuality diverse.* Melbourne: Young and Well Cooperative Research Centre.

Rodrigues, D. L., Lopes, D., & Prada, M. (2018). Cohabitation and romantic relationship quality among Portuguese lesbian, gay, and heterosexual individuals. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy, Advance online*.

Rosenfeld, M. J., & Thomas, R., J. (2012). Searching for a mate: The rise of the internet as a social intermediary. *American Sociological Review, 77*(4), 523-547.

Rothblum, E. D. (2009). An overview of same-sex couples in relationships: A research area still at sea. In D. A. Hope (Ed.), *Contemporary perspectivies on lesbian, gay, and bisexual relationships* (pp. 114-127).

New York: Springer.

* Scholz, B. & Riggs, D.W. (2014). Sperm donors' accounts of lesbian recipients: Heterosexualisation as a tool
   for warranting claims to children's 'best interests'. *Psychology & Sexuality, 5*(3), 247-257.

Schumm, W. R. (2016). A review and critique of research on same-sex parenting and adoption. *Psychological
   Reports, 119*(3), 641-760.

* Shields, L., Zappia, T., Blackwood, D., Watkins, R., Wardrop, J., & Chapman, R. (2012). Lesbian, gay,
   bisexual, and transgender parents seeking health care for their children: A systematic review of the
   literature. *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing, 9*(4), 200-209.

* Short, E., Riggs, D., Perlesz, A., Brown, R., & Kane, G. (2007). *Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
   (LGBT) parent families: A literature review prepared for the Australian Psychological Society.*
   Melbourne: The Australian Psychological Society.

* Short, L. (2007). Lesbian mothers living well in the context of heterosexism and discrimination: Resources,
   strategies and legislative change. *Feminism & Psychology, 17*(1), 57-74.

* Skerrett, D. M., Kõlves, K., & de Leo, D. (2017). Pathways to suicide in lesbian and gay populations in
   Australia: A life chart analysis. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 46*(5), 1481-1489.

Soler, J. H., Caldwell, C. H., Cordova, D., Harper, G., & Bauermeister, J. A. (2018). Who counts as family?
   Family typologies, family support, and family undermining among young adult gay and bisexual men.
   Sexuality Research and Social Policy, 15(2), 123-138.

Sullivan, T. J., Feinstein, B. A., Marshall, A. D., & Mustanski, B. (2017). Trauma exposure, discrimination, and
   romantic relationship functioning: A longitudinal investigation among LGB young adults. *Psychology
   of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity, 4*(4), 481-490.

Summerfield, M., Bevitt, A., Freidin, S., Hahn, M., La, N., Macalalad, N., . . . Wooden, M. (2017). *HILDA User
   Manual – Release 16*. Melbourne: Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research.

* Titlestad, A., & Pooley, J. A. (2014). Resilience in same-sex-parented families: The lived experience of adults
   with gay, lesbian, or bisexual parents. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies, 10*(4), 329-353.

* Tuazon-McCheyne, J. (2010). Two dads: Gay male parenting and its politicisation - A cooperative inquiry
   action research study. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy, 31*(4), 311-323.

Uhrig, S. C. N. (2015). Sexual orientation and poverty in the UK: A review and top-line findings from the UK
   household longitudinal study. *Journal of Research in Gender Studies, 5*(1), 23-72.

Umberson, D., Thomeer, M. B., Kroeger, R. A., Lodge, A. C., & Xu, M. (2015). Challenges and opportunities

for research on same-sex relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 77*(1), 96-111.

Valfort, M. (2017). *LGBTI in OECD countries: A review*. OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers No. 198. Paris: OECD Publishing.

van Eeden-Moorefield, B. (2018). Introduction to the special issue: Intersectional variations in the experiences of queer families. *Family Relations, 67*(1), 7-11.

* von Doussa, H., Power, J., McNair, R., Brown, R., Schofield, M., Perlesz, A., . . . Bickerdike, A. (2016). Building healthcare workers' confidence to work with same-sex parented families. *Health Promotion International, 31*(2), 459-469.

Williams, S. L., & Mann, A. K. (2017). Sexual and gender minority health disparities as a social issue: How stigma and intergroup relations can explain and reduce health disparities. *Journal of Social Issues, 73*(3), 450-461.

Wilson, T., & Shalley, F. (2018). Estimates of Australia's non-heterosexual population. *Australian Population Studies, 2*(1), 26-38.

Windschuttle, K., Walsh, G., & Cowen, S. (2017). The same-sex marriage debate: A forum. *Quadrant, 61*(10), 32-39.

Women's Health Australia. (2018). *Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health - Information for Data Users*. Retrieved from https://www.alswh.org.au/for-researchers/data

* Zanghellini, A. (2007). Lesbian and gay identity, the closet and laws on procreation and parenting. *Griffith Law Review, 16*(1), 107-13.
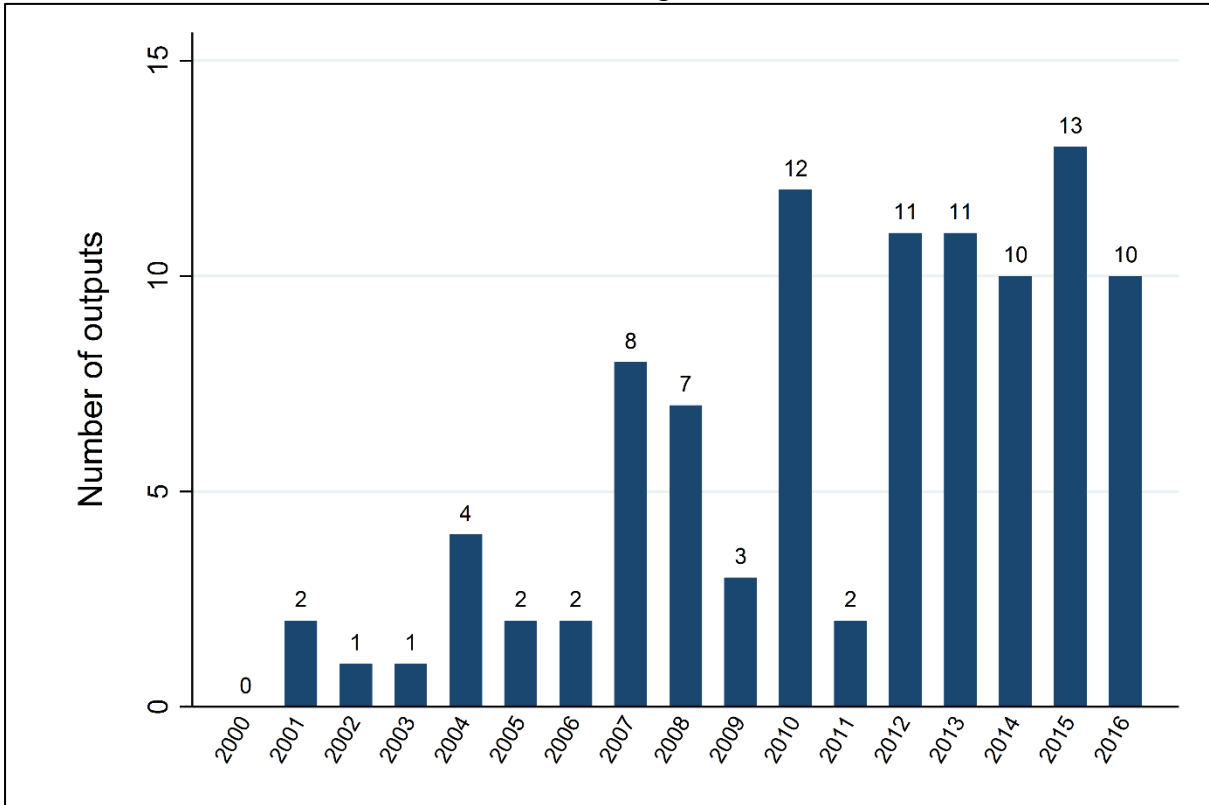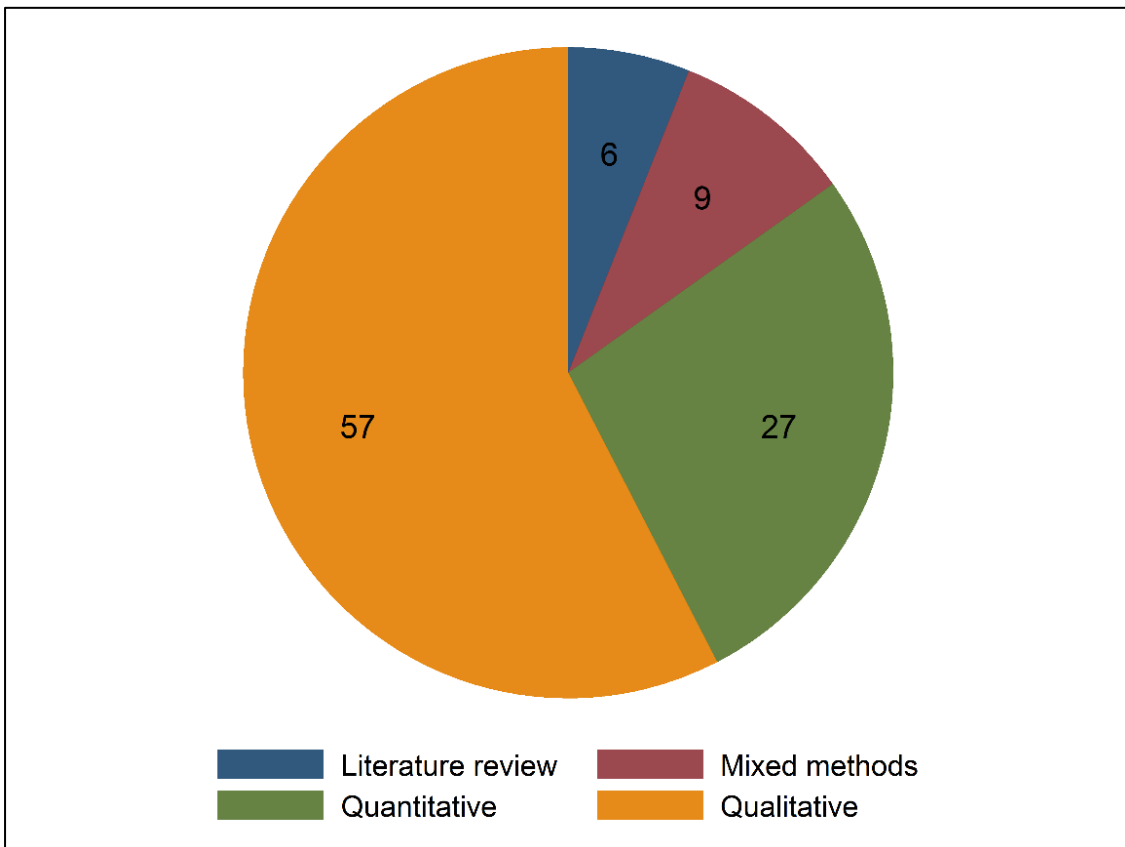
Figure 1. Number of outputs, by year

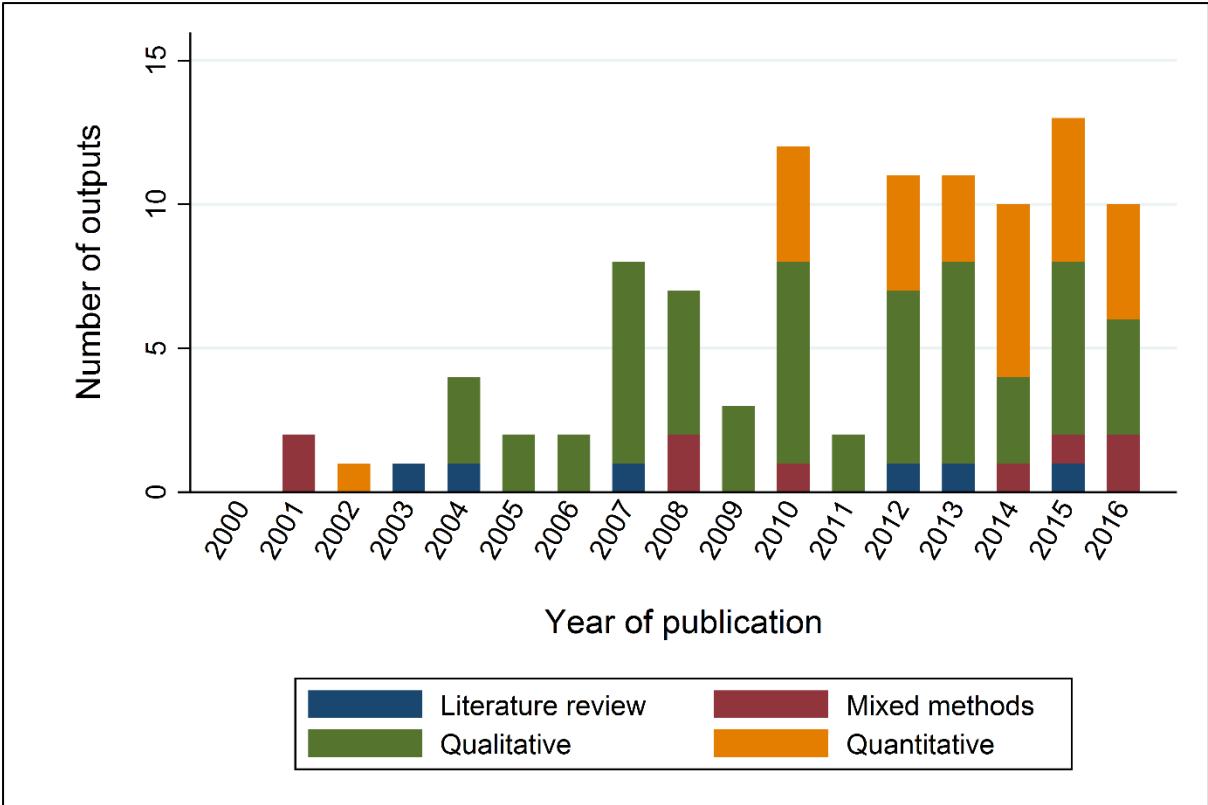*Figure 2*. Number of outputs, by methodology

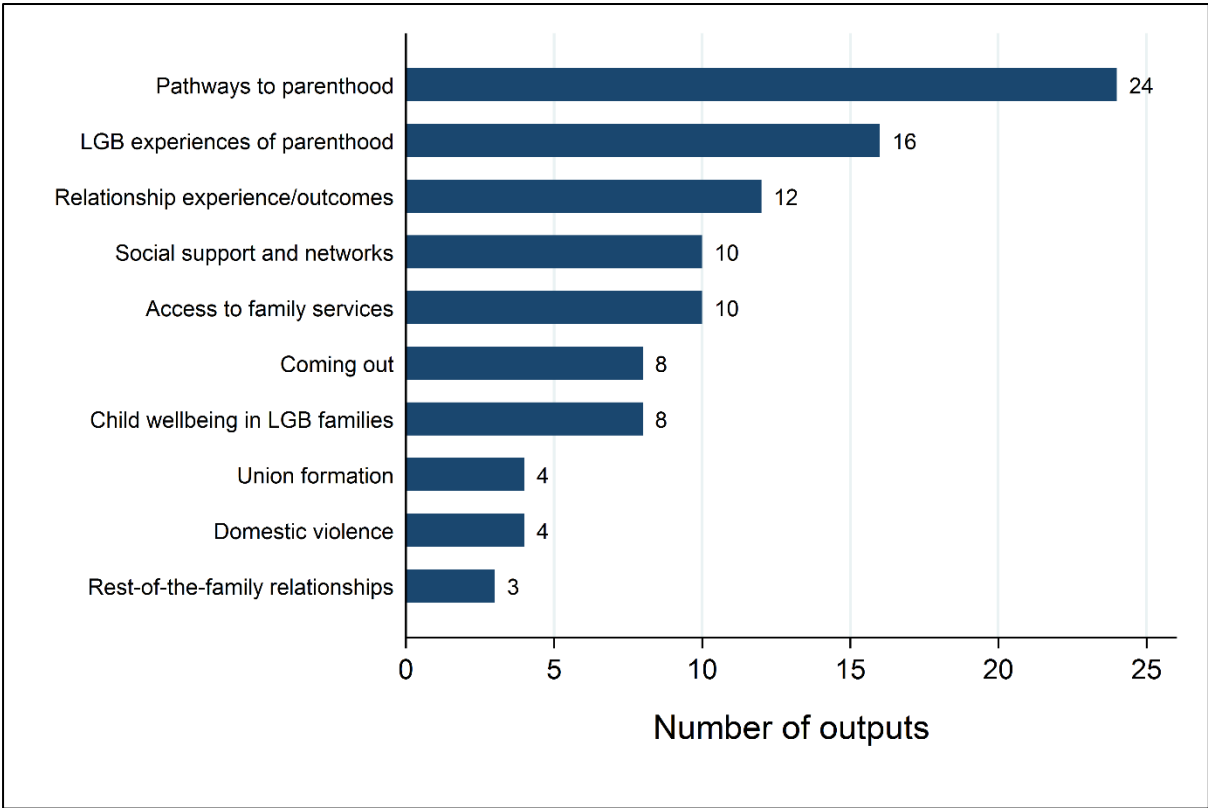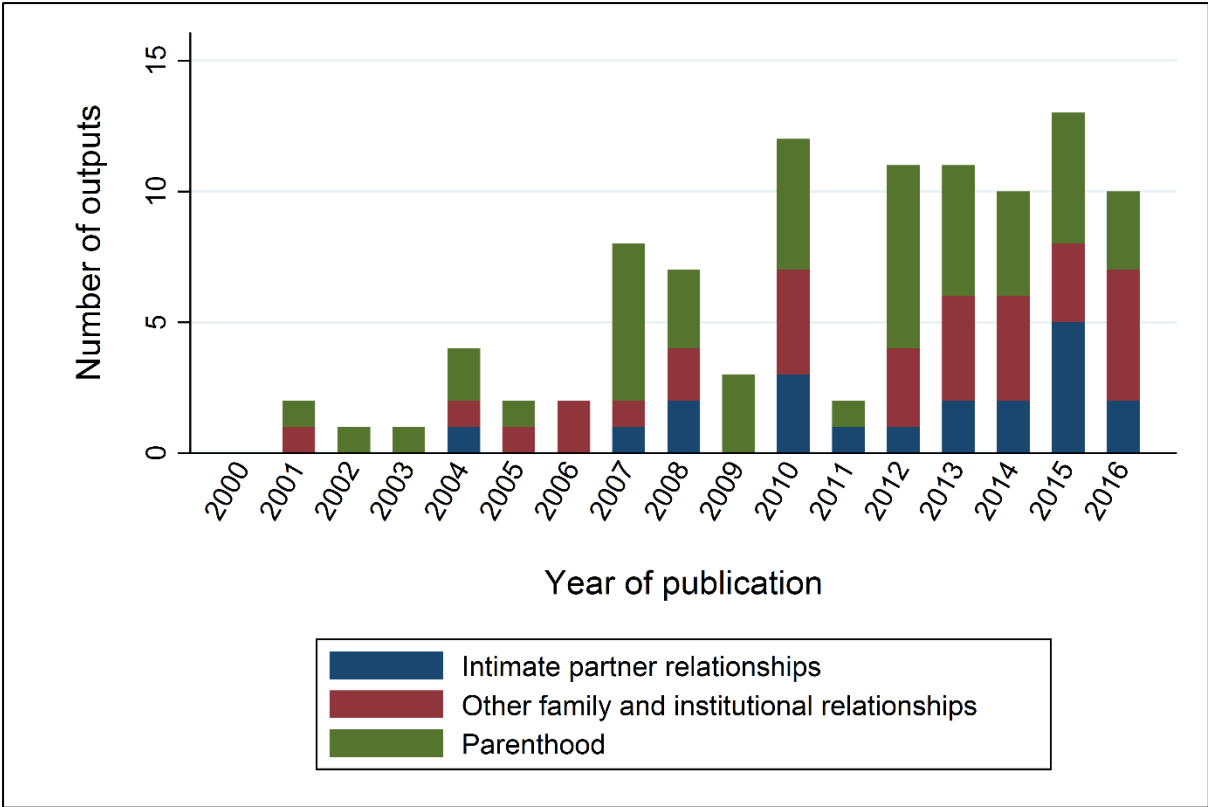*Figure 3.* Number of outputs, by year and methodology

Figure 4. Number of outputs, by subtheme

Figure 5. Number of outputs, by year and theme