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State of the Art
Defamilisation, Familisation, and LGBTQ+ Studies

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This article highlights the interconnection between Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) research and social policy research, and argues that a greater focus on the welfare needs of gender and sexual minority people can advance the defamilisation and familisation literature. While defamilisation and familisation studies have gained significant attention for examining whether individuals, especially women, have adequate opportunities to balance their work and caregiving responsibilities, most of them pay insufficient attention to the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in organising their caring and working life. This article addresses this research gap by undertaking three analytical tasks. Firstly, it explores the defamilisation and familisation risks faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. Secondly, it presents a 'queer life mix framework' to inform the selection of suitable welfare models to guide governments in tackling these risks. Thirdly, it demonstrates how the ideas of the queer life mix framework can be put into practice.

Keywords: LGBTQ+, defamilisation, familisation, welfare model, queer life mix framework.

Introduction

This article highlights the interconnection between Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) research and social policy research, and argues that a greater focus on the welfare needs of gender and sexual minority people can advance the defamilisation and familisation literature. Defamilisation and familisation studies have gained significant attention because they investigate whether individuals, particularly women, have sufficient opportunities to choose their preferred working life and caring life (Lister, 1994; McLaughlin and Glendinning, 1994; Esping-Andersen, 1999; Yu *et al*., 2015, 2023; Lohmann and Zagel, 2016; Kurowska, 2018; Israel and Spannagel, 2019; Chau and Yu, 2022). However, most of them do not pay sufficient attention to the difficulties faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in organising their working life (taking part in the wider economy as a worker) and caring life (providing informal care within the family) (Yu *et al*., 2018). This article addresses this research gap by undertaking three analytical tasks. Firstly, it explores the defamilisation and familisation risks encountered by LGBTQ+ individuals. Secondly, it presents a queer life mix framework that informs the selection of suitable welfare models to guide governments in tackling these risks. Thirdly, it shows that this framework is more than a theoretical possibility and has empirical significance. This is achieved by demonstrating how the ideas of this framework can be put into practice by the implementation of

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three policy approaches – the condition-building, equality, and deficit-reduction approaches.

The article is divided into six sections. The initial section covers the risks associated with defamilisation and familisation. The second section explores the limitations of five widely discussed welfare models, which are currently used to guide the government in tackling the risks of defamilisation and familisation. The third section aims to explore ways to address the limitations of these five welfare models. To achieve this purpose, we review prior research on the significance of adopting a life mix framework that prioritises the concurrent development of both the adult carer and adult worker models. The fourth section delves into the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals with regard to defamilisation and familisation risks. The fifth section presents the queer life mix framework, which informs the selection of suitable welfare models for reducing these defamilisation and familisation risks. Lastly, the sixth section explores ways of putting the ideas contained in the queer life mix framework into practice. This is achieved by exploring how the condition-building, equality, and deficit-reduction approaches can be utilised to help individuals respond to the issue of same-sex marriage.

Defamilisation and familisation risks

Esping-Andersen (1990) categorises eighteen Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries into three welfare capitalism worlds based on the concept of labour decommodification, which refers to the ability of individuals to maintain an acceptable standard of living regardless of their labour-market performance (Kroger, 2011; Powell and Barrientos, 2011). However, critics argue that Esping-Andersen's work overlooks the difficulties faced by women, who also have to manage family responsibilities (Kilkey and Merla, 2014; Kurowska, 2018). They assert that the unequal gender division of unpaid responsibilities can undermine women's welfare (Daly, 2011; Kroger, 2011). Hence, only providing women with support to maintain a reasonable standard of living outside of labour-market relationships may not be enough to enhance their well-being (Bambra, 2007; Chau and Yu, 2013). It is important to take further measures to help women manage their family relationships according to their preferences, while also ensuring a reasonable standard of living (Lohmann and Zagel, 2016; Lo *et al*., 2022a; Yu *et al*., 2021a).

In response to Esping-Andersen's work (1990), Lister (1994, p. 37) presented a widely discussed view on the concept of labour decommodification and defamilisation:

> The dimension of decommodification also needs to be complemented by that of what we might call 'defamilisation', if it is to provide a rounded measure of economic independence. Welfare regimes might then also be characterised according to the degree to which individual adults can uphold a socially acceptable standard of living independently of family relationships, either through paid work or through the social security system.

This quote emphasises the importance of supporting women to achieve economic independence within their families as a means of promoting their overall well-being (Kroger, 2011). In a related vein, Nyberg (2002) notes that male workers' emancipation has often been associated with their independence from the labour market, whereas women's emancipation has been linked to their inclusion in paid work.

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Not all defamilisation studies share the same focus. Some prioritise independence from care responsibilities and the ability to choose who provides care (Leitner, 2003; Chau *et al*., 2017). For example, McLaughlin and Glendinning (1994, p. 66) share this view:

> The issue is not whether people are completely 'defamilised' but rather the extent to which packages of legal and social provisions have altered the balance of power between men and women, between dependents and non-dependents, and hence the terms and conditions under which people engage in familial or caring arrangements.

In relation to this view, Esping-Andersen (1999) defines defamilisation as the relaxation of welfare and caring responsibilities through either welfare or market provision. This allows people to outsource some of their care responsibilities to the formal sector, thereby reducing their dependence on the family (Leitner, 2003; Annesley, 2007; Yu, 2018).

Several studies have highlighted the importance of family relationships to individuals, particularly those who serve as care providers, and their desire to maintain a significant level of involvement in these relationships (Daly, 2011; Keck and Saraceno, 2012; Lohmann and Zagel, 2016). Promoting defamilisation is unlikely to align with their preferences. Therefore, it is necessary to support them in their engagement with their families, while ensuring they have a reasonable standard of living.

Based on these familisation and defamilisation studies, two types of risk can be distinguished: defamilisation risk and familisation risk (Chau and Yu, 2019). Familisation risk arises when individuals lack opportunities to choose a particular family role while maintaining a socially acceptable standard of living. For example, some women who prefer to be full-time caregivers in the family may face difficulties because they are required to participate in the workforce to earn a living (Yu *et al*., 2021a). Conversely, defamilisation risk refers to the lack of opportunities to maintain a socially acceptable standard of living independently of family responsibilities (Yu, Chau and Kühner, 2019; Chau and Yu, 2022). For instance, a woman may be compelled to be a full-time caregiver despite her desire to work outside the home, leaving her with no time for paid employment. Governments can help to reduce both defamilisation and familisation risks by supporting individuals to choose between participating in the workforce or being a caregiver. However, it is not guaranteed that governments will provide this type of support. It depends upon the extent to which they uphold the welfare models that shape the development of social policies aimed at assisting individuals in managing their working and caring life.

Welfare models

A welfare model refers to a simplified construct in terms of which the complex and untidy social reality concerning welfare issues can be understood (Titmuss, 1974; Mishra, 1986). Based on values such as equality, liberty, and altruism, a welfare model guides the development of welfare policies. Studies of welfare models concerning the division of responsibilities between the state and the family in the provision of care, and the division of care within families and the defamilisation and familisation risks, benefit from each other. On the one hand, exploring the relative desirability of various welfare models and their ability to assist individuals in balancing their work and caregiving responsibilities can be aided by considering defamilisation and familisation risks. On the other hand, examining a government's dedication to implementing different welfare models can

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provide insight into its efforts to address these risks. To illustrate this point, five welfare models are discussed in this section – the male breadwinner model, the adult worker model, the adult carer model, the caregiver parity model, and the universal caregiver model. These models have been widely discussed in literature concerning the organisation of working life and caring life (Fraser, 1994; Lewis, 2006; Annesley, 2007; Fox *et al*., 2009; Daly, 2011; Ciccia and Bleijenbergh, 2014; Rubery, 2015; Saraceno, 2015; Yu *et al*., 2021b; Chau and Yu, 2022).

The concept of the male breadwinner model has received significant attention in social science literature, especially in discussions relating to the modern welfare state (Lewis, 2001; Ciccia and Bleijenbergh, 2014; Gonalons-Pons and Gangl, 2021). It is important to note that the modern welfare state was originally designed to cater primarily to regularly employed male breadwinners (Lewis, 2006). Over time, additional provisions were introduced for women and dependent children, leading to the male breadwinner model family. This model emphasises that men should primarily act as breadwinners, while women should serve as informal caregivers and depend on male family members for financial support (Annesley, 2007; Ciccia and Bleijenbergh, 2014). The implementation of this model can create defamilisation risks for those women who seek economic independence within the family and do not want to be the primary family caregiver. It can also create familisation risks for those men who prefer to play the role of informal care provider in the family, rather than taking part in the work economy as a worker.

The adult worker model acknowledges that both women and men can participate in formal employment, and it aims to help women achieve financial independence within the family (Ciccia and Bleijenbergh, 2014; Lo *et al*., 2022a; Yu *et al*., 2021b). Governments are expected to play an active role in implementing this model by outsourcing care responsibilities from the family to other sectors in order to reduce the defamilisation risks faced by women who cannot achieve economic independence due to the unequal gender division of care within the family (Lewis and Giullari, 2005; Yu *et al*., 2021b). However, the adult worker model neglects the needs of individuals who prefer to provide full-time care for their families while also maintaining a reasonable standard of living.

The caregiver parity model upholds traditional gender roles, but the state compensates carers through allowances and other benefits linked to their caring role (Ciccia and Verloo, 2012). In other words, care work is supported financially, but it remains primarily women's responsibility (Ciccia and Bleijenbergh, 2014; Chau and Yu, 2022). Although this model may reduce familisation risks for women who prefer full-time care work, it overlooks the defamilisation risks for women who wish to achieve economic independence within the family through employment. Additionally, the model does not adequately address the familisation risks faced by men who prefer to provide full-time care for their families.

The adult carer model prioritises giving all adults the opportunity to provide care within the family, regardless of gender (Chau and Yu, 2022). It recognises the challenges faced by those who want to provide full-time care but lack financial support. However, it does not take into account the needs of those who require support to achieve economic independence through participation in the workforce.

The universal caregiver model emphasises equal participation of men and women in both work and care, with care being a responsibility shared by families and the public sector (Fraser, 1994; Fox *et al*., 2009; Rubery, 2015; Saraceno, 2015). This model seeks to transform traditional gender roles by incentivising both men and women to combine work

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and caregiving. However, it falls short in guiding government actions to address the defamilisation and familisation risks faced by individuals. This is due to its inadequate consideration of the fact that people may have diverse preferences regarding the organisation of their adult lives and may perceive their working and caring responsibilities differently at various stages of life.

Life mix framework

Since each of the five models has limitations in its ability to guide governments in addressing defamilisation and familisation risks, it is essential to consider implementing multiple models simultaneously. Chau and Yu (2022) suggest a 'life mix framework', which assesses the suitability of different combinations of these models, enabling a government to meet this need. With the emphasis on social equality and autonomy, this framework builds upon two underlying assumptions.

Firstly, the importance of both caring and working lives during adulthood should be equally recognised, meaning that support for informal care providers within the family should be just as significant as support for workers on the labour market. Secondly, individuals should have sufficient opportunities to choose how they organise their working and caring lives, because different people may have different preferences. Based on these two assumptions, the life mix framework stresses three principles. The first principle is that individuals should be provided with sufficient opportunities to alter their preferences for organising their work and caregiving responsibilities during different stages of their lives. To illustrate, women are offered state-subsidised parental leave benefits so that they can opt to become full-time caregivers for their children if they choose. The second principle is that no adult should be compelled to seek, or denied, government assistance in managing their work and caregiving commitments. For instance, parents are given the option to avail themselves of their government's parental leave benefits. The third principle is that people's desires to adjust their family relationships and arrangements by modifying their work and caregiving responsibilities should be acknowledged. For example, some individuals may prefer to be breadwinners rather than financial dependents, and the government can assist them in finding highly paid employment on the labour market to meet this preference.

The life mix framework makes three important contributions to the discussion of defamilisation and familisation risks. Firstly, it makes us aware of the importance of simultaneously supporting both the adult worker and adult carer models in order to address these risks. By prioritising the principles outlined in the framework, it is suggested that this approach will be more effective than any other alternatives in enabling individuals to tailor their work and care responsibilities according to their own preferences, thereby offering greater flexibility for pursuing defamilisation and familisation goals (Chau and Yu, 2022).

Secondly, the life mix framework offers insights into the ideological aspects of reducing defamilisation and familisation risks. It highlights that government efforts to mitigate these risks involve not only financial transactions but also the promotion of values. On the one hand, the framework's two underlying assumptions provide rationales for government actions that support both the adult worker and adult carer models. On the other hand, governments' implementation of policies based on these two models serve as tangible examples of how these assumptions can be applied in practice.

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Thirdly, the life mix framework serves as a reminder of the potential shortcomings of government responses to defamilisation and familisation risks. By emphasising the equal importance of both the adult worker and adult carer models, this framework highlights the possibility of differing views among adults regarding the ideal balance between work and caregiving responsibilities. This recognition is valuable in preventing two problems that can arise from government action or inaction: involuntary exclusion and involuntary inclusion. Involuntary exclusion occurs when individuals are unable to fulfil expected societal roles due to insufficient government support. For example, women who prefer to work may be excluded from the labour market if the government fails to provide adequate support, such as subsidised vocational training programmes or maternity leave benefits. Involuntary inclusion, on the other hand, refers to individuals being forced to take on certain roles against their wishes. For instance, some individuals may be obligated to assume caregiving responsibilities within their families due to compulsory measures implemented by their government.

It is noteworthy that the life mix framework is more than a theoretical possibility. Governments can put the ideas contained within this framework into practice by adopting three approaches – the condition-building approach, the equality approach, and the deficit-reduction approach – in important policy areas. Below, we exemplify how these approaches can be utilised in implementing paid parental leave policies.

The aim of the condition-building approach is to enable individuals to access government policy measures that can improve work and caregiving arrangements. One way to implement this approach is to assist individuals in securing employment, which makes them eligible for benefits such as paid parental leave. The equality approach emphasises the need to provide equal opportunities for all eligible individuals to receive the same benefits from government measures. This includes granting both mothers and fathers the same paid parental leave benefits. However, it is important to note that some users may find that the cost of using such measures outweighs the benefits. This issue can be tackled by the implementation of the deficit-reduction approach, which aims to bridge this gap. The deficit-reduction approach can be implemented in three ways. The first is to allow individuals to choose whether to use government measures or not, such as providing parental leave on a voluntary rather than a compulsory basis. The second is to reduce the costs of using government measures; for example, by ensuring that workers who take parental leave are not paid less than those who do not. The third is to provide more options for individuals to choose from, such as offering highly subsidised Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services alongside parental leave. In this way, people can choose to either take parental leave and care for their child themselves, or rely on ECEC services for care.

Based on the above discussion, it can be said that the three approaches can have an impact on the development of the adult worker and adult carer models, as well as on preventing involuntary inclusion or exclusion, and promoting the principles of the life mix framework.

Defamilisation and familisation risks faced by LGBTQ+ individuals

As pointed out in the introduction, current research on defamilisation and familisation does not sufficiently consider the needs and concerns of LGBTQ+ individuals regarding their work and caring responsibilities (Yu *et al.*, 2018). To address this issue, this section

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discusses the defamilisation and familisation risks faced by LGBTQ+ individuals and the framework that can be used to guide government actions to tackle these risks.

Defamilisation and familisation risks

One major challenge faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in the process of familisation is the obstacles to building their own families (Lo, 2023). This is due to a lack of social and legal recognition of LGBTQ+ families. It is important to note that only thirty-four jurisdictions worldwide have currently legalised same-sex marriage, which serves as a crucial step in enacting people's equal rights to form a legally recognised union (Human Rights Campaign, 2023). Without such legal protection, same-sex couples are subject to unequal economic consequences because they are not entitled to the same spousal protection that is provided to heterosexual couples (Erdley *et al*., 2014). To surmount these structural barriers, LGBTQ+ individuals may consider migrating temporarily or permanently to countries that do legally safeguard the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and families (Ayoub and Bauman, 2019; Lo *et al*., 2022b). However, not all members of the LGBTQ+ community have sufficient financial resources to do so. Pension policies are crucial for promoting familisation by recognising the needs and status of financial dependents within families, because they provide credits for caregiving and survivor pensions. However, these policies often do not consider the needs and challenges faced by same-sex couples. Persistent gender discrimination in the job market means that female workers are less likely than male workers to be able to save enough pension income for retirement, resulting in a pension gap whereby women over sixty five in the European Union (EU) receive much lower pensions than men (Yu *et al*., 2021a). This gap makes women vulnerable to poverty in later life, which is one of the important reasons why research shows that female same-sex couples tend to be at a significant disadvantage compared to different-sex couples (Goldberg, 2009; Schneebaum and Badgett, 2019).

The road to parenthood for LGBTQ+ people is fraught with obstacles, including the lack of legal recognition, societal stigma, and limited access to LGBTQ-affirming healthcare and reproductive services. These challenges can impede the ability of LGBTQ+ parents, particularly non-biological parents, to be acknowledged as parents by either the law or their families of origin, healthcare providers, or the wider community (Hayman *et al*., 2013; Horne *et al*., 2022; Lo, 2023). Moreover, LGBTQ+ parents often worry about their lack of decision-making rights, which can hinder their ability to provide adequate care for their children in medical and school settings (Gash and Raiskin, 2018). These challenges pose significant barriers to LGBTQ+ parents' ability to realise their ideal ways of parenting, which may include sharing parental leave and other aspects of childcare (Evertsson *et al*., 2020; Lo *et al*., 2022b).

LGBTQ+ individuals can also be vulnerable to defamilisation risks. As mentioned in the previous section, being able to earn one's living and becoming financially independent of one's family of origin can be seen as a form of defamilisation (Lister, 1994; Yu *et al*., 2015). Nevertheless, discrimination against minority gender and sexual identities can result in lower wages for LGBTQ+ individuals and put them at greater risk of poverty, even if they have the same qualifications as heterosexual people (Schneebaum and Badgett, 2019). As noted earlier, paid parental leave benefits can serve as a crucial defamilisation tool by giving individuals financial resources to attain a reasonable standard of living, independent of their family relationships (Chau and Yu, 2022). However, in countries

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where LGBTQ+ families lack recognition, their adult members are unlikely to be eligible for these benefits and therefore unable to achieve defamilisation. Research indicates that, even in countries where same-sex marriage is legal, same-sex families may not receive the same amount of paid parental leave benefits as different-sex families (Evertsson *et al*., 2020; Wong *et al*., 2020), indicating a need for further progress in recognising and supporting LGBTQ+ families.

Queer life mix framework

This section proposes a queer life mix framework to address the defamilisation and familisation risks faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. This framework is indebted to the ideas of the life mix framework suggested by Chau and Yu (2022). Both the queer life mix framework and the life mix framework emphasise the equal importance of caring and working lives and the need to provide individuals with sufficient opportunities to organise their lives as they choose. However, the queer life mix framework differs from the life mix framework in two ways.

Firstly, it explicitly stresses the importance of creating opportunities for LGBTQ+ individuals to choose their caring and working lives, or any combination of the two. Secondly, it places a strong emphasis on challenging heteronormativity, which refers to structures and institutions that make heterosexuality privileged and natural, while marginalising other forms of sexuality (Berlant and Warner, 1998). The queer life mix framework is designed to decentre heteronormativity and challenge restrictive assumptions and practices. By focusing on the concept of *queer*, this framework supports Seidman's view (1994) that the study of homosexuality should not be limited to studying a minority group, but should also examine the knowledge and social practices that organise society as a whole.

The queer life mix framework consists of six principles:

- Recognising the equal importance of the caring and working lives of LGBTQ+ individuals throughout adulthood.
- Providing sufficient opportunities for LGBTQ+ individuals to choose how to organise their caring and working lives.
- Acknowledging that preferences for organising caring and working lives may change for LGBTQ+ individuals at different life stages.
- Ensuring that no LGBTQ+ individuals are involuntarily included or excluded from seeking government assistance in organising their caring and working lives.
- Recognising the preferences of LGBTQ+ individuals for changing family relationships and arrangements through adjustments to their caring and working lives.
- Raising awareness of the heteronormative assumptions of the welfare system that can limit both LGBTQ+ individuals and heterosexual people from pursuing their desired caring and working lives.

The queer life mix framework makes important contributions to tackling the defamilisation and familisation risks experienced by LGBTQ+ individuals. Firstly, it draws attention to the limitations and strengths of different welfare models in reducing the defamilisation and familisation risks encountered by LGBTQ+ individuals. To start with, both the male breadwinner model and the caregiver parity model display inherent inadequacies in challenging heteronormative ideas. These models use a heteronormative lens to view

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family structure, focusing on the division of responsibilities between male and female adults in different-sex couples without considering the experiences of same-sex couples. While the universal caregiver model avoids designating women as primary caregivers, it fails to consider diverse preferences among LGBTQ+ adults for organising their caring and working life. Both the adult worker model and the adult carer model have limitations in reducing the defamilisation and familisation risks faced by LGBTQ+ individuals. The adult worker model overlooks the preferences of those LGBTQ+ individuals who want to spend most of their time providing informal care within the family, whereas the adult care model overlooks the preferences of those LGBTQ+ individuals who want to spend most of their time taking part in the work economy. Nevertheless, by implementing both the adult worker model and the adult carer model at the same time, a more conducive environment can be established for LGBTQ+ individuals to organise their working and caring lives according to their preferences. To achieve this, it is necessary to ensure that those government measures (such as the ECEC, paid parental leave benefits, and wage protection) that are used in both of these models are made accessible to LGBTQ+ individuals. In short, utilising the queer life mix framework to assess the relative merits of different welfare models allows us to pinpoint how these models reinforce existing structures that prescribe gender and heteronormative norms for organising men's and women's working and caregiving lives.

Secondly, the queer life mix framework draws attention to the fact that certain LGBTQ+ individuals may be either included or excluded from government policies aimed at assisting them with their work and caregiving responsibilities. For instance, in jurisdictions where there remains a lack of recognition of LGBTQ+ families and an absence of family rights and benefits for these families, LGBTQ+ parents remain excluded from parental leave policy, and have no choice but to leave their jobs to care for their children, thus sacrificing career for family life (Lo *et al*., 2022b). Even in jurisdictions that legally recognise same-sex partnerships, differential access to paid parental leave persists due to the insensitivity of policies to different family forms, such as gender-restrictive parental leave policies in the few countries that incentivise leave for fathers, without providing equivalent options for same-sex female couples (Wong *et al*., 2020). It is important for policymakers to take the different forms and dynamics of families into account when designing policy so that no LGBTQ+ individuals are involuntarily either included or excluded. The queer life mix framework offers a critical lens through which to challenge the heteronormative biases underpinning policy design and draws attention to a wide array of preferences for organising working and caring lives among LGBTQ+ individuals.

As with the life mix framework, the queer life mix framework is more than a theoretical possibility. Its ideas can be put into practice through a government's active involvement in the implementation of the condition-building, equality, and deficit-reduction approaches in significant policy areas. In the next section, we demonstrate this point by investigating how governments utilise these three approaches to assist individuals in dealing with concerns about same-sex marriage.

Same-sex marriage

In the LGBTQ+ literature, a growing number of studies about same-sex marriage and civil unions in Euro-American contexts (Clarke and Finlay, 2004; Peel and Harding, 2008), and more recently in Asian contexts (Jeffreys and Wang, 2018; Tang *et al*., 2020), have

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accumulated over the last few decades. Linked to the expansion of these studies are the growing debates about the strengths and limitations of the legalisation of same-sex marriage. Marriage equality is generally considered key to gaining access to legal rights based on foundational beliefs in human rights and democracy, as well as instrumental rights and economic benefits (Eskridge, 2002). Meanwhile, feminist scholars have long questioned the heteronormative and patriarchal institution of marriage, which has been historically oppressive to women (Jeffreys, 2004; Nair, 2010). Among some queer scholars, same-sex marriage is seen to reinforce the heteronormative institutions of marriage and family and to further the assimilation of LGBTQ+ communities and politics into the 'mainstream' (Duggan, 2002; Beam, 2018). In view of the diverse needs and perspectives of LGBTQ+ individuals, we cannot assume that same-sex marriage will necessarily benefit all LGBTQ+ individuals. It is necessary to explore complementary or alternative policy measures that leverage the benefits of same-sex marriage. Governments can achieve this by using the condition-making, equality, and deficit-reduction approaches to assist people in responding to marriage-related issues. By doing so, a government can put the ideas of the queer life mix framework into practice.

It is important to recognise that legalising same-sex marriage has the potential to be a significant tool in the condition-building approach. Granting legal recognition to same-sex couples as partners can provide them with access to important spousal benefits, such as tax reductions, medical benefits, and the inheritance of estates. Conversely, denying entitlement to same-sex marriage may result in severe consequences, including defamilisation and familisation risks. Studies have shown that LGBTQ+ individuals who live in areas where same-sex marriage is not legally recognised can experience negative physical and mental health consequences due to limited access to financial resources and protection (Erdley *et al*., 2014). This can affect not only their present circumstances but also their later life. For example, ageing LGBTQ+ adults residing in states that do not acknowledge their partnerships typically encounter financial stresses and strains when planning for long-term care as they are not entitled to the same spousal protections granted to heterosexual married couples. The lack of recognition of LGBTQ+ partnerships/families has been described as the 'most blatant and costly example of institutional heterosexism in federal policy' (Butler, 2004, p. 36). Therefore, it can be said that whether or not a government legalises same-sex marriage can have a significant impact on same-sex couples' ability to access government welfare measures (Cahill *et al*., 2000).

As already noted above, the equality approach highlights the importance of ensuring people's equal access to government benefits. In the case of same-sex couples, they may not have the same access to government benefits as different-sex couples, which could limit the effectiveness of legalising same-sex marriage as a means of enabling LGBTQ+ individuals to access public welfare on an equal basis. To fully capitalise on the advantages of legalising same-sex marriage for LGBTQ+ individuals, it is crucial to advocate for equal status and access to public family services and support for both same-sex and different-sex couples.

As discussed in the previous section, the cost of using government measures may outweigh the benefits for some LGBTQ+ individuals. The deficit-reduction approach can be useful in dealing with this problem. It is important to note that not all LGBTQ+ individuals benefit from the legalisation of same-sex marriage in terms of organising their working and caring lives according to their preferences. Therefore, it is necessary to address their concerns and provide them with appropriate support. One crucial area that

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governments should focus on is providing assistance to LGBTQ+ individuals who are going through divorce. This can be achieved through the enactment of anti-discrimination laws to prevent discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals by employers, landlords, and other service providers during the divorce process. Additionally, the government should ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals have access to legal representation and counselling services that cater specifically to their needs during this time. Governments should also provide measures that create a favourable environment for LGBTQ+ individuals who choose not to engage in marriage. These measures can include the recognition and legal protection of different types of relationships, such as domestic partnerships, civil unions, or other forms of cohabitation agreements. Governments can also work towards reducing bias against those who choose not to marry and protect single-person households from discrimination in their access to housing and social benefits.

Using the condition-building, equality, and deficit-reduction approaches to aid LGBTQ+ individuals in responding to the legalisation of same-sex marriage issues conveys two crucial messages. Firstly, legalising same-sex marriage alone is not sufficient to meet the diverse preferences of different groups of LGBTQ+ individuals about how to organise their caring life or working life or both. These groups include, but are not limited to: those who lack the financial resources to marry, married couples who lack adequate support to navigate issues related to familisation and defamilisation risks, married couples seeking to go their separate ways and improve their lives through divorce, and those who prefer non-marital relationships. Secondly, whether or not a government is willing to uphold the queer life mix framework can be reflected in its determination to implement the condition-building, equality, and deficit-reduction approaches in important policy areas. Policymakers should actively reflect upon the heteronormative biases embedded in current policy design. In order to increase LGBTQ+ individuals's chances of realising their diverse preferences regarding working and caring lives, it is imperative to develop additional government measures that assist LGBTQ+ individuals in managing defamilisation and familisation risks, in accordance with the six principles of the queer life mix framework.

Conclusion

This article contributes to the discussion about the interconnection between LGBTQ+ research and social policy research. Its focus is to demonstrate how highlighting the diverse preferences of LGBTQ+ individuals in organising their working life and caring life can contribute to the defamilisation and familisation literature. To meet this purpose, this article has carried out three analytical tasks. Firstly, it has explored the difficulties that LGBTQ+ individuals face in terms of defamilisation and familisation risks. Secondly, it has introduced the queer life mix framework as a tool for informing the selection of suitable welfare models for addressing these risks. Thirdly, it has offered practical strategies for implementing this framework. Further research can build on this framework to explore ways to make the welfare system more inclusive and equitable, support diverse family forms, and respect individual preferences for balancing work and care responsibilities. We can achieve these goals by conducting research projects such as using the queer life mix framework to assess other policy measures for LGBTQ+ individuals, such as housing services and healthcare, exploring whether and why governments are willing to put the ideas of the queer life mix framework into practice.

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