

Women's perspectives on the contemporary family in Irish society

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Abstract

Understanding what women's perspectives on the contemporary family are in Irish society was done using a qualitative approach. After interviewing six participants, it was found that the Irish family is a loving supportive connection, that is becoming more diverse. Also that the family unit is not restricted by blood ties and the future of the family is unknown.

Introduction

Over the past few decades, there have been a number of changes to the family unit, from the feminist movement, to the gay rights movements. Along with this, theorists have discovered a different factors have changed the family unit. In relation to the emotional connections that build a family, the structure of a family, and the role of the family within society. All this has caused the perspectives women have towards the Irish family to transform from a traditional way of seeing the family, to a more modern and inclusive view on the unit.



Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of this research study is to understand what women's perspectives on the contemporary family are in Irish society.



Method

Through the use of a qualitative approach in the form of semi structured interviews the general research question was answered. Using thematic analysis, the data obtained in the interviews was recorded, put into nodes, narrowed down and five themes were discovered. The data for this research was gathered through four individual interviews and one two person interview. The participants were all female and aged between 19 and 30. four were found through Dublin Business School, and two through social media. Four of the interviews were conducted in lecture halls, and two were held in the participants homes. The interviews were recorded on a Dictaphone and stored on a password protected USB. The main ethical issues that arose was the participants welfare, and confidentiality. These two issues were overcome by obtaining consent from each of the participants, through a signed consent form and by keeping all personal information in a secure location, also by not stating the participants real names in the report.

Findings

From the thematic analysis, it was found that, what family is, is a loving support system that takes care of each other. That the family is more diverse in contemporary Irish society. That divorce and, the decline of the Catholic Church, and the increase in the media have altered the family unit. Also that the family is no longer restricted by blood ties, that friendship bonds are turning into family relationship. Finally that the future of the family is unknown, that it can be anything they choose it to be.

Discussion

Taking theories from Talcott Parsons, Anthony Giddens, feminism, and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim Combined their work with the insight gathered from the participants, it is clear that the family unit in Irish society has changed in relation to the intimate bonds that that build a family are stronger. Also that this research study, the work by David Popenoe about too much diversity having a negative impact on the family unit, it is seen from the information obtained in the interviews that this is not entirely true, as according to the participants, all the changes and diversity the family unit has gone through over the last few decades are a positive. Finally, the family unit is forever changing and forever changed.

References

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