


Chapter 6

Designing a Multilevel Academic Framework for LGBTQIA+ Educators, Students, and Educational Systems: Heteronormativity and Queer Pedagogical Praxis

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ABSTRACT

This chapter constructs a multilevel conceptual framework for re-theorising LGBTQIA+ educators, students, and institutions within heteronormative educational regimes. Integrating performativity, intersectionality, habitus, minority stress, and teacher agency, it conceptualises queer educator subjectivity as a nodal point where power, knowledge, and affective labour congeal. The chapter maps queer-informed pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment as epistemic, affective, discursive, spatial, and digital ecologies, while analysing governance through polycentric and datafied architectures that organise risk and possibility. It then synthesises these dimensions into matrices that specify obligations for academics, practitioners, policy makers, industry, and civil society, advancing an integrated queer educational theory that understands conceptual labour as transformative praxis oriented toward just, sustainable learning environments.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Situating LGBTQIA+ Educators within Polycentric Educational Ecologies

LGBTQIA+ educators occupy intricate locations within a polycentric educational ecology that spans early schooling, higher education, vocational training, digital platforms, and community-based learning infrastructures. They function simultaneously as knowledge producers, affective labourers, governance intermediaries, and symbolic figures through whom institutions negotiate contested norms regarding gender, sexuality, kinship, and morality (Wu, 2025; Prock et al., 2019). Their professional lives unfold within assemblages of curricula, regulatory protocols, architectural spaces, digital infrastructures, and community expectations that embed *heteronormativity* and *cisnormativity* in seemingly neutral routines. At the same time, these educators generate counter-hegemonic pedagogical imaginaries that reconfigure what counts as legitimate knowledge, appropriate behaviour, and professional authority. In many jurisdictions, the presence of an openly queer teacher or academic becomes a focal point for wider cultural conflicts over children, citizenship, and the future of the nation. Consequently, LGBTQIA+ educators crystallise broader tensions between democratic pluralism and exclusionary moral orders, making them indispensable for any rigorous theory of contemporary education.

1.2 Conceptual, Political, and Ethical Stakes of Queer Educational Labour

A conceptual-theoretical engagement with LGBTQIA+ educators illuminates the deep political and ethical stakes embedded in ostensibly technical decisions about staffing, curriculum design, quality assurance, and campus governance. The everyday regulation of queer bodies and intimacies within schools and universities materialises abstract regimes of *biopolitics*, *governmentality*, and *moral regulation* in highly concrete ways, from dress codes and restroom access to relationship disclosure and online self-presentation (Nathanson, 2009; Haddad, 2019; Toledo & Maher, 2021). These micro-practices organise which lives are rendered intelligible, which vulnerabilities are recognised, and which harms remain structurally permissible. Ethical questions concerning care, responsibility, and obligation cannot be reduced to individual attitudes, since institutional architectures distribute precarity, safety, and recognition unevenly across different queer subject positions. A conceptual focus therefore foregrounds how decisions about legitimacy, normality, and risk shape the psychic, corporeal, and economic conditions under which LGBTQIA+

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