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## **Humour Style, Identity, and Attachment Processes – An Analysis of Narratives from Nonheteronormative Parents Living in Poland\***

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### **Abstract**

This article presents the results of qualitative research on the narratives of non-heteronormative parents living in Poland. The method of collecting data was partially guided interview. The parents were a couple of women (a trans woman and a cisgender woman) aged 40. The examined woman did not undergo a medical or legal transition. The women were married and raised their child together. The article presents an analysis of humor in the couple's narrative. The research was guided by the following research questions: In what contexts does humour appear? What styles of humour are present in the narrative? What function does the humour have? Which attachment style characterises the interactions between the partners? Which attachment style characterises the interactions between the parents and the child? What is the relationship between the development of the parents' sexual/gender identities and their process of forming bonds in the couple? It was shown that during the interview, the couple joked in three main contexts: interaction with the child, sexual and gender identity, and sharing of household chores. The analysis of the style of humor, the psychological functions of humor and the attachment style of the women was made.

**Keywords:** humour style, attachment style, LGBT parents, positive psychology, qualitative analysis.

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## Introduction

In recent years, the Polish scientific community has been increasingly interested in problems in the functioning of nonheteronormative families. There has been both theoretical research (Abramowicz, 2007; Abramowicz & Biedroń, 2007; Prokopowicz, 2008; Slany, 2008; Kowalska, 2012; 2018) and empirical studies on families, which put particular emphasis on the Polish socio-cultural context. These include small-scale studies (Szukalski, 2008; Śmiecińska & Wycisk, 2012; Wycisk & Kleka, 2014; Kowalska, 2015; Wojciechowska, 2015) and studies with bigger samples, using mixed methods of data collection (Mizielińska et al., 2014; Mizielińska et al., 2017; Stasińska, 2018). The development of LGBT and *queer* studies has resulted in nonheteronormative individuals and their families becoming an important subject of social studies in disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and pedagogy. At the same time, it is apparent that most studies are based in English-speaking countries (Mizielińska et al., 2017). The current work presents a psychological analysis of narratives from a nonheteronormative couple of women who live in Poland and are raising a child together. The research problem central to this paper is the way humour is used in their romantic relationship in the context of forming emotional bonds and revealing their sexual and gender identity. This manuscript is an attempt to partially fill the gap in empirical psychological studies on parenting by nonheteronormative Polish individuals.

## Positive psychology and style of humour

The contemporary approach to human mental health is not just centered around disorders, but also around values and resources. The goal of positive psychology is to enhance an individual's competences and to help them find a sense of purpose, fulfillment, and happiness. The flourishing of positive psychology has inspired theoreticians and practitioners to look into the role of sense of humour in an individual's life, especially into its relationship with health. It turns out that laughter and humour influence one's psychophysical balance (nervous, hormonal, cardiovascular, musculoskeletal, and immunological systems), reduces stress and chronic pain, and alleviates psychosomatic symptoms (Hornowska & Charytonik, 2011). Sense of humour is associated with diverse aspects of the mental and social functioning of an individual. It involves cognitive processes necessary for understanding the content of the humour, affective processes associated with emotional needs that are fulfilled by joking, emotional responses

to experiencing humour, and, finally, also the behavioural aspects of emotional expression and creating humorous situations. One effect of the work of positive psychologists has been the creation of the *Character strengths and virtues* classification (CSV)—a list of strengths, values, and virtues of people that are universal to all cultures and societies. It is outlined in Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman's *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*, which they have referred to as a *Manual of the sanities*. It is an alternative to the psychopathological classification in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DMS). Humour/glee is classified in the CSV under the 'transcendence' category and is understood as an inclination for jokes, laughter, diverting others, and seeing the positive aspects of events (Najderska & Ciecuch, 2013).

At first, people researching sense of humour concentrated on its positive values. However, the results of studies were not unanimous. Martin et al. (2003) noted that many studies assumed that humour has only positive functions and is beneficial for psychophysical health. They noted that the ways humour is used and the goals for which it is used may be diverse, and can be both beneficial and harmful for mental health (when it takes the form of malice or aggression, or is intended to hurt others). Their work resulted in the creation of a model of humour styles, based on which the *Humor Styles Questionnaire* (HSQ) was developed (Martin et al., 2003). This model assumes the existence of two dimensions of humour: 1) adaptiveness and 2) intra-mental and intrapersonal functions. It includes four types of humour: 1) affiliative humour, 2) self-enhancing humour, 3) aggressive humour, and 4) self-defeating humour. The first two are considered adaptive, while the second two are considered maladaptive. This typology will be applied in the analysis of the narratives presented here. The table below presents the characteristics of this typology (Table 1).

It should be noted that in the practical use of humour, these types do not always occur in a pure state—they often permeate each other, and one can contain elements of another. For example, despite its overall harmfulness, self-defeating humour may perform the functions of building and tightening bonds or fulfilling the need for interaction and intimacy. On the other hand, affiliative humour may bear elements of aggression. The authors of the model conducted research to measure the relationship between the styles of humour and various aspects of mental health. A positive association was found between the use of adaptive humour styles and selected indices of mental health (Martin et al., 2003 from: Hornowska & Charytonik, 2011). Features which characterise individuals who use adaptive forms of humour include: high self-esteem, the ability to form

romantic relationships, the ability to provide social support, and frequently experiencing positive emotions. On the other hand, the use of maladaptive humour correlates positively with features such as: anxiety, depression, hostility, low self-esteem, and difficulties forming emotional bonds.

Table 1. Characteristics of the styles of humour identified by the model by Road A. Martin et al. (2003).

Direction/ adaptiveness of humour	Interpersonal	Intra-mental
<b>Adaptive</b>  Features: – friendly – mild – tolerant – harmless – affirmative towards oneself and others	<b>Affiliative humour</b>  The ability to: – tell funny stories and jokes – make spontaneous and humorous banter – make others laugh in order to create emotional bonds and reduce tension  Functions: – enhancing the ego of oneself and others – improving the quality of relationships – tightening bonds – minimising conflicts – increasing morale – creating identity – reinforcing norms (in relation to groups)	<b>Self-enhancing humour</b>  The ability to: – take a humorous approach to life by seeing the funny side of circumstances – maintain a humorous point of view even in stressful situations, difficulties, or adverse events  Function: – reduce tension – cope in difficult situations – enhance one’s sense of control and power in threatening situations
<b>Maladaptive</b>  Features: – harmful	<b>Aggressive humour</b>  Involves: – habitual use of sarcasm, mockery, taunting, humiliation, disparagement, and criticism – a tendency to express humour without taking into account its negative impact on others – difficulty controlling the impulse to say funny things regardless of whether they may harm others  Function: – emotion regulation – improving one’s mood and self-esteem through hurting others – deprecating the value of oneself or other people – avoiding responsibility	<b>Self-defeating humour</b>  Involves: – simultaneously ingratiating, ridiculing, and belittling oneself through humour – humiliating oneself – telling self-effacing and compromising stories about oneself in order to make others laugh  Function: – gaining the approval of others at the expense of ridicule – defensive denial – hiding negative emotions – avoiding dealing constructively with problems – suppressing and hiding one’s emotions and needs

Source: Author’s elaboration based on Martin et al. (2003) and Hornowska & Charytonik (2011).

## Attachment

Attachment theory was created by John Bowlby (2016). It is based on ethology and systems theory, as well the psychoanalytic model. It assumes that people have an instinct for attachment, which makes them yearn to create a stable emotional relationship with their mother (or other attachment figure). Bowlby (1969) conducted empirical studies on children who were separated from their mothers, investigating their reactions and the development of their attachment styles (Bowlby, 2016). This theory is based on analysis of children's reactions to separation from their mothers, which robbed them of a safe and stable bond, thus making it a traumatic experience (Józefik & Iniewicz, 2008). According to Bowlby, emotional development progresses from being attached to an attachment figure to autonomy and individuation. Safe attachment to one's mother or some other figure of attachment is a basic emotional need of humans. Secure, anxious-avoidant, anxious-ambivalent and disoriented attachment styles have been identified. A child develops secure attachment in response to empathetic reactions from a parent and the parent's psychophysical availability. The child is then characterised by a sense of self-worth, believes in the kindness of others, and is able to explore their environment with self-confidence. Experience develops the child's sense of competence. If their parents' reactions are inconsistent, insensitive, or if the parent is unavailable, the child develops an insecure attachment style, a negative self-image (fear of abandonment, lack of self-worth, low self-esteem), a lack of trust in others, and a tendency to avoid closeness to others. In adulthood, the internal working model thus created is the basis of how one thinks about oneself and others, determines how one regulates emotions, and influences the way one forms close bonds. As Bowlby says: the way an adult individual reacts to adverse events, particularly to rejection, separation, and loss, depends on how the individual's personality structure has developed (Bowlby, 2016).

In adulthood, an attachment bond is developed in new, romantic relationships, and is based on the attachment style developed in childhood (Wojciszke, 2013, p. 154; Lubiewska, 2019, p. 63). It is worth noting that research on relationships between adult individuals has usually focused on heterosexual people. It is hard to know to what extent conclusions drawn from heterosexual couples can be extrapolated to the development of romantic relationships between nonheteronormative couples. Attachment style has only recently been taken into account in research on the relationships and experiences of individuals and couples of nonheteronormative sexual and gender identities as well as

their parents (Elizur & Mintzer, 2003; Fassinger & Mohr, 2003; Fontanesi et al., 2019; Ingoglia et al., 2019; Mcconnachie et al., 2020). In the context of the development of attachment in nonheteronormative relationships, emphasis is put on the importance of socio-cultural circumstances and their psychological consequences—namely, difficulties with self-acceptance, identity crises, sense of guilt, disorientation, loneliness, experimental engagement in heterosexual relationships, and minority stress (Bojarska & Kowalczyk, 2010; Iniewicz, 2012). At the same time, the authors emphasise the role of nonheteronormative individuals' personal resources as factors protecting them from the consequences of stigma, such as the secure attachment style and the associated self-esteem and psychological resiliency (Ingoglia et al., 2019).

### **Humour style and attachment style**

In recent years, researchers have begun to observe and describe in more detail the relationships of humour style and attachment style with quality of close relationships, satisfaction with relationships, conflicts in relationships, and divorce in adults (Cann et al., 2008; Kuiper, 2008; McGee, 2009; Saroglou, 2010; Cann et al., 2011; Winterheld et al., 2013; Martin, 2015;).

Campbell (Campbell et al., 2008) measured the relationship between humour style and satisfaction with relationships, perceptions of closeness, and problem resolution in 98 heterosexual couples. The study revealed that couples who use affiliative humour better appreciate the role of conversation in resolving conflicts than couples whose use of humour can be characterised as aggressive. High perceived closeness and satisfaction with the relationship was declared by individuals whose partner used affiliative humour when communicating.

A study by Kazarian (Kazarian et al., 2010) on 283 university students (62.5% women) measured the relationship between the humour style of their parents and retrospectively-perceived parental warmth (acceptance) and rejection in childhood. A weak positive correlation was reported between overall parental rejection and the maladaptive styles of humour; a weak positive correlation was found between overall rejection and the adaptive styles of humour. The authors considered two models of parental influence on the development of humour: the modeling/reinforcement hypothesis and the stress and coping model. The modeling/reinforcement hypothesis assumes that children develop an adaptive sense of humour if they grow up in a warm and positive family environment, where the parents demonstrate the use of humour by laughing and joking often as well as positively reinforcing the child's attempts at initiating

humour. On the other hand, the stress and coping model suggests that children develop a sense of humour by growing up in a cold, inappropriate family environment filled with rejection. They learn to use humour to cope with stress and anxiety and to calm down the interpersonal tensions between family members. For instance, by using humour they divert the attention of their parents who would otherwise be punitive or gain the attention and approval of family members who would otherwise be unsupportive.

Howland and Simpson (2014) studied the relations between humour and attachment styles in 87 couples (86 heterosexual couples and one lesbian couple). The recruitment criteria included being of age and having dated for at least a year. The participants received an online questionnaire and were asked to not consult with their partner while filling it out. After a week, all couples were invited to a laboratory meeting. They were informed by the experimenter that they will conduct a video-conversation with their partner, which will be assessed by qualified observers. The partners were then separated; they assessed their current mood and were asked to think about a discussion topic in line with the instruction: *“Please describe something you would like to change about yourself. This change could be about almost anything, but here are some topics you might consider when thinking about the change you’d like to make (e.g., work, health, relationships with family or friends, etc). The important thing is that, whatever you write down, it is something you want to change about yourself, and that it is NOT directly related to a problem in your relationship.”* The reactions of the participants listening to their partners’ responses were observed. The manner in which participants supported their partners talking about how they would change themselves was assessed. The possible support types included judging, empathising, validating, and showing understanding. Style of humour used in the conversation was also assessed (affiliative/aggressive). The following relationships were examined: 1) humour style and type of support given to the partner; 2) humour style and the mood of the partner; 3) anxious attachment style and the emotional reaction to experiencing aggressive humour; and 4) the use of aggressive or affiliative humour styles, attachment style, and the type of support given during the conversation. The study revealed that partners of individuals who used affiliative humour during the conversation were in a better mood after the conversation than partners of individuals who used the aggressive style of humour. Among people characterised by the anxious attachment style, increased reactivity (decreased mood) to their partner using aggressive humour was observed ( $t[87] = 5.90, p < .001$ ) in comparison to people with the secure attachment style.

## Methods

The participants were transgender and cisgender women aged 40 years. They were lesbians and married. Since the trans woman did not start the process of gender reassignment (medical and surgical), she could marry a woman in Poland. This study was conducted using a qualitative approach and a semi-structured interview. The planned topics included: the dynamics of the relationship (its beginnings and development), the experience of coming out to one's family of origin and to one's child, and the reaction of one's closest environment to coming out. The interview was structured in an open-ended manner in order to both explore the preplanned topics and to allow the interviewees to bring up themes important to them. The interviews were conducted in Poland in the participants' homes in the presence of their several-months-old infant. This was the only interview format acceptable to the participants. These interview conditions fostered the participants' sense of security, freedom of expression, and helped shed light on the way they interact with each other and their child. A significant number of statements uttered by the participants were of a humorous character. Because humour has important psychological functions, this variable became the subject of the analysis of the narratives. Style of humour was not intended to be the research problem before the interviews took place.

The following research questions directed the qualitative analysis:

1. In what contexts does humour appear?
2. What styles of humour are present in the narrative?
3. What function does the humour have?
4. Which attachment style characterises the interactions between the partners?
5. Which attachment style characterises the interactions between the parents and the child?
6. What is the relationship between the development of the parents' sexual/gender identities and their process of forming bonds in the couple?

The tables included in the next section (Tables 2–5) present extracts of statements made by the participants. The participants' names have been changed and all potentially identifying information has been removed. The interviewees have familiarised themselves with the contents of this manuscript and have given consent to its publication.



## Analysis

During the interview, the couple joked in three main contexts: 1) interactions with the child; 2) discussing their sexual identity (including coming-out); and 3) the division of household duties. An analysis of these contexts is presented below (Table 2).

Table 2. Coding of the data and identifying the humour style in the area of interactions with the child.

Excerpt from transcript (translated to English)	Humour style
Alicja: So, will you definitely be focused? Let's see how long he'll be able to stay still. [the child cries] One, two, three, four, five, six [laughter]. Baba, will you give me at least ten seconds, or not? [laughter] Researcher: Does he have to be moving? Alicja: He has to, all the time. I mean, he does not like to stay still. He has to be carried around so that something is happening, changing. He is not interested in sitting still. Now he's gone quiet, but that's just for a moment.	Affiliative humour, self-enhancing humour
Alicja: So, he does not give, you know, I don't know maybe he'll become an intellectual [laughter], someone who does something all the time.	Affiliative humour
Alicja: Because Baba does not tolerate... such stomping [child cries]. He is very angry. Maybe he wants to talk, but he cannot yet [laughter]. Listening is no good for him.	Affiliative humour

Source: Author's research.

The child was present during the interview. The following functions were identified in the humour which appeared in the interactions with the child: releasing tension, tightening bonds, enhancing the ego of oneself and others. The parent approached the child, picked him up, smiled at him, hugged and rocked him, talked to him, but also, importantly, verbally mirrored and validated the child's emotions and needs ("He does not tolerate", "He is very angry", "He has to be carried around so that something is happening, changing"). Recognizing the child's emotions, naming them, normalizing them already at the infancy stage is conducive to the proper development of the child. The emotions of the child were soothed when he was crying; the parents would approach him, react verbally, or feed him. Humour serves to raise and form bonds with the child, but also to help cope with parental duties and the associated challenges. In the interactions presented above, the parent was sensitive to the child's needs. This interaction is an example of the parents being responsive.

The development of a nonheteronormative identity is important for one's self-acceptance and self-esteem, as well as the formation of future romantic

relationships and starting a family (Iniewicz, 2009; Mijas, 2012; Kowalska, 2017). This couple met in an organisation for nonheteronormative individuals. In a humorous way, Alicja encourages her partner to tell their story (Table 3).

Table 3. Coding of the data and identifying the humour style in the area of sexual and gender identity.

Excerpt from transcript	Humour style
Alicja: Talk about how we met in the organisation, because there you were surprised, that I might be a guy, but I don't look like a guy. [laughter] Weronika: They [people from the organisation] invited us; we sat and waited. From the start, I was looking around to see who looked like a man and who is a genetic woman. I did not know Alicja, so I did not know where she's from. I looked at her. Ok, there's a pretty woman sitting there, and so on. So I kept on looking at her, and I checked out her body parts and I said: "No, this is a woman, a hundred percent". We begin to introduce ourselves and my wife introduces herself: "Hi, my name is Alicja" with such a manly voice, and I was just completely taken aback by how my senses had failed me!" ..loo[laughter]	Affiliative humour
Weronika: But in fact, I was into her already from then. I was in it at first sight. And later there was that situation when we needed to do something, and a mode of transportation was needed, a fast one, because something needed to be done during the day. Alicja said that she had a motorbike and volunteered to give someone a ride. And of course I was all about her choosing me to give the ride to, and so I left the place and went downstairs, and I looked, and this huge motorcycle was standing there and next to it such a little thing dressed like a biker, and I thought to myself "God! How is she gonna give me that ride?" [laughter] Now you can't tell, but she was like a stick, but anyway she got the job done.	Affiliative humour
Alicja: Since university, when thoughts about how to settle down in life began to creep in, the attempts to measure up to that problem, of "how to live, Mr Prime minister"? [laughter] This was somewhere in the sphere of these hidden, but important desires, and I thought that most of all I need to make myself independent.	Affiliative and self-enhancing humour
Alicja: Within a year the situation matured enough that I had this idea to come out and maybe do it by giving them this album with the feminine photos. Which is how it happened. I also wrote, on the top of that box: "watch out and fasten your seatbelts", various humorous notes, that, you know, prepare yourself for something incredible [laughter]. And at the end it said that it is me in those pictures, but in a different form.	Affiliative humour

Source: Author's research.

Weronika says that initially Alicja's looks did not 'reveal' any signs of her transgender identity and it was only after hearing her voice that she realised that Alicja is biologically male. Weronika says that their meeting was 'love at first sight', she jokes that after hearing Alicja's voice she "was taken aback" and "her senses had failed her". Alicja's femininity is a very important attribute for both partners. For Alicja, it constitutes a physical embodiment of her identity, which she affirms by her feminine style (make-up, manicure, clothes, body-language). For Weronika, who is a lesbian woman, it is also a source of fulfillment of the

desires related to her identity—the desire to be with a woman in a physical and mental sense. The above excerpts are identified as examples of affiliative and self-enhancing humour. Making each other laugh and taking a humorous attitude towards the common experience of coming-out helps the partners bond, builds their identity, and helps release the tension associated with talking about intimate events. For both partners it was an experience of revealing their own minority identity, which is subjected to marginalisation and social exclusion. Making jokes is a chance for, and one of the ways to strengthen their relationship, as well as to reinforce their identity.

It is worth explaining that one of the ways transgender individuals use to fit into society is *passing* in their new role, i.e. “fitting into the social model of their experienced gender, which is possible if it is in-line with one of the poles of the binary division into men and women. This strategy is often chosen by individuals whose identity is unambiguously masculine or feminine, and, thus, the socially accepted gender structure suits them” (Kłonkowska, 2017, p. 136). Alicja did not undergo a physical transition (hormonal or surgery); she declared having no need for such a transition. The possibility to live as a woman in her own way was important to her. Her style fits within the normative, stereotypical model of femininity and her anatomy allows her to ‘hide’ the masculinity of her body. In the author’s opinion, the analysed extract of the narrative shows Alicia being content with her ability to transition into a clearly feminine embodiment of her gender. On the other hand, for Weronika, Alicja’s gender identity sparked the redefinition of her own lesbian identity. Before meeting Alicja, she believed that she could only have intimate relationships with biological women. With time, the women decided to get married and have offspring.

An important area of the analysis of the humour style is Alicja’s narrative about coming out to her parents. Giving them a gift of feminine photos in a humorous way could have served the function of releasing the tension and stress associated with transition, as well as fulfill the need for control in a stressful situation (waiting for her parents’ reaction). It can be imagined that maintaining a humorous tone in a stressful situation was also supposed to make it easier for her parents to accept their child transitioning, regulate their emotions, and encourage a favourable reaction and acceptance. Feminine photos can be considered an act of affirmation and acceptance of Alicja’s gender identity.

Revealing one’s sexual identity is preceded by the process of internal realisation of one’s own needs as well as facing one’s nonheteronormativity and the awareness of the social marginalisation of nonheteronormative individuals. Coming out or transitioning are, on the one hand, associated with discovering

the truth about oneself, and as a social act they sometimes serve to educate others about tolerance, but they are also associated with a high risk of rejection, stigma, discrimination, exclusion, ridicule, or humiliation (Kita, 2015). The humorous elements of the narrative about their environments’ reactions to Weronika’s coming out and Alicja’s transition are analysed below.

Table 4. Coding of the data and identifying the humour style in the area of sexual and gender identity.

Transcription extract	Style of humour
Alicja: And so the family finally knew, and they basically treated it as if nothing had happened, this may be a kind of a strategy. Or maybe it isn’t really any strategy, but a way to pretend that nothing happens—nothing happened and nothing changed. Of course somewhere in their heads some thoughts are racing, but we pretend that nothing happened after this coming out [laughter].	Self-enhancing humour
Weronika: When I brought Alicja home, my mom was overjoyed. Even though she was, you know, red nails on hands and feet. [laughter]	Affiliative humour
Alicja: A pervert, but at least with a penis! [laughter]	Affiliative humour, self-enhancing humour, self-defeating humour
Weronika: And my second brother, for him, something did not click in his head—when we got married, he was walking around the town and saying that he has nothing to do with these faggots [laughter] Alicja: But, in fact, I also don’t have anything in common with faggots! [laughter] Weronika: Faggot is a general term for any pervert. [laughter] Alicja: And you know, they don’t know any other words. Faggots! [laughter]	Affiliative humour, self-enhancing humour, aggressive humour

Source: Author’s research.

Alicja relates that after her transition her family pretended that nothing had happened. She only supposes that her coming out to the family resulted in an internal reaction—“racing thoughts”. However the assessment of this reaction as “pretending” suggests that Alicja was deprived of her needs: for acceptance, a conversation, contact, and an overt (verbal) recognition of the transition. The humorous emphasis in the first extract presented in Table 4 “but we pretend that nothing happened after this coming out” alleviates difficult emotions (hypothetical sadness, grief or anger). Weronika experienced a positive reaction from her mother to her outing of her relationship with a transgender woman. Her previous cis-gender partner was not as accepted by her mother. In this extract, she reminds Alicja about how delighted her mother was with her, and she also expresses her own affirmation of her transgender identity and her body (“red

nails on both hands and feet”). In the opinion of the author, this joke served to build a secure bond between the partners, as well as a shared identity.

The delight of Weronika’s mother was humorously observed by Alicja “Pervert, but at least with a penis”. In the eyes of Alicja, her male body and the sex of her genitals is a source of acceptance from her mother-in-law and a “chance” for her daughter for a “(hetero)normative” life. Alicja’s joke, in the opinion of the author, contains also an interpretation of Weronika’s mother’s attitude as a sign of androcentrism—concentration on maleness and valuing it higher than femininity. The author sees three forms of humour in Alicja’s joke (affiliative humour, self-enhancing humour, self-defeating humour). Most of all, it serves to release tension, enhance her ego, build her identity, and to see the humorous aspects of a difficult situation. It is also worth noting the use of the word ‘pervert’ by Alicja. She uses it to name the presumed beliefs of Weronika’s mother (and/or of some parts of society) about transgender individuals (or nonheteronormative individuals in general). It is not an expression of her own internalised negative social beliefs about this group.

The topic of their wedding also came up in the interviewees’ narratives. In the first statement by Weronika, who brought up this topic, the author sees three forms of humour: affiliative humour, self-enhancing humour, and aggressive humour. Weronika talks in a humorous way about her difficult experience of rejection and ridicule. Adaptive humour regulates emotions and aggressive humour decreases the weight of the hurtful name-calling which she experienced. The interviewees joke about the term “faggots” as a pejorative but incompetent name for any sexual or gender non-normativity. In the opinion of the author, these jokes serve as a barrier, protecting them from stigma, as well as to build and reinforce the partners’ shared identity. It also creates emotional closeness and a sense of security in their relationship.

Humorous extracts of the conversation about the division of household duties took the form of joking about gender stereotypes and socially-imposed roles that are in-line with one’s biological sex.

The interviewees used affiliative humour and self-enhancing humour in the context of making rules about coexistence in their relationship and the complementarity of roles in the family.

Tabela 5. Coding of the data and identifying the humour style in the area of sharing duties.

Excerpt from transcript	Humour style
Researcher: Tell me, how do you divide duties? Weronika: Ah well, I cook, wash, clean [laughter] Alicja: I lie down, you know! And I watch TV and just drink something [laughter] Weronika: My wife throws away the trash, I haven't finished! My wife throws away the trash, and she nails the antenna to the tree [laughter]. Alicja: This is a very complex topic; we try to divide the duties somehow.	Affiliative humour
Alicja: And anyway, I never demanded that when I come back home there is a dinner to be served. And, anyway, before, when we were not together, I managed the household on my own and this mostly consisted of eating out [laughter]. So it was not like now; here I have a woman in the house and she stays in the kitchen, and such, no. Anyway, I sometimes also tell her not to cook because I can eat at work, but obviously she cooks anyway, because, I don't know, she wants to, and then she says "You make me cook for you". This is obviously not fair. Weronika: I was joking. Alicja: I know, I know. Of course, joking.	Affiliative humour and self-enhancing humour

Source: Author's research.

## Conclusion

The above analysis shows various examples of humorous situations and identifies their typology and function. The most common type of humour in this couple's narrative was affiliative humour, which fosters secure emotional bonds, strengthens the ego of oneself and others, and helps regulate emotions (naming, normalising, and validating them). It thus contributes to a positive upbringing. The intention of the jokes was to normalise and reinforce the couple's nonheteronormative identity and the transgression of gender roles. Positive psychology allows us to consider the experiences of LGBTQ individuals in the context of personal resources, such as strategies for coping with stress and crisis, ways of forming relationships, building one's identity, and parental competences. In order to deepen the analysis, it is advisable to carefully observe the interactions between parents and children, partners, their dynamics over time, as well as the use of quantitative tools. The parent-child interactions revealed in the interview demonstrate the parents' ability to meet their child's emotional needs. These competences are a component of Good Enough Parenting (Louis et al., 2019). This approach and the development of research in this area are important both for the development of LGBTQ psychology and for clinical work with nonheteronormative individuals and the members of their families.

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