

1

Educators' constructions of Maltese society

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2

Aim of the study

- To explore how the experience of social change mediates educators' constructions of society and social diversity
- To examine how educators forge the boundaries of national collectivity within this context of change.

3

About the study

Theoretical Framework: Social constructionism

Methodology: Critical qualitative methodology

Semi-structured in-depth interviews

Critical Discourse Analysis used to analyse the data

Participants: 19 educators from State, Church and Independent Schools

4

The context – Maltese Society

- From a perceived homogenous society to a multicultural one
- Malta's accession to the EU
- Migration
- Introduction of divorce in 2011
- More civil rights to LGBTIQ communities



5

The context – Maltese schools

- Early 1990s – students with disabilities attended mainstream schools
- Increase in non-Catholic students
- More migrant students
- Reforms:
 - College System
 - Removal of streaming and its reintroduction as banding and setting
 - Co-education
 - Learning Outcomes Framework



6

Question:

- If you could paint a picture of Maltese society, how would you paint it?

7 Findings

A divided Maltese society



8 | Findings – Mediating Social Change

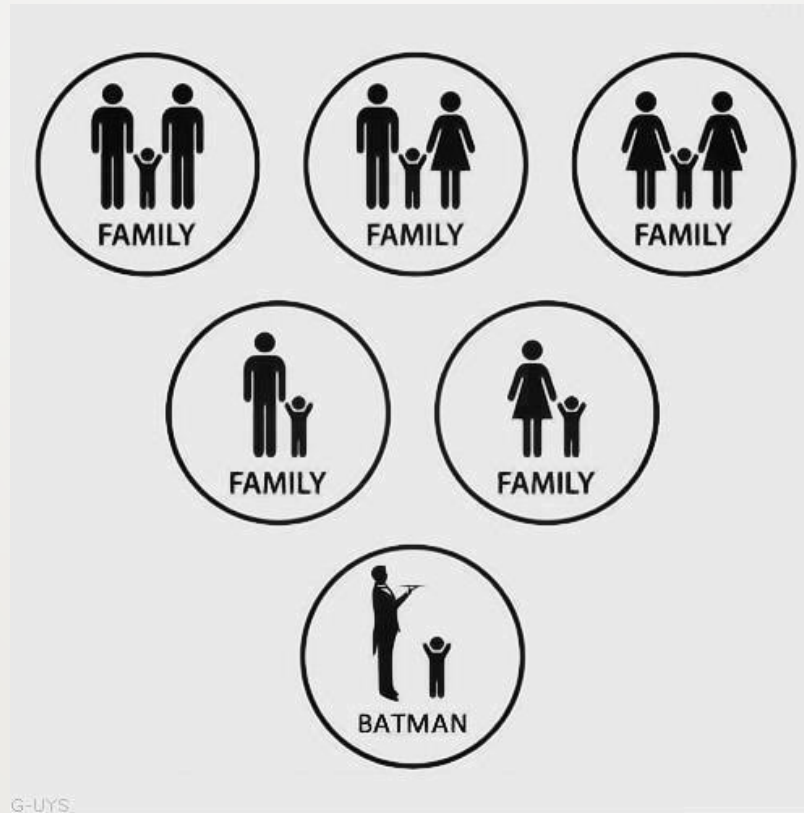
- Cultural Catholicism and Maltese identity



9

Findings – Mediating social change

- Family constructs



10

Findings – Mediating social change

- Contested whiteness



Findings – Mediating social change

- The dominant and the undesirables - A socially stratified Maltese society



Discussion

- The different other disrupts their rational understanding of Maltese identity and society.
- The myth of sameness in an essentialised Maltese identity.
- The other identified from within the Maltese themselves
- A diverse range of understandings of what it means to be Maltese.
- An assimilationist stance.

Conclusion

- Constructions of Maltese society are intensely diverse.
- These constructions are not consensual but contested.
- Implications for continuing professional development:
 - Intercultural competences and pedagogies
 - Intellectual growth of educators – exposition to theories and practices that would induce them to become more conscious of the political implications of their actions.

Thank you

Your attention was much appreciated