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2025-04-02

Deposited version:

Publisher Version

Peer-review status of attached file:

Peer-reviewed

Citation for published item:

Baía, I., Freitas, C. & Silva, S. (2019). Changing criteria of access to gamete donation: The views of donors and recipients. In Yves Charpak, Denis Zmirou-Navier, Dineke Zeegers Paget (Ed.), *European Journal of Public Health*. (pp. 373-374). Marseille: Oxford University Press (OUP).

Further information on publisher's website:

[10.1093/eurpub/ckz187.204](https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckz187.204)

Publisher's copyright statement:

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Changing criteria of access to gamete donation: the views of donors and recipients

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Background:

Differences on the use of sexual orientation and marital status as criteria to define access to gamete donation persist in Europe, contributing to the search of cross border reproductive care (CBRC). The lack of international policy and norms on CBRC highlight the need for surveillance to ensure quality and equitable access to reproductive care, namely by assessing donors' and recipients' views. This study aims to analyze the opinion of donors and recipients about the use of marital status and sexual orientation as priority criteria for accessing gamete donation, and its associated factors.

Methods:

Between July 2017 and June 2018, 72 donors and 171 recipients completed a self-report questionnaire at the Portuguese Public Bank of Gametes. Opinion about the use of marital status and sexual orientation as priority criteria was assessed through a 5-point Likert scale of agreement, ranging from "totally disagree" to "totally agree". Descriptive statistics and multinomial logistic regression were used.

Results:

Most participants disagreed with a priority of access to gamete donation for heterosexual couples (61%) and married women (60%). Participants who agreed with priority to heterosexual couples were more likely to be males (OR = 2.5, CI95% 1.2-5.3) and married or living with a partner (OR = 3.5, CI95% 1.1-10.8). Males (OR = 3.18, CI95% 1.5-6.9) and those with lower white collar (OR = 3.0, CI95% 1.2-7.4) or blue collar occupations (OR = 4.3, CI95% 1.4-13.1) were more likely to agree with priority for married women.

Conclusions:

Donors and recipients agree with equitable access to gamete donation, independently of sexual orientation and marital status. However, a heterosexual marriage hierarchy is particularly observed on male, married/living with a partner, and with lower white or blue collar occupations participants. Policy on reproductive care needs to be especially mindful of equity in access to gamete donation.

Key messages:

- Donors and recipients agree with access to gamete donation independent of sexual orientation and marital status.
- Policy on reproductive care needs to be mindful of equity in access to gamete donation.