

[DOI: 10.20472/IAC.2017.034.037](https://doi.org/10.20472/IAC.2017.034.037)

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**THE EXPERIENCES AND IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONS OF SEXUAL
AND GENDER “NON-NORMATIVE” EMPLOYEES IN
KWAZULU-NATAL , SOUTH AFRICA**

Abstract:

This paper makes an exploration into the workplace experiences of sexual and gender “non-normative” employees in post-apartheid South Africa. Whilst there has been increasing focus on diversity in corporate workplaces in the fields of Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations, there has been silences around issues of sexuality. Although South Africa has one of the world’s most progressive anti-discriminatory legislative framework, this paper also explores how sexual and gender “non-normative” employees challenge, negotiate and manage their personal and professional sexual identities amidst these recent socio-legal changes.

Orientated within the interpretivist theoretical paradigm, this paper aims to understand the multiple realities described by individuals based on their lived experiences. The theoretical contributions of Judith Butler, Eve Sedgwick and David Halperin suggest that sexuality is something fluid and that ‘self’ is unstable, thereby questioning the legitimacy of identity categories. Therefore, sexuality is seen through the lens of a growing, yet contested, body of knowledge known as Queer theory.

Keywords:

sexuality, sexual and gender “non-normative”, corporate workplace, identity construction, Queer theory