



CHRISTIAN ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON LGBTQ+ ISSUES IN NIGERIA: THE CHURCH'S ROLE IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM IN MODERN SOCIETY

Daniel Akumba Martha

A PhD Candidate in the Department of Christian Religion Studies, Faculty of Art,
College Of Humanities, Education and Law Kaduna State University

akumbamartha@gmail.com/07039661413

Abstract

The debate surrounding Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) issues has become a significant ethical, theological, pastoral, and social concern for the Christian Church in contemporary Nigeria. This study examines Christian ethical considerations on LGBTQ+ issues and evaluates the role of the Church in responding to the social, moral, legal, and pastoral challenges associated with sexuality and gender diversity. The study adopts a qualitative documentary research approach, drawing on recent peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, theological literature, legal materials, and relevant contemporary discussions. The study is guided by Norm-Centered Stigma Theory, which explains how culturally dominant norms, social power, and stigma interact to define certain identities as deviant and to generate exclusion or social sanctions. The theory provides an analytical lens for examining how religious, cultural, institutional, and legal norms shape attitudes toward LGBTQ+ persons in Nigeria. The study finds that Christian responses are strongly influenced by biblical understandings of creation, marriage, sexuality, discipleship, and human dignity, while the Nigerian context adds powerful cultural, religious, and legal pressures. Recent scholarship also indicates that religiosity, institutional practices, public discourse, and legal restrictions can shape negative attitudes and experiences of exclusion. The paper concludes that the Church can maintain its theological convictions concerning marriage and sexuality while rejecting violence, humiliation, hatred, and degrading treatment and while strengthening responsible pastoral care. The paper recommends that churches strengthen biblically grounded ethical education, train pastors and counsellors in responsible pastoral care, equip theological institutions to address contemporary sexuality debates critically, and promote respectful public engagement that protects human dignity and peaceful coexistence.

Keywords: Christian Ethics, LGBTQ+, Human Sexuality, Pastoral Care, Stigma, Religion

Introduction

Questions concerning sexual orientation, gender identity, marriage, and sexuality have become increasingly visible within contemporary religious and public debates. For Christian communities, these questions are not merely social or political questions; they raise issues of biblical interpretation, moral theology, discipleship, pastoral responsibility, human dignity, and the relationship between religious conviction and public life. Contemporary Christian ethics increasingly recognises that difficult moral questions require careful reasoning that brings Scripture, theological tradition, moral reflection, social realities, and practical consequences into conversation rather than relying solely on emotional reaction (Magnuson, 2020; Lee, 2021).

In Nigeria, LGBTQ+ issues are particularly sensitive because Christianity operates within a social environment in which marriage and family are strongly associated with heterosexual norms, while religious institutions exercise substantial influence over moral discourse. Recent Nigerian

scholarship demonstrates that religiosity is associated with attitudes toward LGBTQ+ persons and that cultural, religious, and legal factors interact in shaping the environment in which sexual and gender minorities live (Bankole et al., 2023; Olaseni & Nel, 2024). The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act, 2013, which came into force in 2014, further formalised a restrictive legal environment surrounding same-sex relationships and marriage. Contemporary scholarship has therefore treated Nigerian sexuality debates as simultaneously religious, cultural, political, legal, and social questions rather than as matters of private morality alone (Peace, 2024; Ukah, 2021).

Christian responses to LGBTQ+ issues are not completely uniform. Some contemporary Christian ethicists emphasise the continuing significance of biblical norms concerning marriage, sexual conduct, holiness, and discipleship, while other Christian scholars and theologians argue for more contextual approaches to sexuality, human identity, pastoral inclusion, and the interpretation of difficult biblical passages (Kaminouchi, 2020; Lee, 2021; Winright, 2021). This diversity does not eliminate the need for ethical analysis. Instead, it demonstrates the importance of examining how theological convictions are translated into pastoral practices and social attitudes.

The Nigerian Church also faces the challenge of responding to the social consequences of sexuality debates. Research on Nigerian queer experiences has documented the intersection of religious discourse, law, social stigma, and public communication. Ukah (2021) shows how Pentecostal discourse on same-sex relations in Africa can intersect with debates about religious expression and hate speech, while Alichie (2023) demonstrates how online communication can become a site where LGBTQ+ persons experience homophobia and negotiate visibility. Onanuga (2024a, 2024b) further highlights the role of religious figures, religious tropes, and religious narratives in shaping representations of queer identities in Nigerian cultural texts.

The problem addressed by this article is therefore not simply whether churches should approve or disapprove of same-sex relationships. The deeper ethical question is how the Nigerian Church can articulate and practise its theological convictions in ways that are intellectually responsible, pastorally credible, and consistent with the Christian obligation to treat every person with dignity. This requires distinguishing theological disagreement from hostility, moral teaching from social humiliation, and doctrinal conviction from violence or unlawful abuse.

The article examines Christian ethical considerations on LGBTQ+ issues in Nigeria and discusses the Church's role in addressing the challenges associated with the subject. It specifically clarifies relevant concepts, presents a contemporary theoretical framework, examines biblical and theological foundations, considers cultural, legal, and social influences, evaluates pastoral responsibilities, and proposes practical roles for the Church in modern Nigerian society. The article uses documentary analysis and recent scholarship to develop a balanced ethical argument.

Conceptual Clarification

Concept of Religion

Religion may be understood as an organised system of beliefs, practices, values, symbols, and communities through which people interpret ultimate questions and structure their relationship with the sacred. Contemporary scholarship on religion emphasises that religious beliefs operate not only at the level of private conviction but also through institutions, communities, practices, narratives, and public forms of authority. In the Nigerian setting, this institutional dimension is

particularly important because churches participate actively in moral education, family formation, community life, public debate, and the interpretation of social problems.

For this study, religion is understood as a system of faith-based beliefs and practices through which Christian communities interpret human identity, sexuality, morality, and social responsibility. This definition allows the article to examine religion both as a theological source of moral conviction and as a social institution capable of influencing attitudes, norms, pastoral practices, and public discourse. Recent scholarship on Nigerian Pentecostalism demonstrates the importance of religious authority in shaping understandings of gender and sexuality (Obadare, 2022; Ukah, 2021).

Concept of Ethics

Ethics concerns systematic reflection on principles, values, duties, virtues, consequences, and practices that guide judgments about human conduct. Contemporary approaches to Christian ethics emphasise that moral reasoning involves more than identifying rules; it also requires consideration of character, community, justice, responsibility, consequences, and the practical meaning of Christian discipleship (Magnuson, 2020; Stivers & Martin-Schramm, 2020).

Christian ethics is distinctive because its moral reasoning is rooted in Christian understandings of God, Scripture, creation, redemption, Christ, the Church, and the vocation of Christian discipleship. Lee (2021) presents Christian ethics as a life of grace, justice, peace, and faithful participation in God's purposes, while Winright (2021) highlights the importance of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience in Christian moral reflection. In this article, Christian ethics refers to the disciplined application of Christian theological and moral principles to contemporary questions concerning sexuality, human dignity, pastoral care, and the Church's responsibilities in society.

Concept of LGBTQ+

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ+) is a broad umbrella term used to describe diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The term distinguishes sexual orientation from gender identity: sexual orientation concerns patterns of emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction, whereas gender identity concerns an individual's experienced sense of gender.

Contemporary scholarship cautions against treating LGBTQ+ persons as a homogeneous group because experiences differ according to gender, class, age, religion, culture, location, and other social factors (Olaseni & Nel, 2024; Worthen, 2022).

In Nigeria, the meaning and social interpretation of LGBTQ+ identities are strongly affected by legal, religious, cultural, and political conditions. Bankole et al. (2023) found that religiosity and sexual orientation were significant predictors of attitudes toward LGBTQ+ persons among Nigerian residents. Olaseni and Nel (2024) likewise identify substantial socio-legal and professional challenges affecting LGBTQ+ populations in Nigeria. These findings demonstrate that discussions of LGBTQ+ issues in Nigeria should not be separated from the institutional and cultural contexts in which identities are interpreted.

This article uses LGBTQ+ as a descriptive term for diverse sexual and gender identities. Its use does not predetermine the theological conclusion of the study. Rather, it allows the article to distinguish between describing persons and evaluating particular behaviours, relationships, or theological claims. This distinction is important for ethical analysis because disagreement with a theological or moral position does not logically require rejection of the dignity of the person holding or experiencing that identity.

Theoretical Framework: Norm-Centered Stigma Theory

This study is anchored in Norm-Centered Stigma Theory (NCST), a contemporary theoretical framework associated with Meredith G. F. Worthen. The theory extends scholarship on stigma by placing social norms and their relationship with social power at the centre of the explanation of stigma. Worthen (2022) identifies three central propositions: norms and stigma have a culturally dependent reciprocal relationship; their relationship is organised through social power; and stigma involves negative responses and social sanctions directed toward perceived violations of dominant norms. The framework is particularly relevant to LGBTQ+ studies because heterosexual and cisgender norms can function as dominant standards against which sexual and gender minorities are evaluated.

The value of NCST for this article lies in its capacity to explain how religious, cultural, institutional, and legal norms may become connected to social sanctions. Rather than treating negative attitudes toward LGBTQ+ persons as merely individual prejudice, the theory directs attention to the social production of norms and the power structures through which those norms are reinforced. Worthen (2022) demonstrates the usefulness of the framework for understanding gender- and sexuality-based stigma, while Worthen and Herbolsheimer (2022) provide empirical application of the theory to the stigmatization of transgender parents.

Applied to the Nigerian context, NCST helps explain how dominant expectations concerning heterosexual marriage, gender roles, family formation, and sexual morality may shape perceptions of LGBTQ+ identities. Religious institutions may contribute to these norms through sermons, teaching, counselling, leadership statements, and institutional policies. Legal institutions may reinforce particular norms through legislation, while families and communities may reproduce them through social approval or disapproval. The theory therefore provides a framework for examining the interaction between norms, power, stigma, and social responses without requiring the researcher to determine the theological truth of any particular doctrine.

The theory also has an important limitation. NCST is a social explanatory framework and therefore cannot, by itself, determine whether a Christian doctrine about marriage or sexual morality is biblically correct. The theological evaluation in this article must consequently be conducted through Christian ethical reasoning and biblical interpretation, while NCST explains the social consequences of norm enforcement. This complementary use of theory and theology enables the article to ask two related questions: what Christian convictions are being defended, and how are those convictions expressed in social and pastoral practice?

The theoretical framework therefore guides the article in three ways. First, it directs attention to the norms that shape Nigerian Christian understandings of sexuality. Second, it facilitates examination of how social and institutional power can transform norms into stigma or social

sanctions. Third, it provides an ethical basis for distinguishing legitimate theological disagreement from practices such as violence, humiliation, intimidation, and degrading treatment. Recent applications of NCST to LGBTQ+ experiences demonstrate its relevance to precisely these relationships between norms, identity, and social consequences (Worthen, 2022; Worthen & Herbolsheimer, 2022).

Biblical and Theological Foundations of Christian Ethics on Human Sexuality

Christian ethical reflection on sexuality begins from theological claims concerning God, creation, human identity, relationships, holiness, and the purposes of the body. Contemporary Christian ethics emphasises that moral questions should be situated within the larger narrative of Christian faith rather than treated as isolated behavioural rules (Kaminouchi, 2020; Lee, 2021). Within this framework, Genesis 1:26–27 presents human beings as created in the image of God, providing a theological foundation for human worth and moral responsibility. Genesis 2:18–25 presents companionship, marriage, and family within the creation narrative.

Jesus' teaching on marriage in Matthew 19:4–6 returns to the creation narrative and has traditionally been interpreted by many Christian communities as affirming marriage between male and female. Contemporary Christian ethics continues to debate how biblical texts should be interpreted in relation to modern questions of sexuality, but the traditional Christian understanding remains influential within many churches. The ethical significance of this position is not simply its prohibition of particular sexual practices; it includes a broader vision of discipleship, fidelity, bodily integrity, covenant, and family life (Magnuson, 2020; Lee, 2021).

At the same time, Christian ethics must avoid reducing sexuality to a single dimension of human identity. The doctrine of the image of God means that moral evaluation of conduct does not cancel the fundamental worth of the person. Contemporary theological ethics increasingly stresses the relationship between moral conviction, justice, peace, neighbour-love, and the practical treatment of vulnerable persons (Lee, 2021; Winright, 2021). Thus, a church may maintain a traditional theological position on sexual conduct while still recognising a responsibility to prevent violence, humiliation, exploitation, and other forms of abuse.

The ministry of Jesus also provides an ethical model for combining conviction with compassionate engagement. The Gospels repeatedly portray Jesus interacting with persons who occupied socially marginal positions. The ethical lesson for the Church is not that every behaviour is automatically affirmed, but that moral and pastoral engagement should not be reduced to contempt. Christian discipleship requires truthfulness, mercy, restoration, and care for persons. This principle is especially important when theological disagreements occur within a highly polarised social environment.

Christian Ethical Considerations on LGBTQ+ Issues in Nigeria

Biblical Authority and Christian Moral Teaching

Many Nigerian Christian communities understand Scripture as a primary source of moral authority and therefore interpret sexuality through biblical teachings on creation, marriage, holiness, and discipleship. Contemporary Christian ethics recognises Scripture as central while also stressing the need for responsible hermeneutics and moral reasoning (Kaminouchi, 2020; Winright, 2021).

Consequently, Christian teaching on LGBTQ+ issues should be articulated through careful interpretation rather than through political slogans, misinformation, or social hostility.

The existence of different theological interpretations should also be acknowledged. A scholarly treatment of the subject should distinguish between the historic position of many Christian traditions and alternative interpretations advanced by contemporary theologians. The existence of disagreement does not justify caricaturing either position. Instead, it requires transparent presentation of arguments, attention to biblical context, and recognition of the limits of theological certainty on disputed questions.

Christian Ethics, Human Dignity, and the Imago Dei

A central ethical principle is the dignity of the human person. If human beings are understood as created in the image of God, then every person possesses a status that should constrain how Christians treat them. This principle does not require agreement on every moral question. It requires that persons not be subjected to cruelty, violence, humiliation, or dehumanisation. Lee (2021) places justice and peace within the vocation of Christian ethics, while Magezi and Khlopa (2021) show how African ethical concepts such as ubuntu can enrich Christian approaches to hospitality, community, and pastoral care.

The Nigerian context makes this principle particularly significant. Contemporary research documents socio-legal and institutional difficulties affecting LGBTQ+ persons in Nigeria (Olaseni & Nel, 2024), while research on Nigerian religious discourse indicates that religious language can contribute to marginalisation when it becomes a mechanism for defining some persons as morally or socially unacceptable (Onanuga, 2024a, 2024b; Ukah, 2021). The ethical task of the Church is therefore to ensure that theological teaching does not become a justification for violence or dehumanisation.

Cultural, Legal, and Social Influences

LGBTQ+ debates in Nigeria cannot be separated from the interaction of religion, culture, law, and politics. The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act, 2013, created a formal legal framework prohibiting same-sex marriage and related forms of association. Contemporary scholarship argues that the Nigerian legal environment is connected to broader political and social processes. Peace (2024) interprets the anti-gay legal framework through the political economy of homophobia, while Olaseni and Nel (2024) document continuing socio-legal challenges.

Religious discourse is another major influence. Ukah (2021) demonstrates how Pentecostal discourse on same-sex relations in Africa intersects with questions of religious freedom, hate speech, and public morality. Onanuga (2024a, 2024b) similarly shows how religious figures and narratives can function as gatekeepers of acceptable sexuality in Nigerian cultural representations. These findings do not mean that all Nigerian Christians or all churches respond in exactly the same way; rather, they demonstrate that religious institutions are important sites in which sexuality is interpreted and contested.

The Church should therefore distinguish between biblical doctrine, cultural assumptions, and state law. These three sources may influence one another, but they are not identical. A Christian ethical

position should be justified primarily through theological and moral reasoning rather than simply by appealing to what is culturally popular or legally permitted.

Pastoral Responsibility of the Church

Pastoral responsibility is central to the Church's response because sexuality debates involve real people, families, congregations, and communities. Contemporary pastoral scholarship emphasises attentive, contextual, and relational care, including the experiences of LGBTQIA+ persons within pastoral theology (Moschella, 2022). African pastoral ethics also highlights hospitality, community, and the moral importance of treating persons as members of a shared human community (Magezi & Khlopa, 2021).

Pastoral care does not require that every church adopt the same theological position on sexuality. It does require pastors and church leaders to listen carefully, avoid public humiliation, maintain appropriate confidentiality, and provide ethically responsible spiritual and emotional support. Pastoral workers should also recognise the potential consequences of stigma, rejection, and isolation. Research applying stigma frameworks demonstrates that social sanctions attached to sexuality and gender norms can have significant consequences for marginalised persons (Worthen, 2022; Worthen & Herbolsheimer, 2022).

Pastoral care should therefore avoid two opposite failures: abandoning theological convictions on the one hand and treating persons with contempt on the other. A Christian pastoral response should combine theological clarity, compassion, confidentiality, non-violence, and respect for human dignity.

Ethical Evaluation

The preceding discussion indicates that Christian ethical engagement with LGBTQ+ issues requires attention to both doctrine and social practice. Theological convictions concerning marriage and sexuality may be sincerely held and should be represented accurately. At the same time, the social consequences of those convictions must be examined critically. Norm-Centered Stigma Theory is useful because it shows how dominant norms can become associated with social power and sanctions (Worthen, 2022).

The ethical question is therefore not only what the Church teaches but also how that teaching is communicated and enacted. Sermons, counselling practices, disciplinary procedures, public statements, and social-media communication can either promote responsible moral reflection or intensify stigma. Alichie (2023) demonstrates that online communication can reproduce homophobic marginalisation, while Onanuga (2024b) shows how religious figures may operate as gatekeepers of acceptable sexual and gender identities in Nigerian cultural texts.

A balanced Christian ethical response should consequently maintain a distinction between moral disagreement and mistreatment. Churches may teach a traditional sexual ethic while condemning violence and abuse. They may advocate their theological understanding of marriage while rejecting mob action, intimidation, extortion, public humiliation, and unlawful punishment. This approach is consistent with the Christian emphasis on justice, neighbour-love, peace, and the dignity of persons (Lee, 2021; Magezi & Khlopa, 2021).

Contemporary Challenges Facing the Church in Addressing LGBTQ+ Issues in Nigeria

Balancing Biblical Convictions with Pastoral Compassion

One of the most difficult challenges is the perceived tension between doctrinal fidelity and pastoral compassion. Some church leaders fear that compassionate language will be interpreted as theological approval, while harsh rhetoric can create fear and alienation. Contemporary Christian ethics provides resources for moving beyond this false choice by treating moral reasoning and pastoral practice as interconnected dimensions of Christian discipleship (Magnuson, 2020; Lee, 2021).

Social Stigma and Institutional Responses

The interaction between dominant norms and social power is central to understanding stigma. NCST shows that stigma can arise when perceived deviations from culturally dominant norms are subjected to negative social sanctions (Worthen, 2022). In Nigeria, religious, family, community, and institutional responses may reinforce these sanctions. The Church should therefore evaluate not only the content of its teaching but also the practical effects of its institutional practices.

Recent Nigerian scholarship provides evidence that LGBTQ+ persons face socio-legal and institutional challenges and that professional and educational systems require greater competence in addressing sexuality-related issues (Olaseni & Nel, 2024). The Church, as an influential institution, should not ignore these realities. Even where it retains a non-affirming theological position, it can contribute to safer pastoral environments and discourage abuse.

Legal and Human Rights Considerations

The legal environment creates a complex setting for Christian ethical engagement. The Church operates within Nigerian law and should respect the rule of law while also exercising its prophetic responsibility to condemn violence and abuse. Peace (2024) shows that the anti-gay legal framework is embedded in wider political processes, while contemporary reporting has documented arrests and allegations of abuse connected with enforcement of the law. These realities strengthen the ethical importance of distinguishing lawful disagreement from extrajudicial punishment or violence.

Christian ethical responsibility therefore includes advocacy for peaceful coexistence and responsible citizenship. The Church need not abandon its theological convictions in order to reject violence. Indeed, the rejection of violence is compatible with a Christian commitment to human dignity and justice.

Globalisation and Digital Media

Globalisation and digital communication have expanded access to competing understandings of sexuality and gender. Nigerian Christians increasingly encounter international theological, scientific, political, and cultural perspectives through social media and other digital platforms. Alichie (2023) demonstrates that online spaces can simultaneously provide opportunities for communication and become sites of homophobia and marginalisation.

The implication for the Church is that emotional or reactive communication is unlikely to provide adequate ethical leadership. Pastors and Christian educators require sufficient theological and digital literacy to engage contemporary debates critically. They should be able to distinguish

reliable scholarship from misinformation and inflammatory rhetoric and should teach congregants to engage controversial issues without resorting to abuse.

The Church's Role in Addressing the Problem in Modern Society

The Church has a significant role in shaping moral discourse in Nigeria. Its responsibility extends beyond preaching doctrinal positions to include pastoral care, ethical education, community formation, peacebuilding, and responsible public engagement. Contemporary Christian ethics understands the Church as a moral community whose practices should embody the values it teaches (Lee, 2021; Winright, 2021).

First, churches should provide clear and academically responsible teaching on Christian ethics, marriage, sexuality, human dignity, and discipleship. Teaching should distinguish biblical claims from cultural stereotypes and should expose congregants to the complexity of contemporary scholarship. This will reduce the likelihood that sexuality debates are conducted through misinformation or simplistic slogans.

Second, churches should strengthen pastoral counselling. Pastors and church counsellors should receive training in ethical reasoning, confidentiality, listening skills, safeguarding, and appropriate referral. Moschella (2022) demonstrates the importance of contemporary pastoral approaches to LGBTQIA+ persons, while Magezi and Khlopa (2021) highlight the significance of hospitality and inclusive care within African Christian ethics.

Third, churches should affirm the dignity of every person. Maintaining a particular theological position on sexual relationships does not require hatred, ridicule, violence, or degrading treatment. The Church can teach moral convictions while making clear that no person should be subjected to mob justice, physical assault, intimidation, extortion, or public humiliation.

Fourth, theological institutions and seminaries should strengthen their treatment of contemporary sexuality and ethics. Future pastors require exposure to biblical interpretation, Christian moral reasoning, pastoral theology, stigma, human dignity, law, and contemporary social research. This will equip them to address controversial questions with greater intellectual credibility.

Fifth, the Church should promote respectful public dialogue. Christian leaders can participate in public conversations with scholars, policymakers, professionals, community leaders, and other religious actors without abandoning theological convictions. Such dialogue can reduce misinformation, clarify disagreements, and encourage peaceful coexistence.

Finally, the Church should use its moral influence to oppose violence and abuse. This is especially important because religious language can shape social attitudes and because institutions possess power to influence how marginalised groups are perceived. NCST provides a useful reminder that norms and social sanctions are connected to power (Worthen, 2022). The Church should therefore exercise its institutional power in ways that discourage violence, humiliation, and dehumanisation.

Conclusion

This article has examined Christian ethical considerations on LGBTQ+ issues in Nigeria and the role of the Church in addressing the problem in modern society. The discussion demonstrates that the subject is shaped by the interaction of Christian theology, biblical interpretation, cultural

expectations, legal structures, social stigma, pastoral responsibilities, and changing forms of communication. Recent Nigerian scholarship confirms that religion and legal institutions remain significant factors in shaping the experiences and public treatment of LGBTQ+ persons.

The adoption of Norm-Centered Stigma Theory has provided a contemporary framework for explaining how dominant norms, social power, and stigma interact. The theory does not determine whether particular Christian doctrines are correct; rather, it helps explain how norms surrounding heterosexuality, marriage, gender, and sexuality can be translated into social sanctions and institutional practices. This makes it particularly useful for evaluating the social consequences of religious and cultural responses to LGBTQ+ identities.

The paper concludes that the Nigerian Church can remain faithful to its theological convictions while simultaneously demonstrating Christian compassion, rejecting violence and degrading treatment, and strengthening responsible pastoral care. The ethical credibility of the Church depends not only on the doctrines it professes but also on the manner in which those doctrines are communicated and embodied in relationships with persons who disagree with or experience those teachings differently. A response that combines theological seriousness, pastoral wisdom, human dignity, peaceful engagement, and responsible public witness offers a more constructive Christian contribution to contemporary Nigerian society.

Recommendations

1. Churches should strengthen contemporary teaching on Christian ethics, biblical interpretation, marriage, sexuality, and human dignity. Such teaching should be intellectually responsible and should distinguish theological convictions from cultural stereotypes and misinformation.
2. Pastors, church counsellors, and ministry leaders should receive regular training in pastoral care, confidentiality, safeguarding, ethical reasoning, and responsible communication on sexuality-related matters. Training should equip them to provide pastoral support without encouraging violence, humiliation, or abuse.
3. Theological institutions and seminaries should include contemporary scholarship on sexuality, stigma, pastoral theology, human dignity, law, and Christian ethics in their curricula. This will improve the capacity of future church leaders to engage controversial issues critically and responsibly.
4. Churches should establish clear institutional policies against physical violence, intimidation, public humiliation, mob action, and other degrading treatment of persons, irrespective of theological disagreement concerning sexuality.
5. Christian leaders should promote respectful public dialogue on LGBTQ+ issues and engage scholars, counsellors, legal professionals, community leaders, and other religious actors where appropriate. Such engagement can reduce misinformation and promote peaceful coexistence.



6. Churches should develop responsible digital communication strategies that discourage inflammatory rhetoric and encourage evidence-based, theologically informed discussion of sexuality and human dignity.
7. Further research should examine how different Nigerian Christian denominations interpret LGBTQ+ issues and how pastoral practices affect the experiences of individuals and families. Comparative studies across denominations and regions would provide additional evidence for developing contextually appropriate Christian ethical responses.

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