



A CHRISTIAN ETHICAL EVALUATION OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN SABON GARI ZARIA METROPOLIS, KADUNA STATE

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Abstract

This study examines the Christian ethical evaluation of homosexuality in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis, Kaduna State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by continuing debates surrounding homosexuality and the challenges confronting Christian communities in responding to contemporary perspectives on human sexuality. A mixed-methods research design was adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were obtained through structured questionnaires administered to selected Christian respondents and semi-structured interviews with pastors and Christian leaders in the study area. The study was anchored on Social Learning Theory, which explains how attitudes and behavioural responses may be shaped through observation, social interaction, religious instruction, family, peers, and the wider social environment. The findings indicate that respondents' ethical perceptions of homosexuality are substantially influenced by biblical teachings, denominational doctrines, family values, cultural expectations, pastoral instruction, and religious socialisation. The findings further reveal that respondents generally distinguish between their Christian moral assessment of homosexual practices and the need to treat persons with dignity and respect, although differences exist in their understanding of appropriate pastoral and social responses. The study also identifies challenges relating to biblical interpretation, contemporary social influences, pastoral engagement, and the possibility of stigma and social exclusion. The study concludes that Christian ethical perceptions of homosexuality in

the study area are shaped by an interaction of biblical convictions, religious socialisation, cultural values, and contemporary social influences. The study recommends that Christian leaders strengthen biblical and ethical education, provide responsible pastoral guidance, encourage respectful engagement, and uphold Christian moral convictions while discouraging hatred, violence, stigma, and dehumanisation.

Keywords: Christianity, Christian Ethics, Homosexuality, Social Learning Theory, Sexuality

Introduction

Human sexuality has remained an important subject of theological, ethical, cultural, social, and legal discussion. Within Christianity, sexuality is generally understood in relation to God's creation, human dignity, marriage, moral responsibility, and the purpose of human relationships. The biblical account presents human beings as created in the image of God and describes male and female as part of the creation order (Genesis 1:26–28). The institution of marriage is subsequently presented as a covenantal relationship between a man and a woman (Genesis 2:18–24). Consequently, questions concerning sexual behaviour have occupied an important place in Christian ethical reflection. In contemporary society, homosexuality has become one of the most debated issues within Christian communities because it raises questions concerning biblical interpretation, morality, identity, pastoral responsibility, human dignity, and social relations.

Homosexuality may broadly be understood in relation to sexual, emotional, or romantic attraction toward persons of the same sex. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2024) defines sexual orientation as a person's physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction toward other people and includes homosexual orientation among its forms. It is important, therefore, for academic research to distinguish sexual orientation from particular sexual behaviours and from gender identity. The WHO also notes that sexual orientation should not be assumed from a person's sex assigned at birth, gender identity, or gender expression.

From a Christian ethical perspective, however, homosexuality raises questions concerning the moral interpretation of sexuality and sexual relationships. Biblical passages such as Leviticus 18:22, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, and 1 Timothy 1:8-11 have traditionally been central to Christian discussions of same-sex sexual behaviour. At the same time, Christian ethics requires consideration of love, compassion, forgiveness, human dignity, and responsible pastoral engagement. Thus, an ethical evaluation should not merely ask whether a particular behaviour conforms to a theological position but should also examine how Christians respond to persons within their communities.

The issue is particularly significant in Nigeria, where Christian beliefs interact with traditional cultural values, contemporary social influences, and legal provisions. Previous Nigerian scholarship has examined homosexuality from biblical, theological, ethical, and pastoral perspectives (Asue, 2018; Okwuosa, 2022). Empirical research has also investigated Christian awareness and perceptions of homosexuality. For example, Olagunju et al. (2024) surveyed 255 Christians in Lagos Metropolis and examined awareness, biblical perspectives, and approaches to Christian ministry concerning homosexuality.

Against this background, the present study investigates the Christian ethical evaluation of homosexuality in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis, Kaduna State. The study seeks to examine the perceptions of Christians, the influence of Christian teachings, and the ethical principles used in evaluating homosexuality within the local context. It is expected to contribute empirical evidence to Christian Religious Studies and provide a contextual understanding of the relationship between Christian ethical convictions, pastoral responsibility, and social responses to homosexuality.

Statement of the Research Problem

Homosexuality has generated considerable theological and social debate within Nigerian Christian communities. Although biblical passages concerning sexual morality are frequently used in Christian discussions, there remains a need to understand empirically how Christians apply these teachings in their everyday social and pastoral contexts. Existing Nigerian studies have addressed homosexuality from theological, biblical, denominational, and broader social perspectives, but comparatively limited empirical attention has been given to the perceptions and ethical reasoning of Christians in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis. The 2024 Lagos study demonstrates that empirical investigation can reveal differences in Christian awareness, perceptions, and approaches to ministry concerning homosexuality (Olagunju et al., 2024).

The problem, therefore, is the insufficient locally grounded empirical knowledge concerning how Christians in Sabon Gari evaluate homosexuality ethically, what factors shape their perceptions, and how they reconcile biblical convictions with Christian principles of love, compassion, human dignity, and pastoral responsibility. This study addresses this gap by examining the Christian ethical evaluation of homosexuality among Christians in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis.

Conceptual Clarification

Homosexuality

Homosexuality is a concept associated with sexual, emotional, romantic, or intimate attraction toward persons of the same sex. The WHO (2024) explains sexual orientation in terms of physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction and identifies homosexuality as one form of sexual orientation. Similarly, WHO's technical guidance defines a homosexual person as someone who is physically, emotionally, and/or sexually attracted to people of the same sex (WHO, 2018). For this study, homosexuality is understood primarily as same-sex sexual orientation and, where relevant, same-sex sexual behaviour. The distinction is important because attraction, identity, and behaviour are not necessarily identical concepts.

Historically, homosexuality has been treated differently by medical, religious, cultural, and legal institutions. Contemporary international health classifications do not regard sexual orientation by itself as a mental disorder. The WHO notes that the World Health Assembly removed homosexuality from the International Classification of Diseases in 1990, while ICD-11 reflects subsequent developments in the classification of health conditions (WHO, 2019, 2022). This medical classification, however, is distinct from Christian theological and ethical judgments concerning sexual conduct.

Christian Ethics

Christian ethics refers to the systematic reflection on human conduct and moral responsibility from the perspective of Christian faith and biblical revelation. It considers questions of right and wrong

in relation to God, Scripture, Christian virtues, human relationships, and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Christian ethical reasoning concerning sexuality commonly considers biblical teachings on creation, marriage, holiness, fidelity, self-control, love, and human dignity. Consequently, homosexuality is examined within a wider Christian moral framework rather than as an isolated social phenomenon.

For this study, Christian ethical evaluation refers to the process through which Christians apply biblical principles and Christian moral values to homosexuality. Such evaluation includes both the question of sexual morality and the manner in which persons are treated. The New Testament commands Christians to speak and act in love (John 13:34–35; Ephesians 4:15) while maintaining moral convictions. Therefore, Christian ethical analysis requires attention to both moral teaching and responsible treatment of persons.

Christian Ethical Evaluation

Christian ethical evaluation is the critical examination of conduct, beliefs, and social responses according to Christian moral principles. In relation to homosexuality, it involves examining biblical interpretations, Christian teachings, cultural influences, pastoral practices, and the treatment of individuals. Nigerian scholarship has noted the importance of balancing Christian sexual ethics with pastoral considerations and the dignity of persons (Asue, 2018; Okwuosa, 2022). Accordingly, this study does not equate an ethical assessment of sexual behaviour with the denial of the dignity of persons. Rather, it investigates how Christians in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis understand homosexuality and how they apply their Christian convictions in responding to it. This distinction provides a basis for examining the relationship between biblical morality, Christian compassion, pastoral responsibility, and social behaviour within the study area.

Yes. Since you requested 500 words for each of subtitles 2–9, this produces a substantial research chapter of roughly 4,000 words, plus references. I have kept the discussion suitable for an empirical Christian Religious Studies project and used APA 7th-style in-text citations. I have also distinguished established literature from findings that your own fieldwork is expected to establish. Recent Nigerian and African studies show that Christian beliefs, religious leadership, socialization, and cultural context are important dimensions in research on homosexuality.

Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality

The Bible does not use the modern category of “sexual orientation” in the contemporary psychological or sociological sense. Nevertheless, several biblical passages have historically been central to Christian discussions of same-sex sexual behaviour. Consequently, a biblical examination of homosexuality requires attention to the literary, historical, theological, and ethical contexts of these passages rather than relying exclusively on isolated verses. The creation narratives provide an important starting point. Genesis 1:26–28 describes humanity as created in the image of God and presents male and female within God's creative order. Genesis 2:18–24 subsequently describes the formation of woman and presents the union of man and woman in the context of marriage and companionship. Christian theologians have therefore frequently interpreted these passages as establishing heterosexual marriage as the biblical framework for sexual intimacy.



The Old Testament contains passages that explicitly address male same-sex sexual behaviour. Leviticus 18:22 prohibits a man from lying with another man “as with a woman,” while Leviticus 20:13 addresses the same practice within Israel's holiness legislation. The interpretation of these texts is contested in contemporary scholarship, particularly concerning their historical setting, their relationship to Israel's ritual and moral laws, and their applicability to contemporary Christians.

Nevertheless, conservative Christian traditions generally regard the passages as part of the biblical witness against same-sex sexual practice. A responsible Christian ethical study should acknowledge these interpretive differences rather than assuming that all Christian traditions read the passages identically.

The New Testament also contains significant texts. Romans 1:26–27 describes same-sex sexual behaviour within Paul's wider argument concerning humanity's rejection of God. The passage has traditionally been interpreted as condemning homosexual behaviour. At the same time, scholars debate whether Paul's argument should be understood primarily in terms of lust, idolatry, excess, exploitative relationships, or same-sex behaviour more generally. Similarly, 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 and 1 Timothy 1:8–11 contain Greek terms whose translation and precise meaning remain subjects of scholarly discussion. Such debates are particularly important because contemporary concepts of sexual orientation cannot simply be assumed to be identical to the social categories of the first-century Mediterranean world.

Biblical perspectives must also include the broader Christian teachings concerning love, compassion, repentance, holiness, and human dignity. Jesus emphasised love of God and neighbour (Matthew 22:37–40) and consistently demonstrated concern for people who were socially marginalised. This does not by itself resolve the specific question of sexual ethics, but it establishes an important ethical principle concerning how Christians should treat persons. Recent African Christian scholarship similarly identifies tensions between scriptural interpretations, traditional Christian teachings, cultural values, and contemporary understandings of sexuality (Nwankwo & Nana, 2024; Onotere & Urhibo, 2024).

Therefore, the biblical perspective adopted in this study should examine both sexual morality and human dignity. The purpose is not simply to establish a predetermined conclusion but to investigate how Christians in Sabon Gari Zaria understand and apply biblical teachings. This is especially important for an empirical study because respondents may differ according to denomination, biblical knowledge, age, education, pastoral teaching, and personal exposure to contemporary discussions of sexuality.

Christian Ethical Principles and Homosexuality

Christian ethics concerns the principles by which Christians evaluate human conduct, relationships, responsibilities, and moral choices in the light of Scripture and Christian faith. In relation to homosexuality, Christian ethical reflection involves more than determining whether particular sexual practices are morally acceptable. It also requires consideration of human dignity, love, compassion, holiness, justice, forgiveness, pastoral responsibility, and the consequences of Christian responses.

One important Christian ethical principle is holiness. Biblical Christianity calls believers to live according to God's moral purposes (1 Peter 1:15–16). Sexual conduct is included within this broader call to holiness. Traditional Christian sexual ethics generally locates sexual intimacy within marriage between a man and a woman. From this perspective, same-sex sexual behaviour is regarded as inconsistent with traditional Christian teaching concerning sexuality. This position remains influential among many African Christian communities. Recent Nigerian studies indicate that Pentecostal leaders commonly frame homosexuality through theological concepts of sin, biblical morality, creation, and heterosexual marriage (Oriola, 2024).

A second principle is love of neighbour. Jesus identifies love as central to Christian discipleship (Matthew 22:37–40). Consequently, Christian moral disagreement with a particular behaviour should not automatically translate into hatred or mistreatment of the person involved. This distinction is particularly important in an empirical study because respondents may hold strong moral convictions while simultaneously believing that every human being possesses dignity.

A third principle is the image of God. Genesis 1:26–27 teaches that human beings are created in God's image. Christian anthropology therefore provides a theological foundation for human worth. An ethical evaluation of homosexuality should consequently distinguish between moral judgments concerning conduct and the intrinsic value of persons. Such distinction can help prevent ethical disagreement from becoming justification for humiliation, violence, exclusion, or other forms of dehumanisation.

A fourth principle is compassion and pastoral responsibility. Churches are not merely institutions that formulate moral rules; they are communities responsible for teaching, counselling, discipling, and caring for people. Pastoral ministry therefore requires sensitivity, confidentiality, truthfulness, and compassion. Richman (2022), in examining a Nigerian deliverance church, demonstrates the complexity surrounding Christian responses to same-sex relationships and shows how theological ideas about creation influence pastoral approaches.

Christian ethics also includes repentance and grace. Within traditional Christian theology, moral transformation is associated with repentance, forgiveness, and God's grace. The church therefore has a responsibility to communicate its theological convictions while avoiding coercive or abusive practices. The ethical question is not merely what the church teaches but also how that teaching is communicated and enacted.

Finally, Christian ethics requires truth, justice, and responsible social engagement. Contemporary African scholarship has identified tensions between Christian tradition, cultural conservatism, social stigma, and the treatment of LGBTQ+ persons (Onotere & Urhibo, 2024). Thus, this study examines how Christians in Sabon Gari Zaria apply these ethical principles when evaluating homosexuality. The empirical investigation can determine whether respondents primarily emphasise biblical prohibition, compassion, pastoral care, social conformity, or a combination of these considerations.

Theoretical Framework: Social Learning Theory

This study is anchored on Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura. Bandura (1977) argued that human behaviour and attitudes can be acquired through observation, imitation, reinforcement, and interaction with the social environment. Learning does not always require direct personal experience; individuals can observe the behaviour of others and the consequences associated with that behaviour. Contemporary explanations of the theory similarly emphasise observational learning, modelling, cognitive processes, and reciprocal interaction between individuals and their environments.

Social Learning Theory is appropriate for this study because Christian perceptions of homosexuality are unlikely to develop in isolation. Individuals acquire moral attitudes through parents, churches, pastors, teachers, peers, media, community leaders, and other social institutions. A Christian who repeatedly hears homosexuality described as sinful in sermons, Bible studies, family discussions, or Christian media may develop a particular interpretation of the issue.

Conversely, exposure to alternative narratives through education, social media, interpersonal relationships, or other communities may influence how the person understands homosexuality.

The theory identifies modelling as an important mechanism. Pastors and other Christian leaders can function as influential models because congregants often observe their language and behaviour when responding to controversial moral issues. If a religious leader consistently demonstrates compassion while teaching a traditional sexual ethic, church members may learn to combine moral conviction with pastoral sensitivity. Conversely, if homosexuality is consistently discussed using hostile or dehumanising language, followers may acquire similar attitudes.

Reinforcement is another important component. Social approval can strengthen particular attitudes, while social criticism can discourage others. For example, a Christian youth whose peers praise strong opposition to homosexuality may be reinforced for expressing that position. Likewise, someone who receives criticism for asking questions about sexuality may become reluctant to discuss the issue openly. Such processes may contribute to the formation of public and private attitudes.

The theory also recognises cognitive factors. Individuals do not simply copy everything they observe. They interpret information according to their existing beliefs, values, experiences, and expectations. Thus, two Christians attending the same church may develop different perceptions of homosexuality. Factors such as biblical literacy, denominational affiliation, education, age, family background, and personal experience can affect how information is interpreted.

The Nigerian context provides empirical support for examining religion as a socialising influence on sexuality. Oyewole et al. (2023), for example, found that parents' religion significantly influenced communication concerning sexuality among adolescents in Southwest Nigeria. Similarly, previous Nigerian research has found relationships between religiosity and sexual attitudes and behaviour (Odimegwu, 2005).

For this study, Social Learning Theory provides a framework for investigating how Christian teaching, family influence, peer relationships, media exposure, and community norms shape

perceptions of homosexuality among Christians in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis. The theory does not assume that homosexuality itself is “learned.” Rather, it is used to explain the formation of attitudes, interpretations, and social responses concerning homosexuality. This distinction is essential for maintaining conceptual and empirical accuracy.

Christian Denominational Perspectives on Homosexuality

Christianity is not institutionally or theologically uniform. Different denominations and traditions may share fundamental beliefs concerning Scripture, Christ, salvation, and Christian morality while differing in their interpretation and application of particular ethical issues. Homosexuality is one such issue. Within global Christianity, responses range from strong rejection of same-sex sexual relationships to various forms of pastoral accommodation and affirmation. Therefore, an empirical study in Sabon Gari Zaria must recognise denominational diversity rather than treating all Christians as possessing identical perspectives.

Roman Catholic teaching traditionally understands marriage as a covenantal union between a man and a woman and distinguishes between persons experiencing same-sex attraction and sexual acts considered morally impermissible. Catholic ethical teaching therefore combines a traditional sexual ethic with a requirement that persons be treated with respect and compassion. Protestant denominations similarly vary in their approaches. Evangelical churches generally maintain traditional interpretations of biblical sexual morality, although pastoral practices can differ considerably among congregations.

Pentecostal Christianity is particularly important in the Nigerian context because of its significant social and religious influence. Recent research examining Nigerian Pentecostal discourse found that selected prominent pastors generally frame homosexuality through biblical creation, heterosexual marriage, sexual morality, and religious convictions (Ojo, 2024). The language used in such public discourse can influence how church members understand homosexuality and how they communicate their views in society.

The Anglican tradition in Nigeria has also maintained a strong institutional position concerning traditional Christian teaching on marriage and sexual conduct. Okwuosa (2022) examined the moral implications of the Church of Nigeria's position on homosexuality and demonstrated that the issue involves theological and ethical questions concerning biblical interpretation, church identity, morality, and social engagement.

African Christian perspectives should also be considered in their cultural context. Nwankwo and Nana (2024) argue that homosexuality presents an important challenge to African Christian moral values and examine the issue through biblical and phenomenological perspectives. Onotere and Urhibo (2024) similarly identify the interaction of traditional beliefs, scriptural interpretation, church traditions, and contemporary perspectives in African Christian discussions of homosexuality.

Empirical research indicates that denominational affiliation may interact with other factors such as religiosity, religious commitment, biblical knowledge, age, and social environment. For example, the Lagos study by Olagunju et al. (2024) surveyed 255 Christians and included respondents from Evangelical and non-Evangelical churches, including Baptist, Catholic, African

Church, and Redeemed Christian Church of God congregations. The study examined awareness, biblical perceptions, and approaches to Christian ministry concerning homosexuality.

In Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis, denominational diversity may therefore influence ethical perceptions. However, the study should not assume that denomination alone determines attitudes. It should investigate whether denominational affiliation, frequency of church attendance, level of biblical education, pastoral teaching, age, gender, and educational background are associated with different perceptions. Such an approach makes the research genuinely empirical and avoids reducing complex Christian attitudes to denominational labels.

Homosexuality in the Nigerian Socio-Cultural and Legal Context

Homosexuality in Nigeria exists within a complex interaction of religious beliefs, cultural values, social norms, political discourse, and legal regulation. Nigerian society is strongly influenced by Christianity and Islam, while indigenous cultural traditions continue to shape perceptions of sexuality, family, marriage, and social morality. Consequently, discussions concerning homosexuality frequently extend beyond individual sexual behaviour into questions of cultural identity, religion, family structure, and national values.

Marriage and family occupy central positions in many Nigerian communities. Heterosexual marriage is traditionally associated with companionship, reproduction, family continuity, and social responsibility. Consequently, same-sex relationships can challenge established expectations concerning marriage and family. Christian communities frequently reinforce these expectations through teachings concerning Genesis 1–2, marriage, procreation, and sexual morality.

Religion is also a significant influence. Empirical research has demonstrated relationships between religiosity and sexual attitudes in Nigeria. Odimegwu (2005), for example, found that religious commitment was associated with adolescent sexual attitudes and behaviour among Nigerian university students. More recent research on parents and adolescents in Southwest Nigeria similarly found that parents' religion influenced communication about sexuality (Oyewole et al., 2023). These findings support the importance of examining religion as part of the social environment within which sexual attitudes are formed.

The legal context is another important dimension. Nigeria's Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act 2013 establishes legal restrictions concerning same-sex marriage and related activities. However, a scholarly study should distinguish between legal regulation and Christian ethical judgment. Law establishes enforceable rules within the state, whereas Christian ethics evaluates conduct through theological and moral principles. The two may overlap but should not automatically be treated as identical.

The Nigerian context is also shaped by public discourse. Pentecostal pastors and other religious leaders have played prominent roles in discussions of homosexuality. Recent research examining Nigerian Pentecostal discourse found that prominent pastors' public statements frequently framed homosexuality through traditional Christian moral categories (Ojo, 2024). At the same time, empirical research from other African contexts demonstrates that social attitudes toward LGBTQ+ persons are influenced by religious and political authorities in complex ways. Yekple and Mitkov (2024), for example, used an experiment in Ghana to examine whether messages from trusted

authorities could alter anti-LGBTQ norms. Their results varied by type of authority, and messages from religious leaders did not produce a discernible effect in their experiment.

Historical research has additionally identified Christianity as one factor associated with contemporary African attitudes. Baranov et al. (2021) examined geo-coded Afrobarometer data from 33 African countries and reported an association between proximity to historical Christian mission sites and contemporary anti-gay attitudes, particularly among Christian respondents. The authors interpret their findings as evidence of a long-term relationship between missionary religious conversion and attitudes toward homosexuality. Such continental-level findings should not, however, be automatically generalised to Sabon Gari.

The present study therefore focuses specifically on the local social environment of Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis. It seeks to determine how Christian teachings interact with cultural values, legal awareness, family expectations, peer influence, media exposure, and community norms in shaping Christian ethical evaluations of homosexuality.

Empirical Review of Studies on Christianity and Homosexuality

Empirical research provides evidence concerning how individuals and communities understand homosexuality, Christianity, sexuality, and social responses. This review is particularly important because theological arguments alone cannot establish what Christians in Sabon Gari actually believe. The present study therefore draws upon empirical research from Nigeria and other African contexts while recognising the limitations of applying findings from other populations to the present study area.

Olagunju et al. (2024) conducted a descriptive survey examining the understanding and perceptions of selected Christians in Lagos Metropolis. The study obtained 255 responses through an online questionnaire and included respondents from Evangelical and non-Evangelical churches. The researchers investigated awareness of LGBT issues, biblical perspectives on homosexuality, and approaches to Christian ministry. The study reported high awareness but also identified strong traditional Christian perceptions concerning homosexual behaviour. This study is particularly relevant because it provides recent Nigerian empirical evidence. However, its geographical concentration in Lagos means that its findings cannot simply be transferred to Sabon Gari Zaria.

Baranov et al. (2021) conducted a large-scale cross-national analysis using Afrobarometer data from 33 African countries and historical information concerning Christian missions. Their findings indicated an association between proximity to historical Christian mission sites and contemporary negative attitudes toward homosexual persons, with the relationship concentrated among Christian respondents. The study is important because it demonstrates that religious history can have long-term effects on social attitudes. Nevertheless, it operates at a continental level and therefore cannot substitute for local empirical research.

Yekple and Mitkov (2024) conducted an experimental study in Ghana involving messages from different trusted authorities. Their research examined whether messages could alter anti-LGBTQ norms. The findings indicated that the effects differed according to the type of authority delivering the message, while messages from religious leaders showed no discernible effect in the

experiment. This finding is relevant to the present research because it demonstrates that religious authority does not necessarily produce uniform attitudinal outcomes.

Chibango (2024) investigated the religious experiences of gay and lesbian Christians in Harare, Zimbabwe, using qualitative interviews. The study highlighted the complexity of Christian identity, religious belonging, sexuality, cultural expectations, and hostile legal and social environments. Although Zimbabwe differs from Nigeria, the study demonstrates the importance of investigating the experiences and perceptions of individuals rather than examining homosexuality exclusively through institutional religious statements.

Research on sexuality and religion in Nigeria also demonstrates the broader influence of religious socialisation. Oyewole et al. (2023) examined 721 parents in three Southwest Nigerian states and found that religion significantly influenced communication concerning sexuality between parents and adolescents. Similarly, previous Nigerian research found relationships between religious commitment and adolescent sexual attitudes and behaviour (Odimegwu, 2005).

Studies of religion and sexuality therefore suggest that Christian beliefs are shaped through multiple social mechanisms. Family, church, peers, religious commitment, education, and media can all contribute to attitudes. However, a significant research gap remains concerning Christians in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis. The existing studies identified above concentrate on Lagos, broader Africa, Ghana, Zimbabwe, or sexuality generally. The present study addresses this gap by collecting primary empirical data from the specific study population.

Christian Ethical Evaluation of Homosexuality in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis

The Christian ethical evaluation of homosexuality in Sabon Gari Zaria Metropolis constitutes the central analytical concern of this study. Unlike a purely theological investigation, the study seeks to determine how Christian ethical principles are understood and applied by Christians within a specific social environment. The evaluation should therefore emerge from empirical evidence rather than from assumptions about what respondents believe.

The first dimension concerns biblical understanding. Respondents may differ in their knowledge and interpretation of biblical passages such as Genesis 1–2, Leviticus 18:22, Romans 1:26–27, 1 Corinthians 6:9–11, and 1 Timothy 1:8–11. The study should determine whether respondents who demonstrate greater familiarity with these texts also report stronger traditional ethical positions. Such an association would be an empirical finding rather than an assumption.

The second dimension concerns Christian moral principles. Respondents can be asked about holiness, marriage, sexual morality, love, compassion, human dignity, forgiveness, and pastoral responsibility. This is important because a person may consider homosexual sexual behaviour morally wrong while simultaneously rejecting violence, discrimination, humiliation, or social exclusion against homosexual persons. The study should therefore avoid treating moral disagreement and social hostility as identical concepts.

The third dimension concerns social learning. Through Social Learning Theory, the study can investigate the role of pastors, parents, peers, Christian media, social media, and church teachings. Previous Nigerian research indicates that religious commitment and parental religious influence

can shape sexual attitudes and communication (Odimegwu, 2005; Oyewole et al., 2023). Respondents in Sabon Gari may similarly report that their attitudes have been influenced by sermons, Bible studies, family teachings, and social interactions.

The fourth dimension is denominational influence. Since Sabon Gari contains Christians from different denominational backgrounds, the study should compare perceptions without presuming that one denomination is uniformly represented by a particular attitude. Differences may occur between Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, Pentecostal, Evangelical, and other traditions, but individual religious commitment and personal interpretation may also be important.

The fifth dimension concerns pastoral response. Christian ethical evaluation should examine how churches respond when persons who identify as homosexual seek pastoral assistance. Respondents may support prayer, counselling, discipleship, confidentiality, moral instruction, or other forms of pastoral engagement. Richman's (2022) research demonstrates that Nigerian Pentecostal approaches can involve complex theological understandings of creation, sexuality, and transformation.

The sixth dimension concerns human dignity and social treatment. Christian ethics requires the recognition that moral disagreement does not eliminate human dignity. The study can therefore investigate whether respondents support respectful treatment and oppose violence, bullying, harassment, or dehumanisation. This dimension is particularly important in distinguishing a theological position on sexual conduct from social discrimination.

The final evaluation should be based on the actual data collected. If questionnaires reveal strong traditional Christian views, that should be reported descriptively. If respondents demonstrate differences between moral judgment and treatment of persons, those differences should also be reported. Interviews can provide deeper explanations concerning why respondents hold particular views.

The study should therefore evaluate homosexuality through a framework that integrates Scripture, Christian ethics, social learning, denominational teaching, Nigerian culture, and empirical evidence. Such an approach will enable the researcher to describe the ethical perceptions of Christians in Sabon Gari without assuming that every Christian shares the same position.

Conclusion

The study concludes that Christian ethical evaluation of homosexuality requires an integrated approach involving biblical interpretation, theological reasoning, ethical principles, social context, and empirical investigation. The issue cannot adequately be understood by examining biblical passages alone, because Christian responses are also shaped by family, church, culture, education, denominational identity, and wider social influences.

The study further recognises that Christians may maintain traditional sexual-ethical convictions while differing considerably in how they respond to persons who identify as homosexual. Consequently, the ethical evaluation should distinguish between moral evaluation of sexual conduct and the dignity and treatment of persons.

Because the present research is empirical, final conclusions concerning the attitudes of Christians in Sabon Gari should be drawn only after the collection and analysis of field data. The findings should establish the dominant perceptions, the factors influencing them, and the relationship between Christian teaching and social responses.

Recommendations

- I. Churches should strengthen biblical and Christian ethical education concerning sexuality so that members can understand relevant biblical passages within their theological and historical contexts.
- II. Christian leaders should receive appropriate pastoral training for addressing sensitive sexuality-related issues with confidentiality, compassion, truthfulness, and respect for human dignity.
- III. Churches should encourage responsible language when discussing homosexuality and discourage expressions that could promote hatred, violence, humiliation, or dehumanisation.
- IV. Christian families should develop age-appropriate and responsible communication concerning sexuality. Nigerian research indicates that parental religion influences sexuality-related communication.
- V. Churches should provide young Christians with biblically informed education that enables them to engage contemporary debates about sexuality critically rather than relying exclusively on social media or peer information.
- VI. Christian ethical teaching should clearly distinguish moral convictions from mistreatment of individuals. Every person should be treated with dignity even where disagreement exists concerning sexual behaviour.
- VII. Future studies should investigate differences across denominations, age groups, gender, educational levels, and levels of religious commitment in Kaduna State.
- VIII. Future researchers should conduct larger studies across Zaria and other parts of Kaduna State to determine whether findings from Sabon Gari are representative of wider Christian communities.

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