

RESEARCH ARTICLE

SODOMY IN NIGERIA AND THE MEDIA'S INTEREST: A STUDY OF ONDO NORTH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

Festus Folorunso Alabi^a, Mobolanle Ebunoluwa Sotunsa^b^aDepartment of Mass Communication, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, P. M. B. 1019, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria.^bBabcock University, Ilisan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria.*Corresponding Author Email: alabifoluso16@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Sodomy or homosexuality has, for some time now, mainstreamed itself in Europe and America. For instance, Pete Buttigieg - a married gay - is the current America's Transport Secretary. Bolu Okupe, son of Doyin Okupe, a one-time Nigerian minister, lives in France. He has just come out of his closet to declare that he is gay. This 'coming out' has unsettled his Christian father. Besides, Charlie Boy's daughter is a lesbian. Charlie Boy, whose real name is Charles Okputa, son of to late foremost Nigerian jurist, is a Nigerian music icon. A lot of such stories fill the media as well as the social media. The Law of the land makes sodomy a punishable crime in Nigeria. The implication is that the law - passed in 2013 - is only meant to stem its tide. However, do the rural Nigerian communities have the faintest idea of sodomy, let alone, practise it? This paper aims to fix the problem. The paper adopted the focused interview research methodology, which is principally descriptive. The armchair approach and reliance on the media and social media were jettisoned in favour of direct interviews. This is significant because the West - Europe and America - is using the 'Stick and Carrot Approach' to foist Sodomy on the less fortunate and economically vulnerable nations of the world. Unfortunately, Nigeria is home to a vast population of the less fortunate across the globe. Queer, Deconstruction, Agenda-Setting Theories and The Wesley Maclean's Model guided the research. The result of the fieldwork was transcribed and analysed accordingly. The findings lent credence to the set objectives. The assumption that sodomitic love is congenital is fast becoming a universal myth. The congenital myth (doll theory) of sodomitic love has been largely debunked by this paper. Further and similar research should, therefore, be conducted among other rural dwellers in Nigeria (and other parts of Africa).

KEYWORDS

Sodomy, Congenital myth, Europe and America, Nigeria, The Media.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sodomy or homosexuality denotes same-sex relationships, same-sex intercourse as well as same-sex marriage (Pollack, 1971; Thompson, 1994; Sarason and Sarason, 2002; Aldrich 2003; Altman, 2001). A study state that homosexuality is that kind of sexual relationship between two members of the same sex (McMahon and McMahon, 2011). However, there's another study sees homosexuality as a psycho-pathological condition - a chronic disorder (Nnachi, 2011). He argues:

"Abnormal sexual attraction to people of the same sex is the most basic description of homosexuality. Therefore, someone who has desires that are either entirely or partially focused towards others of the same sex may be classified as gay" (Nnachi, 2011).

Being homosexual, therefore, shows that a boy or girl, when he or she grows into adulthood, will solely feel attracted - in a huge and absolute or exclusive romantic sense - to other boys or girls. Simply put, boys will have boyfriends and girls, girlfriends; men will have men's friends and women will keep women's friends. There are elongations: 'sugar daddies' for boys and 'sugar mummies' for young girls or ladies.

According to the Bible, this is sodomy. "Don't engage in homosexual behaviour." It is an abhorrent transgression. Today's modern civilisations are besieged by an abundance of publications, media, and social media,

along with a multitude of websites flooded with pornography and other sorts of sex festivals. Parental Guidance (PG) is thrown away into the file cabinets. Many parents themselves use these resources/websites. Youths are enchanted to explore with a variety of imaginations, including "going to the moon" (Afrika, 2002). But the rural folk— old men and women—who have not been exposed to globalisation midwife this work. This work explored how the traditional Nigerian society would react to this hypothetical scenario:

Assume Ayomide and Adekunle, two lads who live in the same neighbourhood, were to be married. For example, they may become Ikare-Akoko and Oka-Akoko. Everything was now ready for the grand wedding. Alaga Iduro, the master of ceremonies, joyfully declared, "Our SONS, Ayomide and Adekunle, are about getting to get married!" in front of a large audience as the large gathering of both families and other guests were busy exchanging pleasantries. Most likely, a spontaneous chorus of "Eemo, Eewo!"—abomination!—would break forth from the audience. I doubt even one of the guests would stay around to see the oddity!

A different scenario is painted below. It is the report of a gay wedding (Wall Street Journal, 1994 cited in Sarason and Sarason, 2002):

"After living together for more than 20 years, Erik Ladefoged and Kim Norgaard were finally able to properly tie the knot in 1989, surrounded by 30 family members and friends. Between two straight couples, we were

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married. To their surprise, the couple discovered that the wedding was a deeply emotional occasion that represented both their country's acceptance of them and a public confession of their love. I had assumed it would just be a formality. However, our pals were belting out a traditional Danish tune. I felt content everywhere. Being gay and receiving the state's official handshake and smile was wonderful" (Sarason and Sarason, 2002).

The report also states that "Mr. Ladefoged was a school teacher, aged 49". People would concur that it was their decision, regardless of whether society viewed it as odd, bizarre, atypical, or deviant. What's more, they were able to find a place in their own community. But in Africa, this isn't the case. It is undoubtedly "a tale of two climes". The results validated the predetermined goals. It's possible that the widespread belief that sodomites are naturally predisposed is only a political ploy used to seize and hold onto power. By filling in the gaps between myth and reality and giving the media, in particular, the real picture, this work aims to add to the extremely limited body of writing on Sodomy in Nigeria. Moreover, the work would serve as part of the database for other researchers who would like to embark on a similar study. The study revolved around the following objectives: (i) to probe the practise of sodomy in Ondo Senatorial District of Nigeria; (ii) to debunk or ascertain the universality of sodomy, before globalisation; (iii) to provide the media with the raw materials needed for accurate reportage on sodomy, particularly in the selected senatorial area; and (iv) to investigate the effect of media pressure on sodomy.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The widespread belief in contemporary society, especially in the West, is that sodomy has existed since the end of the prehistoric era and is not a relatively new phenomenon. Similar to left-handedness and ambidexterity, homosexuality is only a natural phenomenon, according to those who support and sympathise with it. It was continued to advance the theory that some individuals have a biological predisposition towards homosexuality (Beinert, 1968; Chaffe and Berger, 1997). Thompson in 1994, Kimel and Mesner in 1995, Pollack, 1998, Lehne, 2009, McMahon and McMahon in 1982, and other scholars are examples of this type of research. However, in the traditional Nigerian rustic society, this claim is yet to be justified by anyone. This paper, therefore, investigated this claim in selected urban and rural communities in Ondo State. The research was conducted in purposively selected local government areas of the State. The urban and rural communities were drawn from the Ondo North Senatorial District. The Local Governments are Owo, Ose, Akoko Northeast, Akoko North West, Akoko South and Akoko South East.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

A window into every human culture and activity can be found in literature. With sodomy, the situation is the same. The French psychologist Sigmund Freud, among others, believed that while homosexuality is not a disease, it is 'not normal'. Freud thought that most people harbour latent homosexuality. Lehne, supports this opinion as follows: There is some level of homosexuality in every human community in the globe today, from large, industrialised nations to the smallest and most primitive tribes in far-flung regions (Lehne, 2009). Every community that has existed on Earth throughout recorded history, all the way back to the dawn of time, has included some form of homosexuality. All human communities have been aware of homosexuality since it has always been wherever there have been people, regardless of how harshly some of these societies condemned it or how easily others welcomed it. Science has not yet been able to determine the origins or causes of the phenomena of left-handedness, which is arguably the closest scientific counterpart to homosexuality. Similar to homosexuality, a small fraction of persons in every recorded human community are left-handed. There is no objective basis for considering homosexuality to be less natural than left-handedness.

A major component of this is oral literature, which documents the folktales and folklore of many people. There is a growing body of research being done on Africa's unwritten literature (Finnegan, 1970). Her well-known work, *Oral Literature in Africa*, which compiles the numerous African art forms, is the product of her high regard for this subject. The following year in 1971, Beir published *African Poetry: An Anthology of Traditional African Poems* in response to this.

The volumes contain a wide range of topics, including proverbs, religion, war chants, praise songs, lullabies, and philosophical concepts like love and death. However, there is not even the slightest mention of the desire for same-sex partnerships in either of these works. Sodomy is not discussed in any way in Gordon Innes' analytical analysis of African folklore and creative epics such as *Sunjata: Three Mandika Versions*, which is referenced in Roscoe and Clark (Roscoe, 1971; Clark, 1966). Regarding

the subject of homosexuality in *Sunjata*, nothing is attributed to the griots or travelling praise singers. Furthermore, do not link the topic of sodomy in Africa to African myths and legends of gender (Oluwole and Sofoluwe, 2014).

Africa, however, believes a lot in bonding – bonding between the same sex. Chinua Achebe presents Okonkwo and Obierika as very close friends in *Things Fall Apart*, Ezeulu and Akuebe as the most intimate of friends in *Arrow of God*. Bonding is equally seen in *Arrow of God* between Nwaka and Ezidemili. Achebe puts it this way:

Nwaka and Ezidemili struck a connection back in their early years. They were frequently spotted together. Nwaka was the youngest of the two, and their moms had informed them that they were born three days apart. They were skilled fighters. But they differed in other respects as well. Even if their paths in life diverged later, Nwaka continued to consult the other before making any significant decisions.

From an African perspective, this bonding is in no way suggestive of any romantic activities. This reconciliation can be easily compared to that which occurred between David and Jonathan, as demonstrated by David's grief for Israel, Saul, and his companion Jonathan: And David wept over Saul and his son Jonathan with this lamentation. How have the powerful fallen when the beauty of Israel is killed on the high places? I am saddened for you, my sibling Jonathan; you have been incredibly pleasant to me; your love for me was amazing, surpassing even the affection of ladies (II Samuel 1:17–18–26).

Men and women can live as though there are no other people of the opposing sex in the world by participating in sodomy. quip, "This is a useful illusion" (Kimmel and Messner, 1995). This is really not saying enough. Actually, it's more like escape into a kind of Shangri-La. Pope's views on "Man in the Age of Enlightenment" are consistent with this viewpoint (Pope, 1733:1, 17). Regarding Pope's "Essay on Man," Akporobaro, makes the following claim: Man is a joke, a foolish creature, and a marvel. He can't be conceited, haughty, or conceited. He thinks, just making mistakes (Akporobaro, 2015)

Man can only make mistakes. He is both gullible and flawed to some extent. Strangely, he exudes a great deal of conceit, arrogance, and pride. He is a joke, paradoxically, yet he is also a marvel. He makes decisions based on what he feels is best for him, whether it be friends, location, time, hobbies, career, or identity—especially sexual identity. In addition, he has the capacity to become both bold and rebellious in pursuing his goals or decisions, particularly in this day of enlightenment. According to Akporobaro, humankind's pursuit of peace, joy, and happiness is really a maze of delusions since their actions only serve to make them more susceptible to harm or mistake (Akporobaro, 2015). Pope would also observe in "On Man" Ignoring the relationship between items and systems, a creature fit for his position and status within creation, Man is a finite being who exhibits ignorance of future happenings and partly bases his satisfaction in the here and now on the possibility of a future state (Pope, 1733). Man's folly and unhappiness stem from his vanity in striving for greater knowledge and perfection. The impiety of placing oneself in God's shoes and determining whether his dispensation is right or unfair, perfect or imperfect, or suitable or unfit (I, 17, II, 77, and III).

3.1 Sodomy and popular culture (arts)

The foundation of a people's past is sufficiently provided by popular arts and culture. It both embodies and includes nearly all that a culture stands for. Barber in 1987 provides strong support for this when she says: Above all, the popular arts category appears to be defined by its openness and seemingly limitless flexibility (Barber, 1987). It has included not only genres commonly associated with the arts, like drama, vocal and instrumental music, paintings and sculptures, and written fiction, but also a wide range of phenomena like wire bicycles, coffins, portrait photography, decorated bread labels, and house decorations (Jackson, 1978; Burns, 1974; Sprague, 1978; Middleton, 1974; Beinart, 1968). It is a transient category that always seems to be present but always disappears when one attempts to grasp it.

African popular culture, albeit elusive, falls into three categories: elite arts, popular arts, and traditional arts. Barber states that the traditional arts depicted in this image are mainly associated with rural, oral peasant cultures that have been passed down from pre-colonial times, often with ongoing modifications. In contrast, elite arts are extremely ideological and complex, whereas popular arts are primarily modern and urban, presenting a new culture. Syncretism is essential to popular culture. After constant changes brought about by modernity, the three popular culture categories are currently merging quickly.

3.2 Sodomy and globalisation

The globe has been pulled apart by globalisation. Today, a person can access the world and everything it has to offer, including possibilities, agony, joy, and pleasure, science and technology, the arts and culture, greed, pornography, and sodomy, almost for free, right at their doorstep. According to Akinterinwa in 2015, globalisation:

"From a conceptual standpoint, globalisation is not a recent phenomenon. There are occasions when it is referred to as a change from local to global control. In general, though, globalisation has been defined in a number of ways, including universalism (the spread of culture throughout the world), internationalisation (the rise in cross-border trade and interdependence between peoples of different countries), Westernisation (the homogenisation of the world according to Western US standards), and liberalisation (the transnational spread of unrestrained forces of technology, production, trade, and finance)" (Akinterinwa, 2015).

The crux of the matter is that Africa is equally benefiting from globalisation in every way imaginable and unimaginable. Africans, it now seems, are fast becoming initiates of the sodomitic cult. The different cases of homosexual rape bedeviling African society today simply imply that Africans are actually up to some form of experimentation. This view is supported by Azuh in 2012 in the article "Profile of Nigerian Writers Abroad". Azuh notes that "the prose works are set amid cosmopolitan complexities of contemporary Lagos... London and Los Angeles. The characters are frequently young people wizened beyond their years..." (Azuh, 2012). Notwithstanding, former Zimbabwean President, the Late Robert Mugabe, carpeted sodomites as being worse and more despicable than pigs (Huchu, 2015). As dirty as a pig is an established simile (figure of speech). But homosexuals, according to the Senior African citizen and leader, are filth personified! Both Mugabe and Yahyah Jammeh (former Gambian President) were vociferous in their claim that sodomy was a heinous - cum - outlandish import to the continent from other parts of the world (Nnachi, 2011).

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Three theories and a model guided the research. These are Queer, Deconstruction, Agenda Setting Theories and the Wesley MacLean Model. 'A theory is a body of knowledge which contains the fruits of generations (even millennia) of engagement with certain recurrent problems' Goring et al., (2001).

4.1 Queer theory

Queer, like Marxism and Feminism, began as a movement, a form of revolution. Its target was to secure political, legal, and economic emancipation for sodomites (gay men and lesbians). Sodomites were sidelined and marginalised because of their deviant, unorthodox, and weird sexual practices. Bennett and Royce in 2009 opine that Queer is an intricate word (Bennett and Royce, 2009). It was used initially as a derogatory term for homosexuals until the homosexuals themselves re-invented the terms as a fight-back weapon. Bennett et al., note:

Queer is a queer word. The entry of the word queer' into the English Language is itself a study in the queer ways of words... Queer gained currency in the English language in the United States and elsewhere as (usually) a derogatory term (Bennett et al., 2009).

Today, however, queer is a potent political weapon across all known political parties in the West. It has become a creed that has pulled down race, colour, class, and religion.

4.2 Deconstruction

The theory of deconstruction is radical. It's a rebellion or a revolution. The consensus is that deconstruction plays a significant, if not dominant, role in poststructuralism. Only by keeping in mind that children usually define themselves by fighting with their parents can it be classified as an offspring of structuralism (Goring et al., 2001:17). Structuralism began with an analysis of myth based on linguistics. A refined version of structuralism is called post-structuralism. Deconstruction facilitates the presentation of opposing viewpoints to a preexisting concept, idea, or viewpoint. It demonstrates how a concept can never be as inflexible as a flint. This viewpoint disapproves of the oversimplification of any kind of unsubstantiated claim or assumption.

4.3 Agenda-Setting theory

Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw proposed the Agenda-Setting Theory of the Press in 1972. According to the agenda-setting idea, people

typically only know the information that the mainstream media chooses to convey to them regarding public problems. Additionally, the importance people attach to the same topics seems to correspond with the level of attention the media devotes to them.

Assumptions/Principles of the Theory

- The mass media, such as the press, reflect social reality because news is filtered, chosen, and shaped by newsroom staff or broadcasters.
- People get their news from limited sources because people do not pay attention to all outlets; thus, they rely on the mass media.
- Few media agendas, which were chosen by professional gatekeepers, lead people to perceive given issues as important.

Here, it is assumed that the media set the agenda for our general discussion. The media may not always determine what we think about. Although we have a right to think what we want to think, surprisingly, we tend to think of most of those things the media highlight as important.

The following could be responsible for agenda-setting:

- The number of times an issue is reported
- Using headline and picture display strategies to play up a report in the media
- Reports that give room for "points and counterpoints".

The Agenda-setting theory comes from specific perspectives because it predicts that if people are exposed to the same media, they will place importance on the same issues. According to Chaffe and Berger's in 1997 criteria for scientific theories, agenda-setting is a useful theory because of the following:

- It has explanatory power because it explains why most people prioritize the same issues as important
- It has predictive power because it predicts that if people are exposed to the same media, they will feel the same issues are important
- It is parsimonious because it is not complex, and it is easy to understand
- It can be proven false, if people not exposed to the same issues are important
- Its meta-theoretical assumptions are balanced on the scientific side
- It is a springboard for further research; and
- It has organising power because it helps organize existing knowledge of media effects ([http:// www.uky.edu/~drlane/ capstone/ mass / agenda.htm](http://www.uky.edu/~drlane/capstone/mass/agenda.htm)).

Adepoju in 1999, however, asserts that the agenda-setting theory is not always clear about the role of interpersonal influence in the public's adoption and perceptions, which can be regarded as either interpersonal or mass media effects depending on how they spread through word-of-mouth (even when they originate from the media) (Adepoju, 1999).

This theory is apposite for explaining why people with similar media exposure place importance on the same issues. Although different people may feel differently about the issue at hand, most people feel the same issues are important ([http:// www.uky.edu /-drone/ capstone / mass / agenda.htm](http://www.uky.edu/~drone/capstone/mass/agenda.htm)).

4.4 Wesley Maclean's model

A model is described as "a device representing the essential features of a given phenomenon" by (Daramola, 2003).

According to Folarin in 2003 a model is a symbolic representation created to aid in the debate and understanding of the links between different components of a structure, system, or process (Folarin, 2003).

Wesley-Maclean's Model is the communication model used in this study. Bruce Wesley and Malcolm Maclean Jr. created the model back in 1957.

The Wesley-Maclean concept was based on Newcomb's concept, which says that an individual (A) communicates information about something

(X) to another individual (B). Wesley and Maclean added an infinite number of objects of orientation (Xs, from X1 through Xa)—events, thoughts, objects, and people—to that model. In addition, they included a space for comments and positioned a circle between A and B.

According to the model, the source (A) has a particular object or event (X) in the environment in mind. He creates a message about it (X¹), which is transmitted to a receiver (B). The receiver, too, sends feedback (fBA) about the message to the source (Daramola, 2003:87).

The element (C) comes in mass communication. C plays the role of the gatekeeper in the media. He gets messages from different sources (A_s) or from objects of orientation in the environment (X₁..... X). He processes these messages by adding, subtracting, and modifying the Xs and forms his message (X¹) which he transmits and sends to the receiver (B). As such, the receiver (B) gets a limited portion of the original message that (C) the gatekeeper deems appropriate.

The model states that messages can be purposive or non-purposive. A purposive message comes with the intent of influencing B's perception. Feedback, according to the model, can also be purposive (e.g. a purchase or subscription). Either way, it flows in three ways:

- From receiver (B) to gatekeeper (C); (feedback fBC)
- From receiver (B) to source (A); (feedback fBA)
- From gatekeeper (C) to source (A); (feedback fCA).

Thus, the feedback provides As and Cs information about the effect of their messages on Bs.

5. CONCEPT OF MEDIA REPRESENTATION OF SODOMY

The term "representation" describes the fabrication of real-world elements, including people, places, objects, events, and cultural identities, in any media, but particularly in mass media. Both the products and the procedure are mentioned (Chandler, 2006). In addition to how identities are portrayed in the text, representation also refers to how identities are created during the production and reception processes. Media representation is the manner in which a specific individual or group of individuals is portrayed to the public (Hans, 2009). The media has mediated the world and changed people's perceptions of the past. The mediated symbolic forms influence people's perception of the world, which extends beyond the boundaries of their particular experience. We can witness events, observe people, and learn about a world that is bigger than the confines of our daily interactions thanks to the spread of media products (Thompson, 1995). Thompson describes how a lifetime of exposure to media products has changed our perception of the world. Because of its persistent efforts to reach out to a wide range of audiences at different times, the media is regarded as an agent that reflects society. The media does this, in part, by portraying important topics, like homosexuality in society. Homophobia is gradually decreasing as a result of how homosexuality is currently portrayed in the media (Anderson, 2009; Channon and Matthews, 2015). However, they did not recognise that their results might only apply to a subset of Americans, and the study did not account for African contexts and countries (Anderson, 2009; Channon and Matthews, 2015).

The media portrayal of sodomy is the depiction or portrayal of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex people in media. The initialism LGBTQ is commonly used to include all non-heterosexual sexual orientations and gender identities represented in shorthand. Although the initialism originated in North America, media representation of LGBTQ communities may be examined on a global scale, with varying degrees of tolerance.

Historically, the portrayals of LGBTQ communities in media have been negative, reflecting the cultural intolerance of LGBTQ individuals; however, from the 1990s to the present day, there has been an increase in the depictions of LGBTQ people, issues, and concerns within mainstream media in North America. Queer communities have taken an increasingly proactive stand in defining their own culture with a primary goal of achieving an affirmative visibility in mainstream media. The positive portrayal or increased presence of the Queer communities in media has served to increase acceptance and support for them, establish them as a norm, and provide information on the topic.

5.1 Media representation of sodomy in Nigeria

The human rights frame and the religious frame were observed, according

to Namusoga in 2016 who performed a comparative analysis of two newspapers on the framing of homosexuality in Uganda. The study also found that the majority of the information viewed during the study period consisted of news stories, and that homosexuality was negatively portrayed in both of the newspapers under investigation (Namusoga, 2016)

In 2014, the former president of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan, passed into law a Bill that became the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act. The passage of the law gave way to heightened attacks on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people by mobs who said they were working for the president. Over the past six years, the law has led to varying levels of state-sanctioned violence such as the arrest of 47 gay men and their subsequent trials, and the continued harassment and arrests of queer people. They have had to hide in spaces that were considered safe bars and clubs that catered for queer people as well as the homes of activists until they came under regular attacks and heightened scrutiny. Despite being stifled under this homophobic legislation, queer people's effect on popular culture is still evident. An example is Bobrisky, a media personality and openly trans-woman who has called herself "the most talked-about" and with good reason.

Since becoming a noteworthy fixture in the media, hardly a week goes by when Bobrisky is not topping the trending topics on the Nigerian subsection of Twitter. She has inspired popular slang and has been the subject of many reaction videos and memes. Nigerian singers such as Odunsi (The Engine), of the alte-music sub-genre, have drawn inspiration from queer culture for their music videos. Fashion brands, including Orange Culture and Maxivive, have challenged gender and sexuality norms in their designs, echoing the spirit of global queer activism and resistance. But being visible is not always a good thing. The art that features queerness, especially in the mainstream movie industry of Nigeria, has perpetuated homophobic stereotypes that arguably informed or influenced the Act.

In 2010, before the Bill was signed into law, Moses Eber released *Men In Love*, a direct-to-video movie about a young married couple (Whitney and Charles, played by Tonto Dikeh and John Dumelo), whose rocky marriage is shattered when they meet an enigmatic gay man, Alex (played by Muna Obiekwe), who attempts to seduce and eventually rapes Charles. For the duration of the movie, we are introduced to several gay men, each a similar stereotypical character with little depth beyond an overdone drawl, a flair for the dramatic, a love for wanton debauchery, and, perhaps, the most damaging of all, the reduction of a romantic homosexual relationship to sex and money.

A lesbian who seduces the wife and tries to break the marriage is the main character in another movie called *Emotional Crack*, which was released in the early 2000s and starred Ramsey Noah, Stephanie Okereke, and Dakore Akande. The majority of Nigerian films with gay protagonists, such as *Men in Love* and *Emotional Crack*, depict the story of how attractive individuals who are also queer are out to destroy marriage and transform you into someone they can never trust.

The movies' underlying message warns parents that if their children "choose" to be homosexual, this is what they will end up like. Many straight people avoid or actively attack people they know or think to be queer due to the perception that gay men approach straight men in an attempt to push them aside. In extreme circumstances, this belief has led to preemptive attacks. (Gaurdian and Mail 2020) - (<https://mg.co.za/africa/2020-08-16-nollywood-demonises-queer-people/>)

6. METHODOLOGY

The Direct Interview Approach (One-on-One/Face-to-Face Approach) was employed in the research. In essence, field workers (interviewers) were engaged to ask interviewees probing questions on the subject matter. This is the focused interview method. Since the target audience consisted mainly of old men and women, presumably with no formal education, no structured questionnaire was used. Instead, Video Cameras and Midgets were employed to record the step-by-step activities. The investigation was purposely carried out in the six local government areas that represent the Ondo North Senatorial District. These are Owo, Ose, Akoko Northeast, Akoko Northwest, Akoko South and Akoko South East. These local governments are contiguous to the research base, thereby making the lean available resources, time, energy, and finance manageable. Of great significance is the fact that the four local governments of Akoko have a huge motley of dialects and traditions which added no mean value to the research.

Table 1: Investigation in the six local government areas

Local Government Areas	No interviewed
Owo	45
Ose	35
Akoko North East	35
Akoko North West	45
Akoko South	40
Akoko South East	40
TOTAL	240

After, the products were transcribed and analysed. This is because the interviews were carried out in Yoruba as well as in the interviewers' dialects. It eventually turned out, however, one of the respondents was an Ibo man, necessitating an interview in Pidgin. That was at Irun, Akoko Northwest. A pocket of the respondents was literate, one a retired public servant, forcing code-mixing. That was in Oka, Akoko Southeast.

Interestingly, in Oba, Akoko Southeast, the research caught the attention of a few young boys and girls. Nonetheless, findings showed the same negative attitude and disgust at sodomy.

Old men and women (rural folks) were asked some probing questions:

- As a very young boy or girl, did you have close associates?
- Were those associates opposite sexes or the same sexes?
- Have you ever heard or seen cases of boys flirting with each other?
- What about cases of girls flirting with each other?
- Do you have reports relating to sodomy on radio or television?
- If you heard of or saw such incidents in your community, what would be your reaction?
- What would inform your decision?
- What do you advise the youth to do about this?
- What should the government do?
- Do parents have any roles to play to guard against the practice?
- Do you think the mass media should report/elaborate on such cases?
- What roles should community leaders, traditional leaders, and religious leaders play to stop the act, where found?

The field reports were analysed leading to tangible and reasonable conclusions. The methodology was basically descriptive or quantitative. Nevertheless, the analysis incorporated some elements of the quantitative approach.

7. CONCLUSION

Sodomy, maybe this is a euphemistic term to make homosexuality a closet phenomenon, is a huge game changer in political, economic, and even in the Church arenas – not Islam— in the West, America, and Europe. It is riding on the wings of absolute freedom touching almost all issues. The media are fanning the ember. Homosexuality has now exited the closet to become the most beautiful bride of our time.

But it leaves a piquant taste – like gravel in the mouth – in Africa, particularly in Nigeria. There are rumours of bestiality among nomadic herders. Detached from months from spouses, libidinous thirst must be quenched. It is doubtful if anyone would come out openly to corroborate this as a “doer of the deed”. Even if people engaged in it, chances are that they would condemn it as being despicable. Those are questions for other researchers to investigate.

This fieldwork spanned several weeks. It touched some towns, but quite some villages, interacting familiarly with old men and women in the main. The majority of those interviewed have no access to newspapers. They listen to radio stations, which hardly touch such news. When they do, so much horror is attached to it by newsmen – abominable practice! There is virtually no electricity supply to watch the news on television. Most locals

would use generators to watch movies, not the news. No station would go out of its way in praise of queer in Nigeria, particularly in the six local government areas covered by the research.

LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) people now constitute a teeming population in the West. Where, today, it is neither sinful nor unlawful. Nigerian laws – secular – see homosexuality as a crime. Christianity, Islam, and Traditional Religions cast the practice in the iron steel of sin. This fuels homophobia. In the villages, homophobia might stir or orchestrate banishment.

The Church of Rome considers homosexuality a sin, but not a crime. This is a subtle way of asking the Church to welcome queer people, rather than stigmatise them, to be “sympathetic” rather than judgmental. All these things are very intricate in our modern pluralistic society where the bottom line is for people to live together, accept one another, and demonstrate empathy, whatever form of queer opinion a person holds.

Birds, doves, hawks, dogs, lambs, and swine are compelled to live together as strange bedfellows when absolutism, rebellion, aggression, and disaster fester—as civilisation is currently experiencing. This explains why “Gay Club” operates, if not outright, even in Catholic seminaries, especially in the United States. This was denounced by retired Pope Benedict (Xvi) as a moral breakdown or decline while Pope Francis was in charge. Benedict's posthumous book, which was just released in 2023, contains this. Benedict passed away on December 31, 2022, when he was 95 years old. Notwithstanding, the First Baptist Church holds a rather radically different stance. The First Baptist Church has long been opposed to LGBTQ+ rights. Members of the church in Jacksonville, Fla, for instance, have up to March 19, 2023, to sign an anti-gay pledge to remain in the church. Senior Pastor of the church, Health Lambert, is seen and heard saying that members will be required to sign a document affirming that:

“People are either male or female and this creation is a fixed matter of human biology, not individual choice; that marriage ... is between one man and one woman, and this is the only context for sexual desire and expression; these are basic facts of life and they are wonderful”.

According to Lambert, this is how to share God's love with a “deeply confused culture.” It means, to rule out all sorts of sexual sins, “Pornography, polygamy, fornication, adultery, and homosexuality must be stamped out.”

In all, of the two hundred and forty (240) people interviewed, only one (1) interviewee did not chuckle altogether at the mention of sodomy. This is the retired public servant (teacher) encountered at Oka, Akoko South Local Government. Nevertheless, he condemned the practice in absolute terms.

The research found the myth of biological wirement (congenital factor) as a sodomite a ruse. Since there was no seed, sodomy would not sprout, let alone bloom or fester. To date, therefore, the work discovered that sodomy is still an anathema in the study area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is recommended that similar research be carried out in other areas of the state and the country.
- It is equally recommended that other researchers should continue to investigate if sodomitic or homosexual behaviour is something you do, rather than something that or what you are, to see if it is not the dark harbinger of chaos or sexual anarchy, as current and all available pieces of evidence point to the fact that the practice is inherently unnatural.
- The study would recommend that the over-generalisation or globalisation of the congenital concept of sodomy by the West be scrutinized continuously by Africans.
- The study recommends that African leaders, especially Nigerian political leaders, should not allow sodomy to be foisted on them. It is a cultural, not political, or economic issue.

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