

THE MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF HOMOSEXUALS (LGBT) IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Nature evolves from human nature; hence the saying not just that culture is dynamic but that culture is man writ large. Man is not just the product of nature but the outcome of nature and nurture. That is to why every human society guards its cultural space from the infiltration of foreign elements that usually leads to corruption and in some cases the destruction of what such culture holds very dear. Africans are culturally conservative and have been fighting to save their cultures from western adulterations. One of such battle ground in these clashes between African and western cultures are on gender identity. In Africa gender identity is the product of nature such that any behavior contrary to acceptable gender role is seen as abominable. Thus homosexual identities promoted by western liberal culture are increasingly challenging the conservative gender assignation in Africa. This paper applies the method of analysis to study these challenges to Africa understanding of gender and sexualities. The study discovers firstly, that there is no epistemological basis to justify African gender conservatism: and secondly, that even if there is such basis, modern information explosion has made cultural protectionism untenable. This means that the efforts but Africans to protect view of gender through draconic legislations is a lost battle because sooner or later, the forces of globalization sweeping through the world will sweep these efforts away. The study recommends Africans need to rebrand their gender conservatism and their culture to enable it compete in the global market.

Key words: Morality, culture, globalization, gender, homosexualities.

Introduction:

Africans are cultural conservatives by nature that once the issue of sexualities is mentioned “the multiple complexities associated with her presence would echo around the conference room “ (Tamale 2011). An understanding of homosexuality, requires a prior understanding of who a Nigerian is and what African sexualities look like. A Nigerian was first and foremost an African before becoming a Nigerian. Tamale (2011) again gave us a vivid description of the common feature that binds all Africans together when she said:

Any reference to the term ‘African’ in this volume is used advisedly to highlight those aspects of cultural ideology – the ethos of community, solidarity and *ubuntu* – that are widely shared among the vast majority of people within the geographical entity baptised ‘Africa’ by the colonial map-makers. More importantly, the term is used politically to call attention to some of the commonalities and shared historical legacies inscribed in cultures and sexualities within the region by forces such as colonialism, capitalism, imperialism, globalization and fundamentalism

Africans (Nigeria) sexualities must have been informed by many factors knowing full well that Africans were victims of western imperialism or where the diverge sexualities existing before the onslaught of western domination? These are some of the questions we aim to look into in this research work. How can we then define this sexuality? Phillips (2011: 285) defined it when he said that:

Sexuality can be defined by referring to a wide range of anatomical acts and physical behaviour involving one, two or more people. We can relate it to emotional expressions of love, intimacy and desire that can take an infinite variety of forms. Or it can be implicated in the reproduction of social structures and markers through rules and regulations that permit or

prohibit specific relations and/or acts. In the end, it emerges that these definitions are far from exhaustive. None of them are adequate on their own but that when considered all together they reflect the multiple ways that sexuality is manifest and impacts on our lives, and that above all; these definitions all consistently involve relations of power.

African scholars have done a lot of research work on sexualities and what they usually write is that African sexualities came to be as a result of western domination which brought with it mixture of different cultures culminating in different sexual behaviors out from which homosexualities evolve from. Tamale (2020:92) when she said that:

As is the situation elsewhere around the world, African identities and ways of being are fundamentally influenced by the core concepts of sex, gender and sexuality. These three interrelated concepts are further complicated when they intersect with ideas relating to constructs such as race, ethnicity, nationality, age and religion. Despite this reality, most of us are not consciously aware of the subtle, multidimensional and infinite ways that coloniality shapes our understandings of these aspects of our lives

Conceptual and theoretical analysis

Morality

The word morality means almost the same thing with Ethics. Etymologically, the word morality as was noted by Stumpf&Abel (2020) was derived from a Latin word “Mos” which has the same exact meaning with the Greek word “ethos”. It also has its singular meaning to be “custom” and its plural meaning to be “character”. Ethics simply is a study of we should live our lives. This live we are expected to live must be in accordance with “human nature”. Sample moral questions are as follows:

- What should I do?
- Should I tell the truth?
- What is the relationship between ethics and human nature?
- What are the criteria for determining which actions are good and which one is bad?
- Should we live as moral agents

One prominent philosopher known for his work on morality is Immanuel Kant. Kant's moral philosophy is grounded in his concept of the categorical imperative, which he believes serves as the foundation for moral actions. According to Kant: “morality is based on rationality and the inherent worth of individuals as autonomous agents capable of making moral choices”. Kant (1997) in his "Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals." discussed his moral thoughts. In this book, Kant discusses his moral theory and provides insights into his concept of morality and the categorical imperative. He argues that moral actions are those that are guided by universal principles that could be universally applied without contradiction.

Another influential philosopher who has contributed to the understanding of morality is John Stuart Mill. Mill is known for his utilitarian ethics, which emphasize the importance of maximizing overall happiness and well-being. According to Mill, moral actions are those that promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number of individuals. In "Utilitarianism," (2001) Mill presents his ethical theory and defends the

principle of utility as the foundation of morality. He argues that actions should be evaluated based on their consequences and their ability to produce the greatest amount of happiness or pleasure for the majority.

Man is a moral agent. What makes him a moral agent is his ability to deliberate on and make right decisions and who can be held accountable or responsible for such decisions. . *Moral agents* have a moral responsibility not to do anything that will cause injury or harm to another. The capacity to be a moral agency is assigned only to those who can be held responsible for their actions. Children, and adults with certain mental disabilities and who cannot be held accountable for their actions may have little or no capacity to be moral agents..If we think of ourselves as moral agents, it is also pertinent that we have an understanding who a moral agent is and how the workings of his mind is. Actions are caused and determined by agents which in turn involve other agents. Every agent has beliefs; intentions and desires that guides his every actions. These factors might be negative and also positive. In order to act freely, an agent must be an agent with the capacity to reason between what is right and what is wrong. This will in turn guide the agents to behave either in a good way or in a bad way.

Thinking of ourselves as moral agents means that we are acting out of a ‘natural order of things’ that all moral agents should act. So all agents need to obey the natural law. Example if all moral agents will respond to the moral injunction that says ‘thou shall not kill’ which is also a universal law, then they are acting as moral agents which totally differentiates them from lower animals. Everything in human nature works in accordance with these natural laws.

The question of the morality behind LGBTQ+ identities and relationships is a topic for an ongoing debate and discussion especially among African scholars. Different individuals, cultures, and religious or philosophical perspectives hold diverse views on this matter.

Here, I will outline some of the key perspectives that inform discussions about the morality of LGBTQ+ issues:

- **Moral Acceptance and Equality:** Many proponents argue that LGBTQ+ identities and relationships should be morally accepted and celebrated. They advocate for equality, respect, and non-discrimination, basing their moral stance on principles of human rights, autonomy, and the well-being of individuals. From this perspective, LGBTQ+ individuals have the right to live authentically and pursue loving and consensual relationships without judgment or moral condemnation.
- **Religious and Traditional Perspectives:** Certain religious and traditional beliefs may view LGBTQ+ identities and relationships as immoral or inconsistent with religious teachings. These perspectives often stem from interpretations of sacred texts or religious doctrines. However, it is important to recognize that interpretations can vary, and not all religious individuals or communities hold negative views towards LGBTQ+ individuals. Some religious groups and leaders have embraced more inclusive and affirming perspectives.
- **Natural Law and Biological Determinism:** Some arguments against LGBTQ+ relationships are based on the belief that they violate natural or biological norms. This perspective contends that

sexual or gender identities outside of the heterosexual and cisgender framework are unnatural or contrary to the intended purpose of human biology and reproduction

- Cultural and Societal Norms: Morality can also be influenced by cultural and societal norms. Some societies and cultures have historically held negative views towards LGBTQ+ individuals, often due to entrenched prejudices, stereotypes, or lack of understanding. However, societal attitudes and norms are not fixed and can evolve over time, leading to increased acceptance and moral recognition of LGBTQ+ identities and relationships
- Personal Conscience and Moral Autonomy: Individual moral perspectives play a significant role in shaping one's view on the morality of LGBTQ+ issues. Some individuals form their moral judgments based on personal conscience, empathy, and the belief in the importance of respecting the autonomy and happiness of individuals. They argue that as long as relationships are consensual, based on love and respect, and do not cause harm, they should be considered morally acceptable.

It is important to note that the moral perspectives outlined here are not exhaustive, and there are additional viewpoints that exist within different cultures, religions, and philosophical traditions. The understanding and evaluation of the morality behind LGBTQ+ issues can vary significantly depending on individual beliefs, societal norms, and cultural contexts.

Culture

Okpokwasili (2022) gave a general definition of what culture is as it is related to every aspect of a people's life when she said:

It has to do with traditions, conventions, behavioral pattern etc transmitted from one generation to the other. A times people's behavior is been attributed to their culture. No wonder the Igbo people use the adage that says 'Odinana di be ndi'. Odinana in this context has to do with the peoples way of life and their beliefs which is believed to be within the peoples culture as it is been handed over to them from one generation to the other.

It is worthy to note that such values, beliefs and traditions been handed out will be what will promote the cultural heritage of the people and portray the people in good light to the outside world. Anything outside this is prohibited. Homosexuality and LGBTQ issues are not something that is akin to our culture as Africans and Nigerians as well. It is considered as something learned from diverse cultural infiltrations occasioned by the Western colonialists. We can start by giving a general opinion of how Africans view Homosexual's and LGBTQ individuals. We equally noted that Africa is a vast and culturally diverse continent with over 50 countries, each with its own unique cultural, religious, and social contexts. Therefore, it is not possible to provide a comprehensive overview of how homosexuality is perceived and experienced across the entirety of African culture. However, here are some general points to consider:

- Cultural Diversity: Africa is home to numerous ethnic groups, each with its own cultural practices, beliefs, and attitudes towards homosexuality. Views on homosexuality can vary widely, with

some cultures exhibiting more acceptance or tolerance, while others hold more conservative or traditional views. It is essential to avoid generalizations and recognize the diversity of perspectives within African culture.

Attitudes towards homosexuality and LGBTQ+ individuals vary within Nigerian society. Nigeria is a country with a diverse cultural and religious landscape, and opinions on this matter can be influenced by factors such as religion, tradition, personal beliefs, and exposure to different perspectives. It is important to note that Nigeria has a complex legal and social context regarding homosexuality.

Legally, same-sex sexual activity is criminalized in Nigeria. The Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act, enacted in 2014, prohibits same-sex marriages and any form of public display of same-sex relationships. The law imposes strict penalties, including imprisonment, for individuals involved in same-sex relationships or advocacy. These legal restrictions contribute to a challenging environment for LGBTQ+ individuals in Nigeria. In terms of societal attitudes, many Nigerians hold conservative views on homosexuality, and it is often stigmatized. Homosexuality is considered taboo and contrary to religious and cultural norms by a significant portion of the population. Traditional and religious beliefs, particularly in conservative interpretations of Islam and Christianity, often shape negative perceptions of homosexuality.

However, it is essential to note that attitudes towards homosexuality in Nigeria are not universally negative. There are individuals and organizations advocating for LGBTQ+ rights and inclusion, although they often face significant challenges and opposition. Public discourse on homosexuality in Nigeria can be highly contentious, with strong voices both in support of and against LGBTQ+ rights. It is crucial to approach this topic with sensitivity, respect for diverse perspectives, and recognition of the potential risks and discrimination faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Nigeria.

- **Influence of Colonialism:** The introduction of colonial laws, including anti-sodomy laws, by European powers has had a lasting impact on the criminalization and stigmatization of homosexuality in some African countries. These laws continue to shape the legal and social landscape surrounding LGBTQ+ issues in certain contexts.
- **Traditional Beliefs and Religions:** African cultures often have strong ties to traditional beliefs and religions, which can influence attitudes towards homosexuality. Some traditional belief systems may have historically recognized or accommodated diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, while others may have held more restrictive views. Additionally, the influence of Christianity, Islam, and other religions introduced during colonial and post-colonial periods can shape perspectives on homosexuality in Africa.
- **Stigma and Discrimination:** LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa can face significant stigma and discrimination due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. This can manifest in various forms, including social exclusion, family rejection, verbal and physical abuse, and denial of basic human rights. The fear of societal judgment and persecution often leads to the concealment of one's LGBTQ+ identity.

- **GBTQ+ Activism and Advocacy:** Despite the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, there are vibrant and resilient LGBTQ+ communities in many African countries. Activists and advocacy organizations work to promote LGBTQ+ rights, challenge discrimination, and create safe spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals. These efforts contribute to changing societal attitudes and fostering dialogue within African cultures.

It is important to approach discussions about homosexuality in African culture with sensitivity, respect, and an understanding of the diverse cultural and historical contexts at play. Recognizing the agency and lived experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals within African cultures is crucial for meaningful dialogue and progress towards greater acceptance and equality.

Sex

Okpokwasili (2022) noted that: “Sex has to do with biological components of an individual. It has to do with the biological aspect of one being a male or a female” Sexual identity refers to an individual's enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions to men, women, both genders, or neither gender. This is what could be referred to as one's “sexual identity”. Sexual identity according to American Psychological Association (APA) (2019) refers to: “an individual's self-perceived sexual orientation or sexual attraction, which may include their emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to others. It is a deeply personal and subjective aspect of a person's identity and encompasses various sexual orientations such as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, and asexual, among others”. It is an integral aspect of a person's overall identity and encompasses a range of sexual orientations, including but not limited to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual orientations.

Understanding sexual identity is important for promoting inclusivity, respect, and equal rights for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation. LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) is an acronym that represents a diverse group of individuals based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The term encompasses a range of identities, including lesbian (women attracted to women), gay (men attracted to men), bisexual (attraction to both genders), and transgender (an individual whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth). It is important to note that the acronym continues to evolve to be more inclusive, incorporating identities such as queer, questioning, intersex, and more.

An understanding of sexual identity has evolved over time, and it is recognized that sexual orientation exists on a spectrum rather than a binary categorization. It is not a choice or a result of upbringing, but an inherent aspect of an individual's being. Research suggests that sexual orientation emerges naturally and is influenced by a combination of genetic, hormonal, and environmental factors. Promoting understanding and acceptance of diverse sexual identities is crucial for fostering inclusivity, respect, and equality. It involves challenging stereotypes, biases, and discrimination based on sexual orientation. Supporting LGBTQ+ individuals in their journey of self-discovery and providing a safe and affirming environment is essential for their well-being and mental health.

Gender

Gender can be defined as a social and cultural construct that encompasses the roles, behaviors, identities, and expectations that societies assign to individuals based on their perceived sex. It is a complex and

multifaceted concept that varies across cultures and historical periods. World Health Organization(WHO) (2003) defines gender as "the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women." This definition emphasizes the socially constructed nature of gender and its variations across societies. United Nations (1995) (UN): The UN defines gender as: "the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women." They emphasize that gender is influenced by social, cultural, and historical factors and can vary across different societies and time periods. American Psychological Association (APA) (2008) defines gender as: "the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person's biological sex." They highlight that gender is a social construct and can be influenced by cultural and societal norms. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (2020) defines gender as: "the complex of social and psychological attributes that a culture considers appropriate for members of one sex (typically males or females) or the other." It acknowledges that gender is a social construct that can vary across cultures and contexts.

The relationship between gender and the LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning) community is multifaceted and interconnected. Let's explore this relationship:

- **Gender Identity within LGBTQ+:** Gender identity plays a significant role within the LGBTQ+ community. Transgender individuals, for instance, may have a gender identity that differs from the sex assigned to them at birth. They may identify as a gender different from the one typically associated with their biological sex. This aspect of gender identity is an integral part of the LGBTQ+ community, as it includes transgender individuals who may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or any other sexual orientation.
- **Intersectionality:** Gender and sexual orientation intersect in the experiences of individuals. The LGBTQ+ community encompasses people of various gender identities and sexual orientations. For example, lesbian refers to women who are attracted to other women, gay refers to men who are attracted to other men, bisexual refers to individuals who are attracted to both men and women, and transgender individuals may have diverse sexual orientations as well. Understanding and acknowledging this intersectionality is important to appreciate the diversity and complexity of the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Gender Nonconformity:** Gender nonconforming individuals challenge traditional gender norms and expectations. They may express their gender identity or presentation in ways that do not align with societal expectations based on their assigned sex. Some gender nonconforming individuals may identify as transgender, while others may identify as cisgender (their gender identity aligns with the sex assigned at birth) but still defy gender norms. The LGBTQ+ community provides support and advocacy for gender nonconforming individuals, recognizing the importance of embracing and accepting diverse expressions of gender.
- **LGBTQ+ Rights and Advocacy:** The LGBTQ+ community has been at the forefront of advocating for gender and sexual orientation rights and equality. Activism within the community has played a significant role in challenging discrimination, fighting for legal protections, and

promoting inclusivity and acceptance. Gender identity and sexual orientation are interconnected aspects of identity that are central to the struggles and achievements of the LGBTQ+ movement.

It is crucial to recognize that the relationship between gender and the LGBTQ+ community is diverse and can differ for individuals within the community. Understanding and respecting these intersections and individual experiences is essential for creating a more inclusive and supportive society.

Homosexuality

Homosexuality refers to the romantic or sexual attraction, and sometimes both, between individuals of the same sex. It is a natural and normal variation of human sexual orientation. American Psychological Association (APA) (2020) defines homosexuality as: "an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attractions to men, to women, or to both sexes." They emphasize that homosexuality is a normal and positive variation of human sexual orientation and not a mental disorder. World Health Organization (2017) (WHO): The WHO recognizes that homosexuality is not a mental disorder and states that "sexual orientation, including homosexuality, is a normal variant of human sexuality." Reference: World Health Organization. (2017). WHO removes sexual orientation from list of mental disorders. American Medical Association (2019) (AMA): The AMA supports the understanding that homosexuality is a normal and positive variation of human sexuality. They state that "homosexuality is not a mental disorder and the AMA opposes psychiatric treatment, such as reparative or conversion therapy, that is based upon the assumption that homosexuality per se is a mental disorder."

Who are the homosexuals (LGBT) in African Culture.

The LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning) community in African cultures consists of individuals who identify with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The LGBTQ+ community is made up of people who experience same-sex attractions, form same-sex relationships, or identify as a gender different from their assigned sex at birth. It is important to recognize that the LGBTQ+ community is diverse and encompasses individuals from various backgrounds, ethnicities, religions, and cultural contexts within Africa. Some key groups within the LGBTQ+ community in African cultures include:

- Lesbians: Women who are attracted romantically, emotionally, or sexually to other women.
- Gay Men: Men who are attracted romantically, emotionally, or sexually to other men.
- Bisexuals: Individuals who are attracted to both men and women.
- Transgender Individuals: People whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned to them at birth. This can include transgender men (assigned female at birth but identify as men) and transgender women (assigned male at birth but identify as women).
- Queer/Questioning Individuals: Individuals who identify outside of traditional sexual orientation or gender identity categories, or who are exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Intersex Individuals: People who are born with physical or genetic variations that do not fit typical male or female categories.

It is crucial to recognize and respect the self-identified gender and sexual orientations of individuals within African cultures and provide support and understanding for their unique experiences. The diversity

within the LGBTQ+ community in African cultures reflects the richness and complexity of human sexuality and gender identity.

Problems of Homosexuals in Nigeria.

Homosexuals faces numerous challenges and issues within African cultural contexts. It is important to approach this topic with sensitivity, recognizing the diversity of perspectives and experiences across the continent. While I can provide a general overview, it is important to note that these issues can vary significantly within different African countries and cultural communities. Here are some key challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in African culture, along with references for further exploration:

- **Legal Criminalization:** Many African countries have laws that criminalize same-sex sexual activity, often rooted in colonial-era legislation. These laws can lead to discrimination, persecution, and human rights abuses against LGBTQ+ individuals. For specific information on the legal situation in various African countries, you can refer to the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association's (ILGA) State-Sponsored Homophobia Report:
- **Social Stigma and Discrimination:** Homosexuality can be highly stigmatized in African societies due to cultural, religious, and traditional beliefs. LGBTQ+ individuals often face prejudice, rejection, and social exclusion from their families, communities, and religious institutions. This stigma can lead to psychological distress, isolation, and limited access to support networks. The report "Homophobia, Social Exclusion, and Health among Gay Men and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men in Nigeria" by the International Centre for Advocacy on Rights to Health provides insights into the social challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Nigeria:
- **Violence and Harassment:** LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa are at risk of experiencing violence, including physical assaults, sexual violence, and mob attacks. Vigilante groups and individuals may target LGBTQ+ individuals based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. This violence often goes unreported or unaddressed by authorities, perpetuating a culture of impunity. The Human Rights Watch report "We'll Show You You're a Woman" highlights the experiences of lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women in South Africa.
- **Limited Legal Protections and Advocacy:** LGBTQ+ individuals in Africa often lack legal protections against discrimination, hate crimes, and violence. Advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights can face significant challenges, including governmental repression, societal resistance, and lack of resources. Organizations like the African Human Rights Coalition and The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERS) work towards advancing LGBTQ+ rights in Africa.

It is crucial to consult a variety of sources, engage with diverse perspectives, and consider the specific context of each African country when examining the problems faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in African culture. This helps to avoid oversimplification and promotes a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals within the continent.

Recent Findings

Recent findings has suggested that homosexuality is not entirely un-African as we have been made to believe. We were made to believe that it negates our moral values as Africans. The question how can something which is akin to nature negate the stipulations of the natural law?

Some of my recent findings on the notion of homosexuality predating western imperialism is noted below;

- Tamale (2013): When the colonialists arrived on the continent during the nineteenth century in search of economic opportunities and political-religious security, they certainly shifted the shape and contours of the handprint of African sexualities – particularly its formal aspects.
- Azodo & Eke (2007) citing Murray and Roscoe “... the West is not responsible for homosexuality in Africa, for same-sex activities appear indigenous and natural to Africa, despite the lack of subcultures, public identities, roles, and social acceptance that could compare to Western gay and lesbian lives ...” (p.12)
- Yeseibo, John Ebimobowei (2009::6) also noted that :“Sexual alternatives have evolved in the presence of the evolution of history, economy, and culture, individuals engage in new sexual acts, all along latent in them, which surface as they search for their identities in the obsessive and harsh present. Homosexuality should be seen as an alternative and valid life in a contemporary African society. Labeling a person as homosexual has been used to punish people who deviate from the dominant gender rules”.

Reasons why it negates African culture

St Thomas Aquinas condemned homosexual practice on the basis of Natural law when he said that: “contrary to heterosexual intercourse, which is natural to all animals, is male homosexual union Lanre-AbassBolatito: Natural Law Theory & the Homosexuality Debate 186 which has received the special name of the unnatural vice (see Baumgarth and Regan, 1988:47). The moral implications of LGBTQ+ identities and relationships in African culture vary across different regions, countries, and cultural contexts. It is important to note that Africa is a diverse continent with a wide range of cultural, religious, and social perspectives, and generalizations should be avoided. That being said, there are some common themes and perspectives that can be observed:

- Cultural and Traditional Values: Many African cultures have deep-rooted traditional and cultural values that may place emphasis on heterosexuality, gender roles, and the importance of procreation within a heterosexual marriage. Consequently, non-heterosexual identities and relationships may be seen as deviating from these cultural norms, leading to moral concerns or societal stigma.
- Religious Beliefs: Religion plays a significant role in African societies, and religious teachings often inform moral perspectives. Some religious interpretations in Africa view same-sex relationships as immoral or sinful based on religious texts or doctrines. This can lead to moral disapproval or condemnation of LGBTQ+ identities and relationships within religious communities.
- Legal and Sociopolitical Context: Laws and political climates can greatly influence the moral landscape regarding LGBTQ+ issues. In some African countries, same-sex relationships are

criminalized, and LGBTQ+ individuals may face legal and social discrimination. This legal framework can reinforce negative moral judgments or societal stigma against LGBTQ+ individuals.

- **Intersectionality:** It is important to recognize that the moral implications of LGBTQ+ identities in African culture intersect with other aspects of identity such as race, gender, religion, and class. The experiences and challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals may be shaped by these intersecting factors, and moral perspectives can be influenced by the interaction of these identities.
- **Evolving Attitudes:** It is crucial to note that attitudes towards LGBTQ+ individuals and issues are not static. There are African individuals, communities, and organizations advocating for LGBTQ+ rights, equality, and acceptance. Over time, societal attitudes can shift, and there are ongoing conversations and debates about the moral implications of LGBTQ+ identities and relationships in African cultures.

It is essential to approach discussions about the moral implications of LGBTQ+ identities and relationships in African culture with sensitivity, cultural nuance, and an understanding of the diversity of perspectives within African societies. Respectful dialogue, education, and engagement with diverse voices are important in fostering greater understanding and empathy for LGBTQ+ individuals within African cultural contexts.

Evaluation and conclusion

Evaluating the moral implications of LGBTQ+ issues in Nigeria is a subjective matter that depends on individual beliefs, cultural norms, religious perspectives, and personal values. It is essential to approach this topic with sensitivity, recognizing that there are diverse viewpoints and opinions on LGBTQ+ rights and identities. However, it is important to note that human rights principles and global standards of equality and non-discrimination are crucial considerations when discussing the moral implications of LGBTQ+ issues.

- **Human Rights Perspective:** From a human rights perspective, there is a strong argument for the moral imperative to respect and protect the rights of all individuals, including those who identify as LGBTQ+. Human rights frameworks, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, emphasize the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and the right to privacy and self-determination. Many international human rights organizations argue that denying LGBTQ+ individuals their basic human rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and freedom from torture, is a violation of these principles.
- **Cultural and Religious Perspectives:** Nigeria, like many other countries, has cultural and religious diversity that shapes attitudes towards LGBTQ+ issues. Some cultural and religious beliefs in Nigeria view homosexuality as morally unacceptable, often based on traditional values or interpretations of religious scriptures. These perspectives may influence societal attitudes and legal frameworks. However, it is important to recognize that cultural and religious beliefs are not static, and opinions can vary within communities and over time.

- **Stigma and Discrimination:** One significant moral concern is the high levels of stigma, discrimination, and violence faced by LGBTQ+ individuals in Nigeria. Denying individuals their basic rights, subjecting them to harassment, discrimination, and violence, or promoting practices such as conversion therapy can be seen as morally problematic. These actions can lead to serious harm to individuals, both physically and psychologically.
- **Progress and Empathy:** It is worth noting that there are increasing efforts within Nigeria to promote understanding, tolerance, and acceptance of LGBTQ+ individuals. There are individuals, organizations, and allies working towards challenging discrimination, advocating for LGBTQ+ rights, and fostering empathy and respect. These efforts are grounded in the belief that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, deserve dignity, equality, and protection under the law.

In conclusion, evaluating the moral implications of LGBTQ+ issues in Nigeria is a complex matter with diverse perspectives. While cultural and religious beliefs influence attitudes, it is crucial to consider the principles of human rights, non-discrimination, and the well-being of individuals. Balancing diverse viewpoints and promoting dialogue, empathy, and understanding can help navigate this sensitive topic and work towards a more inclusive and respectful society for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

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