UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
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NEO-PENTECOSTALISM AND SAME-SEX RELATIONS IN GHANA

BY

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DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis is my own original work that I have produced after a research. Where references have been made of people’s ideas and views have been cited, acknowledgements have been given. Also, this thesis has not been presented either in whole or part to any institution.

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ABSTRACT

Same-sex relations also known as homosexuality has undoubtedly become a topical issue in recent years especially in Africa. Some scholars have argued that same-sex relations is not from Africa whiles others have also argued that it has been present in Africa since time immemorial. The Christian community has made some contribution in regard to the issue globally. The Metropolitan Community Church, Catholic Church, the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Church have given much attention to same-sex relations by documentation. Neo-Pentecostals who form part of the largest Christian community in Ghana is used for this research in order to also have a comprehensive perspective on same-sex relations from their angle.

This research is qualitative in nature. Phenomenological approach is used for this research because this approach helps to understand the meanings people ascribe to a phenomenon. Due to the sensitive nature of the research, snowball sampling technique is used. In order to have a proper perspective of the phenomenon, interviews were conducted among two dominant Neo-Pentecostal churches which were Action Chapel International and International Central Gospel Church. Pastors, leaders and members of these churches were interviewed. Christians involved in same-sex relations were also interviewed.

The findings revealed that pastors and leaders have a positive perception towards people involved in same-sex relations whiles members to a large extent have a negative perception. However, pastors, leaders and members have positive relationship with people involved in same-sex relations.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family, especially my dad, Rev. Felix Bortey, my mum Mrs. Patricia Bortey and my siblings Deborah Naa Aku Shika Bortey and Anna Bortey.
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First of all I want to thank God for the grace he bestowed upon me throughout my study period. His love, care and guidance is what has brought me this far. Without God Almighty this would not have been achieved. I am so grateful to God.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GAFCON: Global African Future Conference

LGBT: Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender

PCUG: Presbyterian Church of Ghana

PCUSA: Presbyterian Church (United States of America)
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 General Introduction

Sexuality is an integral part of an individual’s life, irrespective of race, gender, age and religion. This is because sexuality forms the biological, psychological and spiritual make up of an individual.\(^1\) It is biblically believed that, sexuality comes from God and should be revered. Sexuality affects all parts of our lives. Therefore when sexuality is mishandled it affects our joy, happiness and conscience.\(^2\) Those who are involved in same-sex relations do not easily declare their sexuality. Kailla Edger, quotes Laura Nelson by saying “out of fear of condemnation, people hide their sexuality and isolate themselves from others.”\(^3\) The church is of no exemption with regard to this situation since members of the church are part of the larger society.

Marion Soards as quoted by Willard M. Swartley, believes that scripture is the foremost authority to turn to when the issue of same-sex relations is raised within the church, because scripture is vital, discerning, trustworthy and normative.\(^4\) Within the Christian fraternity, those who argue in favor of or against same-sex relations use the scripture to buttress their arguments. According to Swartley, many gay proponents point out that Jesus and the Gospels did not speak about same-sex relations. Rather “Jesus shows mercy and acceptance to those ostracized by social conventions and

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The advocates against same-sex relations also argue that even though Jesus did not explicitly state or make mention of same-sex relations, his stance on sexuality was unambiguously related to heterosexuality. For example, Jesus said in Matthew 5:27-28 that “You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery’. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. According to Gregory M. Herek, “Homosexuality encompasses a variety of phenomena related to a same-sex sexual orientation. Although definitions of the term often focus mainly on sexual acts and attractions between persons of the same biological sex, homosexuality also refers to patterns of same-sex romantic and emotional bonding, identities and communities based on same-sex desires and relationships, and the shared culture created by communities.” Therefore a person involved in same-sex relations is someone who fits into the definition of Herek. For the purpose of this work, same-sex relations will be used interchangeably with homosexuals, lesbians and gays. This is because in some of the literature, same-sex relations are not predominantly used.

The posture individuals and groups have toward same-sex relations have been researched into greatly in the United States of America. According to Gail Mason and Mischa Barr, “it is possible to conclude that those with negative attitude towards homosexuality are more likely to be religious, politically conservative, and less well

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7 Matthew 5:27-28 (New International Version)
educated, and to have authoritarian personalities and traditional gender role beliefs.”

Those who have a positive stance toward same-sex relations tend to argue for the rights of gays by claiming that, legal rights of heterosexuals should be equal to legal rights of homosexuals on the basis of liberal morality argumentation and individual autonomy.

However, Anna Bil Jaruzelska et al noted that, culture is also a contributing factor towards same-sex relations. Within the Ghanaian context in particular, culture has been an argument raised during same-sex relations debate. It is believed that among most Ghanaians, same-sex relations is ‘foreign’ while others also contend that its presence in Ghana is before colonization. Same-sex relations undoubtedly have become a topical issue in recent times in Ghana. The issue has often been geared towards rights of gays mainly propagated by foreign development partners.

The pressure intensified during the term of former President John Evans Atta Mills who emphatically and unapologetically declared his stance against the endorsement of gay rights. The former President John Evans Atta Mills responded to the United Kingdom’s Prime Minister in November 2011, David Cameron, who threatened to cut off aids to countries that do not accept gay rights.

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12 Anna Bil Jaruzelska, Sigurd M. Nordii Oppegard, Oyvind Isachen Berntsen, and Marius Flatas, “Forms of Discrimination of LGBT People in Ghana, Uganda, Russia, and Norway” (Report, ISFiT Research Group, March 30,2017).
said he would not succumb to the pressure of legalization. He said that Cameron had the right to make statements about same-sex relations but cannot ‘force’ the culture in the United Kingdom to that of Ghana. Mills’ argument was based on Ghanaian culture. He claimed that the culture does not in any way support same-sex relations. Mills said he would “never initiate or support any attempt to legalize homosexuality in Ghana.”

After his position on the matter had been made known, subsequent pressure to legalize same-sex relations has not ceased but cultural values to a large extent continue to be a prohibition to the legalization of same-sex relations in Ghana. In November, 2017, President Nana Akufo-Addo, also made similar statements why Ghana has not legalized same-sex relations. He said that “This is a socio-cultural issue if you like.” Even though he further stated that the legalization of same-sex relations might happen one day, he emphasized on culture being a major reason for the criminalization of same-sex relations in Ghana.

Apart from the cultural factor relating to non-acceptance of same-sex relations in Ghana, religion has been appealed to when people declare their negative stance on same-sex relations. The lives of most people in Ghana are either implicitly or explicitly religiously related. According to Ghana Statistical Service, Ghana’s population is highly religious because 71.2% is Christian, 17.6% Muslim, 5.2% Traditional, and 0.8% other. Out of the 71.2% Christians, the majority are Pentecostals and Neo-Pentecostals (Charismatics) who constitute 28.3%. Therefore, it is necessary to know the position of Neo-Pentecostals on issues concerning same-

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sex relations, and to find out modalities or structures being put in place to tackle the issue. Neo-Pentecostals as used by Benno van de Toren, refers to African Pentecostalism, charismatic churches or charismatic movement. Neo-Pentecostal churches are churches whose founders are Africans. These churches emphasize the prosperity and health of their members.\(^{19}\) According to Don Fanning “Neo-Pentecostals are orthodox (biblical authority alone), evangelical (gospel by grace), reformist (desire to renew ecclesiastical structures) and ecumenical (seeking unity of experience across denominational lines including liberal Protestants, Catholics, and Protestants)”.\(^{20}\)

Even though, the church generally appears to be against same-sex relations, the Catholic Church has some documents that elaborate their position on same-sex relations. For example, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has a document on issues pertaining to same-sex relations. The document which is titled “Ministry to Persons with a Homosexual Inclination: Guidelines for Pastoral Care” has essential topics such as “Respecting human dignity”, “The place of sexuality in God’s plan”, “Homosexual Acts Cannot Fulfill the Natural Ends of Human Sexuality”, “Homosexual Inclination is Not Itself a Sin”, “Therapy for Homosexual Inclinations?”, “The Necessity for Training in Virtue”, “The Necessity of Friendship and Community”, “Growth in Holiness”, “Cultural Obstacles and Pastoral Care”.\(^{21}\)

Since the Catholic Church’s perspective and other perspectives from other churches have provided some literature on same-sex relations, it becomes a yard stick to

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comprehensively find out how Neo-Pentecostals also perceive same-sex relations.

Therefore this study wants to tease out the position of Neo-Pentecostals towards same-sex relations, what informs their position and to find out the relationship between Neo-Pentecostals and people involved in same-sex relations.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The stance of churches with regard to same-sex relations seems to be predominantly negative in Ghana. Statements have usually been issued by church leaders with regard to this position. Groups such as National Association of Charismatic and Christian Churches (Neo-Pentecostal Churches) which Action Chapel International is part of have also been against the legalization of same-sex relations in Ghana. For example, the immediate past chairman, Reverend Steve Mensah signed a statement with regard to same-sex relations. The statement showed that Neo-Pentecostals under this umbrella were against same-sex relations and the reasons for their stance were basically cultural and religious doctrines. They claimed that Ghanaian cultural values do not accept same-sex relations and religious doctrines also frown on same-sex relations. However, the Catholic Church has produced many documents to tackle same-sex relations within the church. Since Neo-Pentecostals form part of the largest Christian community in Ghana, it is appropriate to also know their stance on same-sex relations into details and have a form of documentation to buttress their stance in order to provide a Ghanaian perspective of the issue. To the best of my knowledge there is little or no literature with regard to their stance holistically. Therefore this research is out to investigate the perception and relationship Neo-Pentecostals have

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towards people in same-sex relations. It is also a grey area in terms of research. Therefore, it becomes the rationale for the study.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1. To find out how Neo-Pentecostals perceive people in same-sex relations.

2. To find out the relationship Neo-Pentecostals have towards people involved in same-sex relations.

3. To find out the perception Neo-Pentecostals involved in same-sex relations have towards the Church.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What is the perception of Neo-Pentecostals towards people in same-sex relations?

2. What is the relationship between Neo-Pentecostals and people in same-sex relations?

3. What is the perception of Neo-Pentecostals involved in same-sex relations towards the Church?

1.4 Scope of the Study

The Neo-Pentecostal (Charismatic) community in Ghana is made up of several churches. International Central Gospel Church and Action Chapel International, members of the Neo-Pentecostal (Charismatic) community are used for this research. These churches are selected for this research because they are dominant in Ghana. These churches seem to be scattered in urban areas. Therefore, they fairly represent
the Neo-Pentecostals (Charismatic) community in Ghana. Pastors, leaders and members of the churches were used for this research. People involved in same-sex relations were actively involved.

1.5 Conceptual Framework

Acceptance and Positive Relationship Encourage Better Religious Life

Irrespective of the status of an individual, accepting him or her is the foundation that fosters influence in the person’s life be it negative or positive. When somebody is accepted in the church irrespective of his or her sexual inclination, it can trigger a change in the person’s life. Even if the person is going contrary to the teachings of the church, accepting the person and showing the person love becomes an important stage for healing or transformation. Even though, same-sex related acts are not encouraged in the Catholic Church, those with same-sex inclinations are not rejected. Therefore people with same-sex inclinations in the Catholic Church are allowed to practice their religion without hindrance and this enables the church to have some form of influence in their lives. If these people were rejected by the Catholic Church, influence in their lives would have been difficult.24 It is upon this framework that the researcher is using to guide the study.

1.6 Research Methodology/ Data Collection

In this research, qualitative method was employed since it explores experiences, behavior and attitudes of people.25 Qualitative research enables the researcher to understand the perspective of persons towards issues. It enables the researcher to get

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an in-depth meaning and appreciation of how people think about a phenomenon.\footnote{Creswell, \textit{Research Design}, 4.} According to G. E Gorman and Peter Clayton, qualitative approach shows ‘social construction of reality.’\footnote{G. E Gorman and Peter Clayton, \textit{Qualitative Research for the Information Professional: A Practical Handbook}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (London: Facet Publishing, 2005), 24-28.} During a qualitative research, questions pertaining to the phenomenon are enquired. Data is usually gathered from a natural setting (participants ‘setting). According to John W. Creswell, themes emerge during the collection of data. They emerge from a specific to a generic approach which provides an inductive explanation. This enables the researcher to interpret and make meanings of the data.\footnote{Creswell, \textit{Research Design}, 4.} Therefore the research can only generate meaning from the data gathered from the field.\footnote{Creswell, \textit{Research Design}, 9.} Michael Quinn Patton also emphasizes on field work.\footnote{Michael Quinn Patton, \textit{Qualitative Research and Evaluative Methods}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 4.} According to Patton, fieldwork is an integral part of qualitative research since analysis depends on fieldwork.\footnote{Patton, \textit{Qualitative Research and Evaluative Methods}, 4.} According to Pamela Maykut and Richard Morehouse, qualitative research primarily revolves around human lives. Therefore the human being becomes the focal instrument within the research.\footnote{Pamela Maykut and Richard Morehouse, \textit{Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide} (London : Farmer Press, 1994), 27.}

Phenomenological approach was the strategy for data collection.\footnote{Creswell, \textit{Research Design}, 13.} The phenomenological approach is used for this research since this approach has more to do with the study of individuals rather than processes and events.\footnote{Creswell, \textit{Research Design}, 177.} According to Van Manen as quoted by Paton, “phenomenology asks for the very nature of a phenomenon, for that which makes a some-‘thing’ what it is- and without which it

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\cite{Creswell, \textit{Research Design}, 177.} \\
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could not be what it is.” 35 Therefore the phenomenological approach best suits this research since the researcher wants to gain in depth meanings individuals ascribe to same-sex relations.

The snowball sampling technique was used. According to Norman K. Denzin, the snowball sampling technique is also known as interactive sampling.36 Patton also shows that it is also known as chain sampling.37 According to Alison Jane Pickard, the technique has two dimensions. The first (original) has to do with contacting key informants who will provide clues or directions that will enable the researcher to gather more rich information. The second dimension is concerned with contacting an informant who will enable the researcher to probe into further areas during the research. 38 The difference is that the first which is also the original points the researcher to key informants but the second points the researcher to just one or an initial informant. Patton explains the two dimensions by simply showing that the snowball sampling is the kind of sampling that enables the researcher to start with a few who are knowledgeable in the area an individual wants to research into and from this few, more are recommended.39 In other words, one respondent will lead to another respondent then the other respondent will lead to the next respondent. The snowball sampling technique was used for this research because of the sensitive nature of the topic. Therefore the main way to gather data was to rely on one person leading the researcher to another person.

35 Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluative Methods*, 104.
37 Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluative Methods*, 237.
39 Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluative Methods*, 237.
One hundred respondents were interviewed. Seventy Neo-Pentecostals members from Action Chapel International and International Central Gospel Church out of which twenty were involved in same-sex relations and fifty were not involved in same-sex relations, twenty Neo-Pentecostal leaders from Action Chapel International and International Central Gospel Church and ten Neo-Pentecostal pastors from Action Chapel International and International Central Gospel Church were also interviewed. The secondary sources were books, journals and internet sources.

1.7 Literature Review

John Boswell as quoted by Alfred D. Dai-Kosi et al claims that the animosity towards same-sex relations is not recent, since it has been there since the twelfth century and the contention of that time was basically an issue of creation. The argument was that those engaged in same-sex relations and those who engaged in sexual acts that are not procreative in nature are hindering the creation of other human beings.\textsuperscript{40} Medically, it was found out in 1997 that, HIV/AIDS was first detected among people involved in same-sex relations and this contributed to the negative perception people had about the phenomenon.\textsuperscript{41} The debate about same-sex relations has its root founded on religion, legality, morality and medicine.\textsuperscript{42} Despite the intensity of the debate in whatever shape or form it takes\textsuperscript{43}, the religious debate is the


\textsuperscript{41} Boss, Analyzing, 372.

\textsuperscript{42} Dai-Kosi et al, “Ghanaian Perspectives”, 2.

most intense. The religious debate is most intense because, people argue, based on experience, sacred texts, established tradition and human reason.

Outside Africa, homosexuality has been largely tolerated. Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, Spain, Singapore and Australia are examples of countries that have legalized same-sex marriages. Churches outside Africa have also shown diverse contributions towards the phenomenon. Laura L. Olson and Wendy Cadge, demonstrated in their paper that ‘denominational affiliation, gender and racial background, and geographic region’ may affect the clergy in same-sex related discussions. These factors will either make the clergy comment or abstain from commenting on same-sex relations. Paul A. Djupe et al also pointed out that, even though some clergy will like to comment on same-sex relations, they ‘feared’ that their stance will bring division among their members. Olson and Cadge, also put emphasis on the clergy who claimed that the church will be affected negatively when they comment on issues relating to same-sex relations but added that the clergy who commented on same-sex relations seem more tolerant to gays. Olson and Cadge appear not to have shown the steps taken to address the issue by the clergy who either comment or not in this paper. Meanwhile, Djupe et al also focused on official statements about same-sex relations in their paper. The attention of the paper was centered on whether the clergy and members of Evangelical Lutheran Church in

45 Sicker ed, Homosexuality and Religion, 10.
46 Boss, Analyzing, 372.
50 Olson and Cadge, “Talking about Homosexuality”, 165.
America and Episcopal Church should make official statements with regards to same-sex relations. Whether the churches make pronouncements on their stance officially or not the bigger issue is how the members who are involved in same-sex relations will be related with was not delved into in the paper.

Cadge et al, pointed out the difference between the Catholic Church and Episcopal Church in America with regard to same-sex relations. They demonstrated in their paper that, the Catholic Church does not condone same-sex relations whereas the Episcopal Church does. Even though the Catholic Church does not condone same-sex relations, some Catholic priests portrayed that all are welcomed to their parishes. Some Catholic priests do not just welcome, but go a step further to handle the phenomenon. They do this by providing counseling, informal education, preaching and meetings held in order to deliberate on the issue. Despite these pragmatic measures put in place by some Catholic priests, Cadge et al do not really expound on the results of these measures that have been put in place. Despite this limitation, it is quite evidential that some Catholic priests have put measures in place to tackle the issue. Unfortunately, it seems there is no explicitly known modality being put or that have been put in place to holistically handle same-sex relations in Africa.

In connection with gay rights, churches especially the clergy in Belize, have contributed their quota in the discussions. Gay rights activists in Britain in 2011, decided to decriminalize same-sex relations in about 80 countries, including

commonwealth countries such as Uganda, Kenya, Cameroon and Ghana. The group known as Human Dignity Trust (HDT) began a test case in Belize. Evangelical, Anglican and Catholic churches in Belize were against the decriminalization of same-sex relations. These churches were expected to state and show proof of the ‘remedy’ they have in place for same-sex relations. In this particular study, the clergy of these churches were united against the legalization of same-sex relations but it appears they were silent on the ‘remedy’ they have in place. The discussion from the clergy on same-sex relations had much emphasis on the maintenance of the criminalization of same-sex relations. However, the researcher believes that the discussion should go beyond legality. Whether it is criminalized or decriminalized the church has a moral duty in the provision of guidance. The modalities that will tackle the phenomenon in its general sense should be part of the churches’ focus.

In Zambia, Andriaan Van Klinken shows that church leaders and church organizations especially Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia and Council of Churches in Zambia are not prepared to recognize human rights of sexual minorities. However, the Catholic Church in Zambia under the Zambian Episcopal Conference (ZEC) representing the Catholic Bishops stated their position in a religious manner. They believed that the person involved in same-sex relation must not suffer abuse as a ‘person’ even though his or her acts are ‘sinful’.

In connection with the Catholic Church, Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya, Archbishop Charles Daniel Balvo in 2013, pointed out that, even though it is explicitly clear that the church does not promote same-sex related acts, it

does not compromise on people’s dignity.\textsuperscript{56} Church leaders who have stated their stance against same-sex relations have admonished that people in such relations must be regarded as human beings irrespective of their sexual inclination.\textsuperscript{57} Celso Perez argues that the condemnation of acts such as same-sex related acts by the church on moral grounds must not be synonymous to violence and discrimination meted out to the people ‘guilty’.\textsuperscript{58} Klinken’s analysis of the Zambian situation is that same-sex relations are unacceptable within the Christian fraternity. He further points out that, Christians have gone wrong on the argument of same-sex relations. The church should love the person involved in same-sex relations in order to bring transformation rather than pre-judgment.\textsuperscript{59}

In Africa, there are stances people have taken with regard to same-sex relations as seen for example in Zambia in the previous paragraph. Claudia Böhme shows that same-sex relations are ‘forbidden’ in Tanzania.\textsuperscript{60} In her research, it seems the emphasis of the discussion in connection to same-sex relations, regards it as forbidden and less heard about it in relation to other areas such as steps being put in place to tackle the phenomenon. In Uganda, it is not just ‘forbidden’ as we see in Tanzania. Measures have actually been put in place to define ‘the forbidden’. Aryn Baker demonstrated that gays were left alone until 2009. Baker further claims that, conservative pastors in Uganda with their allies from America (Evangelicals) were the cause of the homophobic attitudes towards gays in Uganda. For example they organized a seminar themed; ‘Exposing the Homosexual’s Agenda’. In effect, gays

\textsuperscript{56} Celso Perez, “Zero Tolerance: Why Catholics Must Condemn Anti-Gay Violence”, \textit{America Press Inc}, December 2014, 16.
\textsuperscript{57} Perez, “Zero Tolerance”, 17.
\textsuperscript{58} Perez, “Zero Tolerance”, 18.
\textsuperscript{59} Klinken, “Nationalism”, 272.
\textsuperscript{60} Claudia Böhme, “Showing the Unshowable: The Negotiation of Homosexuality through Video Films in Tanzania”, \textit{Africa Today} 61, no.4 (2015): 63-82.
who were once allowed to go about their normal duties were now afraid to do so because the church led a ‘crusade’ against gays; calling for the death penalty to be meted out to Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) people. In order to substantiate this argument, Baker quotes the Catholic priest, the Minister of Ethics and Integrity, Simon Lokodo, “You had to catch someone in the act, which was very difficult. We had to improve the penal code to address recruitment, promotion and exhibition of homosexuality.”61 A similar situation occurred in Cameroon where church leaders such as Archbishop Samuel Kleda has not only condemned the act but joined the legality of the matter by supporting death penalty of people involved in same-sex relations.62 In the Ugandan case, we see the clergy playing a dual role as a clergy and a minister. His utterances will instill fear in people involved in same-sex relations. This means that a person involved in same-sex relations in this country cannot open up to people about his or her sexual identity. What happens to people who will want help out of those with homosexual orientation? Within this research of Baker, hostility is not only towards the phenomenon but also towards the person.

Christian leaders in Ghana have been part of the fight against same-sex relations to a large extent. In 2011, Christian leaders went further to indicate that they will be against any other group such as politicians who will defend same-sex relations. 63 In this context, it appears the attack on politicians is because of the legislative right they have in passing laws. Therefore to be against politicians who support same-sex relations is to prevent laws supporting same-sex relations from being passed. In June

2015, the Catholic Bishops Conference held in Ghana addressed the issue of same-sex relations. Their stance on the issue was that procreation cannot take place in the midst of same-sex relations. Therefore same-sex relations prevent the purpose and the intent of God towards creation from manifesting.\(^6^4\) However, the Catholic Bishops were silent on how the church will take pragmatic steps to address the phenomenon in Ghana. Their concern was on the effects of the phenomenon but the phenomenon when addressed holistically will be the starting point to address the consequences of the phenomenon. In the latter part of 2016, Prophet Akoa Isaac, founder and leader of the Church of Prosperity claimed that disasters will continue in the world of tolerance towards same-sex relations. He further cautioned during a telephone interview that God had revealed to him to tell people to desist from the practice.\(^6^5\) In his interview, the prophet did not make mention of how the church should handle those who are already involved and the steps the churches are taking to help them prevent same-sex related practices. Mister Lawrence Senyo, President of Ashanti Region Christian Council of Ghana Youth Ministry, encouraged Christian youth to be vigilant by venturing into politics. He advocated that venturing into politics will hinder gays from ruling the nation. As a result, they will not have the capacity to enact pro-gay laws.\(^6^6\)

The above president’s focus was how to prevent gays from having authority. However, he did not highlight not even briefly the measures the church is also taking to tackle the issue within the church. Preventing gays from political positions might work, but their presence in the society will still be eminent. They must not merely be neglected by the church as if people involved in same-sex relations will not exist in the nation. Moreover, Christian groups such as National Association of Charismatic

\(^6^6\) “Gays will rule Ghana one day, if Christians Relax”, \textit{Ghanaian Chronicle}, July 6, 2017.
and Christian Churches and the Christian Council of Ghana have used various platforms to issue statements of non-conformity to same-sex relations in Ghana.\textsuperscript{67}

Even though most of the literatures on the topic under discussion have discussed reasons for which most Christians, especially in Africa, object to same-sex relations, there is little on the steps the church takes in trying to assist or help those caught in the phenomenon. Condemnation of the act is not enough to weed it out neither from the society nor from the church, to be specific. In addition to the condemnation, there must be practical and concrete steps to help those who have found themselves in this practice to get back on track as expected, even though there is a perceived gradual acceptance of the phenomenon as normal.

\subsection*{1.8 Structure of the Work}

The research is divided into five chapters. The first chapter gives the background of the work; statement of the problem, objectives of the study, guiding research question, research questions, scope of the study, conceptual framework, research methodology, literature review, structure of the work and significance of the study. The second chapter discusses \textit{The Concept of Same-Sex Relations in Africa} which shows some evidence of same-sex relations in Africa and also discusses evidence to show that same-sex relations is not part of African culture. The third chapter is titled \textit{International Purview of Some Selected Churches on Same-Sex Relations} which discusses what some selected churches have done in connection to same-sex relations. The fourth chapter discusses \textit{Neo-Pentecostalism and Same-Sex Relations} and chapter five summarizes all chapters, discusses findings and recommendations.

\textsuperscript{67} Bil Jaruzelska \textit{et al}, “Forms of Discrimination”, 19.
1.9 Significance of the Study

First of all, this research will be contributing to existing knowledge. Some works have been done by scholars in relation to same-sex relations. Various perceptions have been discussed in relation to the topic and the discourse is still on going. This research is intended to help the researcher contribute his quota to the debate within the religious fraternity in a scholarly manner. This will foster other researchers the opportunity to look at pertinent issues that will not be the focus of this research in order to enlighten readers within and outside academia.

Secondly, the result of the study is to help the researcher to have a better understanding of the issues at stake in dealing with the topic. The different perspectives of scholars as well as what the researcher finds in the field would enable the researcher to be well informed about the topic which will broaden the researchers horizon and also help the researcher to have an informed position on the issues at stake.

Finally, the research topic will be of relevance to churches especially the churches under study and the society in general since issues are constantly raised about the topic. This will aid in discussions at the societal level and prepare the society of how to handle issue more holistically. This will aid in discussions made about the topic. People will not only be abreast with their position on the topic but also know the other side of the topic under discussion in this paper.
CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF SAME-SEX RELATIONS IN AFRICA

2.0 Introduction

Same-sex relations have been perceived to be a ‘foreign’ issue in Africa (Ghana inclusive).68 However, there are evidences to show that same-sex relations have been present in Africa. There is a claim of same-sex relations being a ‘foreign element’ in Africa despite evidence of ‘local’ forms of same-sex relations in Africa.69 Cletus N. Chukwu shows that “homosexuals must have existed in traditional Africa [and] that they are still among us”.70 Busangokwakhe Dlamini infer from Geoffrey Parrinder and Arlene Swidler and claims that homosexuality or same-sex relations have been in Africa and it is not foreign as it has been argued often.71 Dlamini further deduces from Swidler in regard to the argument raised. According to Swindler, few studies on African sexuality paid attention to heterosexual lifestyles which does not mean there were no same-sex relations in Africa. This inference from Swidler is observed:

Given the predominantly oral character of African traditional religions and the tendency to privacy in sexual matters that is characteristic of most societies, there has been very little opportunity for anthropologists or other observers to acquire a systematic understanding of African attitude about homosexuality.72

Despite the difficulty of gathering evidence in relation to same-sex relations in Africa, Dlamini mentions scholars who have provided data in this regard and they are Junod,

Schapera, Parrinder, Swidler, Lee and Teela. Some these scholars claimed that some same-sex relations were spiritually motivated. Examples from some African countries are discussed subsequently in this chapter.\textsuperscript{73}

This chapter discusses some evidence of same-sex relations from some countries within the African continent. Some of these countries are Lesotho, South Africa, Sudan, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Congo, Rwanda, Angola, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana. However, it must be noted that some evidence of same-sex relations within some African countries such as Nigeria and Ghana are metaphorical in nature since they do not involve erotic or romantic relationship. Despite the evidence from various countries within the continent, other scholars also show evidence to purport that same-sex relations are not part of the African. They argue based on the communal way of living in Africa and procreation. These reasons given by some scholars are also discussed in this chapter. This brings out a holistic approach in discussing same-sex relations within the African context.

\subsection*{2.1 Lesotho}

Dlamini shows that even though same-sex relations are ‘unpopular’ as having presence in Africa it does not denote its absence within Africa. There are examples from South Africa to substantiate his argument. Dlamini supports this assertion by Kendall’s work on lesbian expression which is shown below:

\begin{quote}
I have observed Basotho women-domestic workers, university students and secretaries (but not university lecturers)-kissing each other on the mouth with great tenderness, exploring each other’s mouths with tongues, and for periods of time in excess of 60 seconds, as a ‘normal’ even daily expression of affection. The longest kisses usually take place out of the view of men and children, so I presume that Basotho women are aware of the eroticism of these kisses and are protective of their
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{73} Dlamini, “African Context”, 129.
intimacy, yet never have I heard any Mosotho woman describe these encounters as ‘sexual’. 74

This evidence from Lesotho purports that same-sex relations has presence in Africa. However, Kendall purports that if the kisses are long men and children are not allowed to see. In other words, this might not be the norm of the society because to hide an act from men and children shows how discrete some of these same-sex relations were. It seems that this was not an indigenous lifestyle.

2.2 South Africa

In South Africa, there is some evidence of same-sex relations. Some of the evidence are linked to traditional healers, witchcraft or wizardry. Others are linked to mining. These examples or evidences from South Africa are to further substantiate the presence of same-sex relations within the African continent. This is discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

Isabel A. Phiri shows some evidence of same-sex relations among traditional healers. Phiri researched into female sangomas in South Africa. In her research, she found out that some of the female sangomas (traditional healers) were engaged in same-sex relations. 75 According to Klinken and Gunda, Phiri explains this with two reasons: “The sangomas would engage in same-sex relations, as these (different from heterosexual practices) do not receive constant ritual cleansing, and because these relations would provide the sangomas with a way to deal with the trauma of sexual abuse.”

75 Isabel A. Phiri, Dealing with the Trauma of Sexual Abuse: A Gender-Based Analysis of the Testimonies of Female Traditional Healers in Kwa-Zulu Natal (New York: Orbis, 2006), 126.
abuse in heterosexual relationships”. Phiri claimed that this is a classic example to show that same-sex relations in Africa have no import from Western culture.  

In connection with the *sangoma* context, Lindiwe P. Mkasi delves deeper. According to Mkasi, her dissertation brought to light that, in traditional healing, spirit possession of an individual determines to a large extent the behavior of the individual. Mkasi illustrated this in five ways and interpreted it within western concept. This is shown below:

- A female spirit in a female sangoma.
- A male and a female spirit in a female.
- A male spirit in a female sangoma.
- An authoritative male spirit in a female sangoma.
- A female spirit in a male sangoma.
- Lesbian- A female sangoma who is possessed by a female spirit.
- Bisexual- A female sangoma who is possessed by a female spirit and a male spirit.
- Transgender- A female sangoma who is possessed by a male (authoritative) spirit.

Mkasi asserts that ancestors are very important in traditional societies due to the reprimanding and protective powers they possess. Mkasi infers from Nkabinde and concludes that “when an authoritative male spirit possess a female *sangoma* and that *sangoma* assumes a male position- she is addressed as *uBaba* (father), not only by *iznagoma* (plural form of *sangoma*) but also by the members of the community”. This name *uBaba* is only given to her during divination. Outside this moment (traditional healing), she is called a neutral name ‘*Makhosi*’. Furthermore,

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this *sangoma* might decide not to marry because of the challenges she might go through in relationships because of the male ancestor.

Mkasi infers from Morgan and Reid who claim that this person “may choose a celibate life, choose same-sex partners, or an ‘ancestral wife’, which may be an instruction from the ancestors. According to Mkasi, some female *izangoma* were involved in same-sex relationships.  

This example from the South African context depicts that some people may involve in same-sex relations due to the indigenous religion they belonged to. From the above, it is also shown that during rituals, a female can assume a male responsibility or position and the name is changed right after the ritual period to a neutral name. In effect masculinity is ascribed to a female temporarily because of specific period in time and Mkasi shows that everyone in the community obliges to the name given to the female until that period is over. Therefore it shows an indigenous form of same-sex relations.

Dlamini also makes similar assertions about traditional healers in South Africa. However, he was not specific about these traditional healers as compared to that of Mkasi but it will be of importance to cite him in this context. With regard to traditional healers, Dlamini observed that:

> As I learned in my communications with traditional healers, men who are traditional healers and mediums also attest to the claim that they can only be successful in their practice when they have no contact with women. Although there is no clear indication that all these men only had sexual relations with men, it is clear that they do not have sexual relations with women.  

Furthermore, evidence of same-sex relations is shown within South Africa. It is shown amongst effeminate men. According to Donald L. Donham as quoted by Thabo Msibi, these effeminate men were identified as skesanas. “Skesanas are boys who like to be penetrated during sexual intercourse.” They also wore dresses like that of women. Donham expressed that some men attributed the strength of their manhood in connection to sleeping with skesanas because that showed what he calls being a ‘real man’. This is because men who sleep with skesanas assume they are sleeping with women since their outward appearance depicted some sort of womanhood.81

The last but not the least evidence from the South African context discusses same-sex relations among miners in South Africa. Msibi cites Marc Epprecht and T. Dunbar Moodie in connection with this example. It was a senior-junior relationship among miners. Juniors were to succumb to seniors in order to receive presents from the senior miners. Sometimes they gave all they earned to the junior miners in order to win favor from them. Favor in this context means agreement to a same-sex relationship. This kind of same-sex relations occurred because senior miners as well as junior miners were not allowed to bring their wives to the mines.82 Arlene Swidler also makes similar assertions. She asserts that since they were not allowed to bring their wives into the mines, the senior miners took the new miners as wives. The senior miners ‘schooled’ the new miners on the activities of the mine and provided security for the new miners. The new miners had to ‘pay’ for these services offered to them by the senior miners. They ‘paid’ by preparing meals and having sexual relations with the senior miners. It must be noted that some of the ‘husband and wife’ relationship

82 Msibi, “Lies”, 64.
were initiated with force. It is assumed that this force was from the senior miner because it is the senior miner who ‘marries’ the junior miner. As Msibi supports Epprecht and Moodie in the discussion, the junior miner is enticed just to accept to be a ‘wife’ so if the enticement fails then force in a way is applied. However, it must be noted that this force did not cut across generally among the junior miners because some accepted in order to keep the money and marry women later after they had left the mine.

The senior miner had to pay bride price to the junior miner he wanted to marry according to Junod whom Dlamini infers this from. The bride price is known as *libolo*. The juniors who received the *libolo* also saved the *libolo* in order to marry women in the rural areas. Therefore the marriage within the mines was not a long term marriage. This shows that these marriages were indeed based on circumstances because if the senior miners were allowed to bring their wives into the mine, they might not have engaged in same-sex relations. In addition, the nature of sex within the mine is not oral or anal. The senior would place his genital within the thigh of the junior in order to produce friction that led to orgasm and this is called *ukusoma* in isiZulu. This act occurred among bachelors in the rural areas. Junod purports that this sexual style was practiced by bachelors who did not want to impregnate girls during courtship in the rural areas.

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2.3 Angola

Another example of same-sex relations is from Angola. This example is not as detailed as compared to some of the examples discussed earlier, but it still connotes some idea of same-sex relations in Africa which is of essence to this chapter. In Angola, Pierre de Jarric was quoted by Stephen O. Murray and show instances of homosexual relationship and practices. Jarric asserts that Portuguese priests Gaspar Azevedo and Antonius Sequerius encountered many men in Luanda called chibados who were not ashamed to dress, sit and speak like women. These men could also marry each other and their marriages were esteemed.86

Still within Angola, Cardonegawrote shows evidence of same-sex relations. Murray purports this evidence by translation.

Sodomy is rampant among the people of Angola. They pursue their impudent and filthy practices dressed as women. Their own [languages] name for those who have carnal relations with each other [of the same sex] is quimbanda. Some quimbandas are powerful wizards, who are much esteemed by most Angolans.87

It seems that the language used by the scholars within the Angolan seem strong. They talk about a people with derogatory terms. For example, using words such as ‘impudent and filthy practices’. There is a possibility of same-sex relations but how it is reported also matters.

2.4 Malawi

Another country in Southern part of Africa worth discussing is Malawi. Epprecht discusses evidence of same-sex relations. Epprecht purports that same-sex relations

were present in Malawi. This kind of same-sex relation also happened in the mine compounds as discussed earlier. However, this is quite different in nature. Malawian migrants worked in Zimbabwean mines. In these mines, they had same-sex relations in order to be protected. The protection came about as semen was released. The semen released was used for *muthi*. 88 According to Msibi, “*muthi* is a term used in Southern Africa to refer to traditional medicine.” 89 It is purported that this worked for people in various facets of life. 90 The difference between same-sex relations in the mines in South Africa and the ones in Zimbabwe where Malawians are purported to have engaged in same-sex relations is that, the South African mines were basically sexual satisfaction since junior miners performed ‘wife’ roles but the Malawians were not too interested in sexual satisfaction even though they ejaculated. The end was what mattered to them not the means. The end in this context is that power or protection. Therefore the sexual activity was not the main agenda or focus, what came out of the activity was the agenda. One might argue that, they could have masturbated in order to produce semen. Nevertheless, it must be noted that, the potency of the traditional medicine was based on the ability to produce semen by involving in a same-sex relation. This means that any other way of producing the semen will not yield the needed results for the *muthi* to be effective.

### 2.5 Uganda

Within the Ugandan context, Msibi infers from Murray and Roscoe and claims that there are evidences to show that there is history of same-sex relations. An example is from Nilotico Lango a farming community. According to the inference made by Msibi, men could marry men. Other communities where same-sex relations existed

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89 Msibi, “Lies”, 73.
90 Epprecht, “Dissident”, 22.
according to inference made by Mbisi are the Bahima, the Banyo, and the Baganda.\textsuperscript{91}

For example in Baganda, Murray asserts that, King Mwanga engaged in same-sex relations. The king had same-sex relations with his male servants.\textsuperscript{92}

2.6 Rwanda

In the Old Kingdom of Rwanda, boys had to be trained as warriors. Murray cites Maquet who reported that among the Hutu and Tutsi youth, same-sex relations involving predominantly males was common. These youth were taught at the court. Also, they were to provide sexual services to visitors that came to the court.\textsuperscript{93}

Johnson also shows similar evidence and this is cited by Murray below:

Mutabaruka, a 19 year-old [Tutsi] college student told me that, traditionally, in his tribe there was an extended period during which boys lived apart from the rest of the village while they are training to be warriors, during which every emotional, and often sexual, relationships were struck up. Sometimes these relationships lasted beyond adolescence into adulthood, he told me”.\textsuperscript{94} In this kind of same-sex relations, it is seen that training of younger ones initiated the relation. This shows that a youth specifically a male born into a society of this nature could not escape himself from indulging in same-sex relations. Unless he does not want to be taught or trained which seems impossible due to the nature of the training. This is because there was separation in order for the training to be done.

2.7 Sudan

With the Sudan context, a respondent from an interview conducted by MacDemorts gives as a vivid account of what occurred in Sudan. Reporting it verbatim gives a

\textsuperscript{91} Msibi, “Lies”, 66.
better idea of an evidence of what occurred. The account of the interaction is shown below:

To tell me a story which completely contradicted all I had thought and learnt so far about Nuer homosexual relations. It had always been stressed by the tribesmen that homosexuality between men was impossible, for if discovered among them it could be punishable by death. Doereding now told me about a crazy man he had once known who lived near the Nasir in the Sudan and who frequently dressed as a woman. This was different Doereding explained, because ‘the man had actually become a woman’; the Prophet of Deng had been consulted and had agreed to his change of status. The prophet had decided to call on the spirits and after consultation had declared that indeed the man was a woman. Therefore he could dress in women’s clothes and behave as a woman. From that time onward it was agreed that ‘he’ should be called ‘she’, and ‘she’ was allowed to marry a husband. All very confusing, and so totally against what the Nuer had been telling me, that I questioned Doereding carefully, but he failed to produce further explanation.  

Murray infers from Edward Evans-Pritchard further evidence from Sudan. This is the account:

Homosexuality is indigenous. Azande do not regard it as at all improper, indeed as very sensible for a man to sleep with boys when women are not available or are taboo…In the past, this was a regular practice at court. Some princes may even have preferred boys to women, when both were available. This is not a question I can enter into further here beyond saying I was told that some princes sleep with boys before consulting poison oracles, women being then taboo, and also they sometimes do so on other occasions, just because they like them.

Further accounts from Edward Evans-Pritchard shows that same-sex relations had presence in Sudan. This account is shown below:

All Azande I have known well enough to discuss this matter have asserted the female homosexuality was practised in polygamous homes in the past and still (1930) is sometimes…One of the many wives of a prince of an important commoner in the past might not have shared her husband’s bed for a month or two, where some of the dozens, even hundreds, of wives of

a king must have been almost totally deprived of the sex life normal in smaller homes. Adulterous intercourse was very difficult for a wife in such large polygamous families, for the wives were kept in seclusion and carefully watched... Wives would cut a sweet potato or manioc root in the shape of the male organ, or use a banana for the purpose. Two of them would shut themselves in a hut and one would lie on the bed and play the female role while the other, with the artificial organ tied around her stomach, played the male role. Then they reversed the roles.\footnote{Murray, “Homosexuality in ‘Traditional’ Sub-Saharan African and Contemporary South Africa”. accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.semgai.free.fr/}

Despite the practices of these women, the men were against it. Therefore women caught were either killed or sacked from the households of the men.\footnote{Murray, “Homosexuality in ‘Traditional’ Sub-Saharan African and Contemporary South Africa”. accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.semgai.free.fr/} This suggests that the women engaged themselves because of the perceived neglect of their sexual needs. Since a woman might not have had sexual relations with husband for many days, they found an alternative way to satisfy their sexual needs. Therefore, this suggests that if these women were having sexual intercourse regularly with their husbands, this ‘situational homosexuality’ might not have occurred.

2.8 Ethiopia

There are various examples from Ethiopia as discussed in this section. In Ethiopia, there have been records of same-sex relations among Cushitic-Speaking Qemat (Kemat).\footnote{Murray, “Homosexuality in ‘Traditional’ Sub-Saharan African and Contemporary South Africa”. accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.semgai.free.fr/} Murray cites a research conducted by Christopher R. Hallpike. A summary of this research conducted showed that in Ethiopia, Konso men were engaged in same-sex relations. There were beliefs among the Konso men that sexual relations with women can weaken men. For example one Konso man said to Hallipike that ‘some girls’ vaginas are so strong that they snap off a man’s penis.’\footnote{Murray, “Homosexuality in ‘Traditional’ Sub-Saharan African and Contemporary South Africa”. accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.semgai.free.fr/} Another
example from Ethiopia noted by Murray is among the Maale of Southern Ethiopia. These men were supposedly dressed like females, performed ‘female tasks’ and had sexual relations with other men. These men were called *ashtime*. According to Donald L. Donham whom Murray cited, *ashtime* was considered as ‘abnormal’ in 1975. The reason or the motivations that led to society refuting what they used to practice was not known.\(^{101}\) Traditionally, no woman of childbearing age could also enter the king’s compound. Therefore *ashtime* were given security by the kings.\(^{102}\)

### 2.9 Nigeria

There is some evidence of same-sex relations among some ethnic groups of Nigeria. One of such ethnic groups is Igbo. According to Mary-Jane Rubenstein as cited by Msibi, women of Igbo enjoyed a high level of authority before colonialism.\(^{103}\) Ifi Amadiume also shows that there was female to female marriage among the people of Igbo but purported that such marriages did not involve sexual affairs.\(^{104}\) Also in Nigeria, Kwame Essien and Saheed Aderinto cited Aderinto who claimed that Yoruba women used to help their husbands look for new wives. They sometimes helped their husbands to perform traditional duties. In other words, the women performed pre-marital duties such as payment of bride price. After the husband marries the new wife, the older wives call the new wife ‘my wife’. ‘My wife’ here does not denote any sexual relationship. Meanwhile, the new wife will also call the husband and the other


\(^{103}\) Msibi, “Lies”, 64.

women ‘my husband’.\textsuperscript{105} Just hearing a woman calling another woman ‘my wife’ could suggest a same-sex relation which involves sexual affairs but in this particular context the names to a large extent might be seen as titles.

Evidence from the Nigerian context is seen from Renee I. Pitton’s work. Some Hausa (\textit{yan daudu}): men who talk like women, despite their roles they play religiously at times during the Bori religious rituals, tend to be associated with prostitution.\textsuperscript{106} However, not all \textit{yan daudu} were involved in same-sex relations but there is evidence to show that some were involved in same-sex relations.\textsuperscript{107}

There is further evidence of same-sex relations in Nigeria. This is cited by Murray and inferred from Tade Akin Aina. Some prostitutes were interviewed and they showed evidence of same-sex relations. This is the interview that ensured below.

They still believe that there are magical and witchcraft effects associated with male homosexual intercourse. They also believe that if the dominant partner is a businessman, such associations confer spiritual benefits to his business. This, they state affects the price they place on their services. Also it is felt that homosexuality conveys some unique advantages on its practioners; for instance, they feel that homosexuals tend to be rich and successful men…[They] feel that they are at the risk of becoming impotent (the ‘eunuch effect’) or permanently incapable of conventional heterosexual relations once any of their clients exploit the relationship for ritual or witchcraft purposes …Among the Nigerian prostitutes spoken to, modern risks such as AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases did not carry weight as sources of fear.\textsuperscript{108}

\textsuperscript{105} Kwame Essien and Saheed Aderinto “Cutting the Head of the Roaring Monster: Homosexuality and Repression In Africa”, \textit{African Study Monographs} 30, no. 3 (2009): 126.
2.10 Kenya

In Kenya, Murray shows evidence of homosexuality by citing Rodney Needham’s work. According to Needham, there is a sacred leadership role known as *mugawe* among the Meru of Kenya. A *mugawe* wears women’s clothes and does his hair like that of women. Normally, mugawe are involved in same-sex and they sometimes marry men.\(^{109}\)

2.11 Senegal

In Senegal, evidence shows that same-sex relations existed. Among the Wolof, some men dressed like women, spoke like women and engaged in male prostitution.\(^{110}\) Msibi cites Teunis and Larmarange’s to provide further evidence on same-sex relations among some Senegalese. The evidence shows that the name for these men was *gordjiguene*. *Gordjiguene* simply means ‘manwoman’.\(^{111}\) Teunis shows that:

> There were two types of gordiguene: the oubis (open) and the yauss (the fallen woman or bad woman). The oubis were effeminate, and often spoke to each other in feminine pronouns, while the yauss were men who penetrated during sexual intercourse. The yauss were mostly married or had girlfriends, and largely presented masculine mannerisms.\(^{112}\)

2.12 Congo

Dlamini cites Evans-Pritchard as being a respected figure on indigenous African cultures. Evans-Pritchard showed evidence of same-sex relations in Congo. In one of his works, he reported that Azande of northern Congo were involved in same-sex

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\(^{111}\) Msibi, “Lies”, 67-68.

\(^{112}\) Msibi, “Lies”, 67-68.
relations. This is where warriors married boys temporarily as wives. Murray and Roscoe as cited by Dlamini went further to claim that bride prices were paid to the parents of the boys. Dlamini shows that the evidence showed from the Congo context took some period of time before it was being reported. He further accuses of a shallow report on the evidence provided from this context. It appears that even though there was some evidence of same-sex relations in Congo as reported, it was not projected as an idle way of life that is why it was not too visible for evidence and for reports to be made. This could possibly mean that the evidence of a phenomenon does not necessarily mean its acceptance within the society. Within Congo, further evidence shows that same-sex relations were used as a means to gain wealth. This is recorded among the Bantu-speaking Pahouin slash-and-burn farmers who live in the North of Congo River.

2.13 Burkina Faso

Murray purports that same-sex relations was evident among the Mossi of Burkina Faso. He argued that beautiful boys were chosen to serve chiefs. These boys performed various roles including the provision of sexual intercourse to the chiefs on Fridays since the chiefs were not allowed to have sexual intercourse with women on those days. These boys served as sorones (pages). They were checked yearly to attest that, they had no sexual intimacy with women, until the stage of maturity whereby the
chiefs gave these boys women to marry and the first born of the couple became the chief’s own.\footnote{Murray, “Homosexuality in ‘Traditional’ Sub-Saharan African and Contemporary South Africa”. accessed January 20, 2018, https://www.semgai.free.fr/}

Further evidence shows that same-sex relations existed in Burkina Faso. Dustin Newcombe shows the existence of same-sex relations in pre-colonial times. Newcombe infers from Murray’s work in connection to this evidence. This is where gay men were seen to be spiritually endowed. This belief is shown:

Among the Dagara of southern Bakina (Burkina) Faso, gay men act as gate keepers. Dagara believe that the survival of the cosmos (not just the earth) depends on such gatekeepers. According to Malidoma Somé of the Dagara, a gatekeeper decided that he is a gatekeeper prior to being born. In speaking with one such gatekeeper, Somé find that he was very well integrated into the community.\footnote{Dustin Newcombe, “Homosexuality in Africa: The Myth of Western Decadence Exposed”, \textit{African American Studies}, the Pennsylvania State University, 2002, accessed September 21, 2017, \url{https://www.semanticsscholar.org}}

The gatekeeper who was interviewed in Dagara said “a tribe that knows astrology like no other …the great astrologers …are gay”.\footnote{Newcombe, , “Homosexuality in Africa: The Myth of Western Decadence Exposed”, \textit{African American Studies}, the Pennsylvania State University, 2002, accessed September 21, 2017, \url{https://www.semanticsscholar.org}} As shown in Burkina Faso, same-sex relations were perceived to be attached to greatness. In other words, people involved in same-sex relations were seen as extraordinary people.

\section{2.14 Ghana}

The last but not the least evidence of same-sex relations for this chapter is situated in the Ghanaian context. Murray infers from Italo Signorini who reported on
homosexual relationship among Nzema men in Ghana. These men marry young men for ‘friendship’ not for erotic relationship. The motives for marrying these young men are qualities such as attractiveness, personality and the fluency. Signorini describes the relationship between the two males devoid of sexual intimacy but the relationship is similar to ‘man-woman’ marriage because all the processes ‘man-woman’ go through before and during marriage is similar to what ‘adult –youth’ go through in this context apart from sex. For example there is payment of bride price to the male’s parents. This type of marriage is usually known as ‘Agyale’ or ‘friendship marriage’.  

Among the Nankani of Northern Ghana, woman to woman marriage is permissible within a religio cultural context and it is the last resort for generational continuity. Rose Mary Amenga-Etego shows that if a family’s lineage is being threatened by lack of a male successor; woman to woman marriage is encouraged. This last resort is chosen as a result of the death of heirs of family, within tribal conflicts or war situations. Amenga-Etego shows that:

In such a case, a married daughter who might have survived due to the exogamous marriage system returns home with the duty of restoring her ancestry. The reinstatement of a married woman as a daughter is essential for establishing woman to woman marriages among the Nankani.

It must be noted that within the woman to woman marriage, no sexual relationship is needed. This is because the women involved have culturally accepted means of the

122 Amenga-Etego, “Marriage without Sex?” 22.
fulfillment of their sexual needs. Since the culturally accepted means of fulfilling their sexual needs is not the focus of this thesis, discussions would not be made on that.\textsuperscript{124}

\section*{2.15 Communal Living}

There are scholars who still maintain that despite the evidence that seem to show that same-sex relations was or is in Africa; same-sex relations is not inherent in African culture. One of the arguments raised by these authors is the communal way of living within Africa. The claim or the stance of authors or theologians who continue to emphasize that same-sex relation is from the West has to do with the worldview of the Western countries as compared to the worldview of African countries. According to these theologians, the western culture is more individualistic in nature. Therefore an individual’s sexual preference is solely private whiles in Africa the culture is communal in nature. Therefore relationships must enhance life in the society.\textsuperscript{125}

Enhancement of life probably means saying ‘no’ to any relationship that might hinder reproduction of lives (procreation). Klinken and Gunda reports on the communal living in Africa by making reference to Bujo who concisely claim that man-man and woman-woman relationship has the potential to hinder the enhancement that emanates from man-woman relationship.\textsuperscript{126}

\section*{2.16 Sexuality}

Joseph Onuche concludes from John Mbiti with regard to sex. Mbiti shows that sex has ‘spiritual’ significance in African traditional societies. Therefore it is not a thing

\textsuperscript{124}Amenga-Etego, “Marriage without Sex?”, 29.
\textsuperscript{125}Klinken and Gunda, “Cudgels”, 124.
\textsuperscript{126}Klinken and Gunda, “Cudgels”, 124.
to be joked with. Onuche further infers from Mbiti and shows sexual offences within
African traditional society and they are the following:

ritual offences which arise on account of taboos and ritual regulations, where people (including married couples) are forbidden from having sexual relations at given times, adultery, when discovered is severely dealt with in some societies the guilty person (particularly a man) would be whipped, stoned to death, made to pay compensation or having his head or other part of his body mutilated. Fornication, incest, rape, seduction, homosexual relations, domestic animals, children watching genitals of their parents (in the wide usage of the term) all constitutes sexual offences in Nigerian community.\textsuperscript{127}

Since same-sex relations have been noted to be an offence, it implies that same-sex relations are not part of African culture according to Mbiti. Looking at the arguments of those who claim it is part of African culture, and then it poses a question of ‘when’ did same-sex relations become part of African culture? Has it always been there or it became a taboo after a period? This suggests that since same-sex relations is seen as a taboo generally in Africa then it had presence just that it was not encouraged.

Stephanie Rudwick reemphasizes the argument of those who claim same-sex relations are un-Africa. According to Rudwick, the argument is based on procreation. The claim is that traditionalist and Christian Africans are the ‘pioneers’ of this argument because they perceive the African to be particularly interested in raising children.\textsuperscript{128}

2.17 Conclusion

With arguments expounded so far, scholars have sought to defend their stance with examples from the African continent. Within this chapter, scholars have shown that there is or were presence of same-sex relations in some African countries that have been discussed. In this chapter, it was discussed that same-sex relations manifest in different ways depending on the country or tribal context of the discussion. For example, in South Africa, same-sex relations were seen to have occurred in the mines between senior and junior miners, also in South Africa, traditional healers were involved in same-sex relations. The example from South Africa is quite different from the one in Ghana as discussed in this chapter. While same-sex relations in South Africa involved sexual activities that of Ghana within the Nankani of the Northern Region and the Nzema did not involve sexual activities even though both situations showed same-sex relations. Same-sex relations being ‘foreign’ or ‘local’ is not the bone of contention of this thesis. This chapter is there to shed light on the fact that there is presence of same-sex relations in Africa. However, the chapter also expounded on same-sex relations not being part of African culture despite its presence in Africa. The chapter brought to light that same-sex relations are in Africa, Ghana inclusive. Therefore the role of the church (Neo-Pentecostals inclusive) in dealing with the issue becomes the focus of this thesis. The chapter gives way to chapter three which deals with what some churches have done so far in terms of same-sex relations.
CHAPTER THREE

INTERNATIONAL PURVIEW OF SOME SELECTED CHURCHES ON SAME-SEX RELATIONS

3.0 Introduction

This chapter exposes the research to what churches have done in connection to same-sex relations. The chapter discusses churches such as Metropolitan Community Church, the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Church. This chapter discusses their stance on the issue generally. This chapter is important because the focus of this thesis is mainly to know a particular Christian perspective to same-sex relations. Therefore some churches that have documents relating to same-sex relations will be given attention. The chapter expounds on their stance and makes discussions out of them. This enables a kind of general understanding of what churches are doing about same-sex relations since it continues to become topical in recent times. Each of the churches mentioned is given some attention. At the end of the discussions, the stances of the churches are understood. This is the perspective from which chapter four is discussed.

3.1 Metropolitan Community Church

The Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) was established on 6th October, 1968 by Rev Troy Perry in Los Angeles, United States of America. The mandate of the church was to reach out to gays, lesbians and bisexuals. The church had its first
service in Rev Troy Perry’s living room. Over the years, the church has grown largely and has branches in six continents.129

3.1.1 The Mission of Metropolitan Community Church

The mission of Metropolitan Community Church is: “Calling people to new life through the liberating Gospel of Jesus Christ. Confronting the injustice of poverty, sexism, racism and homophobia through Christian social action, they created community of healing and reconciliation through faith, hope and love”.130 The mission of the church enabled them to conduct same-gender marriages. The mission is also a motivating factor towards the fight for marriage equality in the United States of America and other nations worldwide.131

3.1.2 Why was Metropolitan Community Church Established?

Rev. Troy Perry’s motivation for the establishment of the church was due to the relegation of gays within traditional Christian denominations to the background. Homosexuality has been treated as the ‘topmost’ sin within Christianity.132 Rev Troy Perry was formerly a member of the Church of God denomination. Upon his open declaration as a gay, he was removed from ordained ministry. Rev Troy Perry was aware of the challenge of gay people within and outside the religious circle. Therefore the merging of homosexuality and Christianity led to the establishment of Metropolitan Community Church.133

129 Matthew D. Stewart, “A Perfectly Queer Reading of the Bible”, master’s theses (University of South Florida, Florida 2008).
130 Stewart, “Queue”, 1.
133 Stewart, “Queue”, 2.
Stewart claims that Metropolitan Community Church can be classified as a reactive movement. Stewart substantiates this claim by showing that Metropolitan Community Church sprung up as a result of sidelining gay people in the United States in the mid to late 1960’s. Stewart observed that:

The social context for homosexuals and gays during this period and the time leading up to it was one of social rejection, criminal persecution, stigmatization, and invisibility. Within the religious sphere, especially in the Christian context, they were labeled as sinners, demonized, denied the sacraments and rites, and rejected from participation in Christian congregations.\textsuperscript{134} This led to what is known as ‘gay sub culture’ says Stewart. ‘Gay sub culture’ became the recipe for the emergence of new religious movements that addressed challenges within the ‘gay sub culture’.\textsuperscript{135}

Metropolitan Community Church provided all that a heterosexual relationship would enjoy in a traditional church to same-sex relationships. Stewart infers to Hartman who showed that Metropolitan Community Church provided the avenue for gays, “to be open in their church life, to appreciate all the things that their straight [non-gay] friends took for granted: going to church with your loved one, celebrating your relationship in the eyes of your God and your community, and knowing that the same community will be there for you when the time finally comes to mourn him or her”\textsuperscript{136}

Since the core mandate of Metropolitan Community Church is to allow a Christian to be gay, it enabled gays to feel free to come to church and participate freely in church activities without fear of being ridiculed. In other words, the liberty and privileges a

\textsuperscript{134} Stewart, “Queer”, 9.
\textsuperscript{135} Stewart, “Queer”, 9.
\textsuperscript{136} Stewart, “Queer”, 10.
heterosexual enjoys at church are extended to gays. The heterosexual and the gay are equal in church activities.\textsuperscript{137}

3.2 The Catholic Church

Roman Catholic statements with regard to the condemnation of same-sex relations are purported to be inferred from the Scripture (Bible), the Magisterium of the Church and the inscriptions of the Doctors of the Church.\textsuperscript{138} Three documents relating to same-sex relations are explored under this section. These documents show to a large extent, the stance of the Catholic Church generally in connection to same-sex relations. Other documents have been discussed to further expound on the Catholic position with regard to same-sex relations. The other documents are given some attention in this section of the chapter. This is to give a general holistic approach to the stance of the Catholic Church. The three general documents that are explored are The Vatican’s Sacred Congregation of the Doctrine of Faiths 1975 document, Persona Human Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons and Catechism of the Catholic Church (Chastity and Homosexuality)

3.2.1 The Vatican (Declaration on Sexual Ethics)

This document does not treat same-sex relations in isolation. It treats some aspects of sexuality also. In order to have a comprehensive discussion on same-sex relations, a summary of this document is discussed. In this document, it is purported that human existence largely emanates from sexuality. Therefore a male or a female is a product of sexual activity. In effect, certain aspects of the individual can be traced to

\textsuperscript{137} Stewart, “Queer”, 10.
sexuality. Examples of these aspects are the ‘biological, psychological and spiritual levels’. This is the reason why matters of sexuality become topical anytime it is raised. The document also depicts that sexual immorality continues to increase in society.\textsuperscript{139}

Due to some misconceptions about sex, the Church in a bid to show its stance issues out this document. The document is of importance because sexuality does not only affect individuals but society as a whole. In the document it is claimed that human beings look within themselves in order to derive a form of dignity. This is claimed to be done continually in order to be better as humans. However, morality cannot be achieved on a personal search by the human being. The human being in connection to morality must be aligned with guidelines not from him or herself but from a divine being. An inference from Declaration on Religious Freedom is used to substantiate this argument:

the divine law-eternal, objective, and universal-whereby God orders, directs, and governs the entire universe and all the ways of the human community, by a plan conceived in wisdom and love. Man has been made by God to participate in this law, with the result that, under the gentle disposition of divine Providence, he can come to perceive ever increasingly the unchanging truth.\textsuperscript{140}

In effect, a man-made law alone has defects without the addition of divine laws. Therefore the rightful combination of the two enables a holistic perspective to matters that arise in the course of human existence.

\textsuperscript{140} Boss, Analyzing, 381-385.
Sexuality must be regulated and confined with basic human principles and Christian principles. The Church since time immemorial used such principles to regulate the affairs of life. However, not everyone agrees to these principles. It must be noted that the principles do not stem out of a particular cultural context but rather emanates from ‘knowledge of the divine law and human nature’. In other words, the dynamic nature of culture cannot affect how long or how short principles from the divine and the human nature can be used. It must be noted that the document does not focus on all sexual matters pertaining to sexual abuses. The declaration is intended to reiterate the doctrines of the church in some cases that received much attention which are not in line with the Church’s doctrine.  

In addition to the arguments raised in the document, sexual activity under no circumstance is undertaken before marriage. Within the document, it is shown that no matter arguments purported to favor pre-marital sex, it is not accepted within Christian doctrine. It is only marriage that gives the moral right for sexual intercourse to take place. Reference from Matthew 19 verse 4-6 was made to further substantiate the argument of sexual activity but in other context. This context explains who qualifies for marriage. It was noted that Jesus made reference to a man and a woman in reference to marriage. Therefore since marriage is the only moral avenue for sexual activity, it must also be between a man and a woman.  

Even though, psychological evidence seems to show that same-sex relation among some individuals is normal, it does not follow the Magisterium and Christian morality. The document expounds on two categories of same-sex inclination.

According to the document, some inclinations are derived from negative environmental influences while some inclinations to a large extent natural. With regard to the second category, pastoral care is encouraged. The kind of pastoral care is that which is sensitive to the challenges of the people to overcome their challenges. In addition, same-sexual acts are discouraged and this must be part of the pastoral care.\textsuperscript{143}

Masturbation was also treated in this document. It was purported that scientific proof may show there is nothing wrong with masturbation at a certain period especially among young people. However, it is not in line with the Church’s teaching. Masturbation must not be encouraged.\textsuperscript{144}

3.2.2 Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons

This section discusses the letter briefly in order to further show the Catholic stance on same-sex relations. This letter focused on issues pertaining to same-sex relations and people involved in same-sex relations. In addition, it also focused on how Bishops should address same-sex relations and people involved in same-sex relations in the Catholic Church. There was a need for this because of misplaced arguments within debates of same-sex relations. The letter needed to address arguments inconsistent with the Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{145}

\textsuperscript{143} Boss, \textit{Analyzing}, 381-385.
\textsuperscript{144} Boss, \textit{Analyzing}, 381-385.
\textsuperscript{145} “Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality
Same-sex related acts is a complicated issue but can be discussed within the Catholic moral perspective. It is a perspective which finds support in the more secure findings of the natural sciences, which have their own legitimate and proper methodology and field of inquiry.\textsuperscript{146} Within the Catholic Church, moral perspective elements of human reason is shown. Human reason is seen in the light of faith and also used for selfish interests but for the right motif it must be in accordance to obedience to God the Father. The Church can use science in the pursuit of her mandate.\textsuperscript{147}

This is why same-sex relations need solid not half baked reflections from the Church. These reflections can be achieved through combined efforts. In the letter it states: ‘It thus requires of her ministers attentive study, active concern and honest, theologically well-balanced counsel.’\textsuperscript{148} The document makes reference to the Declaration of Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics of 1975. The reference was made in connection to same-sex tendencies and same-sex actions. Some misconceptions arose after the document was released in connection to tendencies and actions. For example some saw nothing wrong with same-sex orientation. However, there was the need to stress that, even though the orientation was no sin, it could lead to same-sex related acts. Therefore there was a need to pay attention to anyone with an orientation of this nature.\textsuperscript{149}

\textsuperscript{146} Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality

\textsuperscript{147} Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality

\textsuperscript{148} Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality

\textsuperscript{149} Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality
In effect, pastoral care is essential but before pastoral care can be effective in discharge, misinterpretation of the Church’s teaching with regard to same-sex relations must be dealt with. Some of the misinterpretations also allude to the fact that, same-sex relation is not addressed within the scripture or it condones same-sex relations. In addition to the misinterpretations arguments against same-sex relations, it is seen as a cultural issue which is outmoded and cannot fit in recent times. Even though, cultural contexts of scripture vary from the cultural contexts we have today, basic instructions or tenets about same-sex relations remain consistent especially in terms of same-sex related acts which is contrary to the Church’s teachings.\footnote{“Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality}

In order to have a comprehensive understanding of same-sex relations, creation story in Genesis must be of an essential starting point. God is his own wisdom created a male and female in His own image for the two to ‘fit’ each other. Further reference to the creation story pinpoints what is known as the original sin. The human race began sinning from the fall of the man and woman which further continued to the scenario of Sodom. It was emphatically clear within that story that God does not condone same-sex relations. Further reference in the Old Testament is seen in Leviticus 18 verse 22 and 20 verse 13. In the New Testament Paul also showed that people involved in same-sex relation shall not enter the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthian 6 verse 9).\footnote{“Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality}
In addition, the Church further purports that the only avenue to express sexual affection is within marriage. Marriage in this context must be between a man and a woman. This is because it is the legitimate avenue for children to be born. Any sexual activity that cannot enhance procreation is to a large extent frowned upon by the church and a same-sex relation is an example.\textsuperscript{152} Despite the changes in the world today, the church is constant with her teachings and traditions. Even though, some members of the church want the church to accept same-sex orientation and same-sex related acts as normal. Presumably, those in the church enhancing these arguments have close associations with those outside the church who also show the perception that same-sex relation is normal.\textsuperscript{153}

However, the Church’s minister is cautioned to beware of such erroneous mentality since some of these erroneous mentalities create confusion in the church. Therefore such mentalities must not be condoned with. This ensures that people involved in same-sex relations will not tow the line of such arguments. Groups have sprouted within the church. These groups are same-sex affiliation groups who purport the stance of the church as ‘unjust discrimination’. Even though, the Church’s position cannot be changed, it is sympathetic of these groups.\textsuperscript{154}

Moreover, no matter the sexuality of a person, they should not be mishandled by any person whatsoever. People involved in same-sex relations are also persons who must

\textsuperscript{152} “Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality
\textsuperscript{153} “Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality
\textsuperscript{154} “Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality
enjoy every right pertaining to all persons. The Church must not allow people involved in same-sex relations to be treated without respect for their humanity. Despite the respect for all persons, it does not in any way suggest that there is nothing wrong with same-sex relations.

In addition, as noted earlier some did not choose same-sex tendencies. Irrespective of this argument, the individual needs help from God not to practice what he or she feels. A person with same-sex tendencies who wants to serve God must know that Christians sometimes suffer in their quest to know God. Therefore a Christian must overcome challenges because that is the way to inherit eternal life. It is like any other suffering a Christian goes through and overcomes. All Christians are admonished to live a chaste life including people involved in same-sex relations.155

In this letter, the Bishops were instructed to disseminate the stance of the church to the leaders of the church especially the priests. It was noted in the letter that most of the priests are already offering pastoral care to people involved in same-sex relations.156 Bishops were encouraged not to give in to pressure that sabotages the intention of the Church’s teaching. Some of the groups used the word ‘Catholic’ in isolation from the Church’s teaching.

Furthermore, pastoral care must be offered in conjunction with the Church’s teaching. Bishops are to offer pastoral care to suit their contexts. In other words, they are to use

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the Church’s teaching to create their own models of pastoral care. They can further seek the assistance of Catholic theologians to help them. Catechists were also instructed to partake in the pastoral care. No matter the challenges Bishops face under the legal system, they were urged to use the family argument to state their stance. In order for the family to be a family instituted in line with God’s will, it must be a husband and a wife.\textsuperscript{157}

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued out a form of pastoral care based on the guidelines of the Church. Within their model, they urged that the Catholic community to be welcoming because the Church can only support a person involved in same-sex relations by admonishing them to partake in church activities which can aid the journey of a gradual change. In addition, love must constantly be shown to people involved in same-sex relations. Also members of the church with same-sex tendencies must confide in people they can trust in the church such as spiritual directors. In addition to the above, they suggested that any mistreatment of a person involved in same-sex relation must not be admonished.\textsuperscript{158}

3.2.3 Catechism of the Catholic Church (Chastity and Homosexuality)

With regard to the Catechism of the Catholic Church on same-sex relations, some references from other documents have discussed issues on same-sex relations using the Catechism and the documents by Catholic writers. As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops pastoral care was used in the previous section as an example to substantiate the argument on nature of pastoral care in the United States, similar arguments in reference to the Catechism are used to give a holistic

\textsuperscript{157} “Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality

\textsuperscript{158} United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “Ministry”, 16-23.
understanding from the Catholic perspective. However, some of the arguments may not qualify for the whole Catholic Church.

First of all, same-sex relation is defined in the Catechism. The definition is shown below:

Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction towards persons of the same-sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that ‘homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.’

In addition to the above comprehensive definition of same-sex relation within the Catechism, it is further shown in the document that, same-sex relation must not be encouraged because it does not give room for children to be born and it is also not an authentic way of showing sexual love. In addition, it is seen in the Catechism that there is a substantive number of people who have same-sex tendencies. Therefore their inclination becomes a challenge to them because it is objectively disordered. Due to this, the Catechism admonishes acceptance based on respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God’s will in their lives and, if they are Christians to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord’s Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition.

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In connection to the above, the Dicastery, Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, used that to substantiate the argument of non-acceptance of candidates who have deep same-sex tendencies for Ordination. They purported that even though a person with such tendencies must be respected according to the Catechism, the person cannot serve in the Seminary because it is claimed that the person cannot properly minister to men and women because of his tendencies. In the introductory aspect of the arguments on who qualify for priesthood they showed that the person must be whole and must not have a questionable behavioral traits. This is because the person is seen as a representative of Christ. In other words, he must be mature spiritually in order to take the mandate of priesthood.\textsuperscript{162} This may suggest that a person with same-sex tendencies does not have such characteristics.

Moreover some arguments have been made by James Martin, in his article: “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”.\textsuperscript{163} Martin takes ‘respect, compassion and sensitivity’ to make some arguments of what he deems to be the way forward in the Catholic Church. This receives some attention in order to have a broader and an in-depth discussion on same-sex relation within the Catholic Church. In the article, he discusses the three mentioned from two perspectives. The first perspective is what he calls the first lane. The first lane basically refers to what he expects the Church and this context he refers to the church as the Institutional church and that is the Vatican, the hierarchy, church officials and the clergy to do in relation to respect, compassion and sensitivity to persons of same-sex tendencies. In addition he also uses the second lane in his discussion. This refers to what he also expects from persons with same-sex tendencies towards the Institutional church. Both


\textsuperscript{163} James Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426
lanes are discussed briefly in the subsequent paragraphs. The first lane is labeled in this discussion Institutional church and the second is labeled same-sex members.

**Institutional Church**

Martin purports that people with same-sex tendencies must be respected. He defines respect in terms of recognition, using appropriate names, showing love and not being selective. With regard to compassion, he defines compassion in terms of listening and being there for people. In addition he defines sensitivity as feeling for people. Each of them are discussed respectively.

Martin admonishes that the Church must recognize people with same-sex tendencies. In addition, he purports that recognition is a platform for involvement. Martin argues that you cannot claim to recognize someone and not involve the person in activities. He admitted that some parishes are already involving people of this nature but he calls for more involvement. He substantiates his argument by giving an example of involvement and this example is the celebration of mass with them. Martin claims that involvement does not necessarily mean agreement to whatever someone does. He buttress his argument by saying that when other groups such as Catholic business groups are sponsored, does it mean that all activities of the group are agreed with? Martin argues that, involvement is a step of connection. It shows that the Church is willing to help like any other group it does help in the Church.¹⁶⁴

Moreover, respect can also mean using the appropriate name for an individual or group. He argues that if you claim you respect someone, you call the person by the

¹⁶⁴ Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426
name he or she wants to be called. He further argues that names are very important in the Jewish and Christian contexts. He claims that if names were not of importance, God in the Old Testament would not have replaced names of people. For example Abram to Abraham (Genesis 17 verse 4-6) and in the New Testament Jesus would not have replaced Simon’s name with Peter.\textsuperscript{165}

In addition to what Martin calls respect, love is essential. Martin argues that respect also means loving people who are often relegated to the background in society. The church must be the center for the exhibition and manifestation of the love of God to all manner of persons irrespective of whom they are. Therefore the church must show love to people with same-sex tendencies no matter what and this signifies respect. According to Martin, when love is shown to them, they offer their gifts in service to the church. He claims that Apostle Paul in the Bible relates the church to the body. Since the body has several parts, so is the church. So every individual in the church has something to contribute to the well-being of the church. Martin argues that some of the great people who have served are still serving in the church since he became a minister are gays (same-sex relations).\textsuperscript{166}

The other argument made by Martin is in terms of selective approach in handling matters in the church. Martin argues that firing of people with same-sex tendencies is disrespectful since they are fired based on selective church teachings. He purports that if church teachings are the bases for hiring or firing, then there are lots of people who do not qualify to be at post in church organizations. He suggests that then Protestants

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\textsuperscript{165} Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, \url{http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426}
\textsuperscript{166} Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, \url{http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426}
\end{flushleft}
who are in Catholic institutions must be fired since papal authority is an essential teaching in the Catholic Church. Martin gives the impression that if church teachings are to be strictly adhered then a lot of people must be fired because one way or the other they have flouted the church’s teachings. He further elaborates his argument by giving examples of divorce and remarriage. He claims that even Jesus forbade divorce but that has not been a ground for firing employees but people with same-sex tendencies have been fired based on who they are. Therefore Martin presumes there have been selective forms of applying the church’s teachings to issues in and outside the church. According to Martin, the church’s teaching is based on the Gospel and the Gospel admonishes us to help the poor. Therefore those who must be considered for firing are those who do not obey basic instructions such as this. According to Martin, firing of people with same-sex tendencies breeds unfairness which is to be avoided as stipulated by the Catholic Catechism.167

With regard to the Institutional Church, Martin admonishes for compassion which he contextualizes as listening. Martin argues that the ability to listen to people and know who they are and what they go through is a typology of compassion. He insists that the ability to listen to people with same-sex tendencies proves compassion towards them. He encourages leaders of the church to listen to the concerns and experiences of people with same-sex tendencies. Leaders are further encouraged to build a rapport with people with same-sex tendencies. This shows that the Institutional Church is ready to show compassion.168

168 Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426
In addition to what Martin calls as compassion, he advocates that the church must be there for people when they are maltreated. Martin argues that the church especially church leaders must be there for people with same-sex tendencies. Martin argues that any form of violence perpetuated against these people is unacceptable. He purports that the Institutional Church must be there for persons mishandled due to their sexual identities. According to Martin, as Catholic leaders continually publish to defend the marginalized in the society, they should also focus on publishing to defend people with same-sex tendencies who are marginalized periodically. Martin argues that it seems people claim that some marginalized like refugees cannot be compared to people with same-sex tendencies. He defends his stance by claiming that both are marginalized irrespective of who they are. Therefore there is no way marginalization must be upheld irrespective of who is at the receiving end.\textsuperscript{169} Martin finally buttresses his point that Pope Francis called for showing compassion to marginalized groups so it must be done to all manner of persons irrespective of who they are.\textsuperscript{170}

Moreover, Martin discusses the last aspect which is sensitivity in relation to the Institutional Church. The context of sensitivity is feeling for people. Martin argues that being sensitive about people also means knowing them. Martin argues that the Institutional Church does not know much about people with same-sex tendencies. He claims that the writings, preaching, teachings any other activity related to these people are not realistic enough. This is because the Institutional Church to a large extent lacks rapport with them. Martin suggests that real sensitivity begins when you know

\textsuperscript{169} Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018,\texttt{http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426}

\textsuperscript{170}Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018,\texttt{http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426}
much about a person. Until you know being sensitive will not be materialized.171

Martin quotes the archbishop of Vienna to buttress his argument:

[O]ne shares one’s life, one shares the joys and sufferings, one helps one another. We must recognize that this person has made an important step for his own good and for the good of others, even though, of course, this is not the situation that the church can consider regular.172

Martin further suggests that our model is Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ related to all manner of persons. Even if the person is a ‘sinner’ which Martin does not support that people with same-sex tendencies are sinners, he purports that Jesus never attacked people as sinners. Jesus first welcomes people irrespective of who they are and then any other thing follows.173 In addition to being sensitive, Martin further suggests that words such as ‘objectively disordered’ in the Catechism must be rephrased or taken out as suggested by some bishops because it is improper to suggest a person’s orientation as such.174

People with Same-Sex Tendencies

Martin also looks at the other side of the coin by discussing respect, compassion and sensitivity with regard to what he expects from people with same-sex tendencies towards the Institutional Church. He discusses respect based on authority, compassion based on fallibility and sensitivity based on discernment. The three are discussed. In relation to respect, Martin shows the level of authority in the church. He claims that the level of authority ranges from the pope and councils, archbishops and bishops.

172Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426
According to Martin, with regard to matters relating to same-sex relations, the episcopacy speaks with authority and inspiration is also derived from tradition. In other words, the stance of bishops on issues is not only based on the Gospels but traditions as well. Martin suggests that people with same-sex tendencies must not disrespect the authorities when they make statements that do not support or defend them. Martin urges that they must show respect even if they do not consent to everything being taught.  

In addition, Martin argues on compassion. With the enormous task of Catholic Priests, Martin suggests that people with same-sex tendencies must have compassion on Catholic Priests. He purports that as human as they are, they are fallible. Therefore perfection should not be expected of them. He opines that as humans as they are, they are limited and some actions and inactions might be offensive to people with same-sex tendencies. Irrespective of these flaws, people with same-sex tendencies must show compassion to them because they have a moral duty to do so.

Moreover, Martin touches on sensitivity. With regard to sensitivity, he urges that people with same-sex tendencies must discern on what is being said about them and who is saying what is been said. Martin shows that different levels of authority have made arguments about same-sex tendencies. He urges people with same-sex tendencies to prayerfully read but also bear in mind that all authorities are not equal.

175 Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426
Presumably Martin suggests that honor must be given in terms of who speaks on same-sex issues.\(^{177}\)

In addition to the arguments raised in the Catechism, the Catechism urges people with same-sex tendencies to yearn for perfection as seen below.

> Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.\(^{178}\)

### 3.3 The Anglican Communion

Anglican Communion means all Anglican provinces globally. Their stance on same-sex relations are discussed in this part of the chapter. The various provinces such as African (Nigeria and Uganda) and the Episcopal Church of the United States seem not to have agreed on one stance pertaining to same-sex relations. It poses a challenge for the Archbishop of Canterbury to bring resolution to the matter. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the senior bishop and principal leader of the Church of England, the symbolic head of worldwide Anglican Communion and diocesan bishop of the Diocese of Canterbury.\(^{179}\)

From 1867, there have been number of controversies ranging from polygamy to divorce. During such controversies, a distinction is often drawn between conservatives and liberals. This distinction is based upon a specific approach. Usually, the approach is either a conservative or a liberal one. However, the Communion has shown over the period of time that there should not be imposition of ideas. In addition to controversies pertaining to polygamy through to divorce, same-

\(^{177}\)Martin, “We need to build a bridge between LGBT community and the Catholic Church”, accessed June 24, 2018, [http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426](http://www.americanmagazine.org/voices/216426)

\(^{178}\)“Chastity and Homosexuality”, accessed June 19, 2018, [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a6.htm](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a6.htm)(No. 2359)

\(^{179}\)“Anglicans and Sexuality: A Way Forward?”, accessed May 28, 2018, [www.lse.ac.uk /consulting](http://www.lse.ac.uk/consulting)
sex relations have also received a fair share of controversies on the matter. It must be noted that, the conservatives use the Scripture in its literal form known as the ‘Word of God’. In order to resolve or to come to some conclusion on same-sex relations and other matters affecting the Communion, conferences took place in 1998 and 2008 which are discussed below.

3.3.1 Lambeth Conference of 1998 and 2008

Even though the conferences addressed a number of issues, in the context of this chapter, the focus will be on issues of same-sex relations. The two were chosen because of issues of same-sex relations that were peculiar in both years. Lambeth conference is a decennial conference of Anglican Bishops from across the globe. In 1998, tension arose between some conservatives and liberals with issues such as acceptance of same-sex relations. Rubenstein also showed that there was massive tension during the conference.

According to the report on “Anglicans and Sexuality, a way forward?”

At Lambeth 1998 the power of the links between the global North Traditionalists and some global South Leaders became apparent. This alliance augured for a re-defined Anglicanism for the fractured relations that were incidental to producing it. By the end of the Lambeth Conference it was clear that a context to define Anglicanism had emerged out of controversy over homosexuality, and that voices from global south figured prominently in this contest. Re-definition was given by a global phalanx of traditionalists that persuaded Lambeth in 1998 to endorse their position.

Some salient aspects in relation to same-sex relation are the following:

a. commends to the Church the subsection report on human sexuality;

b. in view of the teaching of Scripture, upholds faithfulness in marriage between a man and a woman in lifelong union, and believes that abstinence is right for those who are not called to marriage;

c. recognizes that there are among us persons who experience themselves as having a homosexual orientation. Many of these are members of the Church and are seeking the pastoral care, moral direction of the Church, and God’s transforming power for the living of their lives and the ordering of relationships. We commit ourselves to listen to the experience of homosexual persons and we wish to assure them that they are loved by God and that all baptized, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ;

d. while rejecting homosexual practice as incompatible with Scripture, calls on all our people to minister pastorally and sensitively to all irrespective of sexual orientation and to condemn irrational fear of homosexuals, violence within marriage and any trivialization and commercialization of sex;

e. cannot advise legitimizing or blessing of same-sex unions nor ordaining those involved in same gender unions;  

The outlined points from Lambeth 1998 tackled both sides, that of the conservatives and the liberals. For the conservatives, blessing same-sex unions which was not approved was in their favor whiles the liberals also had pastoral care for people with same-sex tendencies in their favor. However, both will not be fully satisfied of the stance taken during the conference.

GAFCON is Global African Future Conference. According to Brittain and Mckimon, GAFCON boycotted the Lambeth Conference in 2008. The group was instituted before the Lambeth Conference in 2008. It was made up of Archbishop of Sydney, the Primate of Jerusalem and the Middle East and some African Primates. The aim for the group was to remake their stance on same-sex relations as not being compatible to Scripture. They believed that heterosexual relations are compatible to

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Scripture and abstinence should be encouraged before marriage.\textsuperscript{187} However, in 2004, Lambert Commission on Communion evolved in its stance when they published ‘The Windsor Report’. This report called for blessing of same-sex unions and consecration of actively gay and lesbian bishops. Till now this is the stance of the Communion.\textsuperscript{188} Presumably, this might have necessitated the stance of the conservatives (GAFCON) to form the group because in 1998 the Communion satisfied to a large extent both parties until the conservatives felt that the 2004 stance did not favor them. For example in Anglican churches in Africa, there is no acceptance of same-sex relations or ordination of bishops who have same-sex related tendencies. This suggests that Anglican churches do not have a common stance on same-sex relations.

3.4 The Presbyterian Church

In addition to the churches discussed in this chapter already, the Presbyterian Church also becomes an important church for discourse in this chapter. The Presbyterian Church of United States of America to a large extent has accepted same-sex relations. In 2011, the acceptance was declared. Formerly, in order to become a minister, elder or a deacon, this was the constitutional requirement of the Church’s Book of Order: “fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman or chastity in singleness”. Currently, it has been amended to: “Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life”.\textsuperscript{189} The amendment shows that sexual orientation does not prevent one from becoming a leader in the church.

\textsuperscript{188} “Anglicans and Sexuality: A Way Forward?”, accessed May 28,2018, www.lse.ac.uk /consulting
However, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana shows otherwise. The Church in Ghana to a large extent does not purport or agree with the stance of the Presbyterian Church of United States of America. In 2015, some arguments arose and the former moderator Rev. Professor Emmanuel Martey is claimed to have asserted that he did not want any relationship with pro-Gay Presbyterian Churches. The kind of division within the Anglican Communion is similar to what happened in the Presbyterian Church.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has thrown light on positions of some churches in relation to same-sex relation. Metropolitan Community Church as discussed was founded by a gay in order to accept people involved in same-sex relations without any hesitation. The Catholic Church distinguishes between the person and the act but admonishes that pastoral care must be administered in order not to make the person involve him or herself in the act. The person is also encouraged to see his or her sexual orientation as any other struggle a Christian must overcome. Meanwhile, the Anglican and the Presbyterian positions are not universal because whiles others accept people with sexual tendencies to a large extent the other section does not. It must be noted that those who do not accept are Africans. This gives grounds to chapter four which also discusses an African perspective of the issue since the churches to be discussed are founded by Africans.

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CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSIONS ON NEO-PENTECOSTALISM AND SAME-SEX RELATIONS IN GHANA

4.0 Introduction

The chapter four focuses on the objectives of the research. The chapter focuses on the data collected from the field which has been analyzed and discussed. The chapter specifically discusses findings on perception of Neo-Pentecostals involved in same-sex relations towards the Church, the perception of Neo-Pentecostals towards people involved in same-sex relations, the relationship between Neo-Pentecostals and people involved in same-sex relations and the analyses of responses by the respondents and conclusion. The respondents are church members involved in same-sex relations, church members who are not involved in same-sex relations, leaders and pastors. The presentation of the result and discussion are done in line with the stated objectives (See Appendices A, B, C, D on page 106, 107, 108 and 109 for detailed information on the interview guide which the researcher uses thematic analysis).

4.1 Findings on Responses of Church Members (Involved in Same-Sex Relations)

Twenty (20) respondents out of the hundred (100) respondents interviewed for this research asserted that they were involved in same-sex relations (homosexuals). They also asserted that they were Christians who attended church and other details about their Christian identity that are discussed subsequently. Other questions were asked about their sexuality and their responses are discussed also.
4.1.1 Period of members becoming Christians

About 60% of the respondents claimed that they became Christians during childhood. The respondents argued that this was because they were born into the church, so definitely this was the period of which they became Christians. For instance a respondent confirmed that: “I became a Christian because I was born into the church.”

About 10% of the respondents showed that they became Christians during their teens. One of the respondents confirmed that: “I believe it was during my teen years.”

About 30% of the respondents could not really tell the time they became Christians. Their answers showed that they were not certain of the period. One of the respondents ascribed to that: “Can’t remember oo”

4.1.2 Choice of Church

Respondents were asked about their motivation behind the church they belong to currently. Their answers were categorized according to the following which is parental factor, neighborhood factor and invitation. The categorizations of their answers are discussed below.

Parental Factor

Most of the respondents, about 85%, showed that their parents were the reason behind the church they belong to currently. They claimed that since their parents were the first to introduce them to church attendance, they became members of the church without hesitation hence they were born into the church. An example is shown: “My parents are members so automatically I became a member.”

191 Interview with a homosexual, May 14 2018 at Lashibi.
192 Interview with a homosexual, May 13 2018 at Nungua.
193 Interview with a homosexual May 14 2018 at Tema.
194 Interview with a homosexual, May 13, 2018 at Nungua.
Neighborhood Factor

About 10% of the respondents claimed that distance is the reason why they attend the church they belong to. They showed that since the church is in the neighborhood, it is a motivating factor to be part of the church. They would not have to travel far to attend church services. This is shown below:

After I moved into this area, I wanted a church nearby so I think that is why I am in this church. It has really helped to be punctual. If I was staying afar I don’t think coming to church will be that easy because I will spend a lot of money. I will pay fares and also give offerings. I am so happy that church is very near my brother.\textsuperscript{195}

Invitation

However, about 5% of the respondents claimed that the choice of church was because of an invitation. These remaining respondents showed that, they could not or might not have been part of the church if they were not invited. They showed that they were not going to church until they were invited to join the church.

I was not going to church at first. I was just there on Sundays. I hardly thought about church. What I rather did often was to wash and prepare food. One day, I think I had a call from an old friend. He said they are having a program at church and he pleaded with me to honor the program. I told him I will think about it. I went for the program. I am not too sure but I think it was somewhere in December last year. I enjoyed the service and that is how come I am now a member of the church.\textsuperscript{196}

4.1.3 Duration of Membership

Respondents were asked for how long they have been in the church they are in currently and their responses were as follows:

\textsuperscript{195} Interview with a homosexual, May 14 2018 at Tema.
\textsuperscript{196} Interview with a homosexual, May 14,2018 at Lashibi.
**Childhood**

About 70% of the respondents showed that they had been in church from childhood, so basically that is how long they have been in the church. An example is below:

I have been in the church since childhood. You know as child you dare not say you won’t go to church when your parents are going. Daddy is the strict type. He will just not allow anyone to be at home. I remember that, I was sick some time ago. Do you know what he told me? He said Jesus heals and I had to dress up immediately and go to church. I was just going to church for going sake though. Just that I became serious by giving my life to Christ during my teen years.\(^\text{197}\)

**Approximation of Years**

The other respondents comprising of about 30% of the whole, showed that they had been in the church from two decades down to a year. Almost all respondents under this section were not too exact with the number of years shown. Some could not even remember how long so they guessed they number of years they had been in church. An example to confirms this is shown: “I think it’s either three or four years Sir. Mmmm I am not too sure but it’s around that period.”\(^\text{198}\)

**4.1.4 Regularity at Church**

Respondents were asked about their church attendance to show if they regularly go to church often or not and their reasons for the answers provided. About 90% of the respondents attended church regularly. Some had no reason for their regular attendance. About 65% claimed that the joy of attending church motivated their church attendance. Also, about 10% claimed that they had no reason for being regular at church. About 5% claimed that the role played in church motivated them. About

\(^{197}\) Interview with a homosexual, May13 2018 at Nungua.

\(^{198}\) Interview with a homosexual, May 14, 2018 at Tema.
5% showed that their parents contributed to their motivation and about 5% showed that distance was the motivating factor. Some respondents claimed that they were happy going to church, others emphasized the role they play at church, also parents motivated some respondents to go to church and the short distance from their homes to church contributed to their regular attendance. An example to confirm this:

Yes I go often because I have nothing to do in the house and its fun to go to church. Sometimes I just wish we stay in church for longer periods. I really do enjoy church. Staying at home at times can be boring because I am often alone. So why should I miss church for anything?199

However, about 10% of the respondents who did not go to church often attributed their inability to busy schedules. An example is below:

No, sometimes I go to work”. My work runs on shift so sometimes I go to work on Sundays. Probably in a month if I am lucky I will go to church twice. There are times I work additional hours too so it doesn’t permit me to go to church always especially Sundays. My pastors sometimes complain that I should make time for God. Maybe when I get another work I will be able to be regular at church.200

4.1.5 Role Played at Church

Respondents were asked if they play any role in church. Half of them (50%) played roles such as ushering and singing and the remaining played no roles.

4.1.6 Disclosure of Sexuality

Respondents were asked if they had disclosed their sexuality to anyone. These were the responses. About 95% of the respondents claimed that they had not revealed their sexuality to anyone because of the stigmatization they envisage to receive from

199 Interview with a homosexual, May 14, 2018 at Lashibi.
200 Interview with a homosexual, May 19, 2018 at Teshie.
family, friends and society at large. They showed that most people who knew about their sexuality are also homosexuals. An example to confirm is as follows:

Apart from my partner, nobody knows because I will be in trouble. From my family to friends everyone will be disappointed. They don’t perceive me to be one. I don’t want lose anyone in my life. Its better they don’t know at all. The society does not agree to this so how I can tell anyone. I just don’t want trouble. 201

Irrespective of the 95% not disclosing their sexual identity, about 5% of the respondents claimed that they had revealed their sexuality to only a few people. These people were aware because of trust. An example to confirm this is shown below:

I have told two of my friends who are my best friends. I have also told my uncle who is a pastor and I have told them not to tell anybody. I want to tell my dad too but I don’t know how to go about it. I just hope I will find the courage to tell him. I am afraid though. My uncle is calm in nature that is why I was able to gather the courage to tell him but dad hmmm it’s a whole essay about him. He doesn’t have time for us and when he is home and you decide to approach him it is not easy at all. Normally, we approach mum on issues about our lives but as for this I don’t know how mum will take it. Maybe I will give it a try or I will just forget about telling her.202

4.1.7 Is Same-Sex Relation a Sin?

Same-Sex Relations a Sin

Respondents were asked whether they perceive their sexuality a sin. About 90% of the respondents showed that it is. Those who claimed it is a sin argued based on religious doctrine. Most of the arguments in connection to doctrine were based on the creation story in the Bible. They claimed that God created a man and a woman in the Bible to show the kind of sexual relationship He intended for the human race. Adam and Eve were mostly cited to buttress the creation argument. Secondly, the Sodom and Gomorrah episode was used to buttress the argument under religious doctrine.

201 Interview with a homosexual, May 14 2018 at Lashibi.
202 Interview with a homosexual, May 13 2018 at Nungua.
Generally speaking, the Bible and the tenets of the churches they attended influenced their arguments. One respondent captures it this way:

Well, I know it’s sinful. Just that one of my partners gives me a lot of money after any intercourse. He is in his late forties and I meet him once a while. Ermm, let's say once or twice a month depending on the call I receive from him for us to meet. Sometimes, I feel like going for help, other times I don’t feel like going for help, but for the money I get from him. Since the Bible speaks against homosexuality it’s definitely sinful. For example, Adam and Eve were first to show that homosexuality is a sin. If it were a man and a man it wouldn’t have been a problem but man and a woman in the beginning. I was introduced to it by my school father when I was in school. I wouldn’t want to mention the name of my school but I can tell you it is a boys’ school. Since then I have been in it but I know it is definitely a sin.  

**Same-Sex Relations not a Sin**

About 10% of the respondents argued that it is a natural phenomenon. They claimed that same-sex relations can never be sinful. They argued that if it is sinful why they feel for same-sex. They further claimed that feelings can never be sinful. This is confirmed by:

No, I think I am born with it. How can I feel for someone and say it’s a sin. Well, societies at large might not ermm agree with me but I don’t want anyone’s approval. My feelings for guys remain my private and I repeat my private affair. If the church thinks I am sinning I don’t care. My feelings are mine and I have the right to use what I feel the way I want to use it. Nobody can tell me God got it wrong with my feelings. It is nature.

**4.1.8 Teachings or Preaching**

Respondents were asked whether they had heard of any preaching or teaching against their sexuality and how they felt about the messages they heard. 100% of the respondents claimed that they have heard teachings and preaching about their

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203 Interview with a homosexual, May 13, 2018 at Nungua.
204 Interview with a homosexual, May 19 2018 at Lashibi.
sexuality. The difference was how they felt as regards the teachings and preaching heard. This is discussed below:

**Feelings of Remorse**

About 90% of the respondents said they felt remorseful about their sexuality. Especially those who stated that same-sex relation is a sin added that they need help to overcome their challenge. About 75% focused more on being helped but how and where to seek help became the bone of contention because of the stigma attached to same-sex relations. About 10% argued that, what they are doing is sinful but they can’t stop due to reasons such as finances. About 5% were also arguing that they believe with time they would come out of what they were going through. Examples to confirm the three categories of respondents are seen in the following statements:

Yes, on several occasions. I actually know what I’m doing is sinful so anytime they preach against it I feel so bad [tears drop]. I don’t want them to know my sexuality so I pretend to behave like I am one of them. Hmmmm, the truth of the matter is I can’t stop itoo. I really need help but who do I go to. I fear that the way people know me hmmm will be different when they hear I am one. Hmmmmmm

Another argued thus:

Well, I have heard a lot. Just that one of my partners gives me a lot of money after any intercourse. He is in his late forties and I meet him once a while. Mmmm lets say once or twice a month depending on the call I receive from him for us to meet. Sometimes I felt like going for help, other times too I don’t feel like going for help but because of the money I get from him. Money hmmm the money ooo. Ghana is hard, man must survive!

One respondent also argued that: “Ermm, sometimes but I am still praying about it. With time I will stop.”
Feeling Unconcerned

However, some of the respondents representing about 10% were not worried at all with the messages they heard. Some of the respondents in this category were those who claimed that homosexuality is not a sin. According to these respondents the fact that teachings and preaching go against them does not have any impact on them. One respondent for example confirms that:

I took it cool because it was their world against mine so I didn’t really feel anything. After all we live in a free world. Nobody cares. We are all selfish so why should anyone speak against how we feel. Let them continue preaching we don’t care. It is our lives against theirs. They will preach till they get tired. Even if they claim we are sinning. Who doesn’t sin? What about chasing somebody’s wife, what about stealing, what about stealing church money? They should give us a break!”

4.1.9 Change of Sexual Orientation

About 90% of the respondents asserted that they wish for a change of sexual orientation and they agreed that faith and healing could be of help. One of the respondents asserted that:

Yeah. I believe faith and healing can do that’s why I have told my friends and my uncle pastor to be praying for me. I also go for prayers sessions often. Unless, I don’t hear of any prayer time I am there because I know God can heal me out of this thing.

However, about 5% of the respondents pinpointed that they would not want a change of sexual orientation. They further asserted that nothing can change who they are in terms of their sexuality. One said: “I don’t wish to. I’m just fine”.

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208 Interview with a homosexual, May 19 2018 at Lashibi.
209 Interview with a homosexual, May 13,2018 at Nungua.
210 Interview with a homosexual, May 19 2018 at Lashibi.
In addition, some of the respondents about (5%) were also uncertain about a change in sexuality. They did not know whether they wanted change or not. This is confirmed by one of the respondents who said:

Asemoo. I can’t really tell since I haven’t opened up to any help with regard to faith and healing. Maybe yes, maybe no. To be frank I haven’t decided yet. Well it is really a challenging issue. Eiii hmmm I don’t even know what to say.\footnote{Interview with a homosexual, May 14 2018 at Tema.}

4.2 Findings on Responses of Church Members (Not Involved in Same-Sex Relations), Leaders and Pastors of Action Chapel International and International Central Gospel Churches

Since church members who were not involved in same-sex relations, leaders and pastors were asked similar questions in order to ascertain their perception and relationship with Christians who are involved in same-sex relations, their responses are grouped together in terms of similar questions asked. They basically shared similar thoughts. This is not too surprising because they belong to the same family of Christians which is Neo-Pentecostalism. The first aspect which is dealt with is their encounter with people involved in same-sex relations. The second aspect is how they will relate with fellow members and leaders when they find out they are involved in same-sex relations. It must be noted that church members seen in this part of the discussion are not involved in same-sex relations as compared to the discussions made earlier about church members involved in same-sex relations.
4.2.1 Encounter with Same-Sex Related Persons

Church members were asked during the interview whether they had had encounter with people involved in same-sex relations, and for those who had not encountered one, how they would react upon encountering him or her. About 82% of the respondents claimed that they had not encountered homosexuals before whiles the remaining had. Approximately 16% of respondents who claimed they had not encountered homosexuals showed that the sexuality of an individual does not really matter when dealing with them. This is confirmed by one of the respondents who assert that:

No, I will be indifferent. I actually don’t mind people’s sexuality. We were all created by God. Why should I look down on someone because of who he is? If God was to look at me and treat me with my lifestyle I will be dead by now. I am also not perfect so are these people. We must pray for them instead of thinking they are the worst sinner. Senior man we are all not perfect ooo!

Almost (18%) of the respondents also argued that they would not want to have anything to do with homosexuals and even if there was any opportunity for such an encounter they would want to miss it. Some of the respondents who showed extreme carefulness and used some derogatory words for people involved in same-sex relations. This can be confirmed by one respondent saying that:

No, I haven’t encountered any homosexuals and in case I encountered one, it would be weird for me. I wouldn’t want to get closer. I see them as abnormal human beings. Therefore, I just wish in my entire life I wouldn’t encounter any. Why would someone decide to be like this? Aaaaah what at all do they want?

Again about 40% indicated they would be careful but did not use any derogatory language as compared to those earlier discussed. An example is shown below: “No, I

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212 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 4 2018 at Tema.
213 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 10 2018 at Achimota.
believe they are human like us. Just that they have taken a different style to sleep with men. 

For me, I will try to abstain and be away from them. 214

Furthermore, according to approximately (12%) of the respondents, they would show sympathy to people involved in same-sex relations. They will be willing to help them in any way they deem fit which is discussed below in terms of pastoral care. A respondent confirmed this by: “No, I haven’t. I shouldn’t be quick to judge them as if they are the worst sinners.” 215

Respondents who had encountered people involved in same-sex relations claimed that encountering a homosexual did not really affect their relationship. This is similar to the indifferent stance discussed earlier. An example to confirm this is below:

I first met a lesbian at school. I was surprised though because she didn’t hide it. She openly let us know that she was one the moment we got into first year. I was sharing the same room with her. Sometimes I was afraid though. She would dress like a guy and speak like a guy. She was muscular too. Sometimes her friends who I presume to be lesbians visit her at the hostel. To be frank she was strong so nobody dared her koraaaa. Anyway that didn’t stop her from being my friend. We were still acquaintances. 216

Leaders and Pastors were also asked about their encounter with people involved in same-sex relations. Their answers are grouped together because they all indicated that they were or would be indifferent towards people involved in same-sex relations. However, the kind of indifference they showed is different from that of church members. The answers they gave were influenced by the role they play in church. This is because they emphasized that the role they play in church was a contributing

214 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 16 2018 at Teshie.
215 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 3 2018 at Tema.
216 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 13 2018 at Tema.
factor to how they behave because it is part of the training they have received as Shepherds of the church. They further showed that their role allows them to meet people from different backgrounds and different characters so to them meeting a person involved in same-sex relations is not new. One of the respondents:

You know that as pastors we have gone through training to get to where we are now. In fact, we have been called by God to have the heart for people. Sometimes we encounter very difficult people and situations in our line of duty. There are times we can’t sleep until we see solutions in the lives of people. Just before you came here I was encouraging a woman who wants mmmm sorry I mean discouraging her not to divorce the husband. I was telling her that he will change. There are times you have to be extremely patient when dealing with people of this nature. My brother I think meeting homosexuals are normal. I remember I encountered one some time ago, it was a normal meeting with him. It was not anything strange to meet him so I think meeting a homosexual is not strange at all. I almost forgot to add that homosexuality or what you call same-sex relation is like any other sin so if I can be bold to evangelize to a prostitute, what stops me from reaching out to a homosexual. I can also talk to a homosexual without any problem. It is a normal situation to encounter in our day to day work as men of God.217

4.2.2 Basis for Regarding Same-Sex Relations a Sin

All respondents in this section ranging from members, pastors and leaders claimed that same-sex relation is a sin. They all used religious doctrines to buttress their arguments. Pastors and leaders made statements by referring to exact scriptures from the Bible that showed that same-sex relation is a sin but the members explained generally with scenarios from similar text used by the pastors and leaders. However, some respondents’ particularly church members used abnormality and culture to buttress their argument on same-sex relations being sinful. Before I discuss the three extensively, a respondent confirmed this by highlighting all the three in the responses:

Homosexuality, I believe it’s a sin and foolishness. God has created women for men and if they decide to have their fellow men, then I think they are not of their senses. Aaah! Even animals don’t practice that my brother, these people if I had my own way they should be wiped from the

217 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal pastor, May 6 2018 at Kasoa.
surface of the earth. This is the same thing that happened at Sodom and Gomorrah and God wiped all of them away. This is total ignorance and foolishness!

Religious Doctrine

All respondents (100%) used the Bible to argue on this question. The creation story was the most emphasized scripture used to buttress this point. Respondents argued that God in His wisdom created man for woman and woman for man in terms of sexual intercourse. They further argued that if homosexuality is not a sin then God should have created two men in the creation story. Since God created a man and a woman then it means that any sexually related affair between human beings other than man-woman relationship is not the original intention of God. This is where Sodom and Gomorrah is used to buttress the intentions of God. The argument made here is that, if homosexuality is not a sin, Sodom and Gomorrah would not have been destroyed. There was emphasis on the fact that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was as a result of homosexuality. Other scriptures in the Old Testament and the New Testament were used to buttress the argument of same-sex relation being sinful. An example below from one of the respondents extensively addressed all the arguments under religious doctrine.

Hey Sir, you mean you don’t know homosexuality is a sin? We all know it oooh! No matter the current arguments on, let’s say they say we must legalize it. Me I am happy we have not legalized it as a country. Most of us in Ghana I know and really believe are Ghanaians sorry I mean believers of the Bible, how can we then say that homosexuality is not a sin. It looks as if I am angry let me calm down so we take scripture by scripture then we analyze it. I think we should start from the Old Testament then we go to the New. The first scripture I want us to look at is Genesis 2 verse 23-24. Let me paraphrase it. God allowed man to sleep in order to take his rib in order to create woman and we all know they had sex after they were sacked from the place mmmm Eden. If God did not want them to have sex then it would have been man and man. Are you getting the revelation I am bring out here. I believe that if all that Adam needed was a helper then a fellow man could have been of help.

Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 10 2018 at Achimota.
but no. Adam needed not just a helper in other areas but sexually too in order for them to procreate. One thing I usually say is if everybody was to be gay who will give birth? Now let’s look at another scripture. I have really prepared for this today because when you called that you will be coming to interview me on this area I got ready. In Leviticus 20:13, God calls it an abomination. It is God ooo not me. Sometimes I wonder when people say I was born like this. Eii how can you be born like this? God will not create anyone like this. It is demonic forces operating in the lives of these people. With New Testament we will look at three scriptures. Romans 1:26-27, 1 Timothy 1:10 and 1Corinthians 6:9-11. All these scriptures when you go home read them carefully. You will see that they all confirm one thing and this is homosexuality is a sin.219

Abnormality

Some respondents representing about (26%) of the respondents showed that same-sex is a sin because it is an abnormal behavior. They claimed that they are surprised that people will see same-sex relations as normal especially people from the West. They emphasized that it is not normal and people involved need spiritual and medical help.

One of the respondents asserts that:

This thing called homosexuality is a big problem in the world today. I wonder why the white people think it is okay to be a homosexual. All these things happening shows that Jesus is coming very very soon. I will not be surprised if they now say killing is also good. Hmmm, our brothers and sister in this need help paa from pastors and doctors. It is not normal.220

Culture

Approximately (70%) of the respondents also argued that the society does not accept it so it is a sin. They made references to the outcry of the general public anytime the legalization debate is raised. They argued that even when religion is set aside most Ghanaians are against same-sex relations. One of the respondents said that:

219 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal leader, June 1 2018 at Kasoa.
220 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 10 2018 at Achimota.
As a Christian the Bible says it’s a sin and there are scriptures from Genesis to Revelation to prove that. When we put Christianity aside we will realize that our own culture as people frowns upon it. See how people make noise when a foreigner wants to impose this thing on us. Even people who don’t go to church or belong to any religion know it’s a sin. I don’t think we will ever accept this as a normal life in Africa. No African will agree to this. We can be divided on issues even in Ghana but when it comes to homosexuality you will see how everybody will start talking. 221

4.2.3 Same-Sex Church Members

Respondents, specifically, church members who are not involved in same-sex relations, church leaders and pastors were asked of how they would react when it is discovered that a church member is involved in same-sex relations. A common theme run through their answers and this theme was pastoral care and counseling. Except a few who suggested excommunication and this was solely suggested among a few church members. Due to some differences among the themes, the responses are categorized. Church members who are not involved in same-sex relations are separated from pastors and leaders. Pastors and leaders seem to suggest the same answers. Therefore, the responses are grouped into two.

Church Members

About 90% of respondents suggested that when a fellow member of the church is found out to be involved in same-sex relations he or she must be offered pastoral care and counseling. The respondents suggested they would offer pastoral care or will assist the church members involved in same-sex relation to get help from church leaders or pastors. Pastoral care in this context is counseling, prayer and keeping the matter confidential. Counseling in this context is advising the person involved in

221 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal pastor, May 9 2018 at Tema.
same-sex relation or presenting the person to leadership to play the advisory role. An example of that represents counseling is shown below:

So if a church member is into this act, you don’t condemn the person. Unfortunately, most people really condemn sinners in Ghana because we live in a judgmental country where people pretend to be super holy. The moment they hear you have sinned in one way or the other all hell breaks loose. After all, the homosexual is also a human being. The best thing to do is to talk to the person in a nice way. Let the person know that he is loved by God. There is a need to remind the person of God’s love. Some time ago in Kumasi one friend of mine told me that he got into homosexuality when he was in school. I advised him that he should stop because it but if he can’t stop he must go to his pastor who will advise him on how to stop.\(^\text{222}\)

Prayer was also discussed as a form of pastoral counseling. Respondents suggested that there is a need to take the matter as a spiritual issue. The respondents argued that counseling alone will not be enough so in addition to counseling, prayer must be added. A respondent discussed that:

This matter is more spiritual than we see it oo. Nobody was born into this. We must pray for the person and we must tell church leaders to pray for the person too. The person must also be praying for himself. The homosexual person should also intercede for people in this act. Intercession has a way of delivering people. Prayer is a strong key.\(^\text{223}\)

Respondents further urged that the matter must be kept confidential. They argued that exposing the issue could rather worsen the person’s state. They urged that anyone who is found to be involved in same-sex relation must be assured that the matter will remain within the confines of the church. One respondent shows that: “This matter must be kept a secret if only we want to save the person. If you tell others then he will leave the church.”\(^\text{224}\)

\(^{222}\) Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 15 2018, at Teshie.  
\(^{223}\) Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 7 2018, at Ashaiman.  
\(^{224}\) Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 4 2018, at Tema.
However, about 10% of respondents claimed that people involved in same-sex relations should be excommunicated. They argued that people involved in same-sex relations should not be tolerated in the church but they should be sacked. They purported that people involved in same-sex relations can easily influence others if they are allowed in the church. In addition to that they argued that people involved in same-sex relations are capable of tarnishing the image of the church. They seem to suggest that people involved in same-sex relations are the worst sinners. A respondent showed that:

These people are not to be allowed in the church at all koraa! How can you sleep with your fellow man? These people when they enter your church and you allow them to stay they will make others join. It’s like a demonic force. No pastor should allow these people in the church. To me these people should be sacked the moment they enter the church.\textsuperscript{225}

\textbf{Church Leaders and Pastors}

All respondents also argued for pastoral care in connection to members who are discovered to be involved in same-sex relations. However, the nature of counseling and prayers was quite different. The leaders and pastors went further to show how they will counsel and pray for people involved in same-sex relations. Moreover, the showed an elaborative form of counseling and prayers. In connection to counseling this was what one respondent said:

Well, such people do deserve much attention. I will counsel him with the word of God and take him through vital scriptures to show him that this is not the will of God for him. I will constantly visit him in order to make sure he is well fed with the word of God. Ermmm, I believe they need continuous attention because they are used to a particular lifestyle so when you leave him alone he might go back. In fact, it is my greatest desire to win the lost for Jesus. By the help of the Holy Spirit I believe he will change.\textsuperscript{226}

\textsuperscript{225} Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 10 2018, at Achimota.

\textsuperscript{226} Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal pastor, June 11 2018, at Teshie.
With regard to prayer, one of the respondents said that:

I will organize the prayer warriors and declare a moment of fast for the homosexual. In fact, there will be a deliverance session. This thing is demonic and demons must be casted out. We will pray till we see change is his life.\textsuperscript{227}

4.2.4 Same-Sex Leaders

Respondents were asked how they would react when they discover that a leader of the church is involved in same-sex relations. Pastoral care was repeated within their responses. However, stripping of position was part of the responses and some church members also suggested excommunication.

Church Members

Nearly 90\% of the respondents suggested pastoral care and similar to above discussed. They further suggested that the leader must either resign from his or her position willingly or must be forced to resign from his or her position. Others even suggested that, stripping off the position must be the first thing to be done before pastoral care is offered. One of the respondents extensively showed that:

Hmmm, we expect better from our leaders but anyway they are also human beings. Like I said earlier for the member the same should be applied to the leader. Hmmm but the leader ermmm must show better example so I suggest his position is taken away from him to serve as a deterrent to others. That should be the first thing before any other thing is that so that others don’t follow suit.\textsuperscript{228}

\textsuperscript{227} Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal leader, May 6 2018, at Kasoa.
\textsuperscript{228} Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 4 2018, at Tema.
About 10% of the respondents suggested excommunication. There was use of derogatory language by some respondents who suggested excommunication. Anger was sensed in their response. One of the respondents exclaimed that:

My brother I am not angry ooo but if a leader is into this act then how was the leadership chosen? Is it by face or appearance? A leader must not be seen in such acts at all because leaders must set good examples for us. A member can be pardoned a bit but a leader must be dealt with vigorously. He must be withdrawn with immediate effect because he cannot lead himself how can he lead us? After this, he must be asked to leave the church quietly and never return because staying in the church can influence others to be like him.  

Church Leaders and Pastors

Respondents argued for pastoral care and stripping of position if church leaders or pastors are discovered to be involved in same-sex relation. However, the nature of pastoral care is quite different from a church member found to be involved in a same-sex relation. This shown by one of the respondents:

It will be quite unfortunate to find one of our leaders or pastors in this situation. We believe leadership is the very vital in church administration because everyone looks up to the leader. The leader is seen to possess qualities above reproach. Therefore when such things happen to leaders and we don’t deal properly with them, it might set a bad example in the church. First of all we must take his position away from him. The whole church must know that we are doing something about it so that they don’t think we are covering up for him. He must start all over again like a new born Christian. He must go through classes like every new member. He must rededicate his life to Christ. Sometimes pastors who go against the church regulations are withdrawn from their positions and made to sit under senior ministers until there is a change before he is reinstated.

4.2.5 Religious Doctrine

Respondents were asked whether the doctrines of the church can transform a person involved in same-sex relations. All respondents (church members, leaders and

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229 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 10 2018, at Achimota.
230 Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal pastor, June 11 2018, at Teshie.
pastors) agreed unanimously that the doctrines of the church can transform a person involved in same-sex relation. However, there were two perspectives of reasons given by the respondents to show why the doctrines of the church can transform a person involved in same-sex relations. These perspectives are knowledge and willingness which are discussed respectively.

**Knowledge**

Respondents suggested that knowing the doctrines of the church and listening to them regularly has the potential to transform everybody irrespective of one’s sexuality. Therefore the teachings of the church can bring transformation to a person involved in same-sex relation. One of the respondents’ showed that:

> The Bible is says faith comes by hearing and by hearing the word of God. The operating word here is hearing. Hearing is mentioned twice in this scripture in the book of Romans. Until you hear you cannot do or be what the word of God says. I believe with all my heart that anybody who hears and hears again will by all means be transformed by the word of God.\(^{231}\)

**Willingness**

Respondents also suggested that no matter the knowledge the person has acquired, it must correspond to the person’s willingness. According to the respondents, change will only take effect when the individuals agree to change. In other words, individuals cannot be forced to change. This is captured by:

> Sure I believe the doctrines of the church can transform a person but it will also depend on the person, if he or she is willing to change. You cannot force the person to change. Let me repeat it again, you cannot under no circumstance force the person to change. Let me give you an example if you are hungry and I give you food, it is your duty to put the food in your mouth but I don’t think I can forcefully put the food in your mouth. The same applies to the man or woman who wants to change

\(^{231}\) Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal pastor, June 11 2018, at Teshie
from a particular situation such as this. The willingness must be there otherwise there will be no change. So people must be willing to change if not there is no need to even hear the word in the first place. Today most people hear but there is no evidence of change.\textsuperscript{232}

4.2.6 No Documentation

Respondents (leaders and pastors) showed that the Bible is the only ‘document’ they have to handle issues of same-sex relations. Therefore if any issue of same-sex relation arises in the church the Bible will be used to handle the issue. One of the respondents shows that: “We don’t really have a document but the Bible is what we use.”\textsuperscript{233}

4.3 Perception of People involved in Same-Sex Relations towards Neo-Pentecostals is Negative

The discussions showed that the respondents have been Christians for some time now. From childhood (about 60\%) through to teenage (about 10\%) and unspecified number of years (about 30\%) are the duration of the years the respondents have been Christians. It must be noted that during the research, 50\% of respondents played various roles at church and the remaining 50\% did not play any role at church. In terms of their regularity to church as discussed earlier, about 90\% of the respondents attended church regularly and almost 10\% did not attend church regularly due to certain reasons that have been discussed already in this chapter. However, the issue of disclosure of their sexuality revealed that about 90\% had not disclosed their sexuality and even about 10\% that had disclosed their sexuality hardly revealed it to any member, leader or pastor of the church they belonged to due to stigmatization. They showed this by claiming that same-sex relation is not an upheld form of sexuality in our society. This confirms the assertion that culture is a contributing factor with

\textsuperscript{232} Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal member, May 4 2018, at Tema.
\textsuperscript{233} Interview with a Neo-Pentecostal pastor, June 1 2018, at Kasoa.
regard to the perception people have about same-sex relations in Ghana. Therefore they perceive society (Neo-Pentecostals inclusive) to be against them. This assertion is made by one of the respondents cited earlier under disclosure of sexuality (see 4.1.6). This seems to show that their perception towards the Neo-Pentecostals is negative.

In addition to the negative perception towards Neo-Pentecostals, the research revealed that approximately 90% of the respondents argued that same-sex relation is a sin whiles nearly 10% debunked the notion that same-sex relation is a sin. However, 100% of the respondents claimed that they had heard messages preached and taught against their sexuality. The difference is how they reacted or felt towards the messages they heard. While some of the respondents were remorseful after the messages they heard, others seem to be unconcerned. According to the research conducted, almost 90% were remorseful and about 10% seem not to be bothered about the messages they heard. It must be noted that, the same percentage of people who argued that same-sex relation is a sin is equal to the same percentage of people who showed remorse of their sexuality. About 75% of those who showed remorse largely argued that, there is a need for the church to go beyond preaching against their sexuality which seems to be the core of their messages. They suggested that the church should also focus on offering them help, especially those who wish to change their sexuality. People involved in same-sex relations who wanted help from the church were afraid to open up because of how they are going to be perceived after opening up (see 4.1.8 feelings of remorse). Therefore the messages they hear about

their sexuality seem to suggest that it is more of condemning the act but had little to do with helping those involved.

4.4 Perception of Neo-Pentecostals towards People involved in Same-Sex Relations is Positive and Negative

The research revealed that Neo-Pentecostals have a negative perception towards same-sex relations or homosexuality but with regard to the perception towards people involved in same-sex relations it is both positive and negative. All respondents (100%) of Neo-Pentecostals used for this research ranging from church members, leaders to pastors unanimously argued that same-sex relations is a sin. Various reasons were discussed in this chapter to substantiate their claim. The positive and negative perception will be discussed respectively.

4.4.1 Positive Perception

With regard to the perception Neo-Pentecostals have towards people involved in same-sex relations it was revealed that the leaders and pastors had a positive perception. The perception was revealed through their reaction upon encountering a homosexual. 100% of respondents argued that they would be indifferent upon encountering a homosexual and those who had encountered also claimed they were indifferent upon encountering homosexuals. This perception is motivated by the roles they play in church as leaders and pastors. As leaders and pastors, they showed that their roles in church generally enable them to attend to people from diverse backgrounds and since they perceive same-sex relation as a sin, sinners are welcomed by them. To a large extent this is similar to the position of the Catholic Church. However, the Catholic Church seems not to agree that people with homosexual
tendencies are sinners until they practice what they feel. That is why people with same-sex tendencies are offered help within the Catholic Church. Secondly the Catholic Church has some documents on how to handle same-sex relations but Neo-Pentecostals do not have documents that clearly outline the way to handle same-sex related issues apart from the Bible. Therefore the position of the leaders and pastors with regard to perception they have towards people involved in same-sex relations, has not translated into that of the members who hold a negative perception as discussed below.

4.4.2 Negative Perception

With regard to this perception, the research revealed that members of Neo-Pentecostals to a large extent had a negative perception upon encounters with homosexuals. Approximately, 30% showed that they would and were indifferent and about 12% showed that they would and were sympathetic towards homosexuals. This means that nearly 42% of the respondents had positive perception towards homosexuals. However, almost 58% representing the majority of members showed their negative perception in terms of being extremely cautious (about 18%) and cautious (about 40%).

4.5 Relationship of Neo-Pentecostals towards People involved in Same-Sex Relations is Positive

With regard to relationship, Neo-Pentecostals to a large extent showed positive relationship towards people involved in same-sex relations. This was revealed through their reaction towards members and leaders who are discovered to be homosexuals in

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the church. Majority of the respondents argued for pastoral care in terms of the relationship they would have with homosexuals. About 10% argued for excommunication when members and leaders are discovered to be homosexuals. However, almost 90% suggested that if pastoral care fails in terms of the relationship with leaders then they would opt for excommunication since they perceive that leaders must lead exemplary lives. Therefore to a large extent, pastoral care dominated the kind of relationship Neo-Pentecostals would have with people involved in same-sex relations. This position is also similar to that of the Catholic Church but the approach is different. While documents aid the approach in the Catholic Church\textsuperscript{236}, the Bible is the only approach with regard to Neo-Pentecostals.

4.6 Conclusion

It was revealed during the research that people involved in same-sex relations who were Christians largely had their sexual identity hidden from the church. They argued that stigmatization within the society and the church would not enable them to disclose their sexuality and even those who disclosed their sexuality did that on the basis of trust they had in others. It appeared that they did not trust the church (members, leaders and pastors) to let them know their sexuality. During the research, it appeared that Neo-Pentecostals to a large extent were willing to have discourse or dialogue with people involved in same-sex relations. Since most of the people involved in same-sex relations wanted a change of sexual orientation, then the church (leaders and pastors) has a role to play in stating their stance clearly to the members on how they perceive people in same-sex relations aside their perception on same-sex

\textsuperscript{236} “Catholic Documents on Family, Sex, and Homosexuality”, accessed June 18, 2018, https://stpeterlist.com/5-catholic-documents-on-family-sex-and-homosexuality
relations or homosexuality. This is because the members of the church seem to have diverse views on the perception they have towards homosexuals. The research revealed that their perception was largely negative but their relationship to people involved in same-sex relations was largely positive. The leaders and pastors were consistent with their stance on perception and relationship which was positive. However, members were not consistent with their perception and relationship.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.0 Introduction

Same-Sex relations or homosexuality undoubtedly continues to be a relevant topic for discourse globally, especially, within the African continent. The various dimensions of same-sex relations have received much attention in recent times especially the legal dimension. The legal dimension as discussed earlier in this research continues to be the center of the debate in recent times. Consistently, the nation has had to deal with the legalization of it since foreign development partners continue to mount pressure on leaders to legalize it. Till now, the legalization of it has not seen the day of light since leaders have still not agreed to it. The leaders in general argue that culture of the people does not permit same-sex relations so until culture is changed with regard to same-sex relations then there will be no room for a debate on legalization.

5.1 Major Findings

It was revealed that culture and religion are the main reasons most Ghanaians give to substantiate their arguments against same-sex relations. Some of the people who have used culture to substantiate their arguments are presidents. For example Former President Atta Mills and President Akufo-Addo have all used cultural factors to purport their stance against same-sex relations. Religious bodies in Ghana have also done same including Neo-Pentecostals.
It was also revealed in the research that same-sex relations have been or is present in some African countries. The nature of the relation differed in various contexts. For example, in South Africa, same-sex relations were or are seen to have occurred in the mines between senior and junior miners, also in South Africa, traditional healers were involved in same-sex relations. The example from South Africa is quite different from the one in Ghana. While same-sex relations in South Africa involved sexual activities that of Ghana within the Nankani of the Northern Region and the Nzema did not involve sexual activities even though both situations showed same-sex relations. However, it was revealed that, even though same-sex relations had presence in Africa it was not an idle part of the culture.

It was also revealed in the research that Metropolitan Community Church is a church that accepts people involved in same-sex relations. Pastors and leaders of the Metropolitan Community Church have same-sex tendencies. The Catholic Church generally argues that people can have same-sexual tendencies. However they must not be involved in same-sexual practices. Therefore people with same-sexual tendencies must be offered pastoral care. In addition, it was revealed in the research that the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Church have different stances especially those in Africa do not agree to same-sex relations. Moreover, it was revealed in the research that, people involved in same-sex relations who are Neo-Pentecostals have a negative perception towards those who are not involved in same-sex relations. Moreover, some Neo-Pentecostals (church members who are not involved in same-sex relations) have a negative perception about Neo-Pentecostals involved in same-sex relations but a positive relationship towards them. However, Neo-Pentecostal pastors and leaders have both positive perception and relationship towards Neo-Pentecostal members.
involved in same-sex relations. Nevertheless, with regard to same-sex relations, respondents had a negative perception.

**5.2 Recommendation for Further Studies**

The research mainly focused on two Neo-Pentecostal churches but these are not the only Neo-Pentecostal churches in Ghana. There are other Neo-Pentecostal churches that can be researched. The perception and relationship of other Neo-Pentecostal churches will further enrich this research or add new perspectives to the stance Neo-Pentecostals have towards members of the church who are discovered to be involved in same-sex relations.

In addition, further research can be carried out on other Neo-Pentecostal churches outside Ghana. Neo-Pentecostals outside Ghana can further enrich or bring new perspectives of perception and relationship Neo-Pentecostals have towards church members involved in same-sex relations. This will enable a comparative analysis of the Ghanaian situation and the other Neo-Pentecostal church outside Ghana.

Furthermore, other churches (historic mainline) in Ghana can be researched into with regard to same-sex relations. Even though the Presbyterian Church of Ghana seem to have declared their stance, more probing can identify in-depth reasons behind the stance they have taken towards same-sex relations. Their perspective about the same-sex relations will add to researches done in connection to same-sex relations.

Further research should be done on those who do not wish to change their sexual orientation but are in the church. Further and elaborative research must probe into the
reasons why people involved in same-sex relations have negative perceptions about their church but are still in the church. Since the churches in this research revealed that same-sex relation is a sin, what happens to those who believe that it is not a sin despite what is preached or taught? The research did not give attention to this particular area. Therefore a study of this area will be vital.

In addition, the perception of people involved in same-sex relations who are not Christians can be researched. The research can focus on their perception about churches in general. This can also be of benefit to churches in general. This will form an outside perspective of the issue. Research can also be conducted to find out the perception churches have towards people involved in same-sex relations who are not Christians.

5.3 Conclusion

The research focused on the religious dimension of same-sex relations. Before this focus, a little attention was given to the reality of the situation within the African continent. This is because same-sex relation is perceived to be foreign since some countries outside Africa have legalized it. The chapter discussed the concept of same-sex relations within the African continent.

Within the religious dimension, the Catholic Church was seen to have documents to support their stance on same-sex relations. This was used for this research because it gave grounds to fill the gap of the Neo-Pentecostals. The Neo-Pentecostals being part of the largest Christian community in Ghana have made statements with regard to same-sex relations. However, a proper documentation on the issue to the best of my
knowledge has received less attention. Therefore chapter four filled a gap of having some sort of documentation to support the stance of Neo-Pentecostals.
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“Gays will rule Ghana one day, if Christians Relax”, *Ghanaian Chronicle*, July 6, 2017.


**Report**

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions for People Involved in Same-Sex Relations

1. When did you become a Christian?

2. Why did you decide to join the church you are in?

3. How long have you been in the church?

4. Do you go to church often? If yes why/ if no why?

5. What role do you play in church?

6. Have you been able to disclose your sexuality to anyone? If yes how many people and why those people in particular/ if no why haven’t you been able to?

7. Do you think your sexuality is sinful? If yes why/ if no why?

8. Have you heard any teaching or preaching from church that has been against your sexuality? If yes how did you feel?

9. Do you wish to change your sexual orientation? If yes why/ if no why
Appendix B: Interview Questions for Church Members

1. Please tell me about yourself

2. Role in church

3. Have you encountered any homosexual in or outside the church? If yes how was the encounter/ if no how will you react to this encounter?

4. Is homosexuality a Sin? If yes why/if no why

5. If any member of the church confides in you that he or she is a homosexual what will be your reaction?

6. How should church leadership handle homosexuals who openly decide to let leadership know their sexuality?

7. Upon discovery that a member is secretly a homosexual what should the church leadership do?

8. Upon discovery that a leader is a homosexual what should be done?

9. Do you think the doctrines of the church can transform a homosexual?
Appendix C: Interview Questions for Leaders

1. Please tell me about your role in church

2. Have you encountered any homosexual in or outside the church? If yes how was the encounter/ if no how will you react to this encounter?

3. Is homosexuality a sin? If yes why/ if no why?

4. If a church member approaches you that he or she is a homosexual, what will be your reaction?

5. If it is found out that a leader of the church is a homosexual, what will be the reaction of church leadership?

6. Does the church have a document in place to handle homosexuality or is the church planning to have one since the issue has become topical recently?
Appendix D: Interview Questions for Pastors

1. Please tell me about yourself

2. Have you encountered any homosexual in or outside the church? If yes how was the encounter/ if no how will you react to this encounter?

3. Is homosexuality a sin?

4. If a church member approaches you that he or she is a homosexual what will be your reaction?

5. If it is found out that a leader of the church is a homosexual what will be your reaction?