

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

**HOMOSEXUALITY AMONG SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN
KUMASI: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EXPERIENCES OF SOME SELECTED
GAYS AND LESBIANS.**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Frank Okyere, do hereby declare that this thesis/dissertation/project report is the result of my own original research, except for sections for which references have been duly made, and to the best of my knowledge, no part of it has been presented to this University College or any other institution for the award of a degree.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear wife Esther Okyere and our two lovely children Nana Kwame Okyere and Nana Yaa Boamah Okyere.

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To the Almighty God and my Lord Jesus Christ be all the glory and honour for seeing me through this task I set for myself. Without Him nothing could have been achieved.

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ABSTRACT

The debate over homosexuality seems to be an unending one. Christian theologians are sharply divided on the subject. Some assert that homosexuality should be accepted as an alternative lifestyle whilst others conclude that it is detestable and must not be practised by Christians.

Consequently, many concepts have emerged in an attempt to explain the existence of homosexuality in humanity. Some researchers have attempted to link homosexuality to a gene making the phenomenon appear beyond the control of the individual. Conversely, this research finding was not successful in its replication and it has since been rejected. Other explanations to this phenomenon emphasise brain structure, prenatal issues and psychological factors.

Against the backdrop of the various concepts, the researcher sought an understanding of the phenomenon from the experiences of some gays and lesbians in Senior High Schools in Kumasi. This research was necessitated by frequent media reportage about the practice in some Senior High Schools in the Metropolis. Seventeen (17) people shared their experiences. Out of this number, thirteen (13) were practicing homosexuals and the remaining four (4) were former gays.

From the experiences of the seventeen people, it is clear that homosexuality is not genetic, neither does it develop overnight but it is developmental. It is also not learnt. Homosexuality is not alien to the Ghanaian or African culture. It is a human phenomenon which has existed for thousands of years.

Findings from this research reveal that homosexuality is a sinful act as described by Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Romans (cf. Rom. 1:18-28). However, the approach of church leaders, heads of educational institutions and Ghanaians in general towards

homosexuality has not been effective in dealing with it. Instead of helping people who are struggling with homosexuality to overcome its grips through the love that Christ pours out to humanity, the society including the church rather treats them in a manner which worsens their situation. The story of the former gays provides hope to all homosexuals that they can change and live to fulfil the purpose for which God brought them into the world. This can be made possible when the church extends Christ's love to them.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

On September 14, 2015, a young self-confessed homosexual by name Orlando Wilson granted an interview to Anita Erskine on Viasat1 and said that he was sacked from his church by his pastor after confessing to him that he had engaged in homosexual activities.¹ On January 20, 2016 it was reported that Opoku Ware Senior High School in Kumasi had indefinitely suspended three final year students who were suspected to be homosexuals.² Two years earlier in the same school, some students were almost expelled for confessing that they were homosexuals had it not been for the passionate appeal of this researcher to the authorities of the school. Even with that, they were withdrawn from the boarding house without recourse to any remedial assistance to reform them. In another male Senior High School in Kumasi in 2015, three boys were also withdrawn from the boarding house for homosexuality. It seems that institutions in Ghana whether religious or secular are not ready to put up with any issue of homosexuality.

The popular belief among Ghanaians is that homosexuality is alien to the Ghanaian culture. Therefore whoever is identified as one is seen as a social deviant; hence not welcome. There have always been aggressive, suppressive and sometimes violent reactions from people towards homosexuality. When the Prime Minister of Britain, David Cameron, threatened to cut his country's aid to African countries that do not permit same-sex marriages for instance, he received a lot of bashing from the general

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8M0EdEC6ib4>. Accessed on December 17, 2015.

² Donald Ato Dapatem, "Three Opoku Ware SHS Students Suspended," *Daily Graphic*, January 20, 2016, 58.

Ghanaian populace. Again, during the launch of the book “The History of Akwamu” at Akwamu in the Eastern region on July 7, 2015, Nana Abrewa Kwabiaa IV proposed the legalisation of same-sex marriage in the country as a measure for birth control.³ The response she had from the members of the traditional council and other people caused her to retract later. What makes this hostility strong is the Criminal Code of Ghana Section 104 which criminalises the act of homosexuality. The law states in (1) (a) “Whoever has unnatural carnal knowledge of any person of age 16 or over without his consent shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term not less than five years and not more than twenty-five years. (b) Whoever has unnatural carnal knowledge of a person of age 16 or over with his consent is guilty of misdemeanour.” Giving life to this law, four men were jailed in 2003 by an Accra Circuit Court for practicing homosexuality.⁴

These are instances to support the fact that the Ghanaian society is simply not receptive towards homosexuality. But this is reminiscent of the state of affairs of the countries that have legalised same-sex marriage prior to doing so. Before the 1980s in the United States of America, homosexuality was always met with legal and violent suppression from the people and the federal government. For instance, on November 27, 1978 in the state of California, two known homosexual activists, Harvey Milk and George Mascone were assassinated and the assassin, Dan White by name, was handed a light sentence on a charge of manslaughter.⁵ In the case of Bowers versus Hardwick

³ <http://www.dailyguideghana.com/queenmother-calls-for-legalization-of-homosexuality-in-ghana>. Accessed on December 11, 2015.

⁴ Daily Graphic, “Gays can be prosecuted,” <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Gays-can-be-prosecuted-210533>. Accessed on December 17, 2015.

⁵ Milt Ford, “A Brief History of Homosexuality in America” <http://www.gvsu.edu/allies/a-brief-history-of-homosexuality-in-america-30.htm>. Accessed on December 17, 2015.

(1988), the Supreme Court of the U.S.A declared that homosexuality was illegal.⁶

Emmett Barcalow in 1994 wrote:

Many people in the United States today have a strong aversion to homosexuality and to homosexuals. Many people condemn homosexuals and homosexual acts as immoral. Homosexuals have been discriminated against in a variety of ways, perhaps most obviously in government. Homosexuals have been forbidden to serve in the United States military and have been unwelcome in certain branches of the federal government such as the Defence Department, FBI, State Department, and Secret Service. Openly acknowledging that a person is a homosexual can jeopardize his or her career in many areas of employment. Then, too, homosexuals or people suspected of being homosexuals can become the targets of animosity and violence. People have been verbally harassed, abused, and assaulted solely because they are or are thought to be homosexuals.⁷

Similarly in 17th Century England, homosexuality constituted capital crime.⁸ Apartheid South Africa was vehemently opposed to homosexual activities. People could be imprisoned to a maximum term of seven (7) years for it. Now, these countries have moved to legalise same-sex marriage. Marriage in the South African

⁶ Judith A. Boss, *Analysing Moral Issues* (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999), 489.

⁷ Emmett Barcalow, *Moral Philosophy: Theory and Issues* (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, A Division of Wadsworth Inc., 1999), 224.

⁸ Boss, *Analysing Moral Issues*, 488.

context, for example, is currently defined by their law as “the voluntary union of two persons.”⁹

Whilst these countries were brutally aggressive towards homosexuality, the number of homosexuals in their countries kept increasing by day. The more they tried to suppress homosexuals the more the homosexuals kept fighting back with legal and humanistic arguments. Eventually, the homosexuals won the battle. It is evident from these experiences from other countries that using aggression to fight homosexuality in society is not the panacea. According to a report by Amnesty International, between 1990 and 1999 more than three hundred people had been executed in Iran for transgressing the country’s laws against homosexuality.¹⁰ Yet, people continue to practice it in the country.

This researcher once sat on a disciplinary committee of a Senior High School that tried some homosexual offenders in 2013. One boy who was sixteen years of age confessed before the committee in tears that he had struggled since his childhood to find his sexual identity but grew up to finally accept that he was a homosexual. The tone with which he spoke caused some members of the committee to break down in tears. Many homosexuals like Orlando Wilson cannot recollect when they initially had sexual feelings for members of the same sex. They therefore conclude that they were born homosexuals. Although they find it extremely difficult to publicly confess, no amount of aggression, suppression and discrimination can let them change. Responding to a homosexual (Prince McDonald, president of Gays and Lesbians Association of Ghana) who spoke on Joy FM’s morning show during a phone-in

⁹ Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Nairobi: Hippo Books, 2008), 306.

¹⁰ Boss, *Analysing Moral Issues*, 488.

segment to demand that gays be given rights in Ghana on August 24, 2006, another homosexual using the pseudonym K. Mensah wrote on September 6, 2006:

As a gay Ghanaian man, I suppose I am expected to be rooting for the young man who bravely gave an interview demanding gay rights in Ghana. Paradoxically, however, I think he is foolish and misguided. There are so many gay men in Ghana who would never go near this man's organisation. And I do not think we need western style militant gay rights campaigns and demonstrations in Ghana. The status quo is fine for many gay men. They live their lives quietly and incognito, and have no wish to marry each other. Yet they enjoy the local gay scene in their own way without anyone poking their nose in their affairs.

As an African man, I have no wish to proclaim my private, adult, consenting bedroom life from the rooftops. And quite frankly, it is no one's business to come digging, anyway.¹¹

On the same issue, another person also wrote on September 8, 2006:

Some years back, I like Prince woke up to find that there was someone in my bed with me and I wasn't too sure if it was me or an exact replica of me with a "strange struggle." As the days turned into months and finally into years, I realised that I was gay! Women had no particular attraction for me except for

¹¹ K. Mensah, "Homosexuality: The Last Ghanaian Taboo?" <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Homosexuality-The-Last-Ghanaian-Taboo-110045>. Accessed on December 17, 2015.

platonic relationships. Where could I go? Who could I turn to?

I tried prayer, counselling and the whole repertoire but the harder I tried the more heterosexuality eluded me!

Finally, I came to the “I was born this way” junction. This tends to be the breaking point for many who struggle with same-sex tendencies and more so those with a Christian inclination like Prince’s and mine.¹²

These revelations represent similar situations that many people find themselves. Obviously, no stiffer laws or threats of punishment can put an end to this. How can parents, schools, churches and Ghana as a country deal with this ever increasing phenomenon?

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Pre-tertiary education in Ghana consists of a two year pre-school, six years of primary education, three years of Junior High School and three years of Senior High School. The pre-school starts at age four (4). At the Senior High School level some schools are populated by single sex students whilst others contain both sexes. Majority of the Senior High Schools are boarding schools which means students are kept at dormitories and only go home during vacations. There are general rules made by the Ghana Education Service which regulate students’ stay on campus under the supervision of teachers.

Some Senior High Schools in Ghana have recently made news headlines on homosexual issues. Notably are St Augustine’s College in Cape Coast and Opoku

¹² Sena Afari, “Homosexuality in Ghana: ‘The Great Coming Out,’” <http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Homosexuality-in-Ghana-The-Great-Coming-Out-110253>. Accessed on December 17, 2015.

Ware School in Kumasi. In the 1990s, Yaa Asantewaa Girls Senior High School was also noted for such activities. The population of Senior High Schools in Ghana are mainly adolescents from the ages of fifteen (15) years to eighteen (18) years. From this level these people enter adulthood and a behaviour that develops here has a high probability of being carried over into adult life. According to Scott B. Rae, about “30 per cent of adolescents have experimented in some way with a person of the same sex.”¹³

The Ghana Education Service School Code of Discipline for students stipulates that a student found in an act of sexual misconduct on campus should be dismissed from the school.¹⁴ Both homosexual and heterosexual acts are implied. However, it appears that much attention has been given to homosexual acts thereby making news headlines frequently as if heterosexual sexual acts do not break the law. The plausible reason for this selective reportage is the perception that homosexuality is a deviation from the norm; an enigma that cannot be explained.

Despite the punishment given to students alleged to be homosexuals and the negative publicity they get, the practice continues to emerge in the schools. Interestingly, every Senior High School in the country has a Guidance and Counselling section that is supposed to be providing counselling to students. But the news of the presence of homosexuality in the schools makes one to wonder about the effectiveness of the counselling departments. This research is to find out the underpinning factors which are responsible for this phenomenon.

¹³ Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices: An introduction to Ethics* 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2009), 279-281.

¹⁴ Opoku Ware School Students Handbook, 2012, 64.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In trying to accomplish the task of finding out the real issues behind the occurrence of this phenomenon, research questions intended to direct the focus of the investigation were set. The outcome of the investigation must provide answers to these questions.

The research questions are:

- a. Why do students practice homosexual sex at the Senior High School?
- b. How are homosexual offenders treated by their schools?
- c. What impact does the treatment have on the offender?

1.4 AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this research is to find out the factors which contribute to the development of homosexuality among students of Senior High Schools in Kumasi and present it as a challenge for pastoral care and counselling.

Objectives

- i. The researcher intends to inquire about how students develop sexual desires for members of the same sex.
- ii. Again, the researcher will find out the reaction of authorities of these institutions to such cases when reported and how they deal with them.
- iii. Finally, the researcher will evaluate the effects of how homosexual offenders are treated by their schools.

1.5 SCOPE AND FOCUS OF STUDY

Because of the high probabilities of adolescents entering adulthood with their behaviours, it is important that a research on homosexuality takes a look at the

adolescent. Any agitations to legalise same-sex marriage in the country will be led by intellectuals and Senior High School students are prospective intellectuals.

The research studies selected homosexuals who are Senior High School students in Kumasi. There are a total of seventeen (17) public Senior High Schools in the Metropolis. Nine (9) are same-sex schools whilst the remaining eight (8) are mixed. Out of the nine (9) which are same-sex schools, four (4) are boys and the other five (5) are girls. Students were chosen from both same-sex and mixed schools for the study. Both males and females were studied. A total of thirteen (13) practicing gays and lesbians were identified from four (4) different Senior High Schools in the Kumasi Metropolis by the data collection method used. Precisely one (1) male school, two (2) female schools and one mixed school were involved in the study. In addition, four former homosexuals were interviewed.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

This research uses qualitative research design for the study. Specifically it uses a phenomenological approach together with personal observation to find out the issues underlying the problem. It is qualitative because it does not seek to make conclusions based on the number of people involved in the phenomenon under investigation. Rather, the work discusses issues arising from the investigation.

1.6.1 Methods of Data Collection

Looking at the nature of the problem the researcher relied on the snow-ball method to gather data for the study. This method involves identifying a respondent who in turn leads the investigator to another respondent in the study group. The researcher resorted to this method because no Senior High School student would openly disclose

his or her sexual identity because of the threat of dismissal from school authorities and stigmatisation from the general student population. Students involved in the practice therefore need a high level of assurance that they would not be exposed.

Also, some identified former homosexuals were interviewed. Some of the heads of the schools which the students attend were also interviewed.

1.6.2 Limitations

Due to the delicate nature of the phenomenon, people feel reluctant to come forth with information especially when they feel that their schools and the individuals themselves might receive bad press when the information is leaked. Information obtained by this snow-ball method may not tell the whole story of the phenomenon.

1.6.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis will be employed in studying the data collected from the field. This is because the study focuses on interrogating the issues which make the respondents practise homosexuality rather than discussing the number of people involved in the practice.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

There is an on-going debate on how the Church, secular institutions and society as a whole must deal with homosexuality. Morality has been the background for discussing this phenomenon globally and opinions differ. Christians likewise are divided on this issue.

One group of Christians asserts that homosexuality is not against God's moral principles. Proponents of this view appeal to the same portions of biblical texts used to condemn the act to say that those texts have been misinterpreted. According to

these liberalists, the story of Sodom is a case of hospitality rather than homosexuality. Liberalist theologians explain that the people wanted to acquaint themselves with Lot's visitors but the manner they went about it was uncultured and that brought judgement on them. In the case of the law that said "You shall not lie with a male as a woman; it is an abomination" (Leviticus 18:22), they reason that it applied to homosexuality in the temple. When Jesus was on earth He declared these laws as obsolete, hence they no longer apply to Christians.¹⁵

Conservative Christians posit that the people of Sodom received divine punishment because of homosexuality. According to this view, the word that is being interpreted to mean acquaintance is a euphemism for sexual interaction. It is the same word that is repeated by Lot when he pleaded with the people to take his two virgin daughters instead of the visitors. Within the same context, one word cannot mean different things. In responding to the interpretation given by their opponents on the law in Leviticus, the conservatives say that to understand the law to be applicable only to the priesthood is a misconception. It is a moral law and therefore has a universal application. God's moral nature does not change and therefore this law is still in force.¹⁶

It is along these lines that recent debates have been directed. Brennan Breed, for instance, argues that "Life does not simply bend to correspond to a pre-formed, timeless ideal of law. Law works itself out as life is lived."¹⁷ He relies on the petition that the daughters of Zelophehad presented before Moses concerning the inheritance of their father's property. By law daughters were not deemed fit to inherit their

¹⁵ Norman L. Geisler, *Contemporary Issues and Options* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2010), 280-281.

¹⁶ Geisler, *Contemporary Issues and Options*, 284.

¹⁷ Brennan Breed, "Bringing the Case before the LORD: A North American Perspective on the Bible and Human Sexuality," *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013): 19.

fathers' property but here was a case where Zelophehad died without a male child. Upon being petitioned, Moses took the issue to God and finally the law was updated to accommodate women found in similar situations (cf. Num. 27:1-8). Breed suggests although homosexuality was not legal in the living world of the Old Testament, the Church is now confronted with this new challenge and just as Moses updated the law in Israel to suit the circumstance, the Church must do same. He concludes by saying "Gay and lesbian Christians, much like the daughters of Zelophehad, have approached the church in the United States and asked that their case be brought up before the Lord, because the old law does not have a place for them. And, like the prophet in Isaiah 56, I believe that God is calling my community to proclaim acceptance of these men and women who have not, until now, fit in to the categories that my culture accepts as normative."¹⁸

In his submission Breed overlooked the reality that homosexuality was long in existence before the formation of Israel unlike the issue of inheritance he cited. At least the story of Sodom and Gomorrah gives a hint of its presence. Paul says it became part of fallen humanity (ref. Rom. 1:18-32) and that explains why in God's wisdom it was needful to forbid it in the laws of the covenant. During the days of the Judges the phenomenon emerged in Israel but this did not cause any need for amendment of the old law to accommodate it.

Devine Kumah is quoted in Asamoah-Gyadu as writing this about homosexuals: "Morally, they are as dangerous to my children as any other predator, and I must be concerned. More so, gay people and their associates try to make us all believe the hellish lie that homosexual behaviour is normal. As a Christian, I am against homosexuality. I believe it is wrong and I certainly believe that is abnormal, because

¹⁸ Breed, "Bringing the Case before the Lord," 23.

the Bible says so. But I also love all people without Christ and I am concerned about their eternal destinies, gay people included.”¹⁹

From his perspective Kumah believes homosexuals are without Christ and for that matter sinners just like other sinners. His claim of love for them seems rather of the general concern about the eternal condemnation prescribed for all sinners. His confession that they are morally dangerous to his children just as any other predator reveals a position of difficulty he has getting involved in the lives of homosexuals. This will also hinder any effective work aimed at evangelizing them if he means so to do.

Nigel P. Uden is of the view that homosexuals must feel the sense of belonging or togetherness within the church environment. He adopts the concept of ‘Ubuntu’ to explain the kind of relationship that must exist between all people irrespective of ones’ sexual orientation. He says: “Ubuntu is not claiming that human beings are all the same, but that in our diversity we are incomplete without each other.”²⁰ By concluding his piece with reference to a study guide that was produced in 1984, ‘Towards a Christian Understanding of Human Sexuality’, he seems to suggest that humanity does not have full understanding of human sexuality. There is the need to continue talking on the issue whilst allowing an all-inclusive society. He believes that being pastoral and missional is to showcase this kind of love to all including homosexuals.

Uden’s view had a response from Andrew David Omona who said that “being pastoral and missional should go hand in hand with being prophetic. Reading from the

¹⁹ Johnson Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, “‘Homosexuality and Ritual Filth’: Christianity and Media Discussions on Alternative Sexual Lifestyle in Contemporary Africa,” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013): 53.

²⁰ Nigel P. Uden, “Pastoral Perspectives on the Church and Same-Sex Relationships,” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013): 43.

Old Testament, among their many roles, the prophets guided, corrected and admonished, warning people to follow what God required of them, and pronouncing judgement on disobedience. In the same vein, in a missional context, pastors should not forget their prophetic roles if they aspire to be true to their call.”²¹ He concluded by saying “persons with homosexual disorientation should be seen as people to be reached with the love of God. Thus, as noted earlier, Ugandan Christians would endorse the view that ‘Loving others in Christ’s name does not mean condoning all that they say or do. The greater act of love may be to challenge and warn even when we prefer not to do so.’”²²

Whilst reasoning through the scriptures to disagree with Uden, Omona approaches the subject from a similar standpoint of Emmanuel Martey. Philip Laryea quotes Martey’s condemnation of homosexuality as “unbiblical, un-African, abnormal and filthy.”²³ However, unlike Omona who does not prescribe how it must be dealt with by the church, Martey’s church (Presbyterian Church of Ghana) suggests: “The PCG should educate its members on issues of homosexuality through the use of well-prepared materials. Such education should pervade all the activities of the General Assembly Directorates as part of means to saturate the Congregations with the needed information, including medical, genetic, ethical and theological understanding of the issue(s). This should be supported with reading materials and counselling services provided by counsellors who must be trained by the PCG.”²⁴

Being proactive in the lives of congregants in an attempt to curtail the development of what the church estimates to be immoral behaviour is certainly a positive move. But

²¹ Andrew David Omona, “Pastoral Perspectives on the Church and Same-Sex Relationships: An African Response,” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013): 48.

²² Omona, “Pastoral Perspectives on the Church and Same-Sex Relationships,” 50-51.

²³ Philip Laryea, “Homosexuality: A Discussion on the Position of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG),” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013): 15.

²⁴ Laryea, “Homosexuality,” 15.

this approach excludes those who are already practicing it but found outside the church. Openly calling them ‘filthy’ creates a hostile atmosphere for people engaged in it to come out to seek help. Furthermore, the perception of a world-wide homosexual agenda which the church claims must be made known to the congregation will only help to deepen the hostility that people have exhibited over the years towards the phenomenon. This approach will make it difficult for the church to reform people struggling with homosexuality.

Samuel Waje Kunhiyop recommends that “The church must be willing to extend warm acceptance to those who have changed their ways.”²⁵ A critical question that must be asked here is ‘how do they change?’ To sit back and wait for people to change before welcoming them is to act contrary to the great commission. It is the mandate of the church to call people to repentance and not wait for them to repent.

Richard Yaw Boachie in his thesis on homosexuality made exegetical discussion of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. He concludes that the Bible condemns homosexual behaviour and admonished the church to maintain this position.²⁶

In the view of Ernestina Afriyie homosexuality is rated as sinful as any other sin because it is in the nature of fallen humanity. She says:

“Just as Christians who are heterosexual and single must avail themselves of God’s sustaining grace and to lead a life of disciplined sexual abstinence, so must homosexuals avail themselves of that same grace. In the light of this, we realise that the homosexually oriented need a church that is a place of

²⁵ Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 309.

²⁶ Richard Yaw Boachie, “Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 in Homosexuality Debate among Ghanaian Christians: An analysis,” (MA diss., Christian Service University College, 2015): 54.

love, grace and redemption and not one that ridicules and condemns them.”²⁷

She believes that the church must neither condemn homosexuals nor condone the behaviour. Afriyie further suggests an approach that many seem to overlook: “To help homosexuals, we must realise that they are human beings too and thus have needs. If the church does not meet these needs, they will turn to the homosexual community. The church must go out to evangelise homosexuals, take time to know them and share the love of God with them.”²⁸ She however recognises that this task is a “complex journey.”²⁹

What Afriyie suggests is what this work sets out to do. She seems to reason through the strategy of Christ which worked for Him: “Jesus associated with outcasts, people who were rejected by society. He loved them, ate with them and shared the good news with them. He was called the friend of sinners and through him, they were transformed.”³⁰

The various works that have been cited here do not attempt to understand the phenomenon from the experiences of the homosexuals themselves. This work takes the challenge to study individual cases of homosexuality by analysing the experiences of some selected gays and lesbians to uncover its development in the human being to redirect the debate in the Church.

²⁷ Ernestina Afriyie, “Theological and Pastoral Perspectives on Sexuality,” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013): 42.

²⁸ Afriyie, “Theological and Pastoral Perspectives on Sexuality,” 42.

²⁹ Afriyie, “Theological and Pastoral Perspectives on Sexuality,” 42.

³⁰ Afriyie, “Theological and Pastoral Perspectives on Sexuality,” 42.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Much of Christians' debate emanates from their lack of understanding of the phenomenon as it develops in humans. It appears that some make a reflection on sexuality from the biblical perspective and conclude on the sinful nature of homosexuality. In the same way, others make a counter argument that sexuality cannot be understood from the texts in the Bible. None does further interrogation of the phenomenon to understand how it occurs.

- a. This work will provide an opportunity for the pastorate to understand the phenomenon and gain insight into how to deal with it.
- b. Authorities of Senior High Schools will also get to know how to deal with their students who practise homosexuality.
- c. This work will be of immense benefit to parents because they will get information about how this behaviour occurs in children. The necessary measures can therefore be put in place at home to help children.
- d. Ghana as a whole will benefit because the information will help to direct our leaders as to which path to tread as nations continue to battle with the increasing pressure of legalising the homosexuality.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE WORK AND CHAPTER ORGANISATION

This work is organised into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the general introduction, background to the study, statement of the problem, methodology, literature review and significance of the study.

Chapter two is devoted to a historical account of homosexuality among humanity across generations. It also gives a description of the phenomenon and the various concepts explaining its occurrence.

Chapter three presents the issues which emanate from the research work. In this chapter the answers that the respondents provided the researcher during the interview are presented.

Chapter four makes analysis of the data collected for the study. The experiences shared by the respondents are discussed in this chapter.

Summary, conclusion and recommendations are done in chapter five. In analysing the issues certain observations were made and those observations helped the researcher to make conclusions on the phenomenon as it occurs in humans.

The last section of the work contains the bibliography. This is where all the documented materials consulted for the work are listed.

1.10 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Gays and lesbians are terminologies used to refer to homosexual males and females respectively. Gay originates from an Old French word “gai” which meant “joyful, happy, pleasant, agreeably charming.” The word was adopted as slang by psychologists writing in the 1940s to describe male homosexuals. It was initially used to describe the appearance of a homosexual crowd. The story reads; “After discharge A.Z. lived for some time at home. He was not happy at the farm and went to a Western city where he associated with a homosexual crowd, being “gay,” and wearing female clothes and makeup. He always wished others would make advances to him.”³¹ Its usage in contemporary times appears to have been promoted by the homosexuals themselves.

³¹ Rorschach Research Exchange and Journal of Projective Techniques 1947:240 quoted in <http://www.wtymonline.com/index.php?term=gay> Accessed on February 9, 2016.

Lesbian on the other hand is borrowed from the name of an ancient island known as Lesbos which was the home of the famous poet Sappho. She wrote erotic poems to women and so was thought to be of homosexual reasoning. The term later gained acceptance for female homosexuals.³²

“Top” refers to a male homosexual who acts as the man in a gay relationship. In other words, this person in a sexual intercourse penetrates the anus of the partner. This is usually a permanent role for some.

“Bottom” is used to describe the male who plays the woman or is submissive in a gay relationship. What it means is that he is the one whose anus is penetrated by the other partner during intercourse. In most cases this role is also permanent for some people.

“Femme” applies to a female who is submissive in lesbian relationship. Often this role is permanent for some people.

“Butch” is the term for the female who plays the man in lesbian relationship. This is also a permanent role in most cases.³³

“Versatile” or “Vers” is the one who plays both male and female in a gay partnership. He penetrates and is penetrated. Few people play this dual role.

Bisexual is a term that applies to people who have sexual relations with both members of the same sex and the opposite sex.³⁴ For instance, a man who has sex with men and women, or a woman who has sex with women and men is a bisexual.

Heterosexual describes a person who has sexual attraction for only members of the opposite sex.³⁵ Another term used to describe this sexual orientation is “straight.”

³² <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=lesbian> Accessed on February 9, 2016.

³³ <http://www.divamag.co.uk/category/lifestyle/the-great-big-lesbian-dictionary.aspx> Accessed on July 14, 2016.

³⁴ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bisexual> Accessed on February 9, 2016.

1.11 THEORETICAL/CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Several attempts have been made to explain the occurrence of homosexuality in humans. As a result concepts have come up. This research makes references to the various causality concepts such as the Disease Model, Genetic concept, Neurological/Brain Structure concept and the Pre-Natal Hormonal concept. The study is conducted within the theoretical framework of the Social Environment concept. It attempts to find the environmental factors which give rise to the phenomenon.

1.12 ETHICS

The researcher is fully aware of the ethical considerations of the university and particularly in relation to the nature of this work. Information obtained from respondents shall be treated under the principles of confidentiality and anonymity. It is for this reason that the research does not name any Senior High School that the students attend but resorts to the use of pseudonyms for the respondents. Further, there were no audio or video recordings of interactions with respondents. Only respondents who were willing to volunteer information were engaged in the study.

³⁵ <http://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/heterosexual> Accessed on February 9, 2016.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

There have been several attempts by Africans to describe homosexuality as alien to the African culture. For instance, the former moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, Emmanuel Martey, outlined three reasons why homosexuality must be condemned. Philip Laryea cites Martey as saying: “homosexuality is unbiblical (Lev. 18:22); unnatural (Rom. 1:24-27), un-African (since there is no word for homosexuality in most Ghanaian languages).”³⁶ Daniel Arap Moi, former president of Kenya, is also on record as saying “Kenya has no room or time for homosexuals and lesbians. Homosexuality is against African norms and traditions and even in religion it is considered a great sin. Homosexuality is a scourge which runs counter to Christian teachings and African tradition.”³⁷ It is because of this popular view that this chapter seeks to describe homosexuality from its history and nature.

Laryea challenges this view by saying “It is common knowledge that gay and lesbian practices have existed in our boarding schools for a long time. It is difficult to say whether these practices are a result of Western influence.”³⁸

Like Laryea, this researcher is of the view that homosexuality is a phenomenon which has been present in Ghana for a long time, especially in our boarding schools. How this started in the country is unknown and it is not the aim of this work to trace that history. Scholarly works exist alleging that homosexuality has always been with

³⁶ Philip Laryea, “Homosexuality: A Discussion on the Position of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG),” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013):15.

³⁷ Samuel Waje Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Nairobi: Hippo Books, 2008), 304.

³⁸ Laryea, “Homosexuality,” 16.

Africans. In an article titled “Is homosexuality alien, or not, to Africa?” Patrick Ayumu cites several sources of information which homosexuals on the continent are using to counter the popular notion that homosexuality is un-African. He wrote:

To begin with, it is worth noting that the first documented case of homosexuality has been traced to Egypt (Africa) in 2400 BCE. Khnumhotep and Niankhkhnum, two male ‘overseers and manicurists of the Palace of the King’ were depicted in a nose-kissing position in Egyptian art. However, not all anthropologists agree the two were homosexuals. Some argue they could’ve been twin brothers.

Further, among the evidence documented, is a 2000-year-old ‘explicit’ San Bushman painting, which depicts men having sex with each other through the anus. Such archaeological evidence can’t just be wished away, in their view.³⁹

In this piece he references several examples of documented cases of homosexuality among many African societies in Ancient times. A Dutch military attaché documented in the late 1640s that in the Ndongo Kingdom of the Mbundu a warrior woman ruled as King instead of Queen and was dressed as man surrounded by young men dressed as women who she addressed as wives. He also records that “E. Evans-Pritchard also recorded that the Azande, or Zande of Northern Congo, practised an institutionalised traditional custom, which allowed older warriors to marry younger men, who were between 12 and 20 years old. They served them as “wives”. The warriors, according

³⁹ www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/features/Is-homosexuality-alien-or-not-to-Africa-369821. Accessed on December 17, 2015.

to anthropologists, paid a “bride price” to the family of the young men they married, just as happens in heterosexual marriage contracts within the same traditional setting.

The “boy-wives” served their “warrior-husbands” sexually, and domestically. Once married, the warrior-husband referred to his boy-wife’s parents as “gbiore” (father-in-law) and “negbiore” (mother-in-law).” Ayumu further references two Portuguese priests, Gaspar Azevedo and Antonius Sequerius, that in the 17th century Angola, effeminate transvestites were married by men. South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Benin are all cited in the article to be societies which had the presence of the phenomenon before they came into contact with Europeans.

In 2013, Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda, admitted the presence of homosexuality in his country when he met a group of human rights advocates from the USA. He did not attribute it to foreign influence: “In our society, there were a few homosexuals....what is new is the way Europeans and other western people handle the issue of sexuality in general, including public flaunting, which is a problem, and luring young people into acts of homosexuality for money....”⁴⁰

According to the apostle Paul, homosexuality is part of the fallen nature of humanity (cf. Rom. 1:18-28). What he said can be used to explain its presence in Sodom (cf. Gen. 19:4-9) which infuriated God to rain brimstone and fire to destroy the city completely. The extermination of the people of Sodom did not lead to the disappearance of homosexuality from humanity. Because of its presence in the world, it was needful that God spoke about it. In the sight of God, this was an abominable act and therefore declared it as such in the laws of Israel (cf. Lev. 18:22, 20:13). The law

⁴⁰ Andrew David Omona, “Pastoral Perspectives on the Church and Same-Sex Relationship: An African Response,” *Journal of African Christian Thought*, 16, no. 2 (December 2013):48.

however could not prevent it from happening in Israel as it was found in their midst (cf. Judges 19:22-23).

Flavius Josephus, the ancient Jewish historian, also mentioned the presence of homosexuality among the Eleans and Thebans in his Book 2 of “Against Apion.” In it he wrote:

.... And why do not the Eleans and Thebans abolish that unnatural and impudent lust, which make them lie with males? For they will not show a sufficient sign of their repentance of what they of old thought to be very excellent, and very advantageous in their practices, unless they entirely avoid all such actions for the time to come; nay, such things are inserted into the body of their laws, and had once again such a power among the Greeks, that they ascribed these sodomitical practices to the gods themselves....⁴¹

Paul L. Maier runs a commentary on the church history by Eusebius of Caesarea and names Emperor Aelius Hadrian as a homosexual. He says: “Antinous, from Bithynia, was Hadrian’s homosexual lover who drowned in the Nile in [A.D.] 130. Hadrian built the city of Antinoöpolis in his honour.”⁴²

It was necessary to embark on this historical journey to stress the fact that homosexuality did not originate with the West neither is it a recent development. Rae reasons that “Because of the reality of sin, every person has the potential for homosexuality in the same way that we have the potential for any other kind of sin

⁴¹ William Whiston and Paul L. Maier, ed., *The New Complete Works of Josephus* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1999), 977.

⁴² Paul L. Maier, ed., *Eusebius The Church History* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1999), 140.

that the Bible describes.”⁴³ For this reason he concludes that “homosexuality cuts across most cultural and professional boundaries.”⁴⁴

Having established the fact that homosexuality is a long existing human phenomenon, it is equally important that its nature is described. Rae describes homosexuality in three ways. He says homosexuality can refer to “one whose sexual preference has been inverted and who prefers only members of the same sex.” This, he says, is known as “True homosexual.”⁴⁵

According to Rae, it can also apply to “someone who is bisexual – someone who can be sexually attracted to either gender.” He again makes another categorisation of homosexuality with the term “situational homosexual.” This takes the form of not having a predominant homosexual orientation. However, a person in this category has experienced homosexuality before so when he or she is in a relational need he or she will sometimes use a homosexual affair to meet that need. The sexual attraction for this act according to Rae is not the controlling factor but the need that arose.⁴⁶

Rae also makes an important distinction between a person who has sexual desire for members of the same sex and the one who acts on the desire. The former is referred to as “homoerotic” and the latter “homosexual.”⁴⁷ One could have the desire but refuse to act on that desire. Therefore a person cannot be termed as a homosexual if he or she does not engage in sexual relationship with members of the same sex although he or she may have the tendencies.

⁴³ Scott B. Rae, *Moral Choices: An introduction to Ethics* 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2009), 282.

⁴⁴ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 281.

⁴⁵ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 279.

⁴⁶ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 281.

⁴⁷ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 283.

Notwithstanding, Rae's definition reveals how loosely the term "homosexuality" has been applied in contemporary language. "Homo" is derived from Greek which means "same," "like" or "equal."⁴⁸ Its application here means having sexual relations with those belonging to same, equal or like gender. Situational homosexuals should be classified as bisexuals and they stand separately from homosexuals. Bisexuals stand in the middle of homosexuals and heterosexuals. They are attracted to both sexes which disqualify them from being classified as strictly homosexuals although occasionally they have homosexual affairs.

Kunhiyop says homosexuality "involves sexual attraction to those of the same sex."⁴⁹ From the perspective of Kunhiyop, being homoerotic qualifies one to be called a homosexual. He asserts that homosexuality "may be constitutional (or static), in which case it is a predominant and persistent psychosexual attraction towards members of the same sex. This sexual preference is a fixed reality in the person's life, even though it may or may not be acted on."⁵⁰ This definition implies that homosexuality is a permanent state. Nonetheless, he sees another category of homosexuals he describes as "perverts." They are heterosexuals who "distort their actual sexual orientation when they occasionally engage in homosexual sex."

If this definition by Kunhiyop is to be accepted then there are some people who are born homosexuals. But this view is contrary to the story of creation when sexual attraction was meant to be between persons of the opposite sex because God created male and female and charged them to "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it...." (Gen. 1:28). Also, the heterosexuals who he says occasionally engage in homosexual acts cannot be classified as homosexuals. Rather they are bisexuals.

⁴⁸ <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/homo-> Accessed on July 14, 2016.

⁴⁹ Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 303.

⁵⁰ Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics*, 303.

Homosexuality in this work is explained as an act of having sexual preference for members belonging to the same sex only. Males who prefer to have sexual relationship with males are known as gays whilst females preferring females are termed as lesbians. Whether this sexual preference is a perversion or not is what has led to researchers attempting to find how this phenomenon occurs in humans. Many concepts have emerged as a result and the ensuing sections discuss the various concepts.

2.1 DISEASE MODEL

Writing in 1905 on Sexuality, Sigmund Freud submitted that all human beings are born bisexuals, that is, humans are attracted to both members of the same sex and that of the opposite sex at birth. The child experiences sexual development from the first four (4) to six (6) years after birth. He or she goes through the oral stage where the libido is directed towards the mother's breast, the anal and phallic stages in which the libido is now towards his or her own body and then to the latency period until puberty. During puberty, a boy resolves his Oedipal Complex by giving up his sexual desire for his mother and redirects it towards females in his age group. According to Freud, a boy's failure to resolve his Oedipal Complex leads him to misdirect his libido towards members of the same sex. This Freudian theory is termed the "Disease Model."⁵¹

From this work by Sigmund Freud, homosexuality is a developmental phenomenon. When the normal developmental process of sexuality fails, then homosexuality becomes the end product. However, Freud's theory failed to account for how

⁵¹ Sigmund Freud, cited in Judith A. Boss, *Analyzing Moral Issues* (California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999), 491.

homosexuality occurs in the female child. For this reason Freud's submission has not been accepted entirely as the true cause of homosexuality.

Freud seems to suggest that what leads to homosexuality may occur unconsciously in the individual that is why it is termed the "disease theory." No individual consciously creates a disease for himself or herself. This view is sharply contrasted by Vivienne C. Cass who says that a person is "seen to have an active role in the acquisition of a homosexual identity."⁵² She concludes that homosexuality is developmental and several factors influence a person to this end.

2.2 GENETIC CONCEPT

In 1993, a team of researchers led by Dean Hamer suggested that there was a linkage of the Xq28 gene to homosexuality. Their research showed that male siblings having homosexual orientation shared similar genes from their maternal lineage. This finding sought to conclude that homosexuality is a genetic factor and that people are born homosexuals. But in this same research no genetic linkage was found in lesbians.⁵³

After this finding in the United States of America, there was an attempt to replicate this in Canada but it failed.⁵⁴ The failed attempt has raised questions about the methodology that was used to reach the earlier result. Since this research has provided no answers to its critics it has been rejected as having no basis for scientific conclusion. Stanton L. Jones and Mark A. Yarhouse have concluded that "it is quite clear that these studies did not find a chromosome which causes homosexual

⁵² Vivienne C. Cass; "Homosexuality Identity Formation: A Theoretical Model," *Journal of Homosexuality*, 4 (1979):219-235 published online October 18, 2010. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J082v04n03_01 Accessed on September 3 2016.

⁵³ Stanton L. Jones and Mark A. Yarhouse, "The Use, Misuse, and Abuse of Science in the Ecclesiastical Homosexuality Debates," in David L. Balch (ed.) *Homosexuality, Science, and the Plain Sense of Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan/Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2000), 90-95.

⁵⁴ Jones and Yarhouse, "The Use," 94.

orientation: the Xq28 region was neither necessary nor sufficient for a homosexual orientation.”⁵⁵

2.3 BRAIN STRUCTURE CONCEPT

There is also an attempt by some researchers led by LeVay to find out whether there is a linkage between the brain structure of people and sexual orientation. Findings so far suggest differences in the brain structure of male homosexuals and that of male heterosexuals. The research asserts that the brain structure of male homosexuals looks similar to that of female heterosexuals.⁵⁶

Again, this finding has not been replicated anywhere. Moreover, brain experts posit that the size and nature of different brain structures are rather influenced by behaviour. In other words, when a male behaves like a female both are likely to have similar brain structures; the reason for the similarity between that of the male homosexual and the female heterosexual.⁵⁷

2.4 PRENATAL HORMONAL CONCEPT

Another research seems to suggest that homosexuality could be attributed to prenatal hormonal factors. According to this research, sexual orientation is a development that occurs between the second and fifth months of pregnancy. But this happens when the foetus is exposed to sex hormones. It explains that pregnant women who unknowingly take synthetic oestrogen drugs expose their babies to elevated intrauterine levels of oestrogen. Children born through this experience more often turn out to be bisexuals when they become adults. Others also rely on the gender inappropriateness in early

⁵⁵ Jones and Yarhouse, “The Use,” 95.

⁵⁶ Jones and Yarhouse, “The Use,” 98.

⁵⁷ Jones and Yarhouse, “The Use,” 98.

childhood as evidence to support this prenatal hormonal concept. Proponents say boys who are effeminate grow to become gays more than their masculine peers.⁵⁸

These submissions have been contested because the homosexual community does not seem to exhibit elevated rates of the physical abnormalities which usually characterise the prenatal hormonal aberrations. Further, not all effeminate children grow to become gays neither do many homosexuals report gender inappropriateness in early childhood.⁵⁹ Rather some studies point to psychological causes. One report says that “significantly fewer male role models were found in the family backgrounds of the severely gender-disturbed boys”, and that there were more emotional problems in the families of the most disturbed boys.⁶⁰

Another study also links homosexuality to maternal stress during pregnancy. Studies have shown that many German women who were pregnant during the Second World War gave birth to a significant number of children who became homosexuals. In addition to this, a study of birth order has shown that gays are usually born later in a family of overabundance of males relative to females. The mothers who experience such birth orders must have been stressed which often results in a higher incidence of male births. As a result of the stress, there is insufficiency of androgen which in turn produces incomplete masculinisation of the male foetus finally producing homosexuality in adulthood.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Jones and Yarhouse, “The Use,” 102.

⁵⁹ Jones and Yarhouse, “The Use,” 102.

⁶⁰ G. Rekers et al, “Family Correlates of Male Childhood Gender Disturbance,” *Journal of Genetic Psychology* (1983):31-42.

⁶¹ Jones and Yarhouse, “The Use,” 102.

2.5 SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT CONCEPT

Rae explains in three ways how homosexuality may arise in a person. Firstly, homosexuality, he says, may be the result of “a combination of an angry or absent father and a close-bonding and/or domineering mother.” He says this usually plays a major role if the mother uses the boy as an ‘emotional substitute husband.’ Secondly, the male child “does not enter the ‘boy becoming man’ social processes with pleasure. He either does not participate, or if he does, he does not enjoy it, and for that reason is derided by his peers.” The final factor, according to Rae, has to do with the introductory stage of the boy’s sexuality. He believes that the person with whom the boy first has his sexual experience and how the boy interprets the experience can result in homosexuality. For example, when a boy has sexual intercourse for the first time in his life with a male, this can lead to a homosexual orientation.⁶²

2.6 CONCLUSION

There is one fact that stands out from the discussion that homosexuality has been with humanity for a very long time and it cuts across all races, cultures and generations. At least, the first biblical record is that of Sodom which occurred thousands of years ago. It can also be inferred from the Bible’s account that it evolved with fallen humanity. However, how it develops in humans is what has not been clearly concluded either by science or religion. In the words of Baumrind “it is impossible to disentangle the biological and the psychological contributions to the behavioural differences that constitute sexual orientation.”⁶³ Such a conclusion only represents the confusion surrounding this phenomenon.

⁶² Rae, *Moral Choices*, 281.

⁶³ Baumrind D. “Commentary on Sexual Orientation; Research and Social Policy Implications, *Developmental Psychology*” (1995):130-36 quoted in Stanton and Yarhouse, “The Use,” 106.

Certain biological factors enable certain psychological reinforcements to trigger behaviours produced in humans. Apparently the conceptual discussion on homosexuality is a case of nature versus nurture. An analysis of the experiences of the gays and lesbians themselves will help in identifying its development in humanity. This in turn will assist the church and society to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon to be able to deal with it in the appropriate manner.

CHAPTER THREE

PRESENTATION OF DATA

3.0 INTRODUCTION

In trying to understand this phenomenon of homosexuality among students of Senior High Schools in Kumasi, the researcher set up a snow-ball method that identified thirteen (13) students from four (4) different Senior High Schools in the metropolis: seven (7) of them are females and six (6) are males. This chapter presents their experiences as they responded to the interview. As part of the ethical consideration the real names of the respondents have been withheld. Four (4) former homosexuals were also interviewed to share their experiences. The views of two (2) of the heads of the institutions which some of the respondents attend were also sought.

3.1 INTERVIEW WITH G1

Researcher: How old are you?

G1: I am 19 years old.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

G1: Yes I am a Christian.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

G1: I sing.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

G1: I live with my paternal aunt.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

G1: I am very close to my mother even though I don't live with her. I often visit her and we talk a lot.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

G1: I cannot recall exactly when I started having sexual desires for members of the same sex.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

G1: No please.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

G1: In a neighbour's room when I was a little boy.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

G1: It was the same neighbour.

Researcher: How did it happen?

G1: I recall that he called me into his room one day and asked me to hold his penis. Then he placed the penis in my mouth and asked me to suck it. This act was repeated and continued for some days. He was a student in a tertiary institution at that time.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

G1: I didn't enjoy it on the first occasion but it became a regular practice so I later enjoyed doing it.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

G1: We continued for some time but I can't remember for how long.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

G1: Yes please. My cousin told me he could not stand to watch me bath. The conversation between us occasioned the beginning of anal sexual intercourse. I played the female role and this became something we practised regularly for years.

When I entered senior high school, a senior once saw me bathing and got attracted. He asked me to see him later and when I attended, he took me into an uncompleted building on campus late in the night and had anal sex with me. It was repeated on five occasions. Apart from this senior, I also had sexual intercourse with two other students on campus.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

G1: I am of the opinion that homosexuality is a choice.

Researcher: Do you like it?

G1: Although I enjoy anal sex I don't like being a gay. I am trying to stop the practice.

Researcher: If you don't like it why do you continue?

G1: It's difficult for me to stop.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

G1: I believe that every homosexual must be treated like any other human being.

3.2 INTERVIEW WITH G2

Researcher: How old are you?

G2: I am eighteen (18) years old.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

G2: Yes please.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

G2: I sing.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

G2: Yes please.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

G2: I am very close to my mother. In fact my father is not my friend.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

G2: I do not remember precisely when I started having feelings for members of the same sex.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

G2: I couldn't.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

G2: Somewhere in my neighbourhood.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

G2: A friend.

Researcher: How did it happen?

G2: I remember that when I was below age ten (10) there was a friend in my neighbourhood who was a bit older than me. He first showed me how to do oral sex. There was a particular day when there was no one at home and when we were playing he sucked my penis and also asked me to do same for him.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

G2: Honestly I did not like it because I did not feel anything.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

G2: No please.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

G2: Yes please. This was when I entered my first year at the Senior High School. A senior in my dormitory spotted me and asked why I look so girly. I perceived him to be a funny person and so we became friends afterwards. On a particular vacation we were left alone because we slept over till the next day before travelling home and during the night we had oral sex. It happened just once with this senior but I have been involved with ten (10) other boys. Let me emphasise that I have never had anal sex with anyone before.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

G2: I think that homosexuality is not natural but it depends on where and how one grows, especially one's childhood friends and may be what some people do to him.

Researcher: Do you like it?

G2: Although I enjoy the act of oral sex with boys it is not something I want to continue doing.

Researcher: Why do you practise it?

G2: It is difficult to stop.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

G2: Homosexuals should be shown care.

3.3 INTERVIEW WITH G3

Researcher: How old are you?

G3: I am eighteen (18) years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

G3: Yes please.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

G3: I sing.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

G3: Yes please.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

G3: I am very close to my mother. My father is a professional driver and mostly not at home so I find myself more often with my mother.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

G3: I don't remember exactly when.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

G3: No please.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

G3: In my room at home.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

G3: My friend.

Researcher: How did it happen?

G3: It is a long story.

Researcher: I want to hear it.

G3: When I was growing up my father prevented me from playing with boys in my neighbourhood for the reason that they were bad. I ended up playing in the midst of girls regularly. I believe that because I grew up with girls I started reasoning and behaving like them.

One day when I was still a little boy my uncle who was then in his teens came to our house and slept over in my room. When I was sleeping I felt someone on top of me so I opened my eyes and saw my uncle. At this point he was not naked but lying on me and acting as if he was having sex. I liked it so I did not tell him to stop. We continued this act for several days until one day he stripped himself naked and asked me to suck his penis. I obliged. Later he wanted to have anal sex with me but I declined because I was scared. Later, he would group boys of about six (6) in a room and ask us to lie on each other whilst acting as if we were having sex. This went on for a long time till I completed Junior High School.

Before I entered Senior High School, a school mate visited my house. He showed me a pornographic video on his phone and whilst we were watching it, he started kissing my neck. I already had a sexual desire for him so I yielded and we had anal sex. That was my first time.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

G3: Yes I did.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

G3: I did not repeat the act with him.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

G3: In the case of anal sex no. However, I have had oral sex with others; two (2) others.

Researcher: Tell me about these two.

G3: At the Senior High School some of my class mates claimed that whenever they sat by me they had erection. Therefore no one wanted to sit close to me till one boy decided to challenge the rumour. He failed the test. He later started calling me his “girl friend.” He asked me for oral sex but initially I thought he was kidding so I ignored him for some time. His call persisted for about three (3) days till I obliged. Later, another mate in my dormitory also approached me and we had oral sex several times. These are the two people I have engaged at Senior High School.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

G3: I do not think people are born homosexuals. I think it depends on the environment you find yourself.

Researcher: Do you like it?

G3: I don't like it and I want to stop the practice.

Researcher: Why do you practise it?

G3: I find it very difficult to stop.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

G3: Homosexuals are normal human beings like any other person. They have a problem and must be helped. I don't think that beating, killing or attacking any person because he is a homosexual can change the person. All I want to say is that homosexuals must be treated like any other person.

3.4 INTERVIEW WITH G4

Researcher: How old are you?

G4: I am sixteen years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

G4: Yes sir.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

G4: I used to serve as an usher at the children's service at my church.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

G4: No please. I live with my mother.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

G4: My mother.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

G4: I do not remember when I began having sexual desires for members of the same sex.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

G4: No sir, I couldn't.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

G4: In a neighbour's house when I was in primary one I think.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

G4: The same friend I am referring to.

Researcher: How did it happen?

G4: What I remember is that when I was in class one or so I had anal sex with a boy in my neighbourhood. He was older than me. I did not tell any of my parents.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

G4: I did not understand what we were doing but I enjoyed it.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

G4: We repeated the practice several times whenever we were left alone.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

G4: I have had anal sex with so many people that I have lost count.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

G4: It is not normal.

Researcher: Do you like it?

G4: I don't like it.

Researcher: Why do you then practise it?

G4: When I graduated from the Junior High School and entered the Senior High School I put a stop to it for about six (6) months but I could not hold the burning desire in me so I went back to it. The more I try to stop it the more I feel the urge for it.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

G4: Homosexuals must be loved.

3.5 INTERVIEW WITH G5

Researcher: How old are you?

G5: I am sixteen (16) years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

G5: Yes I am a Christian.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

G5: I sing.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

G5: I live with both parents.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

G5: I'm very close to my mother.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

G5: I don't remember.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

G5: No.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

G5: In our house.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

G5: My cousin.

Researcher: How did it happen?

G5: I only recall that when I was a child my cousin used to have anal sex with me. He is about three years older than me. I thought it was child's play until one day when my aunt saw us in the act at home. She beat us and also informed my mother who in turn beat me again.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

G5: I thought it was fun.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

G5: From that day we were caught we did not do that again.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

G5: I've not had anal sex yet but other practices such as kisses yes.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

G5: I don't understand it.

Researcher: Do you like it?

G5: No please.

Researcher: If no then why do you practice it?

G5: When I entered the Senior High School the attraction for members of the same sex became insistent in me. I tried to make advances at some of my mates in order for them to show interest. A senior finally saw me and proposed to me and I accepted. One evening he took me into a classroom block where we started kissing each other. This act was repeated but I must say that I have not had anal sex yet. The senior has graduated and left the school.

I frequently get flashbacks from the senior's encounter with me. It pushes me to engage in the act but I do not want to do it. I need help.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

G5: With love.

3.6 INTERVIEW WITH G6

Researcher: How old are you?

G6: Eighteen (18) years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

G6: I'm a Christian

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

G6: I sing.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

G6: I live with my mother.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

G6: My mother because my father lives outside the country.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

G6: When I was in my final year at the Junior High School.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

G6: No please.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

G6: At my cousin's house when I was around the age of six (6) or there about.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

G6: My cousin.

Researcher: How did it happen?

G6: I visited their house one day and he was alone in the house. Whilst I sat in his room, he pounced on me, took off my clothes and forcibly used his penis to penetrate my anus.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

G6: No, not at all.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

G6: Never, I've disliked him since.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

G6: Yes. My first experience of homosexual sex was when I was raped by my cousin in their house. I was a little boy by then and I did not tell my mother. The memory of this event never left me. I have had anal sex once with another person.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

G6: I believe homosexuality is not normal.

Researcher: Do you like it?

G6: No.

Researcher: So why do you practise it?

G6: Sir, I want to stop but I can't. After that episode with my cousin, I continuously had flashbacks from that experience as I grew up. When I got to my third year in Junior High School I started having sexual feelings for members of the same sex. I got involved with people who were interested in me on Face Book and flirting began.

When I entered Senior High School the feeling became more intense for me to resist. Since my school is a mixed one, I try to control myself from acting on this feeling on campus because I fear I may be found out. I usually go home when the urge becomes

too strong for me. My partner is also a student from another mixed Senior High School in Kumasi.

Now, I want to stop. I have attempted quitting once but my effort lasted for just a week and I returned to it.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

G6: I need help and I think all homosexuals do.

3.7 INTERVIEW WITH L1

Researcher: How old are you?

L1: I'm seventeen (17) years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

L1: Yes I am.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

L1: I'm in the music ministry.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

L1: Yes please.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

L1: My mother.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

L1: I started having sexual feelings for members of the same sex when I was about fifteen (15) years.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

L1: I didn't tell my parents.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

L1: I first practised homosexual sex after graduating from the Junior High School at an aunt's abode.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

L1: It was my aunt who introduced me to the practice in her house.

Researcher: How did it happen?

L1: She put me in the mood for it by fondling me till I got aroused and yielded to it.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

L1: I enjoyed it to some extent although I was trembling.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

L1: We repeated it on two (2) occasions and then she travelled.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

L1: At the Senior High School I have practised it with a friend.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

L1: I initially perceived it as normal but now I think it is wrong.

Researcher: Do you like it?

L1: I am not sure whether I like it but I have come to live with it.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

L1: I think homosexuals need the care of the society to help them change.

3.8 INTERVIEW WITH L2

Researcher: How old are you?

L2: I am seventeen (17) years old.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

L2: Yes I am.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

L2: I do not do any serious activity in church but I am a member of the youth group.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

L2: I live with both parents.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

L2: My mother.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

L2: I think I had sexual feelings for members of the same sex after I had been introduced to it.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

L2: I did not tell my parents.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

L2: My first year at the Senior High School in the dormitory.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

L2: A senior who was in the final year.

Researcher: How did it happen?

L2: It happened first on a Saturday evening during entertainment time. She had earlier made advances at me. That evening when all students had gone for entertainment, she kissed me and that started it.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

L2: I did not enjoy it at that time.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

L2: Yes we continued.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

L2: I have also done it with another person.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

L2: It seems society frowns on homosexuality but I like it.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

L2: I think homosexuals are humans and they must be treated well.

3.9 INTERVIEW WITH L3

Researcher: How old are you?

L3: I am eighteen (18) years old.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

L3: Yes.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

L3: I belong to the drama and choreography ministry in my church.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

L3: No, I live with my mother.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

L3: I have a close relationship with my mother.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

L3: I had sexual desire for members of the same sex at age sixteen (16).

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

L3: No. I did not tell my mother but rather told my elder sister.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practice homosexual sex?

L3: My first practice was at a friend's house during vacation when I was in second year at Senior High School.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

L3: I don't think anybody did. It was a spontaneous act.

Researcher: How did it happen?

L3: I must say that I felt the desire for it but we were watching a movie one afternoon in my friend's room and some scenes of female sex and kissing here and there put us in the mood.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

L3: I did.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

L3: I had another opportunity with her.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

L3: I have not practised it with any other person.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

L3: I think it is not a good practice.

Researcher: Do you like it?

L3: I don't but I got myself into it.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

L3: I believe that when homosexuals are attended to, they can stop.

3.10 INTERVIEW WITH L4

Researcher: How old are you?

L4: I am seventeen (17) years of age.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

L4: Yes.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

L4: I do not perform any special activity in church.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

L4: I live with both parents.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

L4: My father.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

L4: I cannot really tell when exactly I had sexual desires for members of the same sex.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

L4: No.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

L4: At home.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

L4: My elder sister.

Researcher: How did it happen?

L4: I did not know she was a lesbian until she behaved so weirdly towards me. I eventually yielded after she had promised me a lot of things.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

L4: I do not think I enjoyed it.

Researcher: Did you continue the practise with her?

L4: Yes we continued for some time.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

L4: I have practised with a school mate.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

L4: I know it is a bad practice. but I sometimes get the urge to do so.

Researcher: Do you like it? If the answer is no then why do you practice it?

L4: No.

Researcher: Why do you do it if you don't like it?

L4: I just feel the urge to do it.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

L4: I suggest homosexuals must be welcomed and their minds reoriented to desist from that act.

3.11 INTERVIEW WITH L5

Researcher: How old are you?

L5: I am eighteen (18) years old.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

L5: Yes.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

L5: I am not so much involved in church activities.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

L5: I stay with an aunt because my parents are living abroad.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

L5: I had sexual desire for members of the same sex at age sixteen (16) and have since been driven by that.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your aunt about your feelings?

L5: No.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

L5: At home.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

L5: A friend.

Researcher: How did it happen?

L5: It happened one morning around 11 a.m. when we were alone.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

L5: I quite enjoyed it.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

L5: I continued the practice with her.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

L5: I attempted to practise with a school mate but failed. The student I approached embarrassed me and threatened to expose me if I kept harassing her.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

L5: Homosexuality is a bad practice.

Researcher: Do you like it?

L5: I don't.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

L5: I feel homosexuals need the love of the society.

3.12 INTERVIEW WITH L6

Researcher: How old are you?

L6: I am seventeen (17) years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

L6: I am.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

L6: Not actively involved in church activities.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

L6: I live with my mother because my father lives outside the country.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

L6: I have a close relationship with my mother.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

L6: I can't recall.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

L6: No.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practice homosexual sex?

L6: Here at the Senior High School.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

L6: My friend.

Researcher: How did it happen?

L6: She proposed to me and I accepted it.

Researcher: Why did you accept it?

L6: I don't know but I think it is because with me anything goes.

Researcher: You said anything goes. Why?

L6: When I was growing up all my friends were boys. I did so many things with them including anal sex. My life is a mess because there is no direction for my future. I am not happy at home. My mother has been flirting with other men in my father's absence and even arranges for me to date men. My elder sister is a prostitute and my brother is into drugs.

When I came to the Senior High School I met a girl who became my friend. She is a lesbian and proposed to me. Because anything goes for me, I accepted her. She is the one that I have been practising with.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

L6: No.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

L6: I don't know but I have a senior who keeps telling me it is not a good practice.

Researcher: Do you like it?

L6: I enjoy this life anyway. However, I have been trying to stop it but because of my partner I find it difficult. She won't let me.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

L6: I think lesbians deserve care and attention. The senior I referred to doesn't like the fact that I'm a lesbian and she wants me to stop it. I believe she loves me.

3.13 INTERVIEW WITH L7

Researcher: How old are you?

L7: I am seventeen (17) years old.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

L7: I am a Christian.

Researcher: What activity do you do in your church?

L7: I am not active in church.

Researcher: Do you live with both parents?

L7: I live with a family member because my father is not around and my mother is dead.

Researcher: Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?

L7: Neither.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?

L7: I don't remember.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

L7: No.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

L7: In my aunt's house.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

L7: My aunt.

Researcher: How did it happen?

L7: I remember when I was a little girl my mother used to leave me in the care of my aunt when she was going to work. In my aunt's house she introduced me into the act. In addition to this I was raped by a boy in my neighbourhood. This made me to hate boys. I lived with this hatred till I entered Senior High School. Fortunately for me this is an all-female school so I have the opportunity to express the desire in me.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

L7: I didn't.

Researcher: Did you continue the practice with the person?

L7: She did it to me several times.

Researcher: Have you practised it with any person other than the first one?

L7: Yes. I have practised with other people since I entered this school.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

L7: I hear people preach against it as being sinful.

Researcher: Do you like it?

L7: Yes and I don't think I can stop it.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

L7: Homosexuals should be left alone.

3.14 INTERVIEW WITH F1

Researcher: How old are you now?

F1: I am 20 years of age.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

F1: I am a Christian.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual feelings for members of the same sex?

F1: I started having sexual desires for members of my gender around the period between Primary 6 and J.H.S. 1.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

F1: No.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

F1: At a friend's house when I was in the first year in the Junior High School.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

F1: I won't say my friend did. I already had the desire for him.

Researcher: How did it happen?

F1: I attended his birthday party in his house. The party ended late so I slept with him in his room. During the night he started touching me and since I already had the desire for him I responded to his call. We had anal sex and I was submissive in that intercourse.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

F1: It was an act which I enjoyed.

Researcher: Did you continue to have sex with the first person?

F1: The act was repeated several times whenever the two of us were alone either at his house or mine. This continued till I entered Senior High School.

Researcher: Throughout your time at the SHS how many people did you engage in the act?

F1: Throughout my stay at the Senior High School I engaged in anal sex and other related activities with about eleven (11) boys.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

F1: I attribute part of homosexual behaviour to spiritual control but a greater part to personal desire.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

F1: Homosexuals want to be understood so they seek audience. When they do not get that opportunity they keep to themselves and struggle with it. Because of society's lack of understanding for their situation, homosexuals tend to hate heterosexuals and blame them for their (homosexuals) situation.

Researcher: Do you believe you were born a homosexual?

F1: I do not believe that I was born a homosexual. Rather, I was driven by my own desire and in trying to satisfy it, I entered into homosexuality and became addicted to it.

Researcher: How did you stop?

F1: Before I stopped this practice, I was set up and exposed by some of my school mates. From that time I started thinking of stopping the practice. Then I came into

contact with one of my teachers who listened to me and led me through counselling and prayers to come out of it.

Researcher: How are you coping with life in your current condition?

F1: Living a new life away from homosexuality has not been easy. Now I do what heterosexual males do like watching soccer matches with them. I am even surprised at my own self because these were things I never dreamt I could do. I am occasionally prompted by my desires for members of my sex but I try not to act upon those desires. I constantly remind myself of the fact that I was created to be like every other heterosexual male so I try to fill my mind with things that will help me develop my potentials.

Researcher: What activity do you perform in church?

F1: I serve mass at church and support the Sunday school.

3.15 INTERVIEW WITH F2

Researcher: How old are you now?

F2: I am 21 years old.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

F2: I am a Christian.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual feelings for members of the same sex?

F2: I started experiencing the desire for members of my sex in my final year at the Junior High School but I did not understand it until my first year at the Senior High School when it became real to me.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

F2: I was not able to tell either of my parents.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practice homosexual sex?

F2: Although I had those feelings I never had homosexual sex (as in anal sex) with anyone but I have engaged in “blow job.” This happened at my first year in the Senior High School.

Researcher: Who introduced you into it?

F2: I saw “blow job” in movies so I will say no one introduced me into it. However, I made friends with some homosexuals at the Senior High School.

Researcher: How did it happen?

F2: The person I engaged in “blow job” was a one-time experience. We did not repeat the act. I don’t even remember how it happened.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

F2: I did.

Researcher: Throughout your time at the SHS how many people did you engage in the act?

F2: Apart from this person there were a lot of people I practised it with. I have even lost count of them.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

F2: Homosexuality is confusing to me. Sometimes I think it is natural and other times too I think it is very bad.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

F2: My thought is that people should just leave homosexuals alone.

Researcher: Do you believe you were born a homosexual?

F2: No.

Researcher: Then what do you think led you into it?

F2: I was exploring my freedom for the first time since I was always confined to our house with my parents. Senior High School gave me the opportunity to get out of this confinement.

Researcher: How did you stop it?

F2: It has been three years now since I made a promise to myself not to do it again.

Researcher: How are you coping with life in your current condition?

F2: Life has not been easy for me but I am trying. I now get sexual desires for both sexes but since I have decided not to act on such desires I am in control of them.

Researcher: What activity do you perform in church?

F2: I don't perform any special activity in church.

3.16 INTERVIEW WITH F3

Researcher: How old are you now?

F3: I am 22 years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

F3: Yes, I am.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual feelings for members of the same sex?

F3: I started having sexual feelings for members of the same sex when I was about 7 years old.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

F3: I could not tell either of my parents.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practise homosexual sex?

F3: It was around the age of seven (7) in a neighbour's room.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

F3: The neighbour in whose room it happened.

Researcher: How did it happen?

F3: He was much older than me. He lured me with a toffee and had anal sex with me.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

F3: No.

Researcher: Did you continue to have sex with the first person?

F3: No.

Researcher: Throughout your time at the SHS how many people did you engage in the act with?

F3: At the Senior High School I had anal sex with just one person on two occasions.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

F3: I perceive homosexuality to be a mental disorder.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

F3: Homosexuals should be advised on the effects of the practice.

Researcher: Do you believe you were born a homosexual?

F3: I do not believe that I was born a homosexual.

Researcher: What do you think led you into it?

F3: I also do not know what led me into it.

Researcher: How did you stop?

F3: It was divinely revealed to a pastor and I also confessed to it. He then prayed for me and from that time I have not been experiencing such feelings again.

Researcher: How are you coping with life in your current condition?

F3: Normal.

Researcher: What activity do you perform in church?

F3: In church I sing, act and dance.

3.17 INTERVIEW WITH F4

Researcher: How old are you now?

F4: Sixteen (16) years.

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

F4: Yes please.

Researcher: When did you start having sexual feelings for members of the same sex?

F4: I was about ten (10) years.

Researcher: Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?

F4: No please.

Researcher: When and where specifically did you first practice homosexual sex?

F4: At home in our bedroom.

Researcher: Who introduced you to it?

F4: It was my cousin G1. I started with him when we stayed together in one house. He asked me for it.

Researcher: How did it happen?

F4: He usually asked me for it. I initially resisted but when he persisted I yielded to his demand.

Researcher: Did you enjoy it?

F4: Yes please.

Researcher: Did you continue to have sex with him?

F4: Yes I did. We continued for years.

Researcher: Throughout your time at the SHS how many people did you engage in the act with?

F4: I never engaged in the act with anyone else in school.

Researcher: How do you perceive homosexuality?

F4: It is not a good practice. In fact it is evil.

Researcher: How should homosexuals be treated?

F4: They must be prayed for.

Researcher: Do you believe you were born a homosexual?

F4: No please.

Researcher: What do you think led you into it?

F4: I think it was my own desire. I was a child and did not understand it.

Researcher: How did you stop it?

F4: It was very difficult for me but I was determined to quit it. My family moved from the house in which we stayed together with G1. Also, he entered the boarding house when he gained admission into the Senior High School. These situations created an opportunity for me to break my relationship with him. I attended a church service and during an altar call I submitted myself, confessed my sins and together with the preacher I prayed for God's help. Since that day, I made a conscious effort never to return to it again and thanks be to God I have never done it again.

Researcher: How are you coping with life in your current condition?

F4: By God's grace I'm doing fine. It's behind me now.

Researcher: What activity do you perform in church?

F4: I don't play any leading role but I'm an active member of the youth group in my church.

Interview with some heads of Senior High Schools

It was difficult interviewing the heads of the Senior High Schools these students attend. They were not interested in the subject matter. However the researcher managed to get some few pieces of information from them. The brief interviews proceed.

3.18 INTERVIEW WITH ONE HEADMASTER

Researcher: Are you a Christian?

Headmaster: Yes I am.

Researcher: For how long have you been the head of this school?

Headmaster: I've been here for less than a year.

Researcher: Have you dealt with any case of homosexuality among your students since you became head of this school?

Headmaster: Yes.

Researcher: How many have you encountered?

Headmaster: Just one case.

Researcher: How did you handle it?

Headmaster: Based on the school's disciplinary committee's report, those involved were suspended indefinitely.

Researcher: Why did you take that action?

Headmaster: I was convinced that those involved were dangerous to other students. I believed they would lure innocent students into the act.

Researcher: What is your view on homosexuality?

Headmaster: Our Ghanaian culture frowns on it although it has been in our various communities for a long time.

Researcher: Do you see it as a challenge to the society?

Headmaster: Yes, I do.

Researcher: As a head of an institution, what do you think must be done about it from the perspective of the school?

Headmaster: Students must be told to desist from such practices and I also think that when a student is found engaging in it he should be taken out of the school to serve as a deterrent to others.

3.19 INTERVIEW WITH ONE HEADMISTRESS

Researcher: Madam, I want to talk to you about homosexuality among Senior High School students.

Headmistress: That thing is crazy. I don't even understand it.

Researcher: Please what do you mean by that?

Headmistress: Back in our days we had a terminology we called "supi." It simply meant superior friend which was very different from what they do now. But I must say that I don't have much insight into the current trend. Anything I say to you is just a conjecture and I'll have to refer you to the school counsellor.

Researcher: Have you encountered any case of lesbianism since you became the headmistress of this school?

Headmistress: No, I have never encountered any.

Note: L6 and L7 are lesbian partners in the school of this headmistress. They told this researcher that there were more lesbians in the school. However, due to time limitation the researcher could not approach them.

3.20 CONCLUSION

These people only spoke to the researcher because of the atmosphere of security and understanding which he created for them. Most intriguing is the fact that the authorities and the counsellors of the institutions they attend and their parents do not know any of these issues about them. In the case of the former gays their parents have now come to know what their children went through some time ago. Chapter four makes a detailed analysis of these experiences. There were more students involved in the practice according to these gays and lesbians interviewed. However, due to time limitation the researcher was not able to have all of them interviewed.

CHAPTER FOUR

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.0 INTRODUCTION

The pieces of information which have been presented in chapter three need a detailed analysis in order to make meaningful contribution to the on-going debate about homosexuality. It is in view of this that this chapter takes a critical look at the experiences of these young boys and girls. The discussions revolve around the research questions and the objectives set forth by the researcher for this study.

4.1 INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In answering the question as to why students practice homosexual sex at the Senior High School, it is apparent that homosexuality is a manifestation of a feeling that develops over a period of time. In the case of G1, it appears that a combination of certain environmental factors led to his homosexual orientation. Speaking to his mother she said that her husband divorced her when this boy was an infant. Since her divorce was a bitter experience for her to bear because her husband was the only man she had known in her life, she became emotionally distressed and that her son became her consolation. This created a very close bond between them. She was always with him everywhere she went.

Already coming from this background, G1 was introduced to sex by a male adult when he was still a growing child. He was naïve and continued the practice. It is obvious that it was this experience which led him to experiment sex with his first cousin. In that sexual intercourse G1 was submissive and that would become his role throughout his homosexual life. Having done this repeatedly for years it became an

addicted habit which he could not control. Unconsciously his mannerisms were girlish and this appearance must have attracted his seniors when he entered the Senior High School.

These seniors and other mates directed their uncontrolled sexual desire toward him reinforcing his experience. Now he says he has no sexual desire for females. Anal sex is something he enjoys doing as he said. This is because same-sex sexual activity is all that he knows in his life. It is worth noting that this boy had an elder brother who never became gay. He was born at the time their parents' marriage flourished. When the researcher spoke to this brother he said that he does not understand why his younger brother behaves like a girl. "When we stayed in Tamale my brother was always with my mother," he said.

The environment in which G2 grew up is quite similar to that of G1. According to G2's mother, the father regularly got intoxicated with alcohol and did not care about the boy. She had made her son her "friend and husband." In fact it is the mother who trades to take care of her children. It is for this reason that G2 says "my father is not my friend." Against this background G2 was exposed to sexual activity at an early stage of his life by someone who was a bit older than him. This early exposure was possible because the parents left him unattended to. He also unconsciously makes girlish gestures.

G2 says he is afraid of the act of anal sex and that is probably what has kept him from experiencing it. Further, the period between his first time experience at home in his childhood and Senior High School was a period of silent involvement in sexual activities. At the Senior High School level, there was a renewal of the previous experience initiated by the senior he met. It was another "blow job" experience which

seems to have reinforced his previous experience. However, he had stuck to “blow job” because of his fear of the uncertainty about anal sex coupled with the fact that it also gives him sexual pleasure. At every point in time his sexual desire is aroused, the only thought that comes to him is “blow job” with another male. It is convenient for him because he is in a male school. Again this is like an addiction, a habit very difficult for him to break from.

Talking to G3 a similar thought about environmental influence comes to mind. Because of the father’s job he was absent from the boy’s life most of the time when he was growing up. It was the mother who was present for the boy. Again, he grew up in the midst of females. This is like the case of a baby eagle growing up in the midst of chicks. There is a high possibility of the eagle growing up to behave like a chick. G3’s daily conversations were filled with “girls’ stuff” and no wonder he says the girls influenced him to behave like them.

Already struggling with his sexual identity, he comes into contact with his uncle who happens to be battling with his sexual desires. The uncle’s inability to control his burning sexual desire now makes him find this boy as a convenient way of dealing with it. His first approach on that night would definitely create an imprint of sexual engagement in the mind of the boy. He also followed it with a regular grouping of boys in a room and making them lay on top of each other as if having sexual intercourse. This repetitive act would have an influence on the thought of the boy. At the time in his adolescent age when he was approached by a mate for the real act of anal sex it was only a step ahead of what he had already experienced. In this sexual act too G3 played the female and that would also be his role in the homosexual lifestyle.

G3 again met boys who were also finding it difficult to control their sexual desires when he entered the Senior High School. It must be stressed that because of the physical changes that occur in a person at the adolescent age, increased sexual desire is not an unusual characteristic. Because the boys found him very attractive they all wanted to satisfy their sexual urge with him. This continuously put him in that situation of having to continue with his homosexual experience. He says he does not like being a gay but he feels he cannot control his desire.

G4's case also happens to be a case of exploration of sexuality at an early stage in life. His first act was with another boy who he claims was some few years older than him. It seems that particular boy might have seen a scene of sexual intercourse somewhere and wanted to practice it. He found G4 available because like the others his parents also left him unattended. They kept having anal sex every time they found the neighbourhood to be quiet. In this act G4 too was submissive and this has since become his role.

His parents finally separated and when they moved from the neighbourhood he found others in his new environment to continue that practice with. According to him, he has done it with several people that he has lost count. It can be concluded that his homosexuality is a habit that was formed over a period and like the others it has become difficult to stop.

G5 was introduced to the act of anal sex at a very early stage of his life by his cousin who was three (3) years older than him. They continued for some time without their parents noticing until the day his aunt found them. It had become an enjoyable act so the beating he received was not able to deter him from continuing the act. A close observation the researcher made was that G5 became smart and could outwit his

parents from suspecting his homosexual lifestyle. On one occasion he told his parents about someone who proposed love to him so he would gain their trust.

When he entered Senior High he made advances at some of his mates. This made them to start accusing him of being a gay. Such accusations brought his person to the notice of a senior who was also struggling to deal with his adolescent sexual drive. He proposed to G5 and he responded in the affirmative. They started their sexual relationship on one particular night and it continued till the senior graduated. He has not been able to stop because he goes about in search of another lover. His mates say he gives money and all manner of gifts to people he finds attractive.

An enquiry about his parents revealed that the mother happens to be the one in control of their home. She is a merchant who travels regularly outside the country to import goods. She has two shops in town and the husband manages one. G5 happens to be very close to this woman and she pampers him so much.

A combination of the three propositions of Rae⁶⁴ in relation to the development of homosexuality in boys is reflected in the situations of G1, G2, G3, G4 and G5. It appears that G1 and G2 in particular became the “emotional substitute husbands” whilst at the same time being introduced to sexual activities by members of the same sex. G5 has a domineering mother in addition to the introductory factor.

G6 had an unpleasant experience which gave him flashbacks over a long period of time. His older cousin who raped him caused a serious psychological problem for the boy. G6 says he could not break the news to his parents but had no reason for doing so. He took to himself as he grew up and constantly recalled his ordeal in the hands of his cousin.

⁶⁴ Rae, *Moral Choices*, 281.

The researcher's observation is that his inability to share his experience caused him to nurture an emotional distress in him. He grew up with it and at the adolescent age when he became sexually active his emotions produced a sexual desire that replicated his experience. Because he did not like his experience he does not regularly engage in anal sex. Apart from the incidence of rape, he has had anal sex one more time in his life. He considers himself to be versatile meaning he plays a dual role of male and female in his homosexual life.

What may have also contributed to controlling his sexual activities, according to him, is his fear of being found out since his school has both sexes. He tries to suppress his desire anytime it comes up. Having a partner in another school will obviously reduce his sexual activities. G6 has an emotional problem and he finds it difficult to handle.

The experience of L1 also emphasises another case of a person's experience at the introduction stage. Here she says her aunt introduced her to it when she knew no sexual activity in her life. This happened at the age when she had become sexually active. Having been introduced, she now gains interest in it and follows it up by approaching others to continue the practice. Because she enjoyed the act with her aunt and decided to continue with others, she makes the approach and for this reason has become a butch.

The entry into lesbianism in the case of L2 can be identified as proceeding from her timidity and naivety. At the senior high when she was approached by her senior, she could not decline the proposal for probably the fear of being intimidated by the senior and her friends. Since she was sexually active at this level, she gained some sexual pleasure from this experience and this led her to continue the relationship with her till

the senior graduated. After the senior left the school the habit had already been formed so she tried with another person.

L2 claims to be a femme. There is a difficulty in understanding how she continued in this role after her introduction but L1 became a butch although her aunt was the one who introduced her to it. The plausible interpretation may be that perhaps L1's aunt was submissive in their relationship.

L3's experience was motivated by a movie she watched. At the adolescent age, scenes of nudity and sexual activities have a strong and compelling influence on the youth. She and her friend were caught up in this trap of exuberance and they could not resist it. Clearly this would not have happened if there was the presence of a parent or a third person.

Since they enjoyed the act, they sought another opportunity together to repeat it. On both occasions L3 was submissive. She claims she has not done it with another person but this claim is difficult to accept. The reason for the researcher's doubt is that it was one of her school mates who identified her as a lesbian before she was approached for this work. The question then is how this school mate got to know about her. But she cannot be blamed because of the environment she finds herself. She could be dismissed if the information is leaked so she has to be smart.

Another strange experience is that of L4. She was introduced to it by her elder sister. This is incest. But incest and molestation are said to be common among homosexuals.⁶⁵ L4 yielded through the gifts enticement her sister offered her. The story demonstrates how people can become weak in their morals in the face of gifts.

Never suspecting siblings to be engaging in this practice, their parents left their home

⁶⁵ <http://www.familyresearchinst.org/2010/08/effect-of-homosexuality-upon-public-health-and-social-order-2> Accessed on March 20, 2016.

“ajar.” They continued for a period of time and this also formed a habit in L4. She has practised it with another school mate. She confesses to be a butch which suggests that she may have played this role at her introductory stage.

L5 was not detailed in her narrative about her experience. Notwithstanding, what she shared gives a reason to believe she was introduced into homosexuality by a lesbian. She says it was her friend who introduced her into it one morning at home when the friend had visited. They were left to have their privacy. She enjoyed the encounter and therefore repeated the act with her on other days. In all these L5 was submissive and this has made her to become a femme.

She also made a failed attempt to practice it in school with another person. Clearly this student was resolute in her thought and did not allow L5. The student is the contrast of L2.

L6 has a peculiar need she wants to address. Her experience with boys from her childhood has made her to lose interest in males. She is also not happy with her family. She claims to be suffering from a chronic ailment which she would not disclose. To add to these she has a promiscuous mother who urges her to flirt with men. It appears L6 is looking for happiness in her life and she feels lesbianism is the solution. She got involved because she was approached by a lesbian. In fact there were other lesbians in the school who approached her before her relationship with her current partner started. These cases made her to finally conclude in her thought that lesbianism is a normal act and an alternative for her.

L7 suffered child molestation at the hands of her own aunt. Unknown to the mother of L7, this aunt was a lesbian and because of L7's mother's busy schedule she always left her in the care of this lesbian aunt. The aunt also found pleasure in molesting L7

not knowing the consequence on her. L7 grew up with these memories. Eventually her mother died making her to stay with another relative. Parental care has been missing from her life.

She has not had any opportunity to vent these unpleasant experiences in her life. Keeping them to herself she also nurtured in her an emotion which would only produce a pattern of behaviour to replicate her aunt's deeds. She has become hardened and believes that she is better being a lesbian than a heterosexual.

The circumstances which led F1, F2, F3 and F4 into having a homosexual lifestyle some time ago in their lives are not very different from what these active gays and lesbians have shared here. For instance, when F1 got to the age of being sexually active he could not control his sexual desire. In trying to express this desire he came into contact with another male who was also struggling with a similar condition. According to F1, it was his friend who started touching him during the night. Since he already had the burning desire in him he responded.

F2 confesses that he was exploring the freedom he was enjoying in his life for the first time when he entered Senior High School. He fell into the company of gays and started behaving like them. Motivated by the sex scenes he saw in movies he was able to do oral sex (i.e. blow job). This became an addicted habit which he practiced with other males in his school till he says he made a conscious effort to quit it.

F3's experience is that of a victim of circumstance much like the stories the others have already told. He was lured and molested by someone older than him at a very early age. He lived with this trauma till he entered the Senior High and also met another senior who was a gay. His interaction with this person reinforced his earlier experience and got him entangled.

F4 says it was G1, his cousin, who actually seduced him into having his first sexual experience. From his account he did not understand what he was doing with G1 but it was enjoyable. Following a repetitive sexual intercourse the homosexual habit was formed in him. He could not resist it anymore till his parents moved home. What he says worked against their relationship was G1's entry into the boarding school. When he made a conscious effort to break the habit he was able to do it through the help of God.

Based on these experiences it can be said that homosexuality develops at different stages depending on what an individual experiences in life. Psychologists are of the view that what a child experiences produces his or her behaviour at adulthood. For instance, a child who is abused or sees the abuse of others may grow up to be abusive. Therefore it is not surprising that those who were sodomised in their childhood have turned out to be gays and lesbians at this stage of their lives. It is very difficult for people in this age group to control their desires.

Senior High School level only coincides with the adolescent age where people are sexually active. Sexual activity increases at this level in a person but the fact remains that most of the homosexual tendencies begin earlier as almost all the gays and lesbians have related.

On the issue of the treatment they receive from authorities of their schools, the reactions of some heads of schools interviewed reveal a certain level of understanding of the phenomenon which reflects the general view of the Ghanaian context. The posture of one of the heads of the female schools indicates a feeling of disgust and the expression of abomination typical of Ghanaians. In her view, homosexuality talked

about today is not like the “supi”⁶⁶ of their day which according to her applied to a friend who was a senior (i.e. superior friend). In the researcher’s judgement, she was trying to evade the issue that homosexuality existed in her school days. She believes homosexuality is a crazy act which developed recently in the Senior High Schools.

Both the headmaster and headmistress interviewed expressed the difficulty in allowing homosexual students to be in the midst of other students. The headmaster, for instance, was of the opinion that homosexual students can influence other students to become like them and therefore must not be allowed to stay in the school. Due to some of these thoughts, G1 and G2 were withdrawn from the boarding house based on unsubstantiated allegations of homosexual sex offences.

These views highlight the belief that homosexuality is strange and the students involved are evil and dangerous. In one of the female schools some of the girls the researcher spoke to intimated that the lesbians are believed to have some spiritual forces backing them and for these reasons the heterosexual students do not want to get close to them. Following this belief, suspected homosexual students are usually isolated. Even people who are effeminate are branded homosexuals and for that matter isolated. In almost all the schools visited, the homosexual students were observed to have close relationships with each other. They are close to each other because they feel rejected by their heterosexual counterparts.

The responses the homosexuals gave indicate that they are not treated with dignity as every human being would like to be treated. The expression from the gays and lesbians that homosexuals must be treated with care exposes the school environment to be in accord with the general hostility that Ghana as a whole bears against

⁶⁶ “Supi” is an old term for the practice of lesbianism in female Senior High Schools in Ghana.

homosexuality. This is a factor that is influencing the schools to treat homosexuals with impatience and lack of compassion.

Also, five students from three different schools of which two are heterosexuals revealed to the researcher that their school counsellors cannot be trusted. In one of the schools for example, a matter that had surfaced between a counsellor and a homosexual was used as evidence against the student when the student was arraigned before a disciplinary committee on an allegation of homosexual offence on campus. Further, the researcher can confirm that based on his personal informal conversations with several teachers at the Senior High School level, a lot of them think that homosexual students must be dismissed from the schools.

All of these sentiments are made known to the homosexual students on many platforms in the schools by teachers and other students. But because homosexuals are not able to suppress their sexual desires, they rather go underneath and practice their activities in secret. They do not trust any heterosexual to confide in him or her for any assistance whatsoever. Although majority of these gays and lesbians interviewed expressed their desire to stop the practice, they would rather stay and suffer in their situation in reality than to let somebody know that they are homosexuals.

Withdrawal from the boarding house and sometimes dismissal of students found in homosexual activities which happen to be the usual sanctions have never in any way worked to make them change. Rather, such measures strengthen their feeling of rejection and desertion by society which they already have. They usually conclude that they are on their own and since they find no person who understands them they continue with their practice. It is from this point that they become deeply engaged and

would find all reasons to defend and justify themselves and the act. This is how the treatment they receive in their schools impact on them.

4.2 CONCLUSION

From these issues it can be concluded that the popular assertion that students go to the Senior High School to learn homosexuality is erroneous. It is also not factual to say that it is only in same-sex schools that this phenomenon exists. At least F6 and his partner are examples showing that homosexuality cuts across all Senior High Schools.

Furthermore, homosexuality does not develop overnight at the Senior High School. It has more to do with the social environment in which an individual finds himself or herself. The experiences of a child will influence his or her behaviour as he or she grows up. When a person experiences homosexual sex and it is repeated, an addicted habit forms; hence it becomes difficult to break.

From the information gathered, it is clear that how school authorities, teachers and students deal with homosexual cases does not work. Homosexuals are treated in ways which leave them with the thought that they are not wanted by society. Following this they coil into their shells and will not let anyone know their situation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The debate on homosexuality seems to be an unending one. Christian theologians share a divided opinion. Whilst some believe it is an alternative lifestyle and those involved must be allowed to practice it freely, others are of the view that it is sinful and must not be allowed to exist in Christianity. All of these stands appeal to the scriptures to base their argument. Some countries have amended their laws to accommodate homosexuality whereas others still resist. It appears that many of the decisions taken for or against homosexuality by individuals, institutions and countries are based on the lack of understanding of the phenomenon.

Historical accounts have indicated that homosexuality has existed among humanity for thousands of years. The burning of Sodom did not cause an end to homosexual practices as it emerged later in Israel in the days of the Judges. Various writers consulted for this work lead to one conclusion that homosexuality is a human phenomenon which cuts across all cultures, countries and institutions. It does not spread across geographical boundaries but originates with the people themselves. In other words, countries are not influenced by foreign entities to practice it. Rather, it has always existed with the people of every country.

Because of this seemingly difficult-to-understand phenomenon, various concepts have emerged trying to explain its existence. There have been several attempts in science to link it to genetic cause. However, no concrete research has been able to prove any genetic root. Freud's disease theory also has no support. His inability to explain how

lesbianism occurs in females makes weak his argument. Those who wanted to use the structure of the brain to explain homosexuality have also not succeeded since brain experts say that behaviour rather influences brain structure.

Other writers are of the view that a combination of nature and nurture produce homosexuality. To them there has not been a distinctive factor that can be relied on to explain this phenomenon. They acknowledge that there could be some biological, psychological and social factors working together to contribute to the formation of homosexual behaviour.

Thirteen (13) practicing homosexuals and four former gays share their experiences and conclude that no one is born a homosexual. They were introduced into homosexual practices by some other people at different stages of their lives. Some were molested at childhood whilst others were led into it by their adolescent sexual desires ignited by movies they watched or by their peers who also sought sexual gratification.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Based on the experiences of the gays and lesbians interviewed for this work, there are certain issues that are settled. Homosexuality has no genetic linkage and that no person is born gay or lesbian. Whatever causes boys to be born effeminate cannot be used to justify homosexuality. Besides, not all effeminate become gays. During this research some effeminate were labelled as gays by some of their school mates and they were approached. After interacting with them it became clear that they were not gays.

It follows that homosexuality is influenced by the environment of a person. All the experiences shared here support this conclusion. An observation made was that those

effeminate who were wrongly thought to be gays by their peers grew up in an environment which never exposed them to the conditions the gays and lesbians experienced in their lives when growing up. What is more, the lack of parental guidance and control together with the kind of human associations children get as they grow up lead to the development of homosexuality. When children come into contact with homosexuals at that early stage of their lives they are likely to be influenced through child molestation. Rae shares this view when he says that the person who introduces a child to sex for the first time is a major factor in determining whether the child will become a homosexual or not.⁶⁷

Homosexuals are not distinct humans. The practice is the result of the sinful desire found in fallen humanity. Apostle Paul elaborated what has led to this kind of desire in his letter to the Romans. Among other things Paul says that it is due to the increase in sin which is leading to this phenomenon. He said “For this reason God gave them up to dishonourable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error” (Rom. 1:26-27 RSV). Therefore, any person can become a homosexual. Again, Rae is proved right here when he says “Because of the reality of sin, every person has the potential for homosexuality in the same way that we have the potential for any other kind of sin that the Bible describes.”⁶⁸

This research has shown that some parents are ignorant of the type of friends their children have, the kind of movies they watch and a lot of things that affect their

⁶⁷Rae, *Moral Choices*, 281.

⁶⁸Rae, *Moral Choices*, 282.

psychology as they go through their human development from childhood through the adolescent stage. This is the critical moment where homosexual habit can be formed depending on what the child experiences during this period.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that homosexuality is an addiction. Once a person is introduced to it and the act is repeated, the satisfaction gained from it can make one addicted to it. Almost all the people interviewed confessed it is fun doing it and very difficult to quit. Breaking a habit has never been easy. It is this fact that makes homosexuals and their activists conclude that they were born like that; hence must be accepted as an alternative lifestyle.

Students do not learn homosexual habit at the Senior High School level. The phenomenon is developmental as concluded by Troiden.⁶⁹ Senior High School level just coincides with adolescent age where people become sexually active and find it difficult to control their sexual desires.

Many Christian fathers are failing their God-given mandate to take care of their house. The Amplified Bible renders Gen. 18:19 as “For I have known (chosen, acknowledged) him [as My own], so that he may teach and command his children and the sons of his house after him to keep the way of the Lord and to do what is just and righteous, so that the Lord may bring Abraham what He has promised him.” This portion is in relation to the thought of God about Abraham when He (God) wanted to punish the people of Sodom. Inferring from this passage it is expected by God that the father figure plays a central role in the upbringing of children. For this to be done effectively requires the presence of the father in the life of the child.

⁶⁹ Richard R. Troiden; “The Formation of Homosexual Identities,” *Journal of Homosexuality*, 17 (1989):43-74. Published online on October 26, 2008. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1300/J082v17n01_02?src=recsys Accessed on September 3, 2016.

In contrast, the common trend observed in almost all the experiences was the seeming gap between the father and the child. All the practicing except for one and the former homosexuals said they have a close relationship with their mothers than their fathers. How are fathers relating with their children that they appear far away from them? One of them said that due to his father's job he was often absent from home. Another also said his father is not his friend. It is a known fact that most fathers are always out there trying to find money to keep the family.

A fact that this research attests to is that whilst many church leaders in Ghana are preaching to condemn homosexuality and calling it un-Christian and un-African, the phenomenon is already happening in their churches without their knowledge. All the respondents are members of some denominational churches in Kumasi. Some even play active roles like singing in their churches, handling Sunday school and other roles assigned to them. Meanwhile, church leaders are speculating that there is a homosexual agenda by the West to influence churches and countries to accept the practice. Unknowingly, it is already in the country and in the churches. No denomination can be exonerated from this. To stress this further, one of the lesbian's father is a pastor of a church in the Metropolis.

Senior High Schools where this phenomenon manifests more have not been effective in managing the phenomenon. What has been exposed here is rather an approach that makes the adolescents struggling with this phenomenon worse in their situation. Heads of Senior High Schools and their counsellors are not well abreast with the knowledge of this issue to be able to deal with it effectively.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The issues that this research has exposed inform the following recommendations:

1. Parents, especially fathers, must get very close to their wards in order to understand them and their challenges. The relationship that parents create for them and their children will make them either open up and share their problems or hide them. More so, parents should not entrust their children in the care and supervision of people they do not have full knowledge about their lifestyle.
2. Church leaders should try as much as possible to create a welcoming atmosphere for people struggling with homosexuality to feel the sense of hope for them. This will encourage them to avail themselves for the changing process to commence in their lives. At least the four (4) former homosexuals give testimony that the practice can be stopped if the approach is right.
3. Special training must be given to school counsellors to equip them to be able to handle homosexual matters. Homosexuals at the Senior High School level are not difficult to handle. They seek audience and for this reason counsellors must create the enabling environment for them to voice their situation.
4. It is important that the Ghana Education Service Code of Discipline for students which says that a student found guilty of sexual misconduct be dismissed should be reviewed and amended. Instead, measures aimed at reforming the offender should be adopted.
5. The media should be involved in educating the public on issues relating to homosexuality, bestiality, paedophilia, masturbation and the like. The more the general public is educated on these issues the better they become informed.

This will help Ghana to provide the needed support to victims of sexual abuse to be healed.

6. This work focused on the experiences of some selected homosexuals. During this research one of the former gays revealed to the researcher that there is a growing concentration of homosexuals along the coastal areas of Ghana. It is recommended that any future research work should look into this trend.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICING HOMOSEXUALS

1. How old are you?
2. Are you a Christian?
3. What activity do you do in your church?
4. Do you live with both parents?
5. Which of your parents do you have a close relationship with?
6. When did you start having sexual desires for members of the same sex?
7. Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?
8. When and where specifically did you first practice homosexual sex?
9. Who introduced you to it?
10. How did it happen?
11. Did you enjoy it?
12. Did you continue the practice with the person?
13. Have you practiced it with any person other than the first one?
14. How do you perceive homosexuality?
15. Do you like it? If the answer is no then why do you practice it?
16. How should homosexuals be treated?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE FORMER HOMOSEXUALS

1. How old are you now?
2. Are you a Christian?
3. When did you start having sexual feelings for members of the same sex?
4. Were you able to tell your parents about your feelings?
5. When and where specifically did you first practice homosexual sex?
6. Who introduced you to it?
7. How did it happen?
8. Did you enjoy it?
9. Did you continue to have sex with the first person?
10. Throughout your time at the SHS how many people did you engage in the act?
11. How do you perceive homosexuality?
12. How should homosexuals be treated?
13. Do you believe you were born a homosexual?
14. If your answer to question 13 is no, then what do you think led you into it?
15. How did you stop?
16. How are you coping with life in your current condition?
17. What activity do you perform in church?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HEADMASTERS/MISTRESSES

1. Are you a Christian? If yes then what role do you play in your church?
2. For how long have you been the head of this school?
3. Have you dealt with any case of homosexuality among your students since you became head of this school?
4. How many have you encountered?
5. How did you handle it or them?
6. Why did you handle it or them the way you did?
7. What is your view on homosexuality?
8. Do you see it as a challenge to the society?
9. As a head of an institution, what do you think must be done about it from the school's perspective?
10. As a parent, what do you think parents must do about it?