

MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF TRANS-SEXUALITY IN NIGERIAN SOCIETY

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project work titled; was carried out by **MORAL IMPLICATIONS OF TRANS-SEXUALITY IN NIGERIAN SOCIETY** with matriculation number **ART2101137** of the Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Benin, Benin- City.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty for his infinite mercies and grace.

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My first and foremost appreciation goes to God Almighty who has enabled me to get to where I am today throughout my study.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigerian society, where traditional, religious, and cultural beliefs strongly influence moral judgments about gender and sexuality. Trans-sexuality challenges the conventional notion that gender is fixed and biologically determined, proposing instead that it is fluid and deeply personal. In Nigeria, however, trans-sexual individuals often face moral condemnation, social rejection, and legal discrimination due to prevailing religious doctrines and cultural norms that regard such identities as immoral or unnatural. The study reveals that Nigerian moral reasoning is largely communal, emphasizing collective values over individual autonomy. Consequently, trans-sexuality is perceived as a moral deviation that threatens social harmony and divine order. This perception limits open moral discourse and perpetuates intolerance and stigmatization. The research further explores the ethical tension between cultural morality and universal human rights, raising questions about whether morality should evolve with changing understandings of human identity.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The discourse on trans-sexuality in Nigeria remains highly sensitive and controversial due to cultural, religious, and colonial legacies that have shaped perceptions of gender and morality. In the words of Epprecht, M. (2008), “Trans-sexuality refers to the experience of individuals whose gender identity does not align with the sex assigned to them at birth. Also, Oyewumi, O. (1997) stated that”¹ “Globally, conversations around transgender issues have advanced significantly, supported by legal reforms, media representation, and academic engagement.”² However, in the words of Mohammed, A. Nagarajan, C. & Aliyu, R. “in Nigeria, such discussions remain constrained by moral condemnation, religious doctrines, and societal stigma, which suppress open dialogue and reinforce exclusion.”³

Mohammed, A. Nagarajan, C. & Aliyu, R. also maintained that “Historically, some Nigerian ethnic groups had more fluid understandings of gender before colonial rule imposed rigid binary roles and criminalized gender variance through legal instruments such as the 1861 Criminal Code.”⁴ In the words Oriogun, R. (2000) “In contemporary

¹ Epprecht, M. (2008). *Heterosexual Africa? The History of an Idea from the Age of Exploration to the Age of AIDS*, (Athens: Ohio University Press), p. 89.

² Oyewumi, O. (1997). *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press,), p. 114.

³ Mohammed, A. (2018). Nagarajan, C. & Aliyu, R. *She Called Me Woman: Nigeria's Queer Women Speak*, (Abuja: Cassava Republic), p. 7.

⁴ Epprecht, M. *Op. Cit.*, p. 91.

times, trans individuals in Nigeria are often marginalized, denied rights, and subjected to systemic discrimination rooted in moral judgments and legal restrictions.”⁵ This has resulted in a climate of fear, silence, and violence toward those who do not conform to traditional gender norms. The challenge, therefore, lies in addressing these moral assumptions that inform social and institutional responses to trans identities. It becomes necessary to interrogate the prevailing moral frameworks and propose an inclusive approach that reflects human dignity, justice, and ethical responsibility—particularly within the Nigerian context.

It should be noted that the question of sexuality and gender identity has become one of the most pressing ethical, social, and cultural debates of the twenty-first century. Trans-sexuality, understood as the condition in which an individual identifies with a gender different from the one assigned at birth, has gained increasing global attention. In many Western societies, this phenomenon has been framed within the context of human rights, personal freedom, and the right to self-determination. However, in African societies, particularly Nigeria, the subject remains controversial, largely because of the cultural, religious, and moral frameworks that shape societal norms. Nigerian society is deeply rooted in communal values, religious doctrines, and traditional beliefs that emphasize conformity to heterosexual and cisgender norms. Against this background, trans-sexuality

⁵ Oriogun, R. (2020). *Sacrament of Bodies*, (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press), p. 23.

is often regarded as a moral anomaly, clashing with long-established cultural and ethical standards.

The Nigerian social context is complex in its perception of issues relating to sexuality and gender. The cultural fabric of the nation is built around communal identity and the preservation of lineage, where gender roles are considered fixed and essential for social order. Religion—both Christianity and Islam, which dominate Nigerian life further reinforces these traditional values. Religious leaders, both clerical and traditional, frequently condemn trans-sexuality, viewing it as morally deviant and contrary to divine design. This religious and cultural resistance has contributed to a social environment in which trans-sexual individuals face stigmatization, marginalization, and even criminalization. Laws such as the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act of 2014, while directed primarily against homosexuality, have also heightened hostility towards all forms of non-heteronormative sexual and gender expression, thereby affecting trans-sexual individuals in Nigeria.

The moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigerian society are multifaceted. On one hand, the phenomenon challenges long-held assumptions about human nature, morality, and the purpose of sexuality. It raises questions about whether morality should be grounded in cultural tradition, religious doctrine, or the recognition of individual autonomy and rights. On the other hand, trans-sexuality exposes underlying tensions in Nigerian society regarding tolerance, justice, and the universality of human dignity.

While some argue that acceptance of trans-sexuality undermines societal values and destabilizes family and communal structures, others contend that moral responsibility requires society to uphold compassion, fairness, and respect for human rights, even in cases that challenge conventional norms.

This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the moral implications of trans-sexuality in the Nigerian context by examining the ethical tensions between tradition and modernity, communal morality and individual autonomy, as well as religious injunctions and human rights advocacy. By critically engaging with the cultural, religious, and legal responses to trans-sexuality, the research aims to provide a balanced analysis of how Nigerian society interprets and reacts to this phenomenon. In doing so, it will contribute to the broader discourse on morality, human dignity, and the place of marginalized identities within a society deeply shaped by traditional and religious values.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Nigeria's moral landscape is defined by deep-rooted conservatism influenced by religious, cultural, and colonial legacies. These influences create an environment where trans identities are not only marginalized but also criminalized, fostering social hostility, exclusion, and state-sponsored discrimination. The enforcement of laws such as the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act of 2014 has further entrenched transphobia under legal and moral cover.

Oriogun, R. (2000) further maintained that “Unlike other parts of the world where trans rights are increasingly recognized, Nigeria remains resistant, upholding moral beliefs that equate trans-sexuality with immorality and social deviance.”⁶ This prevailing attitude exacerbates the vulnerability of trans individuals, subjecting them to violence, poor healthcare access, and denial of fundamental rights.

The dilemma is moral and ethical in nature—how can a society claim to uphold justice and dignity when a significant segment of its population is dehumanized? Addressing this contradiction demands a critical examination of the moral frameworks at play and a rethinking of what constitutes ethical inclusion in a pluralistic society like Nigeria.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is:

1. To investigate the dominant moral beliefs toward trans identities in Nigeria.
2. To examine how moral frameworks shape the experiences and rights of transgender individuals.
3. To explore ethical models that promote inclusive moral reasoning and reduce discrimination.
4. To contribute to academic and human rights dialogue surrounding gender identity and morality.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

5. To offer recommendations for policy and legal reforms that support the protection and dignity of trans individuals in Nigeria.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this project work includes, but not limited to the following:

1. It will offer practical and ethical understanding for human rights campaigners, educators, and policymakers who are striving to make spaces more inclusive and to resist discriminatory policies and attitudes.

2. It will encourage moral conversations beyond religious orthodoxy, promoting a framework that prioritizes human dignity and ethical pluralism in a culturally diverse society.

3. It will inform future interdisciplinary research in the areas of gender studies, African philosophy, moral theory, and public policy.

4. It will help society understand how Nigerian cultural and religious traditions interpret trans-sexuality, thereby clarifying moral frameworks and value systems.

5. It promotes public discourse on trans-sexuality, encouraging tolerance, empathy, and informed moral reasoning within communities.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

Every study adopts a method of inquiry suited to its subject matter. This research, being philosophical and social in nature, employs a combination of critical analysis and evaluative methodology. The critical method enables the researcher to identify, analyze, and interrogate dominant moral frameworks surrounding trans-sexuality in Nigeria, while the evaluative method examines the strengths and weaknesses of such moral systems in light of human rights and ethical inclusivity.

This study also adopts a conceptual analysis of key themes such as morality, gender identity, discrimination, and cultural ethics. Through this, existing literature, legal documents, media reports, and religious doctrines will be critically analyzed to understand how they shape public and institutional attitudes toward transgender persons in Nigeria. Materials such as books, journal articles, and public policy documents will be utilized to ensure that the research is grounded in both theoretical knowledge and practical realities.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the moral implications of trans-sexuality within the Nigerian socio-cultural and religious context. It examines how traditional, religious, and colonial ideologies have historically shaped perceptions of gender identity in Nigeria and how these ideologies continue to influence discrimination and exclusion today.

The research explores how dominant moral and ethical beliefs contribute to the marginalization of trans individuals and limits their rights and dignity. By emphasizing

inclusive ethics, the study investigates potential frameworks that can enable more just and equitable treatment of all gender identities in Nigeria.

It also investigates the intersection of morality, law, and human rights, particularly in response to legislations such as the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act of 2014, which directly and indirectly affects the rights of transgender persons. Ultimately, the study aims to foster constructive moral dialogue and propose pathways toward inclusive moral development in Nigerian society.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

Morality: MacIntyre, A. (2007) defined morality to mean “the standard of right and wrong that guides behaviour within a given society. It represents values and principles that are socially accepted and used to judge actions as good or bad. Morality is often shaped by religion, culture, and philosophical reasoning.”⁷

Ethics:

In the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant, I. Defined ethics as “a systematic study of moral principles. It involves evaluating what is right or wrong, just or unjust, and

⁷ MacIntyre, A. (2007). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), 23.

the reasoning behind such judgments.”⁸ Ethics provides the philosophical basis for morality and is essential in assessing human behaviour and institutional practices.

Trans-sexuality:

“Trans-sexuality refers to the condition in which a person’s gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.”⁹ This term is often used to describe individuals who seek to transition socially, medically, or surgically to another gender.

Gender Identity:

“Gender identity is a deeply held sense of one’s own gender, which may or may not align with the sex assigned at birth. It is a core aspect of a person’s self-understanding and personal experience.”¹⁰

Discrimination

“Discrimination refers to the unjust or prejudicial treatment of individuals based on characteristics such as gender identity, race, religion, or sexual orientation.”¹¹ In the

⁸ Kant, I. (1998). *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 41.

⁹ Stryker, S. (2008). *Transgender History* (Berkeley, CA: Seal Press), p. 15.

¹⁰ Whittle, S. (2020). *Respect and Equality: Transsexual and Transgender Rights* (London: Routledge), p. 24.

context of trans-sexuality, it involves systemic exclusion, marginalization, and denial of rights rooted in societal bias or legal frameworks.

Gender Variance

This term describes the expression of gender behaviours, identities, or roles that differ from cultural norms associated with one's assigned sex at birth. It challenges the rigid binary model of gender and reflects the diversity of human identity.

Inclusive Morality

“Inclusive morality is an ethical framework that acknowledges and respects the diversity of human experiences, identities, and expressions. It promotes fairness, empathy, and justice, seeking to reduce social inequality and affirm the dignity of all individuals regardless of gender or sexuality.”¹²

1.8 LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of trans-sexuality within Nigeria is deeply intertwined with global and local understandings of gender, identity, and morality. Foundational to transgender theory is Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990), which problematizes the binary gender model by

¹¹ Berry, J. W. (2011). *Cultural Psychology: Perspectives on Human Development* (New York: Cambridge University Press), p. 214.

¹² Tatum, B. D. (2017). *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* (New York: Basic Books), p. 45.

suggesting gender as a performative act¹³. This notion provides a lens through which to view Nigerian gender variance, challenging rigid cultural norms.

Currah et al.'s *Transgender Rights* (2006) highlights the legal challenges transgender individuals face worldwide, demonstrating how law often institutionalizes discrimination¹⁴. Serano's *Whipping Girl* (2007) discusses the social stigmatization faced by transgender women, relevant for understanding Nigerian socio-cultural attitudes¹⁴

Epprecht's *Heterosexual Africa?* (2008) traces how colonial regimes imposed binary gender roles that disrupted indigenous gender fluidity in African societies, with direct implications on contemporary Nigerian norms¹⁵ Oyěwùmí (1997) argues in *The Invention of Women* that African gender systems have historically differed from Western constructions, presenting alternative gender identities accepted in precolonial Yoruba culture.

Connell's *Gender* (2002) frames gender as socially constructed and shaped by power dynamics⁶, while hooks' *All About Love* (2000) offers a framework of love and acceptance, critical in addressing social stigma faced by transgender persons.¹⁶ Stryker's

¹³ Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, (New York: Routledge), p. 33.

¹⁴ Currah, P. et al., (2006). *Transgender Rights*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p. 45.

¹⁵ Berry, J. W., *Op. Cit.*, p. 19.

¹⁶ MacIntyre, A. (2007). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), p. 12.

Transgender History (2008) outlines transgender social movements and challenges, offering comparative insights into activism in Nigeria.

Tamale's *African Sexualities* (2011) examines African gender and sexuality beyond Western norms, emphasizing indigenous epistemologies⁹. Massad's *Desiring Arabs* (2007) critiques Western discourses on non-Western sexualities, urging respect for local contexts.¹⁷

Building further, Halberstam's *Female Masculinity* (1998) expands understandings of masculinity and gender performance beyond cisnormativity.¹⁸ Halberstam argues that masculinity is not inherently tied to being male. She explores how women and female-bodied persons have long performed masculinity in varied ways, and that these forms have been marginalized, pathologized, or ignored. Prosser's *Second Skins* (1998) provides psychological perspectives on transgender identity and embodiment. Meyer's *Outlaw Representation* (2002) analyzes queer identity and representation, enriching understanding of societal exclusion mechanisms. Judith Halberstam's *Female Masculinity* (1998) is a groundbreaking work in gender studies that challenges conventional understandings of masculinity and its assumed alignment with the male body. The book interrogates the cultural invisibility of masculine women and critiques the rigid gender binaries that underlie mainstream social and academic discourses. Halberstam argues that masculinity should not be viewed exclusively as the property of

¹⁷ Tamale, S. (2011). *African Sexualities*, (Dakar: Pambazuka Press), p. 17.

¹⁸ Halberstam J. J. (1998). *Female Masculinity*, (Durham: Duke University Press), p. 23.

men but rather as a diverse set of practices, identities, and performances that can be embodied by people across genders.

One of the central aims of the book is to destabilize the dominance of heterosexual, white, middle-class male masculinity as the cultural standard against which all other masculinities are measured. Halberstam contends that female masculinity, which has often been pathologized, ignored, or ridiculed, reveals the artificiality and fragility of traditional masculinity. By analyzing female masculinities, Halberstam exposes the ways in which cultural institutions police gender boundaries to maintain male privilege. The text insists that acknowledging and legitimizing female masculinity not only broadens the

From a Nigerian perspective, Nwoye's *African Queer Sexualities* (2014) confronts societal norms and legal frameworks that marginalize LGBT persons in Nigeria.¹⁹ Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley's *Thieving Sugar* (2010) offers critical reflections on African sexualities and gender performances¹⁵. These works underscore the ongoing struggles and resilience of trans persons within restrictive socio-political climates.

This corpus of scholarship provides the critical theoretical and contextual foundation for investigating the moral, social, and legal implications of trans-sexuality in Nigerian society.

¹⁹ Nwoye, W. (2014). *African Queer Sexualities*, (Lagos: Joja Publishers), p. 19.

CHAPTER TWO
CONCEPTUAL DISCOURSE ON MORALITY

2.1 The Idea of Morality

The idea of morality has remained one of the most profound subjects of human reflection throughout history. From ancient philosophy to contemporary ethical debates, morality is understood as the guiding principle that helps human beings differentiate between what is right and what is wrong, what is just and what is unjust, and what ought to be done as opposed to what should be avoided. It is, therefore, not merely a set of rules imposed externally but an intrinsic framework of values, norms, and duties that regulate human conduct both individually and collectively. Tamale, S. (2011) was of the view that “Morality provides a foundation upon which societies are built, relationships are maintained, and justice is administered. Without morality, human life would descend into chaos, as there would be no common ground for resolving disputes, promoting cooperation, or ensuring the dignity of every individual.”²⁰

At its core, morality is tied to human nature and the search for meaning. Philosophers such as Socrates and Plato viewed morality as inseparable from reason and the pursuit of the good life. For Socrates, “morality meant living a life of virtue, guided by knowledge and reason rather than by mere impulses or societal expectations.”²¹ Plato developed this further by connecting morality to the idea of justice and the harmony of the soul, suggesting that moral action arises when reason governs the appetites and passions. Similarly, Aristotle saw morality as the cultivation of virtues that lead to eudaimonia, or

²⁰ Tamale, S. (2011). *African Sexualities: A Reader*, Cape Town: Pambazuka Press), p. 35.

²¹ Bowes, P. (1959). *The Concept of Morality*, (London: Routledge, 1959, p. 47.

human flourishing. His virtue ethics emphasized character over rigid rules, arguing that morality is about finding the golden mean between extremes. These early insights show that morality is deeply connected to the human quest for wisdom, balance, and fulfillment.

Religion has also played a decisive role in shaping the idea of morality. In most traditions, morality is grounded in the belief in a higher power or divine lawgiver who establishes the standards of right and wrong. For example, Arewa, O. B. (2014) argued that “the Judeo-Christian tradition presents morality as rooted in God’s commandments, with the Ten Commandments serving as a moral compass for humanity. Similarly, in Islam, morality is embedded in the teachings of the Qur’an and the Hadith, guiding Muslims in their daily lives.”²² In African traditional religions, morality is woven into the cultural fabric, often expressed through communal values, respect for elders, harmony with nature, and the preservation of life. Here, morality is not seen as an individual affair alone but as a responsibility toward the community and the ancestors. These religious perspectives highlight the transcendent dimension of morality, grounding it in something greater than human will and linking it to divine order and purpose.

Modern philosophy, however, has offered alternative interpretations of morality. Thinkers such as Immanuel Kant detached morality from external authorities and emphasized the autonomy of the human will. For Kant, “morality is rooted in reason and the categorical imperative, which commands that one should act only according to maxims that can be

²² Arewa, O. B. (2014). “Culture, Identity, and Transnationalism: The Case of Nigeria,” *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 19–52.

universalized.”²³ This rationalist account presents morality as an objective and universal law, valid for all rational beings regardless of culture or religion. On the other hand, utilitarian thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill located morality in the consequences of actions, proposing that the morally right action is the one that maximizes happiness or utility for the greatest number. Unlike Kant’s duty-based morality, utilitarianism emphasizes outcomes rather than intentions. These contrasting perspectives reveal the richness of moral philosophy, where debates over duty, consequences, and virtue continue to shape our understanding of how human beings ought to live.

In the words of Gewirth, A. (2013), “Beyond philosophical and religious frameworks, morality is also a social construct that binds communities together. It is the foundation of law, politics, and culture, ensuring that human interactions are governed by fairness, responsibility, and respect.”²⁴ In traditional African societies, for instance, morality is inseparable from communal values, where actions are judged not only by their individual impact but also by their effect on the larger community. A person’s moral worth is often measured by their contribution to harmony, unity, and the well-being of others. This collective dimension of morality is equally evident in modern societies, where laws, rights, and duties are shaped by shared moral convictions about justice, equality, and human dignity. Thus, morality functions as both a personal compass and a social glue that sustains coexistence.

²³ Ibid., pp. 19 – 52.

²⁴ Gewirth, A. *Reason and Morality*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 23.

However, the idea of morality is not without challenges. One major issue is moral relativism, which argues that moral values are not universal but are dependent on culture, history, or individual preference. According to this view, “what is considered moral in one society may be regarded as immoral in another, and there is no absolute standard to adjudicate between them.”^{6 25} While relativism promotes tolerance and respect for diversity, it also raises the problem of whether any action can truly be condemned, even if it violates fundamental human rights. In contrast, moral objectivists insist that there are universal principles of morality, such as respect for human life, justice, and truth, which transcend cultural and historical boundaries. The tension between relativism and objectivism reflects the complexity of defining morality in a globalized world.

In contemporary times, morality has taken on new dimensions as humanity grapples with issues such as technology, bioethics, environmental sustainability, and global justice. Debates about artificial intelligence, euthanasia, climate change, and economic inequality all center on moral questions: What obligations do we have to future generations? How should we balance individual rights against the common good? What does it mean to act justly in a world marked by inequality? These questions show that morality is not a static idea but an evolving discourse that adapts to new realities while remaining rooted in the fundamental concern for human dignity and the good of all.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

In essence, the idea of morality is a central theme in human existence, shaping the way individuals live, societies function, and cultures evolve. It encompasses religious, philosophical, and cultural dimensions, reflecting both universal aspirations and particular traditions. Morality is about more than obedience to rules; it is about the pursuit of the good life, the cultivation of virtues, the promotion of justice, and the recognition of human dignity. While debates continue over its foundations and applications, morality remains indispensable to human flourishing. It is the compass that guides our actions, the bond that unites our communities, and the vision that calls humanity toward a more just and meaningful existence.

2.2 The Significance of Moral Values to Societal Growth and Development

Moral values are the foundational principles and ethical standards that guide human conduct within society. They serve as the compass for distinguishing between right and wrong, good and bad, justice and injustice. In every society, moral values shape the collective conscience, regulate interpersonal relationships, and sustain social order. Without them, the bonds that hold communities together would weaken, and society would risk falling into chaos. The significance of moral values to societal growth and development cannot, therefore, be overstated, for they form the very bedrock upon which progress, stability, and human flourishing are built.

At the heart of societal growth lies the preservation of harmony and peace, which are made possible by adherence to moral values. Principles such as honesty, respect, justice,

tolerance, and responsibility help reduce conflict and foster mutual trust among individuals. When people are guided by honesty, they engage in fair transactions, avoid deceit, and uphold integrity, which in turn strengthens economic systems. Respect and tolerance promote peaceful coexistence in diverse societies, ensuring that cultural, ethnic, and religious differences do not degenerate into hostility. Justice ensures fairness and equal opportunity for all, preventing exploitation and abuse. In this way, moral values become the glue that binds individuals together into a functioning whole, creating an environment conducive to growth.

Furthermore, moral values play a crucial role in the governance and political stability of any society. Leaders who are guided by integrity, accountability, and fairness inspire trust and loyalty from their citizens. On the contrary, the absence of moral values in leadership breeds corruption, injustice, and abuse of power, which stifle development and create unrest. Societies that emphasize moral education in politics cultivate transparent institutions that protect the rights of the people and lay the groundwork for sustainable progress. According to Eyo, E. C. (2019), “History has shown that civilizations with leaders who embody strong moral values tend to flourish, while those consumed by greed and immorality collapse under the weight of internal decay. Thus, the health of political institutions is inseparably tied to the presence of moral standards.”²⁶

²⁶ Eyo, E. C. (2019). “Ethics and Human Sexuality in Contemporary Nigerian Society,” *Philosophy International Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 115–126.

In the realm of economic development, moral values also hold tremendous significance. “An economy thrives not merely on resources and technology but on trust, discipline, and cooperation. Values such as diligence, honesty, and fairness contribute to efficient labour practices and fair distribution of wealth. Bowes, P. (2009) also asserts that ”²⁷ A society where individuals are committed to hard work and accountability experiences growth because its human capital is directed toward productivity rather than fraud or exploitation. Conversely, where corruption, greed, and dishonesty dominate economic life, investments are discouraged, innovation is stifled, and poverty becomes entrenched. Economic development, therefore, rests on a moral foundation that ensures fairness in trade, responsible use of resources, and the protection of the common good.

Education, which is another vital pillar of societal development, is deeply tied to moral values. While the acquisition of scientific and technical knowledge advances a society’s material progress, the integration of moral education nurtures responsible citizens. Schools and institutions that teach respect for human dignity, empathy, and discipline produce individuals who use their knowledge for the service of humanity rather than for destructive ends. A society that neglects moral education risks producing brilliant minds who lack ethical judgment, thereby endangering the future of the community. Moral values, therefore, ensure that education contributes not only to intellectual growth but also to the holistic development of responsible, compassionate citizens.

²⁷ P. Bowes, *The Concept of Morality*, (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 84.

More so, there is the role of moral values in preserving cultural identity and social continuity. Every society transmits its norms, traditions, and ethical codes to younger generations, thereby ensuring that its heritage is preserved. In line with Gyekye, K. (1997), “Moral values act as a bridge between the past and the future, safeguarding the cultural fabric of a people. They instil a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, which strengthens social cohesion. A community that loses sight of its moral values risks cultural disintegration, alienation, and moral confusion.”²⁸ Hence, moral values are not only a compass for individual behaviour but also the custodians of cultural identity and historical continuity.

Beyond material progress, moral values contribute to the overall well-being and happiness of individuals within society. A community where compassion, love, and empathy flourish provide a supportive environment for its members. Social virtues such as kindness, forgiveness, and selflessness enhance interpersonal relationships and reduce the prevalence of crime, violence, and hostility. This creates a society where individuals can live meaningful lives, free from fear and oppression. In this sense, moral values do not merely serve societal growth in terms of infrastructure and technology but also in fostering human dignity, emotional security, and collective well-being.

²⁸ Gyekye, K. *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 215.

The significance of moral values to societal growth and development is profound and far-reaching. They are the invisible pillars that uphold peace, justice, and progress in human communities. Without them, governance becomes corrupt, economies collapse, education loses direction, and social harmony disintegrates. Moral values ensure that material advancement is accompanied by ethical responsibility, making development both sustainable and humane. For any society aspiring to lasting growth, moral values must remain central to its vision, policies, and practices. They are not merely abstract ideals but practical necessities that shape the destiny of nations and determine the quality of human civilization.

2.3 Moral Standards and Moral Principles

Moral standards and moral principles form the bedrock of ethical reflection and human conduct in society. They provide the framework within which human beings understand right and wrong, good and evil, duty and obligation. In every society, morality plays an indispensable role in shaping the consciousness of individuals, influencing their choices, and guiding their behavior toward others. The concepts of moral standards and moral principles, though closely related, have distinctive roles in ethical discourse, and understanding them requires a careful examination of their meaning, their function in human life, and their importance to social order and personal development.

Rachels, J. and Rachels, S (2019) defined moral standards as “those accepted norms of behaviour that regulate human conduct within a given society or community. They are the

codes of conduct that define what is right or wrong, just or unjust, permissible or impermissible.”²⁹ It should be noted that unlike ordinary social conventions, which may govern etiquette or cultural practices, moral standards carry with them a strong sense of obligation and universality. For example, while bowing to greet may be a cultural convention in one society and shaking hands may be the convention in another, the moral standard of honesty, truthfulness, or respect for human life transcends cultural boundaries. Moral standards are usually grounded in deeper ethical convictions and are often linked to the pursuit of human dignity, justice, and the common good. They are not arbitrary but arise from the recognition of human beings as moral agents who must treat each other with fairness and respect.

Moral principles, on the other hand, are the foundational truths or general rules upon which moral standards are built. They provide the rational justification and philosophical grounding for moral standards. While moral standards tell us what ought to be done in specific situations, moral principles explain *why* those actions are required. For instance, the moral standard “do not steal” is derived from the broader moral principle of respect for ownership and human rights. Similarly, the moral standard “do not kill” flows from the more fundamental principle of the sanctity of human life. According to the aforementioned authors, “Moral principles, therefore, operate at a higher level of abstraction;

²⁹ Rachels, J. and Rachels, S. *The Elements of Moral Philosophy*, 9th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2019), p. 30.

they are universal and enduring guidelines that inform and justify the specific moral rules within a community.”¹³⁰

The distinction between moral standards and moral principles is important, yet their relationship is inseparable. Standards without principles become rigid customs with no rational justification, while principles without standards remain abstract ideals without practical application. A balanced moral life requires the presence of both: principles to provide universal direction and standards to concretize those principles into lived human experience. For example, the principle of justice demands fairness in human dealings, but this must be expressed in practical standards such as fair wages, equal treatment under the law, and impartial judgment in conflicts. Without these standards, justice remains a lofty idea with no real impact on social life. Without the principle of justice, these standards could be reduced to mere legalistic or conventional practices without deeper moral weight.

The significance of moral standards and principles also becomes clear when one considers their role in personal development and social harmony. On a personal level, adherence to moral standards disciplines the will, shapes character, and cultivates virtues such as honesty, courage, compassion, and responsibility. A person who abides by moral standards is not merely following rules but is actively forming a moral identity rooted in respect for others and fidelity to truth.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

On a social level, moral standards promote trust, cooperation, and peace. No society can flourish where lying, stealing, and injustice are rampant; moral standards act as the glue that binds individuals into a cohesive community. Meanwhile, Williams, B. (1985) maintained that “moral principles offer the universal vision necessary for resolving conflicts between different cultures, religions, or legal systems. When societies differ on the application of moral standards, they can still appeal to shared moral principles such as fairness, human dignity, and equality to find common ground.”³¹

Moral standards and moral principles are indispensable in confronting ethical dilemmas. In complex situations where duties conflict, principles serve as the higher guide for evaluating and resolving competing standards. For example, in medical ethics, the principle of respect for life may conflict with the principle of individual autonomy. Here, moral reasoning involves balancing principles and applying them to particular standards of practice. This interplay demonstrates that morality is not simply a list of dos and don'ts but a dynamic engagement with reason, human dignity, and the demands of justice.

It should also be noted that moral standards and moral principles are complementary dimensions of morality that together sustain both individual integrity and social order. Eyo, E. C. (2019) maintained that “moral standards provide the concrete rules of conduct that regulate everyday life, while moral principles supply the universal foundations that

³¹ Williams, B. *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 54.

give those standards their legitimacy and rational basis. They are inseparable in practice, for standards without principles are empty conventions, while principles without standards are abstract ideals.”³² Their relevance lies not only in guiding personal conduct but also in fostering social harmony, shaping laws, resolving ethical dilemmas, and advancing the cause of justice and human dignity. A society that neglects moral standards or abandons moral principles risks falling into chaos and relativism, while an individual who disregards them risks losing the very essence of moral humanity. Thus, to live ethically is to be guided by moral principles and to embody them through moral standards in daily life.

2.4 Moral Implications of Trans-Sexuality in Nigeria

The discourse on trans-sexuality has become one of the most debated issues in contemporary moral, cultural, and political discussions around the world. In Nigeria, where religion, tradition, and communal identity are deeply rooted in everyday life, the subject assumes a unique significance. Ezeanya, W. (2023) maintained that “Trans-sexuality, which refers to a person’s transition from one gender to another through medical, social, or psychological means, challenges long-established moral frameworks.”³³ This is particularly striking in a society where identity is strongly defined

³² Eyo, E. C. pp. 115–126.

³³ Ezeanya, W. (2023). “Transgender Identity and Family Life in Africa.” *Filosofia Theoretica: Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 88 – 97.

by biological sex and cultural expectations of gender roles. To examine the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria, it is essential to explore the cultural, religious, legal, and ethical lenses through which it is perceived, as well as the tensions between global human rights discourses and indigenous value systems.

Nigeria is a country with deep moral consciousness shaped largely by religion and tradition. Both Christianity and Islam, which constitute the dominant religious affiliations in the country, hold strong doctrines on the natural order of creation. Christianity, drawing from the biblical account of creation, emphasizes that God created humans as male and female, each with distinct roles. Islam equally stresses that sexual identity is a divine gift and should not be tampered with. These religious positions view trans-sexuality not simply as a matter of personal choice, but as a moral transgression against divine order. Within such frameworks, transitioning from one sex to another is often condemned as a rejection of God's will, which in turn shapes how the Nigerian society views trans individuals. The moral implication here is that trans-sexuality is considered a deviation from spiritual and moral truth, and therefore unacceptable within the dominant religious ethos.

Beyond religion, Nigerian traditional culture also plays a central role in shaping moral outlooks. African societies, including Nigeria, have historically placed great emphasis on procreation, lineage continuity, and communal identity. Onanuga, P. A. (2014) states that "Gender roles are not merely social categories but are deeply tied to communal

expectations, family honour, and the preservation of cultural heritage. A man is expected to embody strength, provide for his family, and continue his lineage, while a woman is expected to bear children, nurture, and sustain the household.”³⁴ Thus, trans-sexuality disrupts these expectations by introducing ambiguity into these roles. A person who transitions is perceived as rejecting their culturally assigned responsibility, thereby threatening the collective moral fabric of the community. The implication here is that trans-sexuality is seen not just as an individual choice but as an affront to communal morality and the collective understanding of identity.

At the legal and political level, Nigeria has entrenched anti-LGBTQ+ laws that criminalize same-sex relationships and gender non-conforming identities. According to Okpokwasili, O. A. (2024), “The Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (2014) is not only a legal instrument but also a moral statement of national identity. The law reflects the country’s stance that such practices are inconsistent with Nigerian values and are, in fact, considered immoral.”³⁵ Trans-sexuality, though not explicitly addressed in the act, falls under the broad category of non-heteronormative identities, and trans individuals are often subjected to discrimination, harassment, and social exclusion. The moral

³⁴ Onanuga, P. A. (2014) “Shackling (Im)morality: Religious Tropes, Religious Figures and Marginalizing Politics in Queer Nigerian Creative Texts,” *Journal of the African Literature Association*, vol. 18, No. 1, pp. 89–105.

³⁵ Okpokwasili, O. A. (2024). “The Moral Implications of Homosexuals (LGBT).” *Nnadiabube Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 17 – 29.

implication of such legal frameworks is the reinforcement of societal rejection of trans identities, creating a moral climate where intolerance is sanctioned by law. This deepens the marginalization of trans persons and presents their existence as incompatible with Nigerian moral order.

However, the global discourse on human rights and dignity has challenged this dominant Nigerian perspective. International human rights frameworks emphasize the autonomy of individuals, the right to self-expression, and the freedom to live authentically according to one's gender identity. From this perspective, trans-sexuality is not a moral failing but an assertion of personal liberty and human dignity. The moral implication, therefore, is a clash between universal human rights ethics and Nigeria's communal morality rooted in religion and tradition. While the former emphasizes individual freedom and authenticity, the latter prioritizes collective order and conformity to inherited values. This tension creates a moral dilemma: should morality in Nigeria evolve to embrace inclusivity and the dignity of trans persons, or should it remain rigid, upholding traditional values at the expense of minority identities?

Another significant moral implication of trans-sexuality in Nigeria lies in the area of healthcare and psychological well-being. "Trans individuals often suffer discrimination in healthcare settings, leading to neglect of their medical and psychological needs. Many live in secrecy, facing stigmatization that affects their mental health, often leading to

depression, social isolation, and in some cases, suicidal tendencies.”³⁶ From a moral perspective, this raises questions about compassion, justice, and the responsibility of society to protect vulnerable members. Even within the framework of traditional morality, Nigerian societies value human life and community care. The neglect of trans persons, therefore, represents a moral contradiction: while the society condemns trans identities, it simultaneously fails to uphold its moral obligation to preserve the dignity and welfare of all individuals.

Furthermore, the Nigerian response to trans-sexuality exposes a broader moral debate about modernity and tradition. Nigeria is a society in transition, grappling with the forces of globalization, technology, and exposure to diverse worldviews. Young people, especially in urban centers, are increasingly influenced by global discourses on gender and sexuality, which often clash with the traditional moral outlook of the older generation. This generational divide raises questions about whether morality is static or dynamic, and whether Nigeria’s moral system can adapt to the evolving realities of identity without losing its cultural essence. The moral implication here is the need to balance respect for cultural values with openness to human diversity, a task that requires careful ethical reflection.

Finally, the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria are complex and multifaceted, shaped by religion, tradition, law, and global influences. For many Nigerians, trans-

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 17 – 29.

sexuality is seen as a moral deviation that contradicts divine order, cultural heritage, and communal values. Legally and socially, it is marginalized, reinforcing its rejection within the public sphere. Yet, the persistence of trans individuals and the global emphasis on human rights raise profound questions about justice, compassion, and the evolving nature of morality. Ultimately, the Nigerian society is faced with a moral challenge: whether to remain rigid in the preservation of inherited values or to engage in an honest dialogue that considers the dignity and humanity of trans persons. The path chosen will determine not only how Nigeria handles the issue of trans-sexuality but also how it defines morality in a rapidly changing world.

CHAPTER THREE

MORAL IMPLICATION OF TRANS-SEXUALITY

3.1 Conceptualizing Trans-Sexuality

Trans-sexuality is a subject that has generated extensive debates in contemporary philosophical, psychological, and socio-cultural discourses. “At its core, trans-sexuality refers to the` condition or experience of individuals whose gender identity does not

align with the sex assigned to them at birth, leading many to seek transition—whether social, medical, or both—in order to affirm their lived identity.”³⁷ (Nagoshi, J. L. and Brzuzy, S., 2023). To conceptualize trans-sexuality, one must go beyond simplistic definitions and approach it as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that involves questions of identity, embodiment, social recognition, and moral value.

The first dimension in conceptualizing trans-sexuality is the biological and psychological interplay in the construction of identity. Traditional biological frameworks tended to reduce gender strictly to anatomy, chromosomes, and reproductive capacities. However, “trans-sexuality challenges such a rigid binary by highlighting that gender is not merely a biological fact but also a deeply felt psychological and existential reality.”³⁸ (Nagoshi, J. L. and Brzuzy, S. (2023). Leino, U. (2021) opined that “For many trans-sexual individuals, there exists a profound dissonance between their inner sense of self and the physical body they inhabit. This experience, often referred to as gender dysphoria, underscores the importance of recognizing that identity cannot be confined to biology alone but must account for the person’s subjective consciousness and lived reality.”³⁹

³⁷ Nagoshi, J. L. and Brzuzy, S. (2023). “Transgender Theory: Embodying Research and Practice,” *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, vol. 25, No. 4, pp. 431–443.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 431 – 443.

³⁹ Leino, U. (2021). “Conceptualizing Sex, Gender, and Trans: An Anglo-Finnish Perspective,” *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, Vol.8, pp. 448–461.

Another important aspect is the social and cultural construction of gender. Societies often establish norms that dictate how men and women should behave, dress, or even pursue life goals. Trans-sexuality disrupts these expectations by affirming that gender identity can transcend cultural prescriptions. This disruption forces society to revisit and re-evaluate its assumptions about the naturalness or fixity of gender roles. From this perspective, trans-sexuality is not merely a personal condition but a phenomenon that challenges the dominant structures of knowledge, power, and morality within society.

More so, trans-sexuality is inherently tied to embodiment. The body is not just a biological entity but also a medium through which individuals express identity and find social recognition. Leino, U. (2021). Also stated that “For many trans-sexual persons, medical transition through hormone therapy or surgery represents not only a physical transformation but also a reclaiming of authenticity.”⁴⁰ This raises philosophical questions about the relationship between body and self: is the body simply given, or can it be reshaped to reflect the truth of identity? In this sense, trans-sexuality underscores the fluidity of human embodiment and questions the metaphysical assumption that the body is a fixed determinant of who we are.

It should be noted that conceptualizing trans-sexuality also involves grappling with its moral and ethical implications. “On one hand, affirming the identities of trans-sexual persons promotes dignity, autonomy, and self-determination—values central to human

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 448 – 461.

flourishing. On the other hand, cultural and religious frameworks often resist such affirmation, viewing trans-sexuality as a deviation from natural or divine order.”⁴¹ The above tension situates trans-sexuality at the crossroads of human rights and cultural relativism, where the moral imperative to respect individual authenticity collides with collective notions of morality.

Finally, trans-sexuality must be understood as a lived reality shaped by struggle, resilience, and hope. It is not merely an abstract concept but the life experience of individuals navigating questions of belonging, recognition, and selfhood in contexts that are often hostile or indifferent. Conceptualizing it in this broader light means approaching it with empathy and intellectual openness, while acknowledging the plurality of ways in which humans experience and express gender.

3.2 Moral Perspectives on Trans-Sexuality

The subject of trans-sexuality occupies an increasingly prominent space in contemporary moral debates, drawing attention from philosophers, theologians, ethicists, and cultural critics alike. According to Esteban, J. (2002), “As a concept, trans-sexuality refers to the experience of individuals whose gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth, and who may choose to transition medically, socially, or

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 448–461.

psychologically in order to live authentically in their affirmed gender.”⁴²The moral perspectives on this issue are deeply contested, shaped by cultural traditions, religious doctrines, philosophical principles, and evolving human rights discourses. Understanding these perspectives requires an engagement with the ethical frameworks that underpin both acceptance and rejection of trans identities.

One of the most significant moral perspectives is rooted in human dignity and autonomy. From a humanistic and rights-based standpoint, individuals are considered moral agents with the capacity to define their own identities and pursue self-fulfilment. This perspective argues that “to deny a person the freedom to express their gender identity is to infringe upon their dignity, reduce their well-being, and undermine their autonomy.”⁴³ (Esteban, J. (2002). The moral imperative here is respect: society has an obligation to uphold the rights of trans individuals by creating environments that support their flourishing.”⁴⁴ (Gerritse, K. et al. 2022). Ethical theories such as Kantian deontology, which emphasize respect for persons as ends in themselves, reinforce this position by affirming the intrinsic worth of every individual regardless of gender identity.

⁴² Esteban, J. (2002). *Attitudes toward Transsexuality, Empathy, and Bullying in Young Population*. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, Vol. 19, No. 7, pp. 38 – 49.

⁴⁴ Gerritse, K. et al. (2022). “I should’ve been able to decide for myself, but I didn’t want to be left alone.” A qualitative interview study of clients’ ethical challenges and norms regarding decision-making in gender-affirming medical care. *Journal of Homosexuality*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 47 – 55.

In contrast, traditionalist moral perspectives often view trans-sexuality as problematic, arguing their point from a religious or cultural doctrines. In many faith traditions, gender is considered divinely ordained and immutable, tied to biological sex at birth. From this standpoint, transitioning or rejecting one's assigned sex is perceived as a violation of natural or divine order. This moral framework interprets trans-sexuality as not merely a personal choice but a disruption of established moral and social norms. For instance, natural law theory, especially in its classical interpretations, argues that "moral goodness lies in living in accordance with nature's purposes."⁴⁵ Since procreation and complementarity between male and female are considered central to human flourishing, trans-sexuality is seen as contrary to moral law.

However, moral perspectives are not limited to stark opposition between affirmation and rejection. Some approaches attempt to mediate between cultural traditions and modern understandings of identity. Communitarian ethics, for example, emphasizes the balance between individual freedom and social cohesion. From this view, while the moral autonomy of trans individuals should be acknowledged, communities must also consider how social values and traditions are preserved. The moral challenge, therefore, lies in negotiating inclusion without dismantling shared cultural or religious foundations. Another perspective comes from the lens of consequentialist ethics, particularly utilitarianism. Here, the moral evaluation of trans-sexuality focuses less on intrinsic right or wrong and more on the outcomes of acceptance or rejection. If affirming trans

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 47 – 55.

identities reduces suffering, promotes happiness, and contributes to social harmony, then acceptance is morally justified. On the other hand, “if trans experiences are met with hostility, discrimination, and exclusion, the result is increased suffering, which consequentialists would argue is morally wrong. This utilitarian approach highlights the importance of considering the lived realities of trans individuals, whose mental health and social well-being are often directly shaped by societal attitudes.”⁴⁶ (Gerritse, K. et al. 2022).

Contemporary feminist and queer moral theories further enrich the discourse by challenging rigid gender binaries and emphasizing the moral value of inclusivity and justice. These perspectives argue that “trans-sexuality exposes the limitations of traditional understandings of gender, compelling society to rethink the moral frameworks that privilege some identities while marginalizing others. In this sense, the moral significance of trans-sexuality lies not only in affirming individual rights but also in fostering a more just and diverse moral community.”⁴⁷ (Gerritse, K. et al. 2022).

Ultimately, moral perspectives on trans-sexuality remain deeply pluralistic, reflecting broader tensions between tradition and modernity, universal human rights and cultural particularism, autonomy and community. While traditional perspectives caution against deviation from established norms, progressive approaches insist on the moral necessity of inclusion and respect for identity. The challenge for contemporary societies is to engage

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 47 – 55.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 47 – 55.

in ethical reflection that is both principled and compassionate, recognizing the dignity of trans individuals while navigating the complexities of cultural and moral diversity. In the end, the moral discourse on trans-sexuality is less about rigid judgments and more about humanity's ongoing search for justice, authenticity, and respect in an ever-evolving moral landscape.

It should also be noted that phenomenon of trans-sexuality has become one of the most debated ethical issues in contemporary moral discourse, raising fundamental questions about human identity, freedom, and the boundaries of morality. While advocates see it as a matter of human rights and personal authenticity, critics raise concerns from religious, cultural, and moral standpoints. Within this complex debate, two dominant moral perspectives on trans-sexuality emerge: the liberal human rights perspective, which emphasizes autonomy, dignity, and inclusivity, and the conservative traditionalist perspective, which prioritizes natural law, religious values, and social order. Examining these two perspectives reveals not only the depth of the controversy but also the ethical dilemmas societies must navigate in addressing the reality of transgender experiences.

The liberal human rights perspective begins from the conviction that every human being possesses inherent dignity and the freedom to determine the course of their own lives. This view is grounded in modern liberal philosophy and supported by international human rights frameworks that protect individuals against discrimination based on gender identity. From this standpoint, trans-sexuality is seen not as a deviation but as an

authentic expression of one's inner self. E. S. Block, 2001 was of the opinion that "The principle of autonomy is central: moral agents should be free to define their identity and pursue happiness in ways that do not harm others. Denying transgender individuals the right to transition, whether socially or medically, is interpreted as a violation of personal liberty and equality."⁴⁸

Moreover, advocates argue that gender is a social construct shaped by culture and history, and therefore, individuals should not be confined by rigid binary categories. In this light, supporting trans-sexuality promotes inclusivity, reduces marginalization, and affirms the moral worth of every individual. For liberal moral theorists, the obligation of society is to dismantle prejudices, ensure equal opportunities, and create spaces where transgender persons can flourish without fear of stigmatization or discrimination.

In contrast, the conservative traditionalist perspective is based on the natural law arguments, religious convictions, and the preservation of social order. From this viewpoint, they argue that human sexuality is not merely a matter of individual choice but a reflection of divine intention or biological reality. Many religious traditions, particularly in Christianity, Islam, and African cultural systems, hold that gender is fixed by God or nature and is therefore immutable. For this reason, to alter one's biological sex or to reject one's natural gender role is perceived as a violation of moral order and an act of

⁴⁸ Block, E. S. (2001). "Christian Moral Freedom and the Transgender Person." *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 331–347.

rebellion against divine or natural design. Supporters of this perspective argue that “accepting trans-sexuality undermines the family structure, erodes moral values, and destabilizes cultural norms.”⁴⁹ (E. S. Block, 2001).

Furthermore, they claim that the psychological and medical risks associated with transition such as regret, health complications, and social alienation demonstrate that trans-sexuality does not offer a stable foundation for human flourishing. For traditionalists, they argued that “moral responsibility entails embracing one’s given nature rather than attempting to alter it. Thus, policies and moral teachings should discourage trans-sexual practices, not as an act of hatred, but as a commitment to preserving what is perceived as the natural and moral order of society.”⁵⁰ (Block, E. S. 2001).

Both perspectives discussed above raise profound ethical questions that challenge modern societies. On the one hand, the liberal approach entails compassion, justice, and personal autonomy, which actually is in line with contemporary struggles for human rights and inclusivity. It insists that “marginalization of transgender people is not only unjust but

⁴⁹ E. S. Block, “Christian Moral Freedom and the Transgender Person.” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2021, pp. 331–347.

⁵⁰ Block, E. (2001). “Christian Moral Freedom and the Transgender Person.” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 41, No. 2, pp. 331–347.

also morally corrosive, for it devalues the principle of universal dignity.”⁵¹ (E. S. Block, 2001). On the other hand, the traditionalist perspective reminds us that moral systems are built not only on individual freedoms but also on collective values and enduring traditions. It cautions against embracing radical changes without considering long-term implications for family, culture, and morality.

In essence, Block, E. S. 2001 was of the opinion that “the debate between these two moral perspectives on trans-sexuality is not easily resolved, for it reflects deeper tensions between modernity and tradition, autonomy and community, rights and responsibilities. While liberalism advocates for the expansion of moral boundaries to accommodate diverse identities, traditionalism resists such expansion in order to safeguard what it sees as eternal truths and stable social structures.”⁵² Hence, the task of moral philosophy and public ethics, therefore, is not merely to choose between these perspectives but to engage in dialogue that respects both the dignity of individuals and the cohesion of communities. In this way, societies may move toward a balanced approach that acknowledges the complexity of trans-sexuality without undermining the moral foundations on which human life depends.

3.3 Religious and Cultural Views on Trans-Sexuality

⁵¹ J. M. Wimberly, “Virtue ethics and the commitment to learn: overcoming disparities faced by transgender individuals” *Philosophy, Ethics, and Humanities in Medicine*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2019, pp. 112 – 127.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 112 – 127.

“Trans-sexuality, which broadly refers to the condition where an individual identifies with a gender different from the one assigned at birth, has generated diverse interpretations and responses across religious and cultural contexts. The subject remains one of the most contested issues in contemporary discourse, particularly as it challenges traditional notions of identity, gender, morality, and social order.”⁵³ (Campbell, M. et al., 2019). It should be noted that while some religious and cultural frameworks emphasize rigid binaries of male and female identities, others are beginning to accommodate more flexible understandings of human sexuality and identity.

From the perspective of religion, the Abrahamic traditions; Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have historically upheld the idea of a divinely ordained gender binary. In the words of Aymanee, A. and Zaharin, M. (2020), “In the Judeo-Christian creation narrative, God is said to have created humanity as “male and female,” a dichotomy that forms the basis for moral and social order. Within conservative Christianity, trans-sexuality is often viewed as a violation of divine will, interpreted as an attempt to alter God’s creation.”⁵⁴ This is why for many conservative theologians, the body is a sacred gift from God, and altering it to align with a self-perceived gender is seen as an act of rebellion against

⁵³ Campbell, M. et al., (2019). “A Systematic Review of the Relationship between Religion and Attitudes toward Transgender and Gender-Variant People,” *International Journal of Transgenderism*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 21–38.

⁵⁴ Aymanee, A. and Zaharin, M. (2020). “Countering Islamic Conservatism on Being Transgender: Clarifying Tantawi’s and Khomeini’s Fatwas from the Progressive Muslim Standpoint,” *International Journal of Transgender Health*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 235–241.

divine authority. Consequently, trans-sexual individuals are often met with moral condemnation, exclusion, or calls to repentance. However, progressive strands within Christianity have developed more inclusive interpretations, emphasizing compassion, human dignity, and the belief that all individuals are created in God's image. Such perspectives argue that trans-sexuality does not negate divine creation but reflects the complexity of human diversity.

In Islam, the predominant view is similarly restrictive. Hence, Best, M. and Weerakoon, P. (2021). is of the view that "The Qur'an and Hadith literature reinforce the binary notion of gender, with specific roles assigned to men and women within family and society. Traditional Islamic jurisprudence regards trans-sexuality as a disruption of natural and divine order. Nevertheless, Islamic thought has shown some nuances. For instance, the Iranian clerical establishment in the 1980s permitted sex reassignment surgery under certain circumstances, reasoning that while homosexuality remained prohibited, individuals who identified with a gender different from their biological sex could undergo medical transition to conform with a "true" gender identity."⁵⁵ This demonstrates that even within religious conservatism, there are avenues for negotiation and reinterpretation. Still, in most Islamic societies, cultural stigma and legal restrictions continue to suppress open expressions of trans identity.

⁵⁵ Best, M. and Weerakoon, P. (2021). "The Experience of Gender Incongruity in the Christian Church: A Qualitative Study," *Journal of Religion and Health* 60, No. 6, pp. 209–224.

In Eastern religions, perspectives tend to be more diverse. “Hinduism, with its rich mythology and flexible social structures, has historically recognized gender fluidity. Hindu texts contain stories of gods and heroes who change sex or embody both masculine and feminine characteristics, such as Ardhanarishvara, the composite form of Shiva and Parvati, symbolizing the unity of male and female principles.”⁵⁶ (Best, M. and Weerakoon, P. 2021). South Asian cultures also recognize the *hijra* community, which is composed of transgender and intersex individuals and has existed for centuries, often occupying a paradoxical space of reverence and marginalization. In Buddhism, the emphasis is less on rigid gender roles and more on the impermanence of all phenomena, including gender identity. While traditional Buddhist societies may still stigmatize trans individuals, doctrinally, Buddhism offers room for acceptance since ultimate liberation transcends all material and social categories, including gender.”⁵⁷ (Best, M. and Weerakoon, P. 2021).

Turning to cultural perspectives, attitudes toward trans-sexuality vary widely depending on historical, social, and political contexts. Both Kanamori, Y. and Fossett, S. (2021) argued that “In many African societies, gender has traditionally been viewed in binary terms, often linked to family lineage, procreation, and community continuity. Within such frameworks, trans-sexuality is frequently perceived as a threat to cultural values, kinship

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 209 – 224.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 209–224.

structures, and moral order.”⁵⁸ Nevertheless, anthropological studies reveal that some African societies did accommodate gender nonconforming individuals in ritual or social roles, though not necessarily in the modern sense of trans identity. Today, in much of Africa, colonial legacies combined with strong religious conservatism have reinforced negative attitudes, making trans individuals highly marginalized.

In Western societies, cultural views on trans-sexuality have shifted significantly over the past century. While earlier medical and psychiatric discourses pathologized trans identities, more recent cultural movements have emphasized acceptance, human rights, and gender diversity. Benson, K. and Westerfield, (2018). Maintained that “The rise of LGBTQ+ activism, feminist thought, and postmodern critiques of binary categories has fostered greater recognition of trans people in law, media, and public life. However, cultural acceptance remains uneven, with backlash from conservative movements who argue that trans rights conflict with traditional family values or biological realities.”⁵⁹

Indigenous cultures in the Americas and Oceania provide further insight. “Many Native American tribes historically recognized Klinken, A. V. (2024). Maintained that “Two-Spirit” individuals, people who embodied both masculine and feminine roles within their

⁵⁸ Kanamori, Y. and Fossett, S. (2021). “Transgender Attitudes and Beliefs Scale (TABS): Validation with a Sample of Self-Identified Christians,” *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, Vol. 12, pp. 99 - 112.

⁵⁹ Benson, K. and Westerfield, (2018). “Transgender People’s Reflections on Identity, Faith, and Christian Faith Communities in the U.S.,” *Sexual and Relationship Therap*, Vol. 33, No. 4 2018, pp. 395–420.

communities. They were often regarded as spiritually gifted and held respected positions”⁶⁰ Similarly, “Polynesian cultures recognize the *fa’afafine* in Samoa, individuals assigned male at birth who embody feminine gender roles and are integrated into community life without stigma.”⁶¹ These examples demonstrate that cultural attitudes toward trans identities have not always been negative and, in some cases, were deeply embedded within social and spiritual life. (Klinken, A. V. (2024).

From the above, it can be said that religious and cultural views on trans-sexuality reveal a complex interplay of acceptance, restriction, and negotiation. While many religious traditions emphasize divine authority and rigid gender binaries, others provide room for fluid interpretations and inclusive practices. Culturally, while contemporary Western societies increasingly recognize trans rights as part of human dignity, many traditional African, Middle Eastern, and Asian societies remain resistant due to deeply rooted religious, cultural, and social frameworks. Yet, historical and anthropological evidence shows that gender fluidity and nonconformity have long been part of human experience, suggesting that trans-sexuality is neither a modern invention nor a mere cultural aberration. The tension between continuity and change, tradition and modernity, exclusion and inclusion, defines the ongoing debates. Ultimately, understanding trans-

⁶⁰ Klinken, A. V. (2024). “Transgender, Trans-human, Trans-religious: The Decolonial Queer Possibilities of Ogbanje and Other African Spirits,” *QTR: A Journal of Trans and Queer Studies in Religion* Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 195–216.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 195 – 216.

sexuality within religious and cultural frameworks requires balancing respect for tradition with recognition of human diversity, dignity, and the evolving nature of social values.

3.4 Moral Implications of Trans-Sexuality in Nigeria

The question of trans-sexuality has increasingly become a subject of global moral discourse, attracting diverse responses from cultural, religious, philosophical, and legal perspectives. In Nigeria, a country whose social fabric is deeply woven with religious convictions, traditional customs, and communal values, the emergence of discussions on trans-sexuality has provoked significant debate. To understand the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria, one must take into account the nation's unique socio-cultural context, the influence of religion, and the ongoing tension between individual rights and collective morality.

Ezeanya, W. (2023) insists that “Trans-sexuality, which broadly refers to the experience of individuals whose gender identity does not align with their biological sex, challenges long-established moral frameworks in Nigeria. Traditionally, gender is perceived in rigid binary terms, tied directly to one's biological attributes and reinforced through cultural practices. In most Nigerian societies, gender roles are not just social constructs but moral imperatives that structure the family, kinship relations, and community order.”⁶² Consequently, any deviation from these roles is often interpreted as a threat to the moral

⁶² Ezeanya, W. (2023). “Transgender Identity and Family Life in Africa.” *Filosofia Theoretica: Journal of African Philosophy, Culture and Religions*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2023, pp. 88 - 97

fabric of society. Thus, trans-sexuality tends to be seen not merely as an individual choice but as a violation of cultural and communal norms that define morality in Nigeria.

Religion is another critical determinant of the moral evaluation of trans-sexuality in Nigeria. The country is almost evenly split between Christianity and Islam, with both religions emphasizing the divine creation of humanity as male and female. “Biblical and Qur’anic teachings are often invoked to argue that altering one’s gender is an act of rebellion against divine order. For Christians, the moral implication of trans-sexuality is often framed as sin, a deviation from God’s intended design for humanity. Similarly, in Islam, the idea of changing one’s God-given sex is viewed as tampering with divine will. This religious lens leads to moral judgments that condemn trans-sexual persons as violating sacred principles, thereby creating an environment of stigma and marginalization.”⁶³

Beyond religion, there is perceived threat of trans-sexuality to social cohesion. In a culture where family lineage, procreation, and community identity are highly valued, the notion of rejecting one’s biological sex is viewed as undermining the collective goals of continuity and stability. The family, considered as the foundation of society, depends on clearly defined gender roles for its moral and functional order. Trans-sexuality therefore raises questions about marriage, inheritance, and kinship responsibilities. From this

⁶³ *Ibid.*, PP. 88 - 97

perspective, the moral implication is that it destabilizes institutions that hold the society together.

However, it is important to recognize that the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria are not solely negative. There is also a growing moral challenge to society itself—namely, the need to confront issues of human dignity, justice, and rights. Moral philosophy, especially from a human rights standpoint, questions whether it is ethical to deny individuals the freedom to express their identity simply because it conflicts with cultural or religious norms. This tension brings to light the moral responsibility of Nigerians to balance communal values with individual autonomy. Denying recognition to trans-sexual persons often leads to marginalization, discrimination, and psychological harm, raising the moral issue of whether society is complicit in perpetuating injustice.

Another moral implication lies in the discourse on authenticity and personal flourishing. Philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Charles Taylor emphasize the moral importance of living authentically—being true to oneself. For trans-sexual individuals, transitioning may represent an authentic expression of who they are. The refusal of Nigerian society to accept such authenticity can be interpreted as a denial of moral growth and human flourishing. Thus, the moral question extends beyond condemnation to whether society's rigid stance inhibits the possibility of individuals achieving self-realization and fulfillment.⁶⁴ Tamale, S. (2011).

⁶⁴ Tamale, S. (2011). *African Sexualities: A Reader*, Cape Town: Pambazuka Press, p. 35.

Another dimension is the moral dilemma of legal and social exclusion. The Nigerian legal system, influenced by religious and cultural conservatism, does not recognize transsexual identities. This results in discrimination in employment, healthcare, education, and social participation. The moral question that arises is whether it is just to deny citizens equal protection and dignity simply because of their gender identity. From a human rights perspective, such exclusion violates the moral principle of justice, which demands fairness and equality in society. Yet, from a conservative standpoint, legal restrictions are seen as morally necessary to protect societal order.

furthermore, trans-sexuality introduces questions about marriage and family ethics. In Nigeria, marriage is not just a private union but a social and moral institution tied to procreation and family lineage. Tamale, S. (2011) further maintained that “Trans-sexual individuals therefore complicate traditional expectations of marriage and childbearing, leading to moral debates about whether such unions undermine family values. The issue becomes particularly sensitive in inheritance and lineage-based cultures where family continuity is a sacred duty. The moral implication is that trans-sexuality forces a reconsideration of how Nigerian society defines family, kinship, and moral responsibility to future generations.”⁶⁵

From the above, we can see that “the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria are multi-layered and deeply contested. They encompass the tension between tradition and

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

modernity, religion and conscience, communal values and individual rights, as well as national culture and global influence.”⁶⁶ (Tamale, S. 2011).

While many Nigerians view trans-sexuality as a moral violation of divine and cultural order, others argue that society’s response raises moral concerns about justice, human dignity, and compassion. The debate thus reflects a broader moral struggle: whether Nigeria will continue to anchor its moral reasoning in rigid cultural and religious norms or evolve towards a more inclusive ethic that balances tradition with respect for individual authenticity.

In conclusion, the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria are complex, shaped by religion, culture, and collective values. On one hand, trans-sexuality is perceived as a moral transgression against divine law, cultural norms, and social order. On the other hand, it exposes moral dilemmas about justice, dignity, and human freedom in a rapidly globalizing world. The debate is therefore not simply about whether trans-sexuality is right or wrong, but about how Nigerian society navigates the tension between preserving traditional morality and acknowledging the evolving demands of human rights and individuality. A nuanced moral evaluation requires balancing communal cohesion with compassion, justice, and respect for human dignity.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 88 - 97

CHAPTER FOUR

EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 EVALUATION

At its core, the study draws attention to the phenomenon of trans-sexuality, a term that broadly refers to individuals whose gender identity or expression differs from the sex assigned to them at birth, and who may undergo medical, surgical, or social transitions to align with their identified gender. By situating the focus within Nigeria, the study signals

a deliberate attempt to contextualize a global issue within a local framework. This localization is important because the Nigerian environment is characterized by distinct cultural, religious, and moral orientations that often determine societal attitudes toward sexual minorities. In Nigeria, questions surrounding trans-sexuality are not merely academic but also moral, legal, and existential, especially given the cultural conservatism and the dominance of Abrahamic religions in shaping moral perceptions.

From a moral standpoint, the study raises fundamental questions about human dignity, autonomy, natural law, and social justice. A central issue lies in whether trans-sexuality should be perceived as a moral good, a neutral reality, or a moral disorder within the Nigerian moral imagination. On one hand, advocates of liberal ethics and human rights frameworks may argue that trans-sexuality, as an expression of human freedom and authenticity, must be morally permissible. They stress that “respect for individual autonomy, self-determination, and protection against discrimination forms the ethical basis for affirming trans identities.”⁶⁷ On the other hand, “traditional Nigerian moral systems, largely informed by religious teachings—Christianity, Islam, and African traditional religions—tend to regard gender as divinely or naturally fixed.”⁶⁸ From this

⁶⁷ J. L. Nagoshi and S. Brzuzy, “Transgender Theory: Embodying Research and Practice,” *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2024. pp. 431–443.

⁶⁸ E. S. Block, “Christian Moral Freedom and the Transgender Person.” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, Vol. 41, No. 2, 2021, pp. 331–347.

perspective, trans-sexuality could be interpreted as morally problematic, seen as an aberration from natural order, divine will, or communal harmony. Thus, the project sets the stage for a clash between universalist rights-based ethics and communitarian or religiously grounded moral frameworks.

Another dimension of moral implication concerns the social fabric. Nigeria, being a highly communal society, tends to prioritize collective morality over individual self-expression. The introduction of trans identities challenges long-held cultural norms around kinship, procreation, marriage, and gender roles. Evaluating the moral implications therefore requires an exploration of how trans-sexuality impacts societal values, the meaning of family, and the moral responsibilities assigned to individuals based on their gender. For instance, how does trans-sexuality interact with the cultural expectation of continuity through lineage? What are its implications for moral education, youth identity formation, and social cohesion? These are questions that add depth to the topic.

In essence, it should be noted that the study of the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria is both timely and advantageous, as it sheds light on a complex and sensitive subject that touches on ethics, culture, religion, law, and human rights. One of the primary advantages of this study is that it encourages critical reflection on the moral foundations of Nigerian society in relation to emerging global discourses on gender identity. “Nigeria, being a country deeply rooted in religious and cultural traditions, often

interprets morality through these lenses.”⁶⁹ By exploring the moral implications of transsexuality, this study provides an opportunity to assess whether these moral foundations can adapt to modern realities or whether they remain static in the face of changing social norms. This process of reflection promotes dialogue and intellectual engagement, which are essential for national growth in an increasingly globalized world.

Another advantage lies in the way this study opens up academic and social spaces for marginalized voices. “Transgender individuals in Nigeria often face discrimination, exclusion, and stigmatization due to cultural taboos and legal restrictions.”⁷⁰ By examining the moral implications of their existence and choices, the research highlights their lived experiences and brings them into moral and ethical consideration. This promotes inclusivity, empathy, and awareness, challenging prejudices and encouraging a more humane society. Such discussions can pave the way for improved social policies that protect minority rights without necessarily undermining cultural or religious values.

Furthermore, the study promotes interreligious and intercultural dialogue. “Nigeria is a multi-religious nation where Islam, Christianity, and African Traditional Religions hold significant influence. Each of these traditions has its own understanding of human sexuality and moral behaviour.”⁷¹ Hence, a systematic study of transsexuality and its moral implications provide a platform for these traditions to critically engage with one

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 333 - 347

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 333 - 347

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 333 - 347

another, fostering mutual understanding rather than conflict. This is advantageous in reducing tension, encouraging tolerance, and nurturing peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic society.

More so, the study has practical significance for law, education, and public policy. Legal frameworks in Nigeria are often shaped by moral reasoning, yet these laws sometimes fail to adequately address emerging social issues. “By exploring the moral implications of trans-sexuality, scholars, lawmakers, and policymakers are better positioned to understand the ethical dimensions of the debate and to make informed decisions that balance tradition with human dignity.”⁷² In education, such research enhances knowledge production and ensures that Nigerian universities and intellectuals contribute to global debates on gender and sexuality, rather than being passive observers.

Furthermore, the study contributes to moral philosophy itself. “Questions of identity, bodily autonomy, human dignity, and freedom of expression are core to moral inquiry. The Nigerian context adds richness to these debates because it brings unique cultural, religious, and philosophical perspectives that are often overlooked in Western-centered discussions on trans-sexuality.”⁷³ By interrogating the moral implications in Nigeria, the research adds to global scholarship, ensuring that African moral reasoning has a place in shaping universal ethics.

⁷² M.A. Krapiec, *Man and Natural Law* (Lublin: Catholic University of Lublin Press, 1993), p. 101.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

However, while the study is rich in potential, it also presents challenges that must be critically addressed. One challenge is the danger of moral absolutism or bias. In a society where public discourse on sexuality is often hostile, the researcher adopts an approach that is analytical rather than polemical, ensuring that the project remains scholarly and not merely ideological. Another difficulty lies in the scarcity of reliable data on trans individuals in Nigeria, as many live in secrecy due to fear of persecution. This limitation may affect empirical grounding, though it can be mitigated through reliance on qualitative approaches, comparative studies, and theoretical analysis.

In essence, the study is both ambitious and timely. It invites an exploration of one of the most contested issues of modern ethics within a Nigerian context where tradition, religion, and modernity converge. The study has the potential to make a significant scholarly contribution by critically examining how trans-sexuality is morally constructed and debated in Nigeria, and what ethical lessons can be drawn from this engagement. If handled with intellectual balance, cultural sensitivity, and philosophical rigor, the study can open new frontiers in African moral philosophy, while also enriching global debates on gender and morality.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the study on the moral implication of trans-sexuality in Nigeria, it is recommended that future academic and societal engagements should approach the subject with a critical balance between cultural sensitivity and universal human rights. Nigeria is

a deeply religious and culturally conservative society, where traditional values and religious teachings strongly influence public opinion and policymaking. These contexts often produce moral objections to trans-sexuality, with critics viewing it as contradictory to African cultural heritage and contrary to Christian and Islamic ethical frameworks that guide much of Nigerian society. Such a standpoint underscores the belief that trans-sexuality undermines natural identity, destabilizes family values, and introduces ethical confusion into communities that are already struggling with socio-political instability and moral crises.

It is further recommended that policymakers, religious leaders, and educators should reinforce moral education that emphasizes the need to be true to their biological identity and discourages practices that could be perceived as foreign imports eroding traditional African values. This can be achieved by strengthening community-based moral teachings, encouraging family cohesion, and engaging youth in moral dialogue that highlights the dangers of adopting lifestyles considered inconsistent with religious and cultural norms.

Moreso, public health campaigns should focus on creating awareness of the potential psychological and medical risks associated with transitioning, thereby discouraging individuals from pursuing trans-sexual practices without adequate moral and ethical reflection. By doing so, it will help to reaffirm its commitment to upholding moral standards and cultural authenticity in the face of globalization and westernization.

Again, it is recommended that academic discourse in Nigeria continue to critically examine trans-sexuality not merely as a personal choice but as a phenomenon with profound moral and social implications. Scholars should highlight the need for caution in embracing ideologies that could fragment society or weaken long-standing values that serve as the bedrock of communal life. This means prioritizing research that explores how trans-sexuality challenges traditional understandings of morality, family, and identity in Africa.

Furthermore, it is recommended that educational institutions take a more active role in shaping the moral consciousness of young Nigerians by reinforcing traditional values in curricula. Schools, colleges, and universities should include in their moral and civic education subjects discussions on sexuality that reflect African perspectives rooted in family cohesion, communal responsibility, and religious morality. This will ensure that the younger generation is shielded from what many see as moral confusion that accompanies the acceptance of trans-sexuality. Religious institutions, which already wield significant influence in Nigeria, should also be empowered to take up the responsibility of moral guidance by continuously teaching doctrines that affirm the natural order of gender identity as divinely ordained. In this way, education and religion will form a united front in preserving the moral consciousness of society.

In extending the recommendations, it is important to emphasize the role of policy, law, and governance in reinforcing the moral fabric of the nation. Nigeria, as a sovereign state

with its constitution deeply rooted in cultural and religious values, should adopt policies that clearly discourage trans-sexual practices which are seen to contradict the nation's ethical and spiritual heritage. Legal frameworks should be strengthened to protect cultural values from erosion by Western ideologies that promote individualistic interpretations of identity. By resisting external pressures to normalize trans-sexuality, Nigeria would safeguard the integrity of its moral and social structures. This does not necessarily mean advocating violence or discrimination, but rather developing laws and policies that prioritize moral education, community identity, and public order over controversial lifestyle choices.

On a community level, it is recommended that family institutions be revitalized to serve as the first line of moral defense. Parents and guardians should be encouraged to openly discuss issues of sexuality with their children from an early age, instilling values that counter the attraction of foreign ideologies that may encourage confusion about gender identity. The family, being the cornerstone of Nigerian society, has the responsibility to uphold moral standards that resonate with the collective cultural heritage. When families are strong in their moral convictions, society as a whole becomes less susceptible to practices such as trans-sexuality, which are seen to undermine natural identity and societal stability.

By way of rounding up this section, it is recommended that religious and cultural leaders actively collaborate in national conversations about morality and identity. These leaders

should be at the forefront of shaping public discourse, ensuring that moral clarity is maintained in the face of globalization. National campaigns could be organized to sensitize citizens on the perceived dangers of adopting lifestyles that contradict their moral heritage, emphasizing that the preservation of cultural and religious values is crucial for national identity and unity. By doing so, Nigeria not only resists foreign pressures but also strengthens its cultural and spiritual foundation for future generations.

4.3 CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of trans-sexuality in Nigeria raises critical moral concerns that challenge the very foundations of the nation's cultural, religious, and social order. Nigerian society is deeply rooted in traditions that emphasize the sacredness of human identity as bestowed by nature and affirmed by divine authority. To alter one's biological sex or to live in contradiction to one's natural gender role is often perceived as an affront to these long-held values. From the moral standpoint, trans-sexuality appears to disrupt the natural order of creation, destabilize family structures, and undermine the ethical framework upon which Nigerian communal life is built. The moral implications, therefore, are not only personal but extend to the collective conscience of the nation.

Religiously, the three dominant faith traditions in Nigeria—Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religion share an almost unanimous stance against practices such as trans-sexuality. These religions stress that human beings are divinely created male and female, and that attempting to subvert this order is tantamount to rejecting divine

authority. For many Nigerians, trans-sexuality is therefore not merely a personal decision but a moral deviation with spiritual consequences. The sacred texts and religious teachings often serve as guiding principles for moral conduct, and since they condemn the practice, trans-sexuality becomes morally unacceptable in the Nigerian context.

Culturally, Nigerian society places a premium on family lineage, continuity, and communal responsibilities. Hence, the acceptance of trans-sexuality poses a moral risk to these values by destabilizing the traditional expectations of marriage, procreation, and social harmony. “When individuals reject their natural sex, they risk dismantling the roles and responsibilities assigned to them by both tradition and community.”⁷⁴ This undermines the cohesion of the family unit, which is the bedrock of Nigerian culture and morality. Hence, from a cultural perspective, trans-sexuality carries moral implications that could fracture the social fabric and weaken communal solidarity.

Socially, the promotion or normalization of trans-sexuality in Nigeria could lead to confusion, moral relativism, and the erosion of ethical boundaries. The younger generation may become disoriented when the distinction between male and female is blurred, thereby weakening their understanding of moral clarity and responsibility. Moreover, embracing trans-sexuality could open the door to further practices that contradict both moral norms and legal frameworks in Nigeria. In this sense, trans-

⁷⁴ J. L. Nagoshi and S. Brzuzy, “Transgender Theory: Embodying Research and Practice,” *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, vol. 25, no. 4, 2024. pp. 431–443.

sexuality is not only a personal identity issue but a social phenomenon with far-reaching consequences for public morality.

Therefore, when viewed through the lenses of religion, culture, family, and communal values, the moral implications of trans-sexuality in Nigeria are predominantly negative. It poses a threat to the sanctity of natural identity, destabilizes the moral order, and contradicts the ethical principles that guide Nigerian society. For this reason, trans-sexuality cannot be morally justified within the Nigerian context, and its acceptance would amount to eroding the moral foundations upon which the nation is built. Nigeria must therefore resist pressures to normalize trans-sexuality and instead uphold the moral, cultural, and religious values that safeguard its identity and social cohesion.

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