

LGBT COMMUNITY AND THEIR SEXUAL HEALTH CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA.

An Abstract of the Thesis By
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Nigerian Legal system in January 2014 officially criminalized the act of being gay with consequent punishment of 14 years imprisonment. The vulnerable LGBT community were disadvantaged in various ways and had huge obstacles to integrate socially in the wider Nigerian community. The LGBT community are faced with higher risk of health issues because of the situation where it is difficult to have freedom to live in line with ones identified sexuality which results to challenges in having a quality healthcare to maintain such sexuality. The socio-cultural, religious and traditional system support and perceive the LGBT community and their associates as social misnomers and spiritually possessed by certain evil spirits, as such their sexuality should not be encouraged. The result of the wrong social perceptions towards the LGBT community members were exclusion of identified individuals in different social systems ranging from family, occupation or career, friendly circles, religious associations and also health systems. Despite the affirmative position of human rights laws that health is the right of every individual, most of the health centers and healthcare facilities in Nigeria violate these rights by secluding and consciously or unconsciously mismanaging the confidential information in their possession relating to their services to the LGBT community. The thesis will focus on the LGBT community in Nigeria and the challenges or obstacles that hinder their ability to seek, receive, manage and sustain their sexual health. Various identified reasons for this obstacles faced by the LGBT community can be traced to the Anti-Same Sex law that was passed in Nigeria in 2014 as well as deep rooted internalized stigma arising from culture, traditions and religious doctrines and their impact will be extensively discussed. Many scholars and authors argue that a change in the legal framework that limits social inclusion of LGBT will reduce the health challenges being faced they face. The paper will therefore use existing literature, interviews from health workers and LGBT members in Nigeria to elaborate the situation.

Keywords: LGBT Community, Sexual Health, Socio Cultural and Religious Challenges and Obstacles, Nigeria, Inclusion and Exclusion, Stigma.