

The view of homosexuality in the Venda culture: a Christian ethical evaluation

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Abstract

It is a matter of fact that homosexual civil unions are now fully recognized. This study serves to answer one main question: How should the Venda community view homosexuality as seen from a Christian perspective? The new bill on civil unions raises concern in the Venda community due to the fact that it runs against Venda traditions and Christian ethics. In ancient times homosexuality was regarded as an activity or practice, but in the contemporary world it is not only regarded as an activity or practice, it as an inherent orientation and lifelong pattern.

The fact that we are either male or female influences our place in society. Emotionally it colours our attitudes and feelings. The common logic says that homosexuality must be genetic or hormonal, and there is nothing that can be done about it. Such thinking seems logical, but we do not believe it is based in truth. Scripture, the majority of Venda citizens and much secular literature provide evidence that homosexuality, though deeply ingrained and habitually practiced, can be overcome – both as a lifestyle and identity. No studies prove conclusively that homosexuality is inborn. Venda culture upholds the heterosexual marriage and denounces homosexual relationship at all cost, citing that it is a taboo. Biblically speaking, homosexual behaviour is unnatural and flow from men's perversion.

Homosexuality is a sin, but it is a forgivable sin in the New Testament. Culturally and biblically speaking, homosexuality is taboo and the ideal relationship that God approves is a heterosexual marriage. If the Bible says that sleeping around is a sin, it will also apply to the one that was born with a strong sexual drive. On the other hand we must condemn all who react to homosexuals with homophobia because treating homosexuals with hatred is transgressing the law of love that teaches us to be the keepers of our brothers and also to love them as we love ourselves. Yes, homosexuals can change as we know that there is nothing impossible with God.

Opsomming

Dit is 'n feit dat homoseksuele huwelike nou ten volle erken word. Hierdie studie poog om die volgende vraag te beantwoord: Hoe moet die Venda gemeenskap homoseksualiteit beskou vanuit 'n Christelike perspektief? Die nuwe wette oor homoseksuele huwelike bring paniek onder Vendas omdat dit teen Venda tradisie en Christelike etiek ingaan. In antieke tye is homoseksualiteit gesien as 'n blote aktiwiteit of praktyk, maar in die hedendaagse wêreld word dit gesien as 'n inherente orientasie en lewenslange patroon.

Die feit dat ons of manlik of vroulik is, beïnvloed ons plek in die samelewing. Dit kleur ons idees en gevoelens. Blote logika sê dat homoseksualiteit geneties of hormonaal moet wees, en dat daar dus niks sal wees om daaraan te doen nie. Sulke denke klink logies, maar dit is nie gebaseer op die waarheid nie. Die Skrif, sowel as die meerderheid Venda burgers en baie sekulêre literatuur gee bewyse dat homoseksualiteit, alhoewel diep ingewef en ingeoefen, wel oorkom kan word – beide as lewenswyse en as identiteit. Geen studie bewys onteenseglik dat homoseksualiteit ingebore is nie. Venda kultuur bevorder heteroseksuele huwelike en verwerp homoseksuele verhoudings algeheel. Dit is 'n taboe. Bybels gesproke, is homoseksuele optrede onnatuurlik en vloei dit uit mense se perversie.

Homoseksualiteit is 'n sonde, maar dit is vergeefbaar in die Nuwe Testament. Kultureel en Bybels gesproke, is homoseksualiteit 'n taboe en die verhouding wat God goedkeur is die heteroseksuele huwelik. As die Bybel sê losbandigheid is sonde, het dit ook betrekking op 'n persoon gebore met 'n hoë seksdrang. Aan die ander kant moet ons ook almal wat teenoor homoseksueles reageer met homofobie verwerp, want om homoseksueles met haat te behandel gaan teen die liefdeswet wat leer dat ons die oppassers van ons broers is en hulle moet lief hê soos onself. Ja, homoseksueles kan verander aangesien daar niks is wat in God onmoontlik is nie.

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THE VIEW OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE VENDA CULTURE: A CHRISTIAN ETHICAL EVALUATION

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 FORMULATING THE PROBLEM

1.1.1 Background

On 27 April 1994 South Africa held its first democratic election, which resulted in democracy and freedom for all South Africans. It was the first time a black man became president in the person of President Nelson Mandela. In addition, a constitution was drafted and amended in 1996. The constitution of our state is a modern constitution and it promotes a liberal democracy. Vorster (2007: 24) in support of Villa-Vicencio says: “a Liberal Democracy was not only the best dispensation for a multi-racial and plural South Africa, but it also offered the most acceptable prospect from the point of view of Christian ethics”. In the Constitution chapter two is of critical importance, being a Bill of Fundamental Rights. In this Chapter, section 9(3), which deals with equality, says: “The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic, or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth” (The Constitution; Act 108 of 1996: 7).

Even though the Bill of Rights was written to help the citizens of South Africa to live in peace and harmony, it brought confusion in some communities. One example of something that results from this is the claim by homosexuals that they are being discriminated against since their civil union is not recognised by civil authorities. The constitutional court revisited this issue and instructed parliament to address the matter of possible legislation that can make provision for gay

marriages. As a result the Gay Civil Union Act was promulgated on 14 November 2006. This bill caused much controversy in black communities. When considering authors such as Marshall (1996:16), it becomes clear that this bill can be questioned. Marshall (1996: 16) says: “In the Bible, power and authority do not stem from the mere will of the people but ultimately from God. This can sound worrisome to modern ears and is usually described as some ‘theocratic’ hangover. But it is not a threat to freedom: it is the foundation of freedom. Divine authority is always mediated through human beings – in politics as much as in churches.” Marshall (1996:16) further holds that: “Democracy means the people at large have a responsibility to discover and express God’s will”. Dowry (1996: 29) states that: “Churches must now more than ever before lay the moral foundation for their members so that they can combat that bad influence which they are facing”.

Phosa (1996: 25) asserts that: “In the democratic South Africa, we need, as Christians, to allow the non-Christians to also live their lives according to their beliefs. I firmly believe that Christians do not have the right to prescribe to a non-Christian and to a Gnostics on how to live their lives. They do, however, have the right to air their views on what the Word of God spells out”. We can see here from Marshall and Phosa’s views that they differ with regard to the source of a good constitution. Such differences resulted in the controversy that this study deals with. In view of Phosa’s claim, homosexual marriages can be justified, whereas Marshall questions the foundation of homosexual rights, holding that such rights are not founded from the Word of God, and are therefore unacceptable. On the other hand, Phosa (1996: 26) further claims that: “We, as Christians, should stop acting like gods ourselves. We should live our lives in such a way that non-Christians are made aware of the fact that God is alive and that He is ruling the World!” Phosa says that Christians must stop judging others (including homosexuals – PTM) since they are not God, but should live their lives as children of God who don’t have to speak on behalf of God. However, he falls into the trap he wanted to avoid by prescribing how Christians must live their lives, while Christians have the Bible to teach them how to live their lives.

Johnston (1983: 6) continues to make this controversy difficult by asserting that: “To tell homosexuals ... that to enter God’s kingdom they must cease to be homosexual, or at least cease expressing their homosexuality, is to place them under law rather than under grace. Homosexuals

cannot earn salvation by sacrifice of their sexuality any more than heterosexuals can.” Johnston’s argument can no longer be ignored because he uses Scripture to defend homosexuals, as heterosexuals do when they condemn homosexuality. Moberly (1983: 33) further attests that: “When homosexual men and women try to live ‘in love’ ... they are fulfilling themselves and acting in accordance with God’s purpose”.

Contrary to Moberly and Johnston’s claim, the majority of the Venda community who live in the far north of the Limpopo province, view this new bill as something that brings confusion to the people of South Africa. This new bill directly affects the Venda community. Masakona (2000:10) states that: “The moral and good Venda man is one who fulfils his obligations towards his family (living and dead) by, among other things, marriage and procreation.” Masakona (2000:11) further asserts that the Venda sees a close and definite connection between the ritual of initiation and the right of procreation. The main object of a Venda marriage is the begetting of legitimate children. If procreation and the ritual of initiation are so important to the Venda community, then homosexuals cannot fit into this community since they cannot take part in procreation and initiation rights, because introducing someone who is biologically female to be a man will be considered taboo and a curse on the Venda tribe. Initiation leads to knowledge of and self-assurance with regard to sexuality ... initiation includes seclusion, sacrifices to ancestors, dances, medical treatment, and circumcision (Mbiti, 1989: 118).

Those who don’t acknowledge this new bill want to know what prompted the state to allow same sex civil union? They claim that homosexual civil union is un-African, inhuman, immoral, and blasphemy. They go further and assert that this new bill undermines the majority of South Africans, who are against this new bill, in favour of the minority. They further hold that this bill is not founded on any black South African culture, including Venda culture. From an African cosmology, a series of perspectives on the traditional Venda marriage is important. Sexuality is one manifestation of the life force, which is seen as a biological given. An increase in the life force enhances physical strength, health and fertility. If a young man does not marry, it means “no wife; no new generation and this would endanger the family” (Masakona 2000: 12). Men and women who consider homosexual relationships are equally endangering the family, since there would no longer be a new generation. Webb (2001: 109) poses this question: “Should the

Church, therefore, accept a homosexual lifestyle within its own community because to do otherwise would make the gospel less attractive to the unbelieving community?” This question by Webb comes as a problem to Christians, and it needs consideration.

The controversy is fuelled by the claim from homosexuals in favour of the new bill that they were born with this same sex orientation. Some say that they choose to live their lives in this way since we are all living in the democratic era, which promotes freedom of religion, belief and opinion. No one can judge someone due to his/her sexual orientation, as stated in section 9(3) of Chapter 2 that deals with the Bill of Rights. Keane (1980: 81) holds that “homosexuals are no more responsible for their sexual orientation than heterosexuals. In this light our goal should be to give homosexual a true welcome into society, a true sense of belonging. Homosexuals are as much part of the human race as any other persons”.

Recognition of these civil unions does not make life simple for either homosexuals or heterosexuals. Heterosexuals are of the opinion that this act is blasphemy, inhuman, and that it promote moral decay. They further attest that it is ethically wrong. They claim that the new bill promotes the deeds that they view as wrong (The Big Question of 10th March 2007). On the other hand, homosexuals feel that they are continually oppressed by society. Some churches even feel that they are supposed to protect homosexuals since God loves all His children in a same manner. Hoagland (1989: 24) contends: “Lesbians (homosexuals) are oppressed within the existing social framework.” He further attests that he is interested in moral revolution. Gill, (2005: 201) supports Hoagland by claiming that: “One serious obstacle to the incorporation of lesbian and gay perspectives into the study of religion and gender arises from the fact that most religious traditions have either sought to silence or oppress sexual minorities.” Homosexuals hold that they are born with this sexual orientation, whereas others hold that it is just matter of choice.

Matsapola, Sunday Sun journalist, quoted a well-known lesbian musician, Mshoza: “To be a lesbian is not wrong but it does not feel right for her anymore. ‘I feel incomplete and I am looking for a male companion in my life. A man who will love, protect and appreciate me’. She further says she is willing to do whatever it takes to live a straight life in order to get the man of

her dreams” (Matsapola, 2007: 5). Claims like this send out a double message and leads heterosexuals to contend that homosexuality is not a straight life. This claim will be investigated from the perspective of the history of the ancient Roman world and black community. The Roman world is relevant here because the Scripture text that explicitly condemns homosexuality is Romans 1: 18-32.

Furthermore, there are questions (Botha, 2005: 1 & 2) that will always haunt South Africa as a nation. Botha asks the following 14 questions that we can no longer ignore:

1. Which sexual orientation is valid; Homosexual, heterosexual or bi-sexual?
2. What was the early teaching on homosexuality?
3. Is it possible to accept the authority of the Bible and at the same time practise homosexuality?
4. What does Jesus say about homosexuality?
5. Is homosexual marriage a tolerable option?
6. Is heterosexual marriage and homosexual marriage the same?
7. Are homosexual families acceptable?
8. What about homosexual people in the church?
9. Are there not examples of loving, monogamous homosexual relations?
10. Why should homosexual intercourse be compared to bestiality, incest and prostitution?
11. Should we not only reject promiscuity in both hetero- and homosexual relations?
12. Is the cause of homosexuality not a homosexual gene?
13. The whole body is holy unto the Lord. Why not anus as well?
14. Can homosexual orientation change?”

Such questions prompt us to look carefully at this subject. It needs immediate attention.

1.1.2 Problem Statement

It is matter of fact that homosexual civil unions are now fully recognised. This study serves to answer one main question: How should the Venda community view homosexuality as seen from a Christian perspective? This question probes us to deal with the following related questions:

- What are modern trends regarding homosexuality in South Africa?
- What is the view of people from Venda culture about Homosexuality?
- What is a Christian ethical perspective on homosexuality?
- Is the Venda view of homosexuality ethically acceptable?

1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1.2.1 Aim

The main aim of this study is to help the Venda community to become aware that reality is forcing us to live a real life, which leads us to deal with real challenges of homosexuality within our community. This study will aim to provide guidance to the churches and individuals who are frustrated by this new bill, and to homosexuals who are mistreated because of their sexual orientation. Furthermore, this study aims to shed light on how government should deal with moral issues that concern the community as a whole. It would end with showing God's command of love to all people that lead us to become caring communities rather than destroying communities. Due to the claims made and many questions posed by heterosexuals and homosexuals, the study will include exegesis with regard to this issue so that we may come to a correct interpretation of the Word of God. This study will also serve to give moral and ethical advice to the Venda community.

1.2.2 Objectives

The objectives of this study are the following:

- To expose modern trends regarding homosexuality in South Africa.
- To explain the view of Venda culture about homosexuality.
- To provide a Christian ethical perspective on homosexuality.
- To evaluate whether the Venda view of homosexuality is morally right or wrong?

1.3 CENTRAL THEORETICAL PROBLEM

The new bill on civil unions raises concern in the Venda community due to the fact that it runs against Venda tradition and Christian ethics. Venda tradition and Christian ethics can provide suitable guidelines to manage this concern.

1.4 RESEARCH METHOD

This ethics study on homosexuality is founded in the Reformed tradition, and the following methods will be used.

1.4.1 Literature Study

A literature study will be conducted in order to:

- 1.5.1.1 Describe the modern trends of homosexuality in South Africa.
- 1.5.1.2 Find the view of the Venda culture about homosexuality.
- 1.5.1.3 Evaluate whether homosexuality is morally or ethically wrong.
- 1.5.1.4 Find a Christian ethical perspective on homosexuality.

In this evaluation the Bible is considered as primary source in view of Romans 1: 18-32. The researcher will do an exegesis of this chapter and other relevant passages.

1.4.2 Empirical Study

1.4.2.1 It is evident that issue of homosexuality is of concern after the amendment that has been made to section 9(3) of Chapter 2 of our Constitution, which deals with the Bill of Rights. There is not enough literature that deals with this topic from the perspective of the Venda culture. However, there is plenty of information that is generally not available in written form. Consequently, the research includes personal interviews with Venda Tribal authorities, traditional healers, Christians, non-Christians, pastors of African Initiative Churches, Charismatic Churches, and Mainstream Churches, political leaders of different political parties at the local level, youth and teachers. A narrative methodology will be pursued, and the statistic tables will be provided.

1.4.2.2 Three questionnaires were designed to collect the necessary information, and they will be referred to as Addendum 1, 2, and 3. The first one is directed to Venda Tribal authorities and traditional healers, the second one to Church leaders, ordinary citizens (young and old), principals, teachers and the third one to political leaders at a local level.

1.5 SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN POINTS 1.1.2, 1.2.1, 1.2.2, 1.4.1, 1.4.2.

Problem Statement	Aim and Objectives	Methodology
What are modern trends regarding homosexuality in South Africa?	To expose modern trends regarding homosexuality in South Africa and to shed light on how to deal with moral issues that concern the community as a whole.	Literature and media will be used in this regard.
What is the view of the Venda culture about	To give the view of Venda culture about	An empirical study will be done in this regard due to

<p>homosexuality, because the recognition of same sex marriage as from 14 November 2006 in South Africa caused havoc in the Venda Culture?</p>	<p>Homosexuality. Here we will find out whether Venda people practiced homosexuality in history.</p>	<p>the lack of written sources in the Venda community about homosexuality.</p>
<p>What is a Christian ethical perspective on homosexuality? Recognition of same sex brought a schism in the Church of God due to different viewpoints of churches on this matter and different interpretations of Romans 1: 18-32.</p>	<p>To give a Christian ethical perspective on homosexuality.</p>	<p>We will establish the evidence of Scripture on the different facets of homosexuality. Romans 1:18-32 is identified and exegesis will be done. The exegesis will follow a grammatical-historical method.</p>
<p>Is homosexuality morally and ethically wrong?</p>	<p>To evaluate whether homosexuality is morally or ethically wrong.</p>	<p>A literature study and empirical study will be done in this study in view of modern trends about homosexuality and the Venda culture.</p>

CHAPTER TWO

2 *MODERN TRENDS REGARDING HOMOSEXUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICA*

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Before South Africa became democratic on 27 April 1994 homosexual marriages were illegal and also regarded as taboo. On 14 November 2006 South Africa became the first African nation to legalize same-sex civil unions, and the fifth country in the whole world to do so after the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and Canada (Mashau 2008: 64). Under Apartheid, sex between men was outlawed. Even today 63 percent of ordinary South Africans believe that homosexuality should not be accepted. Mrs. Mdende is disappointed that South Africa's black-led government, which passed the Civil Union Bill by 230 votes to 41 of parliamentarians of which the majority are ANC members, is setting out to "destabilize tradition" (Smith, 2006:1).

Mashau (2008:66) in support of Mrs. Mdede says: "The sad thing about the whole process of parliament's passing of the Civil Union Act is that parliament did so even though the majority of traditional leaders and religious people were against it. In the process of consultation, it became clear that the majority of South Africans pleaded with the government not to legalize same-sex marriages, as it is something that is an abomination in African culture and also in the light of the Scriptures. It hurts to see that our government upholds what they call 'the rule of the people by the people'. In this instance, the voice of the masses was disregarded whilst that of the minority was respected and accommodated."

Vorster (2007:227) furthermore says "In 2006 the Constitutional Court instructed Parliament to promulgate a new marriage law where marriage is defined in such a way that it can include a homosexual marriage. Homosexual behaviour is increasingly regarded as normal, in the legal world as well as in the human sciences." Instruction from the Constitutional Court led government to recognise homosexuality as legal as from 14 November 2006. On 1 December 2005, the Constitutional Court of South Africa ruled in favor of the recognition of same-sex marriage. They ruled that the marriage Act of 1961 was unconstitutional, and discriminated

against gay and lesbian rights. After this ruling, the Constitutional Court gave the South African Parliament until 1 December 2006 to revise or revoke the existing laws to include same-sex marriages. Parliament adhered to the directive of the Constitutional Court when it passed the act on same-sex marriages on 14 November 2006. Parliament was forced to pass the Act by the Constitutional Court, which should not have been the case (Mashau 2008:65).

Parliament has, in keeping with the equality clause, passed legislation to prevent discrimination in a range of areas. For example, the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000, commits the government to "promote equality" on all the grounds in the equality clause. "Human rights organisations and some churches challenge traditional views about homosexuality and argued for the liberation of persons with a homosexual orientation" (Vorster, 2007:227).

Homosexuality in the church of God and the debates around accepting homosexual relationships as normal also affect the church badly. A working party led by the Bishop of Gloucester (of Anglican Church), John Yates, produced a report entitled *Homosexual Relationships*, which suggests that: "there are circumstances in which individuals may justifiably choose to enter into a homosexual relationship". This was a considerably more liberal approach than the church would subsequently adopt (Yates, 2004:94). The *Church Times*, some years later, noted that disapproval was no longer an adequate response. The Church of England has homosexuals among its priests, and among its worshippers. These are people who have the same need of sexual expression in its many forms, for companionship, for acceptance as heterosexuals. It becomes increasingly difficult to deny them those things and argue that the denial is merciful, or truthful, or practical. The Church can no longer defer the time when it will have to consider withdrawing disapproval of homosexuals. That would mean most notably that homosexuality ceased to be an obstacle to ordination (Bates 2004:94).

At the other end of this debate, Higton (2004:95) denies the existence of homosexuals in the church, and wanted a witch-hunt. He demands Godly discipline, which supports the Scripture teaching that homosexual practice is an abomination and a perversion. He reads from letters he has received about 'rampant' practices at theological colleges, of clerics frequenting gay bars and

clubs, of an unnamed rector displaying explicit posters and pamphlets in his church and of priests being moved and reappointed to new parishes following convictions for indecency. Higton (2004: 95) boldly asserts this: “Today the nation and the world are going to make a decision, not about morality but about the credibility of ... the Church of England. Whatever decision we take will send out a message either that the church is courageously true to its Biblical and traditional foundations or that it is not. ... We must help homosexuals to see the error of their ways and unashamedly proclaim Biblical beliefs and morals. Let us stand up and be counted.” Homosexual relationships do not only affect the church of England, every church as the body of Christ sooner or later will be affected and effected by this, therefore it is important to consider the debate that is going on within the Church of England. Since we have Church of England in South Africa (i.e. Anglican Church), therefore it is relevant to consider what is going on in Anglican Church.

Holloway (2004: 95) in support of Higton claims that: “there was a homosexual mafia in the church, even in high places. The church of Jesus Christ is being scandalized in the eyes of the watching world. He wanted appropriate discipline against such priests. The homosexual issue was more likely to split the Anglican Church Communion than ordination of women. Holloway said some African bishops had already talked of boycotting the following year’s Lambeth Conference of bishops because of the Church of England’s tolerance of homosexual practice among its clergy.” We can learn here that Africans cannot tolerate homosexual relationships, proven by the fact that African bishops wanted to boycott Lambeth conference. Most African cultures cannot tolerate homosexual relationships, and that is why Africa is surprised by the moral standard of South Africa that legalised homosexual civil union.

In view of the debate that is going on in the Church of England, we have to introduce the hallmark of the True Church in order to help an ordinary person to understand which criteria one can use to determine if the decision taken by the church and the government is Biblically justifiable or not. The hallmark of the true Church comprises three things, namely the following: Firstly; the True Church preaches the Biblical truth in season and out of season without compromise. It preaches the Biblical truth whether it is acceptable to men or not. Secondly, the True Church exercises discipline to its members who persist in sin after they are reprimanded with love, as we read in Matthews (18: 15 – 20). Bishop Holloway and Bishop Higton of the

Church of England support the first and second marks of true church. They want the church to defend these marks even though there are homosexuals within the church. Sin is anything that is against the Word of God. Thirdly, the True Church participates in the Holy Sacraments, namely Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. The recognition of same sex marriage invoked serious reaction within the Venda community, fundamentalist religious groups and other indigenous cultures.

2.2 DEFINITION AND TRENDS OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.2.1 Definition of the term homosexuality

The term homosexuality refers to any person who is erotically attracted to another person of same sex. Grenz (1990: 201) defines homosexuality as: “preference for sexual partners of the same sex or to the situation in which erotic feelings are nearly exclusively triggered by persons of one’s own sex.” An example of this modern approach with its emphasis on orientation rather than behavior is the definition offered by John Dwyer, the Roman Catholic ethicist, preferring that the term “homosexuality” be used only to refer to the orientation, he define the term as “a preference on the part of adults, for sexual behavior with members of their own sex (Grenz, 1990: 201). Grenz (1990: 201) further contends that: “Recent findings also suggest that one fourth to one third of adult males have had some overt homosexual feelings or experience, generally between the onset of puberty and age sixteen. This finding has led many researchers to differentiate between homosexual orientation as ‘a phase to be passed through and a constant to be lived with’. Second, the modern emphasis on orientation has led some ethicists to conclude that the biblical authors lacked an awareness of homosexuality as a sexual inversion, as a stable, lifelong sexual preference.” Fields (1976: 4) claims that a minister preaching to 200 should expect nine or ten of his people to have a homosexual orientation.

Botha (2005: 4) defines homosexual orientation as follows: “a person in his sexuality is focused on a person of the same sex and not on a person of the opposite sex. It is frequently assumed that the Bible writers did not know about mutually caring same sex relationships. It is further

believed that such mutually caring same-sex relationships originated in modern times.” Collins Dictionary (2003: 264) defines homosexual as a person who is sexually attracted to members of the same sex. According to Socarides (1976: 144) “Homosexuality can be defined as a pattern of sexual behaviour wherein individuals repeatedly and out of inner necessity engage in sexual acts with partners of the same sex. Contrary to popular belief, this is not a sexual preference as there is no choice.” Sacorides further claims that this desire is determined by unconscious mental process. Griffin (1969: 10) holds that: “The person or society which believes, for example, that the chief (if not the sole) end of sex is procreation will clearly regard any behaviour which frustrates this end as ‘unnatural’. Some current moral thinking in our community holds this pre-supposition and makes this judgment. But it is only an assumption (and, for many other thinkers, an exceedingly dubious one) that procreation is the main or sole aim of sexual activity.”

2.2.2 Different trends of homosexuality in South Africa

Many view homosexuality as an orientation. There are four types of sexual orientation, namely heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual and transgender. Balswick *et al.* (1999: 69) contends that “the first three describe individuals who have erotic attraction for the opposite sex, the same sex and both sexes; while transgender is an umbrella term used to describe individuals who cross or transcend culturally defined categories of sex and gender.” David Greenberg asserts that homosexuality is not an essence of condition that some people have and others do not. Rather than a static orientation, it is a behaviour produced and interpreted in different ways by different societies at different times. Homosexual identity, then, is a social label (Grenz, 1990: 201).

Some view homosexuality as a behaviour. Bell (1976: 132) is of the opinion that: “There are many reasons for various persons to maintain simplistic views of homosexuality, to resist the notion that there is a range of experience which the singular term ‘homosexuality’”. Homosexuality is a behaviour within which even homosexuals themselves behave very uniquely. There are quite different sets of motivations that could prompt the particular behaviors in question. Bell (1976: 133) further contends that: “The ‘man on the street’ may be the lesbian or male homosexual who thinks that he or she knows exactly what homosexuality is all about – ‘I’m homosexual and I should know what I’m talking about’ – and who then proceeds to tell you

that all homosexuals feel oppressed or are psychologically maladjusted or whatever on the basis of his or her own experience of what it means to be homosexual.” In view of Bell’s observation, one can conclude that homosexuals are prompted by different factors that are so unique that not even one homosexual can explain why someone is homosexual. Each and every homosexual is prompted by his or her own background, environment, heredity (either biological or psychological) etc. This view leads to the conclusion that homosexuality is a learned behaviour or inherited lifestyle.

2.3 TRACES OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN HISTORY

One of South Africa's most bizarre and notorious anti-gay laws was introduced after a police raid on a gay party in a suburb of Johannesburg in 1966. Amendments to the Immorality Act resulted in the infamous "three-men-at-a-party-clause", which criminalized any "male person who commits with another male person at a party any act which is calculated to stimulate sexual passion or give sexual gratification". A "party" was defined as "any occasion where more than two persons are present" (<http://www.constitutional.org.za> [Date Retrieved: 30/03/2007]). We can learn here that the homosexual practice here in South Africa dates back to the 1960's. Grenz (1990: 199) witnesses that "On June 28, 1969, New York police raided the Stonewall Inn, a bar frequented largely by persons of a homosexual orientation. The event at the Stonewall Inn is often viewed as marking the beginning of a new chapter in the ongoing struggle over the issue of homosexuality, the gay activist era." Homosexuality is not something new; it has its own history and has been an issue for a very long time.

In the words of Grenz (1990: 199): "Homosexuality itself is not a new issue. Homosexual practices were known in the ancient world. Several Greek philosophers, for example, reported their involvement in homosexual acts. Homosexual practices were also present in the ancient Semitic world, as is evidenced by injunctions against them found in the Hebrew Torah. So widespread were such acts in the Roman Empire that Paul listed them among the sins of the pagans that Christians were to avoid. Nor did the Christianisation of the western world mark the eradication of homosexual activity. On the contrary, church theologians and ethicists have grappled with this issue from the patristic era into the present."

In Leviticus (18: 22 & 20: 13), which dates back to 1445 – 1444 B.C. the Bible spells out that “If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.” Leviticus 18:22 says: “Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable (NIV).” We can learn here that even though the term homosexual is not used, the Law is against sexual activities between people of the same gender. Apostle Paul in his letter to Romans (1: 26 & 27) spells this: “Because of this, God gave them to shameful lusts. Even their women exchange natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the man also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion (NIV).

Both Old Testament and New Testament recorded the issue of homosexuality. Some hold that since Jesus Christ never mentioned anything concerning homosexuality, we cannot take the words of Apostle Paul seriously. This kind of view is not valid. What about what Moses recorded in Leviticus? When one nullifies what the apostle Paul wrote in the letter to the Romans and Corinthians, one denies the authority of Scripture. 2 Peter 1: 20 & 21 teaches us the following: “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of the Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (cf. also 2 Timothy 3: 16 & 17).

2.4 A CONTEMPORARY VIEW OF HOMOSEXUALITY

In ancient times homosexuality was regarded as a superficial activity or practice, but in the contemporary world it is regarded as an inherent orientation and a lifelong pattern. Grenz (1990: 199) says: “Prior to modern times homosexuality was understood in terms of activities and such practices were generally viewed as deviant, a perversion of normal sexual relations, if not blatantly sinful. As a result, engaging in homosexual acts generally carried social condemnation. The modern outlook defines homosexuality more in terms of a personal orientation, a sexual inversion, seen as a lifelong pattern. Grenz (1990: 200) asserts that the first use of the term homosexuality is attributed to K.M. Benkert, a Swiss doctor, in 1869 (also cf. Botha 2005: 4).

Cahill (2001:165) observes that: “a modern view of sex is likely to define it as private, good, and spiritual, it is not entirely a provocative overstatement to say that Christian tradition judged sex a public danger, more often evil than virtuous, and more a sign of the corruption of the body than of the transcendence of the soul. Such a generalization calls for nuance, of course. While influential sex theorist Augustine, saw sex primarily as an unruly physical passion needing to be rigorously disciplined through the institution of marriage and the justifying purpose of procreation.” Johnston (1983: 57) claims that: “Much fundamentalist Christian literature may seek to discredit and damn the gay Community of Faith for teaching or practice, but there are no authentic grounds for denying our incorporation into the universal Body of Christ. For we too; recognize the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and the regenerating work of the Spirit in the world today.” Johnston’s claim hit the spot concerning the traditional view of Scripture that does not justify the relationship between homosexuals, because he claims that they also recognize a traditional view of the Scripture. Johnston suspects that the traditional view that does not acknowledge the relationship of homosexuals, approaches the Scripture without taking into account the context of first hearers, who held the tradition that sex is only for procreation (cf. Johnston 1983: 57- 60).

Gay activists encourage people to publicly affirm their sexual preference and also actively assert that homosexuality as a sexual preference stands on equal footing with heterosexuality. Gay activist now demand that society not only tolerates homosexual acts but accepts the homosexual orientation as a legitimate, alternative lifestyle (Grenz 1990: 200). During the 21st century, South Africa has experienced a drastic change of view regarding homosexual orientation. Other viewpoints teach that homosexual behaviour should be seen as normal and that marriages between homosexuals should be legalized in Liberal Democracies (Vorster 2007: 227). “In 2006 the Constitutional Court instructed Parliament to promulgate a new marriage law where marriage is defined in such a way that it can include a homosexual marriage. Homosexual behaviour is increasingly regarded as normal, in the legal world as well as in the human sciences” (Vorster 2007: 227).

Vorster (2007: 227) was spot on when he says: “Fundamentalists religious groups and native cultures (amongst others Venda culture - PTM) who regard the normalization of homosexual behaviour in Western countries as immoral and in contradiction to their own moral values, react to it with what can be described as ‘homophobia’”. This term describes an attitude of hate and distrust, and acts of aggression and injustice towards persons with a homosexual orientation.

Vorster (2007:228) offers three different views of Christian ethicists regarding homosexuality:

- “Scripture prohibits any form of homosexual behavior. This position can be typified as the traditional view.
- The second position sees the first-mentioned as fundamentalist. This view adjudicates Scripture as providing for homosexual behaviour within a permanent devoted relationship and that the principles of heterogeneous marriage are applicable. This position can be typified as the modern view.
- The third position departs from the point of view that Scripture provides no pertinent details about homosexuality, because Scripture is an old book written with the knowledge and insights of that age. The problem does not lie with homosexuality, but with Scripture itself. Views about homosexuality are shaped according to current scientific knowledge, in addition to Scripture’s message of liberation. This position can be typified as the view of scriptural criticism.”

The viewpoints that Vorster offers, require us to be specific of the approach we are going to use in this studies. Of course in the liberal South African Democracy, the second and third view can have a strong hold, since it promotes the equality clause of the South African Constitution. Modern views and Scriptural criticism are common approaches in South Africa. These modern approaches view the Bible with a Hermeneutics of suspicion. The Scriptural criticism approach will definitely cause us to view the Bible as time bound rather than time addressed. In other words, we will consider the Bible as out of fashion. This view demotes the authority of the Bible in such a way that it becomes just like a mere historical book or old scientific book that is no longer relevant in this modern world of technology. The study subscribes to the first view, which is the traditional view, because this view acknowledges that the Bible as the authoritative Word of God that we have to approach with faith, without any doubt. This approach further

acknowledges that the Bible is not time bound but time addressed. In other words the Bible is as relevant for today's hearers as it was for the first hearers.

2.5 FACING THE REALITY OF HOMOSEXUALITY

Reacting to homosexuality with homophobic attacks would not provide any solutions when dealing with this controversial issue. The fact that homosexuality is legally recognized in South Africa compels each and every one of us to deal with this issue with caution. Sex is a fact of human life. It belongs to the goodness of man's created nature and requires suitable expression if man wants to be truly human. We may rejoice in it, be afraid of it, or simply accept it, but we cannot avoid our own sexuality, even if we should want to (Griffin 1969: 9). There is increasing psychiatric evidence that those who try to pretend that they have no sexual feelings or needs, and those who cannot come to terms with their sexuality, are likely to have grave difficulties in living with themselves and with other people. Griffin (1969: 9) asserts that: "The fact that we are either male or female influences our place in society, the jobs that are open to us and the influence we can wield in them. Physically our sex helps shape our form, our size, our voice and many other factors. Emotionally it colors our attitudes and feelings."

The big question would be; if a male claims that he is female because he is attracted to another male partner; would he be emotionally ready to change the person he is within to really behave and think like a woman? We are affected personally and socially by our male-ness or female-ness. Many of our noblest virtues, like courage, sense of responsibility, and caring for others, are linked to our gender. According to Socarides (1976: 146; 147) the claim that homosexuality is simply a variant of normal sexual behaviour and exists alongside heterosexuality as an equivalent expression of adult sexual maturation, is utterly false. Socarides sustains his claim by citing the following four points:

- True obligatory homosexuality is a form of psychiatric or emotional disturbance. Homosexuality is a mental disorder that can only be effectively treated with psychotherapy.

- Homosexual object choice is not innate or instinctual, nor is heterosexual object choice, since both are learned behavior. The choice of a sexual object is not predetermined by chromosomal tagging. Only massive childhood fears can damage and disrupt the standard male-female pattern. Such early unconscious fears are responsible for the later development of homosexuality.
- Homosexual behaviour that is nonobligatory (episodic) may be practiced by individuals through choice for a variety of motivations and should not be confused with true homosexuality. The motivation is as complex as any other motivation that influences human behavior: personal gain, power, preferred status, position, etc. It is not caused by unconscious fears and ensuing guilt, but is due to conscious, deliberate choice.
- Since the obligatory homosexual is suffering from a psychosexual disorder, it is obvious that he should not be penalized for the consequent activities carried out in private and in partnership with a consenting adult. He should not suffer special penalties because of the manifestation of this condition as long as it is not accompanied by antisocial or criminal behavior.

Sacarides' view sheds light to us on how to understand the homosexual behaviour pattern of homosexuals. He mentioned the first issue as a mental disorder that needs psychotherapy to heal. The second issue is homosexuality as learned behaviour that is caused by the environment, including things such as childhood fears, peer pressure, pornography movies, etc. The third issue is nonobligatory, here someone practice homosexual relations out of curiosity. The fourth and the last issue is obligatory homosexual. Sacarides holds that this behaviour is caused by psychosexual disorder. The person who is an obligatory homosexual does not practice homosexuality because he or she rejoices in it, but because it is a problem that he or she cannot avoid. Sacarides' fourth argument is that this cannot be used as an excuse of practising homosexuality since the Bible calls it an unnatural relationship, even in the instant of experimentation. Our calling is to help that particular person with love and compassion. Sacarides' points are amplified by the personal voices of homosexuals.

2.6 PERSONAL VOICES OF GAYS AND LESBIANS

Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu holds this view: “The church of Christ, far from being inclusive and welcoming of all, has over and over again pushed many to the periphery; instead of being hospitable to all, it has made many of God’s children outcasts and pariahs on the basis of something which, like race or gender, they could do nothing about – their sexual orientation. The church has joined the world in committing what I consider to be the ultimate blasphemy – making the children of God doubt that they are children of God. Lesbians and Gays have been made to reject God and, in their rejection of the church, they have been made to question why God created them as they were.” Tutu further attests this: “If the church, after the victory over Apartheid, is looking for a worthy moral crusade, then this is it: the fight against homophobia and heterosexism. I pray that we will engage in it with the same dedication and fervor which we showed against the injustice of racism, so that we may rehabilitate the gospel of Jesus Christ in the eyes of many who have been deeply hurt.” Here follows the testimonies of some of those individuals:

Freddy (1997:12&13) says the following: “At 19 I had my first relationship with another man. I told my parents, and my father totally rejected me. ‘I have no son,’ he said to me. My parents, who are staunch members of the Dutch Reformed Church, only spoke of sodomy and licentiousness. They were very harsh in their judgment and would not listen when I tried to explain that my life wasn’t like that. I wasn’t living a licentious life – with drugs, sex and all that. I was unable to tell them of the beautiful love I felt for my friend. My mother wanted me to see a pastoral psychologist. She was sure that I could be cured. I am now 29. I have made peace with God. I know that he accepts me just as I am. I am fortunate that the experience of the past ten years has helped me a lot to come to this point.”

Bert (1997:14) says: “I was very religious and active in the youth club, taught Sunday school, and attended youth camps. I prayed regularly that God would take this affliction away from me, but he never did. I began to think that my faith was not strong enough, and so I sought advice from our minister. He was shocked and refused to believe me. When I was 17 he refused to confirm me, and two weeks after the confirmation service I was attacked by a group of ‘gay

bashers'. It took a couple of months to recover from my injuries. The minister's son was one of the attackers, and he swore at me, calling me a 'bad dog and a moffie'. His father must have told him about me. After that I refused to go back to church. I swore at God for making me like I was. I hadn't wanted to be gay. I asked him, 'How can you judge me if you are the one who made me so? Why can you not help me to change? Ten years later I heard another minister saying with regard to politics, 'God has more mercy than the church, which preached Apartheid. God is love!' for the first time it made sense to me. God is more compassionate than the minister and his son. God has more mercy than a bunch of Bible texts that are torn out of context by 'moffie-haters (i.e. gay-haters). God loves me, and through his grace I am what I am.'

Repsold (1997:22) is the mother of Sue Welman, a lesbian, and the pastor of the Deo Gloria Family Church in Pretoria. She says the following: "Sue always had a lot of friends, but nobody special. I thought she was what you call 'slow' and too religious. It came as a terrible shock when I finally realized that she wasn't slow, but not interested in being more than friends with boys. The rumors reached my ears of a special friendship with a girl. For six years the secret was kept, safely locked away. During this long period I never made peace with the fact that my beautiful child could be gay. That was a word not to be spoken out loud. Nobody was to know, not my sister, or my lifelong friend. A programme on Brain Sex, screened recently on television, finally confirmed my belief that some people are born homosexual. On the other hand, many are made that way by so-called straight people.

Another testimony is that of Jasper (2006: 1), a 23-year-old Zimbabwean who works as a hairdresser in Harare. He discovered his homosexuality at the tender age of 12 while still in school in rural Wedza, where he grew up with his parents. He says his behaviour has not been influenced by any western culture since he discovered his sexuality at a very tender age in a rural setting, well before interacting with anything he could call western.

In a testimony, Paul (2006: 1), 33 years old, who works in Bulawayo as a teacher, says he was married twice and has a daughter of six. Both his wives left after finding out that the marriage was just a front. Paul says his parents forced him to marry. He goes to church every Sunday "to

pray for his sin” but is unable to abandon his lifestyle. Paul says he was “born gay” and “feels insulted by people who think this is a prank”.

Sarah (2006: 1), a 28-year-old professional journalist says she is lesbian and there is little she can do to change that. She says she is not attracted to men and will not get married to a man because she has always been attracted to other women. She has a female partner and the two are in love, although both their parents encourage them to settle down with male partners. She says she discovered her sexuality ten years ago when she was in college. “At first I was confused. I didn’t understand what it was. I tried to date boys but it didn’t work out. I just couldn’t stand it.” Sarah says her behaviour and feelings come naturally to her.

2.7 EVALUATION OF PERSONAL VOICES OF GAYS AND LESBIANS

Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu claims that the church of God is causing the children of God to doubt that they are children of God. With this he is falling in a trap of forcing the Gospel to conform to the man-made standards. In my view Johnston (1983: 133) approaches this issue better by asserting that: “While it is true that we have a prophetic commission to preach the Good News of God’s saving purpose for the gay community, care must nevertheless be exercised not to ignore the twofold command contained in the Great Commission. Not only did our Lord tell his church to “preach the Gospel to all creation” (Mark 16: 15); he further admonished it to “teach ... them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matthew 28: 20). While there appears to be an abundance of superficial evangelistic fervor in some gay churches, there seems to be a deficiency in the area of biblical exposition and observable that biblical ignorance among gay Christians is not the exception, but the norm.” Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu is liberal in his approach of Scripture, and because of that he usually falls into the trap of approaching the Bible with a mentality that usually claims that God is in the side of the poor or oppressed. Tutu quickly points to Apartheid as an example. The liberal message was more relevant in the Apartheid era, but in most instances is not relevant since its interpretation is based on who is oppressed and who is not. Usually it will take the side of the oppressed even though such a person’s behaviour pattern is contrary to Biblical teaching.

Surely, there are homosexual people amongst us. Preventing gays and lesbians from coming out and speaking about who they are would not do any good to our community. Gays and lesbians must be allowed to mention their orientation and their feelings openly.

As much as it is good for the community to know about someone's HIV, TB, or marital status, it is also good to know someone's sexual preference. Knowing someone's sexual orientation does not mean that we either support or reject it. Once we know someone's status, it is a way forward for us in terms of how to preach and teach God's grace to such a person without ignoring the Biblical truth. For example, Bert who is a gay says: "God has more mercy than the church, which preached Apartheid. God is love!" for the first time it made sense to me. God is more compassionate than the minister and his son. God has more mercy than a bunch of Bible texts that are torn out of context by 'moffie-haters (i.e. gay-haters). God loves me, and through his grace I am what I am." If the gay Christian community continues to preach and teach only the basic blocks of "Jesus loves you" and "Gay is good," the growth process into spiritual maturity – understanding how to walk with God, as taught in the Scriptures – will surely be stunted (Johnston 1983: 134).

The author of Hebrews puts it very clear in Hebrews 5: 11 – 6: 1: "We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God."

A constant diet of "milk" can only prolong spiritual infancy, and the end result, according to the apostolic author, will be a lack of discernment between good and evil. Such a condition can be deadly to the gay Christian movement; as the prophet Hosea wrote, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4: 6). We can see that Bert's understanding of the Word ends with the fact that God loves him, without considering the effect of God's love upon his life. Gays too

are under God's grace. We must preach grace to them without fear. The message that gays are under grace, and not under the Old Covenant condemnations of the Law, needs to be proclaimed to all those in the gay community who for too long have laboured under the inner guilt engendered by past religious training. However, the provisions of acceptance and forgiveness are not the only implications of God's grace. Just as important is our response to God's love – a willingness to manifest spiritual and sexual responsibility in lifestyles and daily behaviour (Johnston 1983: 135).

The apostle Paul in Galatians 5: 1 and Romans 6:1, 2&15 teaches us this: "You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature, rather, serve one another in love. What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means." Just as the greatest part of the fundamentalist movement within the church has been characterized by rampant homophobia, so in the opposite direction, much of the gay religious community seems to be characterized by an attitude of extremely loose moral permissiveness. Being extremely moral loose is a symptom of taking God's grace for granted. God's grace teaches us to say no to sin (cf. Titus 2: 11 & 12). The core issue for the church is not that all homosexuals should change to being heterosexual and marry someone of the opposite sex, but that they should refrain from homosexual behavior. Such a change in the homosexual is possible and desirable, and has been shown to succeed over and over again (Botha 2005: 46). The availability of God's mercy must not become an excuse for careless living and moral laxness.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Davies and Rentzel (1993: 20) say: "Once a gay, always a gay is a common sentiment in the homosexual community. Many gays and lesbians feel that they were born homosexual. They do not remember making a conscious choice to be sexually drawn to members of their own sex. So, the common logic says, homosexuality must be genetic or hormonal, and there is nothing that can be done about it. Such thinking seems logical, but we do not believe it is based in truth. Both Scripture and much secular literature provide evidence that homosexuality, though deeply

ingrained and habitually practiced, can be overcome – both as a lifestyle and identity.” Homosexuals and everyone who supports homosexual practice have a clear choice to make: would he or she obey God’s Word, or seek to interpret it in order to fulfill his or her sexual desire? The vast majority of academic and biblical scholars agree that the Bible prohibits homosexual activities. Nearly all of today’s credible translations of the Bible are also in agreement: homosexual practice is prohibited by God. A homosexual can change as much as any drug addict, liar or prostitute can change.

In 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 we read the following; “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexual immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified”. Paul evidently knew former homosexuals, prostitutes, etc in the church of Corinth. The message that homosexuals can change is therefore not new. Homosexuals have been changing since the Bible was written. Paul makes a wonderful and amazing statement of change: “And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God”.

Davies (1993: 23) clearly says: “No studies prove conclusively that homosexuality is inborn.” If such proof existed, it would be given worldwide publicity and the ongoing arguments would end. Despite the lack of conclusive evidence, many people believe that homosexuality is inborn. It certainly gives a ready explanation for why so many lesbians and homosexuals have always felt different. It could also explain why homosexual feelings and identity are difficult to change.

CHAPTER 3

3 *HOMOSEXUALITY AND VENDA CULTURE*

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Venda culture is one of the African cultures that want to uphold its traditions and moral values. Usually Venda communities find it difficult to accept new things that override their common thinking. Anything that does not fit Venda community and their lifestyle is referred as taboo or un-African. “The moral and good Venda man is one who fulfils his obligations towards his family (living and dead) by, among other things, marriage and procreation (Masakona 2000: 11)”. The above view shows that homosexuality won’t be easily accepted by the Venda community. The issue of homosexuality in Venda is often not even entertained because the majority of Vendas think that it is pretty obvious that it does not exist. If it does, those who are involved know that it is immoral and unacceptable, and they can only practice it freely in the streets of Hillbrow in Johannesburg, not on Venda soil. Interviews will be conducted with the Venda Tribal Authority, traditional healers, church leaders, ordinary citizens (young and old), principals, teachers and political leaders on the local level in order to test these views.

3.2 VIEW OF TRADITIONAL LEADER (TRIBAL AUTHORITY) AND TRADITIONAL HEALERS

3.2.1 Tribal Authority

The interviews with the Tribal Authority were conducted in qualitative form. The interview was recorded and is presented in writing verbatim. [Tapes are with the author].

Answer 1 Refers to Traditional Leader number one, Abbreviation = TL 1

Answer 2 Refers to Traditional Leader number one, Abbreviation = TL 2

Answer 3 Refers to Traditional Leader number one, Abbreviation = TL 3

3.2.1.1. Are you aware of the fact that homosexuality is recognized as legal in South Africa? What is your view about the recognition of homosexuality in our country?

TL 1: Yes, I know that homosexual is legal but in Venda culture it is not allowed.

TL 2: Yes I know but I just heard it from the Radio. This issue need tribal court to look at it and come with recommendations.

TL 3: Yes, we are aware but we are very disappointed because the government passed this Bill without proper consultation in a ground level. The survey maybe was done in the upper level if it is done at all. The government must have a proper hearing concerning this matter.

3.2.1.2. *Is legalizing homosexual relationships against Venda tradition? Why?*

TL 1: Homosexual marriage is against Venda culture, because since we are born it was not part of our culture and we never met it in history

TL 2: It is not allowed in Venda culture that a man can marry a man or a woman can marry a woman, because since we were born we never heard of such practice.

TL 3: Yes, it is against Venda culture because it goes against the will and creation order of God. God created woman with breasts, waist and bums to prepare her to fulfil sexual needs that God created her to perform. Being homosexual is going against God's will and is protesting against God's creation order. A man is a man by children, procreation is important. We can only have leaders of tomorrow if and only if heterosexual marriage is preserved.

3.2.1.3. *Do you know of any homosexual practices that occurred in the history of Venda or is occurring now?*

TL 1: It never happened in our history, if it happens; it is a taboo.

TL 2: Even in a history we never heard of homosexual relationship. Homosexuality is just a new thing to us more especially in our village.

TL 3: It never happen in Venda history and homosexuality is unacceptable in Venda culture.

3.2.1.4. *On your own merit, can you allow active homosexual partners to stay in your village?*

TL 1: We won't give them stand because this never happen in Venda. In the era of the late President of Venda P.R. Mphephu it was not even allowed to give a woman alone a stand, that law changed just because of unfair divorce that woman were subjected to.

TL 2: We won't give homosexuals who are in love a stand in our village, because we simply don't have a stand for homosexuals. We never heard of such practice in history and we were born knowing that a woman is meant for a man.

TL 3: Tribal authority will never give a stand or any ground to homosexuals.

3.2.1.5. *Is homosexuality taboo? Why?*

TL 1: In Venda culture, homosexuality is a taboo, because it was never practice and it never happened in the history of Venda people.

TL 2: It is taboo, because we never come across such situation. Man cannot have sexual relations with another man. How are they going to do it?

TL 3: Yes it is taboo, because even animals don't do it.

3.2.1.6. *How would you react if it comes to your attention that there are homosexual people who want to get married in your village?*

TL 1: Unless you are out of your mind, you can marry homosexual or allow them to marry in your village. It is not part of our heritage. Homosexual partners can marry in our village only if we are served by court order not based on our customs and norms. Traditionally, homosexuality is a taboo.

TL 2: We will never marry homosexual people as traditional leaders. If they want to marry in the village, we won't allow them unless the community approve it.

TL 3: We will never marry homosexuals in customary marriage; we won't even speak of marriage because homosexuality itself won't exist in this village. I am convinced that those who practice it, they know for sure that they can only practice their homosexuality somewhere else not in the Venda soil.

3.2.1.7. *How would you handle a case of a lesbian who wants to go for initiation?*

TL 1: We will never accept them in man initiation school.

TL 2: This question is crazy, because it is impossible that this can happen in our culture.

TL 3: This will never happen, that would be an insult to the Venda community and culture.

3.2.2 Traditional Healers

The interviews with traditional healers were conducted in qualitative form. The interviews were recorded and are presented in writing verbatim. [Tapes are with the author].

Answer 1 Refers to Traditional Healer Number one, Abbreviation = TH 1

Answer 2 Refers to Traditional Healer Number two, Abbreviation = TH 2

3.2.2.1. Are you aware of the fact that homosexuality is recognized as legal here in South Africa?

TH 1: We are not aware.

TH 2: Yes we are aware; we heard it from the Radio.

3.2.2.2. Is legalizing homosexual relationships against Venda tradition?

TH 1: Yes it is against Venda culture; from the creation order a woman must be married by man.

TH 2: Yes it is, we are not used to it.

3.2.2.3. Do you know of any homosexual practices that once occurred in the history of the Venda or is currently taking place?

TH 1: It never happened in our history that a man can marry a man or a woman can marry a woman.

TH 2: We only here of this in the Radio, but in Venda; it never happens.

3.2.2.4. If a homosexual couple approaches you and asks for your blessing over their marriage or for the success of their marriage, how would you respond?

TH 1: We won't help them because we don't know of such practice. We only bless heterosexual relationship.

TH 2: Doing so will be cursing my ancestors who gave me this gift. I won't help them if they come to me as couple unless they come one by one looking for other help but not blessing their marriage.

3.2.2.5. *Is homosexuality taboo in our culture? Why?*

TH 1: Yes it is a taboo, because we as Venda people don't practice homosexuality and it is also not allowed in our culture.

TH 2: without doubt, it is a taboo; our ancestors don't approve homosexual relationship.

3.2.2.6. *There is a myth that says homosexuals are controlled by an evil spirit, where does this come from?*

TH 1: Yes it true, this is craziness because we don't practice homosexuality as Venda people.

TH 2: I don't know much about that, but one can believe it because this behaviour is unbecoming.

3.2.2.7. *There is a rumour that says some traditional healers do marry persons of the same sex, what is your view on this?*

TH 1: Yes, it does happen that a female traditional healer can marry another woman but they won't have sexual relations together. She would give the woman she married to her brother for sexual relations and procreation. When the woman is married is explained clearly to her that she is married by female traditional healer without knowledge that she will be given to one man from the family of the traditional healer. It is not allowed that a man traditional healer can marry another man. But it must be noted, a female healer who marries another woman will never have sexual relations because they both know that it is a taboo.

TH 2: Yes, but only traditional healers who are female are allowed to marry another woman if the ancestors revealed to them that they must do so. The purpose of marriage is only helping traditional healer with domestic work. A man that will be chosen by female traditional healer will be given to her for sexual activities and procreation. Male traditional healers are not allowed to marry another man, he can only have a male slave who failed to pay him for the service he rendered but he will consider that slave as his son. The slave is allowed to marry whoever female partner he wants.

3.2.2.8. Is it possible that one's ancestors may reveal a partner of the same sex as a marriage partner?

TH 1: Yes, it does happen, the ancestors will be looking for someone who will help with household chores and grinding of medicine.

TH 2: Yes, but not for sexual activities, only for domestic work.

3.2.2.9. Is it possible for you as a traditional healer to change the orientation of a homosexual to a heterosexual?

TH 1: No, there is no hope of healing for these kinds of people.

TH 2: I don't know.

3.2.3 Summary of qualitative results from interviews with traditional leaders and traditional healers

Both traditional leaders and traditional healers are aware of the existence of homosexuality in South Africa, but they persist that it is against the Venda traditional belief system. Historically speaking, homosexuality is not a part of Venda culture and customs. Due to a lack of tolerance from the side of traditional leaders towards homosexuality, they assert that they won't give homosexual couples stands in their village. They go to the extent where they won't even allow them to marry in their village. Traditional leaders consider homosexuality as taboo without any reservations. They consider lesbians who want to go to a male initiation school as an insult to the Venda community and culture. Traditional healers believe that homosexuals are controlled by evil spirits. Traditional healers also reveal that only a female traditional healer is allowed to marry another woman, but the main purpose of that marriage is to provide the traditional healer with someone to do household chores. In order to fulfil the sexual needs of the woman married to traditional healer, the healer gives the woman she married to her brother or any man of her choice.

3.3 VIEW OF CHURCH LEADERS, ORDINARY CITIZENS, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

3.3.1 View of church leaders

The research with church leaders was done in quantitative form. The tables below offer the findings of the research.

The researcher visited the majority of the church leaders in Vhembe District at their own homes. One meeting with eight leaders took place in a group format. The church leaders interviewed come from different denominations, including Mainline, Pentecostal, Charismatic, and African Initiative Churches. The sample was collected by using questionnaires that church leaders answered individually. All the church leaders approached for the research responded positively. The total number of respondents was twenty two.

Results, Section A:

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	19	86%
Female	3	14%

Age	Frequency	Percent
13 – 19	0	0%
20 – 35	1	5%
36 – 48	8	36%
49 – 60	8	36%
more than 60	5	23%

Highest level of education	Frequency	Percent
Never attended School	1	4%
Grade R to 7	5	23%

Grade 8 to 12	5	23%
Higher Education (Certificate, Diploma, Degree)	11	50.00%

3.3.1.1. The findings of section A of the questionnaire indicate that the majority of participants are male pastors, ranging between the ages of 36 and 60 years old. 50% of the pastors interviewed have had formal education. This indicates that the pastors interviewed are probably open-minded and most of them know what is going on in the world at large. The fact that majority of them range between 36 and 60 years old helps this study in that most of them have been thoroughly exposed to the cultural belief system of the Venda people.

Section B

Question 4: *Are you aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa?*

Question 4	Frequency	Percent
Yes	17	77%
No	5	23%

3.3.1.2. Findings: This question was aimed determining whether church leaders are aware of homosexual policy in South Africa. The majority of pastors are aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa.

Question 5 & 6: *Do you have any homosexual person in your church? Do you know of any homosexual practice in Venda?*

Question 5	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1	5%
No	21	95%

Question 6	Frequency	Percent
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Yes	2	9%
No	20	91%

3.3.1.3. Findings: This question was aimed at knowledge of existing homosexuals in churches and in Venda. 95% of pastors don't have any homosexual person in their churches, whereas 91% of them don't know of any homosexual practice in Venda. We can deduce that homosexuality is not yet a big challenge for Venda churches.

Question 7: *Do you preach against homosexuality?*

Question 7	Frequency	Percent
Yes	13	59%
No	9	41%

3.3.1.4. Findings: Question 7 to 12 were aimed at determining the attitude of church leaders towards homosexuals. Only 41% of pastors have never preached against homosexuality or mentioned it in the church. This indicates that it is not yet an issue in the church and Venda community. It also indicates that the churches in Venda are not proactive when it comes to controversial issues like homosexuality that affect the community and Christian life.

Question 8: *Does a church have to tolerate homosexuality?*

Question 8	Frequency	Percent
Yes	6	27%
No	16	73%

3.3.1.5. The findings of the majority of church leaders indicate that the church must not tolerate homosexuals. This finding indicates that the church could become part of a homophobic attack on homosexuals, because usually where there is no tolerance, there is a fight.

Question 9: *If a homosexual person joins your church, will you treat him/her as a Christian?*

Question 9	Frequency	Percent
Yes	8	36%
No	14	64%

3.3.1.6. The findings indicate a clear lack of tolerance of church leaders towards homosexuality because the majority of church leaders say they won't treat a homosexual person as a Christian.

Question 10: *Can you ordain a homosexual person as a priest?*

Question 10	Frequency	Percent
Yes	2	9%
No	20	91%

3.3.1.11. The findings of the majority of church leaders indicate that they won't ordain a homosexual priest. It is against the view of the Anglican Church who ordain a homosexual priest.

Question 11: *Can you marry or bless a homosexual partner?*

Question 11	Frequency	Percent
Yes	1	5%
No	21	95%

3.3.1.12. The findings the majority of church leaders clearly indicate that they won't marry or bless a homosexual marriage. Church leaders don't have room for homosexuals.

Question 12: *Is homosexuality natural or a curse?*

Question 12	Frequency	Percent
Natural	3	14%
Curse	19	86%

3.3.1.9. The findings clearly indicate that the church leaders' reluctance to marry or bless a homosexual marriage is motivated by the fact that they hold the view that homosexuals are cursed, and they won't marry a cursed couple.

Question 13: *Do you denounce homosexuality based on Venda moral standards or the Bible?*

Question 13	Frequency	Percent
Morals	1	5%
Bible	21	95%

3.3.1.14. Question 13 and 14 is aimed at finding the standard based on which church leaders their denounce homosexuality. The majority of church leaders denounce homosexuality based on the Bible. They believe that the Bible does not support homosexuality.

Question 14: *Do you know of any passages in the Bible that denounce homosexuality.*

Question 14	Frequency	Percent
Yes	15	68%
No	7	32%

3.3.1.11. The majority of church leaders know passages that denounce homosexuality. The following passages were provided: Genesis 3, Genesis 1, Lev. 18:22, Lev. 20:13, Romans 1 and 1 Corinthians 6:9–11.

Question 15: *Do Venda people practice homosexuality?*

Question 15	Frequency	Percent
Yes	2	9%
No	20	91%

3.3.1.12. This question aimed to find out whether Venda people now practice homosexuality since it is now legal. The greater percentage of church leaders are convinced that Venda people don't practice homosexuality and are not practicing it even though it is now legal.

Question 16: *Can a homosexual person change his/her orientation to be heterosexual?*

Question 16	Frequency	Percent
Yes	21	95%
No	1	5%

3.3.1.13. This question aimed to discover the possibility of change if homosexuals can find some kind of help to become heterosexuals. The majority of church leaders believe that homosexuals can change their orientation to be heterosexual since there is nothing impossible with God.

❖ *Summary of quantitative research results among Church Leaders*

The majority of church leaders are aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa. The greater percentage of them report that they don't have any homosexual members in their churches and they don't know of any homosexual practice in Venda. The majority of church leaders preach against homosexuality. They also revealed that the church doesn't have to tolerate homosexuality. They show this lack of tolerance towards homosexuals by asserting that if a homosexual person joins the church, they won't treat him or her as a Christian. Without any reservation the greater percentage of church leaders say they won't ordain a homosexual priest or marry homosexual partners. They consider homosexuality as a curse. They hold that their

denouncement of homosexuality is not based on their Venda morals as such, but that it stems from the Word of God. The majority of church leaders believe that there is hope for homosexuals if they attempt to seek help. They can change their homosexuality to be heterosexual.

3.3.2 View of ordinary citizens

The research amongst ordinary citizens was conducted in quantitative manner. The researcher interviewed the majority of the ordinary citizens in the Vhembe District on street corners, old people in their homes, school learners at school and some individuals at church. The sample was collected in the following manner: The respondents who are able to read were handed a questionnaire to answer, and those who are not able to read or write were interviewed by the researcher who read the questions to them and ticked the answers on their behalf. The majority of ordinary citizens who were approached responded positively. A small number of elderly people were sensitive and hesitant to answer the questions asked. The total number of respondents is fifty-nine.

Results: Section A

The Frequency Procedure

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	27	46%
Female	32	54%

Age	Frequency	Percent
13 – 19	16	27%
20 – 35	17	29%
36 – 48	4	7%
49 – 60	9	15%
More than 60	13	22%

Highest level of education	Frequency	Percent
Never attended school	9	15%
Grade R to 7	10	17%
Grade 8 to 12	31	53%
Higher Education (Certificate, Diploma, Degree)	9	15%

3.3.2.1. The fact that most of the respondents have not had higher education boosts this research, because most of the ordinary citizens have not been influenced by worldviews different from that of Venda culture.

Section B

Question 4: *Are you aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa?*

Question 4	Frequency	Percent
Yes	46	78%
No	13	22%

3.3.2.2. This question was aimed at determining the awareness of ordinary people concerning homosexuality. The majority of ordinary citizens are aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa.

Question 5: *Do you know that there are homosexual people in South Africa?*

Question 5	Frequency	Percent
Yes	34	58%
No	25	42%

3.3.2.3. This question tests whether ordinary citizens have knowledge of the existence of homosexual people in South Africa. The majority of participants know homosexual people exist in South Africa.

Question 6: *Do you know of any homosexual person in Venda?*

Question 6	Frequency	Percent
Yes	9	16%
No	49	84%

3.3.2.4. One frequency is missing. This question was aimed at narrowing the focus to awareness of homosexuality in Venda. The majority of ordinary citizens did not know of any homosexual person in Venda.

Question 7: *If you find out that one member of your family is homosexual, would you speak about it openly?*

Question 7	Frequency	Percent
Yes	23	39%
No	36	61%

3.3.2.5. Question 7 to 13 is aimed at determining the attitude of ordinary citizens towards homosexuals. The majority of ordinary people in Venda won't speak about homosexuality in public when a family member is involved.

Question 8: *Can you tolerate homosexuals?*

Question 8	Frequency	Percent
Yes	15	25%
No	44	75%

3.3.2.6. The majority of ordinary people in Venda don't have tolerance towards homosexuals.

Question 9: *Would you accept them in your house or village?*

Question 9	Frequency	Percent
Yes	19	32%
No	40	68%

3.3.2.7. The majority of Venda citizens say they won't accept homosexuals either in their houses or villages. We can deduce from this that Venda people don't have tolerance towards homosexuals.

Question 10: *If you find out that your child has a homosexual partner, would you pay lobola (bride price) for him or her?*

Question 10	Frequency	Percent
Yes	4	7%
No	55	93%

3.3.2.8. The greater percentage of ordinary citizens in Venda indicated that they won't pay lobola (Bride price) for partners who are in a homosexual relationship.

Question 11: *Do you consider homosexuality dangerous to our community?*

Question 11	Frequency	Percent
Yes	51	86%
No	8	14%

3.3.2.9. The greater numbers of ordinary people believe that homosexuality is dangerous to our community.

Question 12: *Is homosexuality taboo?*

Question 12	Frequency	Percent
Yes	53	90%
No	6	10%

3.3.2.10. The greater percentage of ordinary people thinks that homosexual is taboo.

Question 13: *Are you in favour of a homosexual relationship?*

Question 13	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	20%
No	47	80%

3.3.2.11. The majority of citizens are not in favour of a homosexual relationship.

Question 14: *Is homosexuality new thing in the Venda Community?*

Question 14	Frequency	Percent
Yes	47	80%
No	12	20%

3.3.2.12. This question is aimed on determining whether Venda has historical record of homosexuals. We can understand now why the majority of ordinary citizens are not in favour of homosexual relationship. It is because the majority of them think that homosexuality is new thing in Venda.

Question 15: *Do Venda customs approve of homosexuality?*

Question 15	Frequency	Percent
Yes	5	9%
No	53	91%

3.3.2.13. One Frequency is missing. The greater percentage of ordinary people says Venda customs don't approve homosexuality.

Question 16: *Do Venda people practice homosexuality?*

Question 16	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	12%
No	52	88%

3.3.2.14. This question focuses on what is happening now. The majority of Venda people don't practice homosexuality. We can deduce that this is influenced by the Venda custom that does not allow one to practice homosexuality or to be in a homosexual relationship.

Question 17: *Can a homosexual person change his/her orientation to be heterosexual?*

Question 17	Frequency	Percent
Yes	41	69%
No	18	31%

3.3.2.15. Findings: This question aims to test whether there is the perception of a possibility of change in homosexuals. The majority of ordinary citizens believe that homosexuals can change their orientation to be heterosexuals.

❖ *Summary of quantitative research results amongst ordinary citizens*

The majority of ordinary citizens are aware that homosexuality is legal and know that there are homosexual people in South Africa. The greater percentage of ordinary citizens revealed the following attitudes towards homosexuals: 1. If they find out that one of their family members is homosexual, they won't speak about it. 2. They don't have tolerance towards homosexuals. 3. They won't accept homosexuals in their houses or village. 4. They won't pay lobola (Bride price) in case a homosexual person wants to marry. 5. They consider homosexuality as dangerous to the community. 6. They also consider homosexuality as taboo. They are not in favour of homosexual relationships because it is perceived as a new thing in Venda and it is against Venda customs, values and norms. They say Venda people don't practice homosexuality, and they believe that a homosexual person can change to become a heterosexual as he/she was created by God to be so.

3.3.3 View of principals and teachers

The research amongst principals and teachers was done in a quantitative manner. The researcher visited six schools in the Vhembe District. He dropped off questionnaires with the principal, who distributed it to teachers, and on a certain day the researcher collected the completed questionnaires. All principals and teachers asked to participate responded positively. The total number of respondents is Forty-Eight.

Results: Section A

The Frequency Procedure

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	25	52%
Female	23	48%

Age	Frequency	Percent
13 – 19	1	2%
20 – 35	11	23%
36 – 48	21	44%
49 – 60	14	29%
More than 60	1	2%

Highest Level of Education	Frequency	Percent
Grade 8 - 12	2	4%
Higher education (Certificate, Diploma, Degree)	46	96%

3.3.3.1. Findings indicate that 52% participants were male and 48% were female. The majority of them range between 36 and 48 years of age, with higher education. Involving participants who are educated added an informed view of people who know Venda culture and other worldviews.

Section B

Question 4: *Are you aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa?*

Question 4	Frequency	Percent
Yes	37	77%
No	11	23%

3.3.3.2. This question is only aimed at awareness of the existence of homosexuality in South Africa. The majority of principals and teachers are aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa

Question 5: *Do you have any homosexual learners in your school?*

Question 5	Frequency	Percent
Yes	5	10%
No	43	90%

3.3.3.3. Question 5 aimed to reveal if there are homosexuals in schools. The greater percentage of principals and teachers say they don't have any homosexual learners in their schools.

Question 6: *Do you know of any homosexual practice in Venda?*

Question 6	Frequency	Percent
Yes	14	30%
No	33	70%

3.3.3.4. Findings One Frequency is missing. Question 6 is aimed at revealing if there are homosexuals in Venda. The majority of principals and teachers don't know of any homosexual practice in Venda.

Question 7: *Do you consider homosexuality a problem?*

Question 7	Frequency	Percent
Yes	38	79%
No	10	21%

3.3.3.5. Questions 7 to 14 aimed to determine the attitude of Venda people towards homosexuals. The greater percentage of principals and teachers consider homosexuality a problem.

Question 8: *Do teachers and learners tolerate homosexuals?*

Question 8	Frequency	Percent
Yes	19	41%
No	27	59%

3.3.3.6. Two frequencies are missing. The majority of principals and teachers believe that we must not tolerate homosexuality.

Question 9: *Would you admit a homosexual learner to your school?*

Question 9	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	74%
No	12	26%

3.3.3.7. One frequency is missing. The greater percentage says that they can admit a homosexual learner without a problem. The South African Schools Act compels them to do so, as one is not allowed to discriminate against children based on their race, sexual orientation, etc.

Question 10: *Can you accept a fellow co-worker who is homosexual in your midst?*

Question 10	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	73%
No	12	27%

3.3.3.8. Four Frequencies are missing. The majority of them say they can accept a homosexual co-worker in their midst. Due to the open-minded of principals and teachers they can accept homosexuals in their midst.

Question 11: *If you find out that a child has homosexual tendencies, would you try to change him or her?*

Question 11	Frequency	Percent
Yes	27	56%
No	21	44%

3.3.3.9. Most principals and teachers say they will try to change a child with homosexual tendencies or orientation.

Question 12: *Is homosexuality dangerous to learners?*

Question 12	Frequency	Percent
Yes	31	66%
No	16	34%

3.3.3.10. One Frequency is missing. The greater percentage of principals and teachers believe that homosexuality is dangerous to learners.

Question 13: *Is homosexuality taboo?*

Question 13	Frequency	Percent
Yes	28	58%
No	20	42%

3.3.3.11. The majority of principals and teachers believe that homosexuality is taboo.

Question 14: *Are you in favour of homosexual relationships?*

Question 14	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	15%
No	41	85%

3.3.3.12. The greater percentage of principals and teachers are not in favour of homosexual relationships.

Question 15: *Does Life Science or Life Orientation teach about homosexuality?*

Question 15	Frequency	Percent
Yes	35	73%
No	13	27%

3.3.3.13. Questions 15 and 16 aim to determine the effectiveness of the education the learners receive in schools. The majority of principals and teachers say that Life Science and Life Orientation teach about homosexuality.

Question 16: *Does Life Science or Life Orientation help learners make good sexual choices?*

Question 16	Frequency	Percent
Yes	43	90%
No	5	10%

3.3.3.14. The greater percentage of principals and teachers believe that Life Science and Life Orientation do help learners make good sexual choices.

Question 17: *Do Venda people ever practice homosexuality?*

Question 17	Frequency	Percent
Yes	14	29%
No	34	71%

3.3.3.15. This question aims to investigate the existence of homosexuality in history. The majority of principals and teachers are convinced that Venda people never practiced homosexuality in history.

Question 18: *Can a homosexual person change his/her orientation to be heterosexual?*

Question 18	Frequency	Percent
Yes	34	71%
No	14	29%

3.3.3.16. This question looks at the possibility of change. The greater percentage of principals and teachers believe that a homosexual person can change his/her orientation to be heterosexual.

❖ *Summary of quantitative research results amongst principals and teachers*

The majority of principals and teachers know that homosexuality is legal in South Africa, but they don't have homosexual learners in their schools and they also don't know of any homosexuals and any homosexual practice in Venda. The greater percentage of them considers homosexuality a problem and believes that teachers and learners don't have to tolerate homosexuals. In contradiction with this, the majority say that they will admit a homosexual learner to their schools and also accept a homosexual co-worker in their midst. The majority of them believe that if they find a learner with homosexual tendencies they would try to change him/her. They also consider homosexuality as dangerous to learners and as a taboo. The greater percentage is not in favour of homosexual relationships. The majority of them believe that Life Science and Life Orientation as a subject in school teaches enough about homosexuality and they also help learners to make good sexual choices. They are convinced that if a homosexual person finds help he/she can change from homosexual to heterosexual.

3.4 VIEW OF POLITICIANS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

3.4.1 Politicians at the local level

Interviews were conducted with political leaders in qualitative form. The interview was recorded and is presented in writing verbatim. Interviews were conducted with three different political leaders from three different political parties. Because of the confidentiality clause, the name of the participants and the respective political parties will not be mentioned, unless the participants mention it in the middle of the interview.

Answer 1 Refers to political leader number one, Abbreviation = PL 1

Answer 2 Refers to political leader number two. Abbreviation = PL 2

Answer 3 Refers to political leader number three. Abbreviation = PL 3

3.4.1.1. As an African person, how do you feel about the bill that was passed on 14 November 2006 that legalises same sex marriage? As a politician, how do you regard homosexuality?

PL 1: The new bill that legalises homosexuality is just a right that the law gives homosexuals to express their sexuality. This bill covers the rights of homosexuals. As politician I regard homosexuality as a right that one can exercise if he or she wants to.

PL 2: AZAPO holds the philosophy of the Black Conscious Movement. Black Conscious movement is based on morals, customs and values of black people, and then according to us as black people, this new Bill is unacceptable. As AZAPO we have tried to speak, but no one was willing to listen to us.

PL 3: As Africans we believe that a woman must be married by man, but sometimes the challenges that people come across force them to end up in homosexual relationship. Traditionally, homosexuality is not allowed. As politicians we are obliged to accept homosexuality because we don't know how many homosexuals are out there. We receive them because we also need their vote. As politicians, we work with vote even though we see that their practice is wrong. We must know that they also have rights like anyone. We as politicians since we value democracy we accept them, and accommodate them in our midst, but we are convinced that what they do is taboo, but what can we say, they are people who are counted in our country and we need their votes too.

3.4.1.2. Venda is a traditional place. How would you expect the traditional leaders to deal with issues of homosexuality?

PL 1: The traditional leaders have to deal with the homosexuality considering what the Constitution says since the Constitution is the Supreme Law of our country. They have to accept what Constitution says. Everyone has the right and freedom of association therefore homosexuals chosen to live that way therefore traditional leaders have to accept it.

PL 2: Traditional leaders are also bounded by the Constitution. The constitution shows that everyone has rights. They must acknowledge that they rule everyone in their village therefore they must not discriminate someone based on his or her sexual orientation. In contrary; Traditional leaders must not leave the customs, norms and values of Venda people, they must continue holding on them. In Venda customs, norms and values is clear that a man does not

marry man and a woman does not marry woman therefore traditional leaders must not compromise in this issue.

PL 3: Traditional leaders are born leaders and they don't depend on votes. They follow culture wholeheartedly and we know that they won't accept this taboo but because of the Constitution; they are forced to accept them within their villages. When homosexuals enter Royal Palace they must leave their practice and follow the culture and all the Venda norms that the traditional leader expects from their servants.

3.4.1.3. How should African people who are traditional handle the issue of homosexuality in a democratic country?

PL 1: Traditional leaders have to include homosexuals in their structures and activities. They must treat them as human beings who are equal to everyone regardless of their orientation.

PL 2: South Africa belongs to everyone who stays on it but we differ in race, belief, etc; but we must not turn away from our tradition. As blacks, we don't have to copy what other races do. We must know that Indians are Indians, Chinese are Chinese, and Whites are Whites, as they are following their traditions, we must also follow ours. We must follow our identity as there is saying that says; 'Black is beautiful'. Homosexuality is not part of our black heritage, therefore is unacceptable.

PL 3: We are living in democratic country that is why this new Bill was passed in Parliament. We as cultural and traditional people we know and believe that a man marrying another man is not practiced in our society. Venda people, Zulus, Tsongas, and all black cultures don't practice homosexuality but these are rights which our children received from the democracy we founded then let us leave them to enjoy these rights.

3.4.1.4. In the situation of education, how do you think teachers should treat homosexual children?

PL 1: Teachers are informed of respecting the dignity and the rights of any individuals therefore they have to treat homosexual children just like any child in school.

PL 2: Teachers in schools are governed by South Africa School Act; teachers must know that every kid regardless of his/her orientation attends school. The teacher has to treat learners

equally and can assist homosexual learner to be heterosexual if he or she is asked by a learner to do so in their private time.

PL 3: Teachers must remember that they are hired by the Department of Education. Teachers also have a role of being parents in school. The task of teacher is very limited in school; the task of a teacher is to teach. If a teacher is offended by children who practice homosexuality, a teacher can only give advice after school hours but he/she will continue to treat them equally since a teacher does not have any right to take a learner out of class because of his or her sexual preference.

3.4.1.5. On the side of the church, how should Christians handle the issue of homosexuals in their churches, especially since our country is democratic?

PL 1: Christians have to acknowledge that South Africa is a Secular State therefore all religion are equal. Everybody has a right to choose religion he/she wants. The church also have to respect the right of homosexuals even within the church since homosexuals too are part of society and community therefore they also have a right to enjoy and do what the community do like going to church.

PL 2: The Churches have canons that they use such as Bible, Heidelberg Catechism, Canon of Dordt, etc. The churches must follow their doctrines. If you are a Christian church follow you Christian doctrine. The churches have to treat homosexual issue as the Bible teaches.

PL 3: Looking at the Biblical history, the Bible does not allow that a man can marry a man or a woman can marry a woman, but since we are living in transformed world and the pastors live by congregants' tithing and love offerings they have to accept homosexuals within the church because if the church is full of homosexuals, he won't live if he chase them away. The preacher can only give advice in his sermon. After all, the church also has rights to say what they believe concerning this homosexual issue. They have to ask wisdom from God on how to handle homosexuals within the church in order to avoid division in the church. A preacher has to set a standard on highlighting the limitation of every right in his sermon but he has to stand in middle ground.

3.4.1.6. President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe believes that homosexuals don't have rights. According to him they are sexual perverts who are lower than pigs and dogs. Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda, believes that all homosexuals must be arrested, and Sam Nujoma, the former President of Namibia, believes that homosexual relationships are un-African, and that it is a borrowed culture from the West. What is your opinion about all these claims?

PL 1: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights which is agreed by all States leaders says that all people has a right and have a right of choice therefore what the President of Zimbabwe Robert Mugabe, Yoweri Museveni and Sam Nujoma said, they were just expressing their personal opinion and that is not what the world can accept because it is against the universal declaration of human right. People have equal rights; even homosexuals have equal rights in every country and cannot be insulted by being referred as dogs and pigs. Such insult does not cover what human rights stand for.

PL 2: President Mugabe is right because he based his argument on African culture, norms and values. We need to understand that wherever he is, Mugabe defend African culture and fight for the right of Africans. President Museveni was just emotionally because he knows that in Africans homosexuality is unacceptable. To him homosexuality is taboo. President Nujoma is showing us that homosexuality is bad and we must not take everything from western culture. In order to conquer this issue we must go back to our African roots following the ways of our forefathers. As Venda people, we must not eat dogs just because Koreans eat dogs. In Venda we don't accept homosexuality, thereof let's stand firm in our belief system.

PL 3: All those three Presidents were just mentioning their ideas which are not final to the nation; it is just their personal opinion. We must also look at their leadership style in their respective countries then we will understand why they speak like this. They have old fashioned leadership style, where they thought that once you in power; that power is for life. As politician we say to those three Presidents that gone are those days where you as a leader chose for people what they must do. We are living in democratic country and it allows everyone to practice what he or she wants. The president does not decide for people but the people decide what must happen in their country. They must also stop blaming the west for everything wrong because everything has a start. They must make peace with their heart that they are old and we are living in a changing world which is ruled by democracy.

❖ *Summary of qualitative research results amongst political leaders at the local level*

PL 1 considers the legalisation regarding homosexual marriages as a good decision by the South African government since it protects human rights as stated in the Constitution. **PL 2** considers the legalisation of homosexual partnerships as wrong since is against the Black Conscious movement, which is based on the morals, customs and values of black people. **PL 3** believes that homosexual relationships are not allowed traditionally, but as politician he is binded by the Constitution to allow it. He is also influenced by the votes he wants from homosexuals, since they don't know exactly how many homosexuals they have in the country.

PL 1 and **PL 2** believe that traditional leaders must deal with homosexuality as stated in the Constitution but **PL 2** also stresses that traditional leaders must not forsake their Venda customs, norms and values. **PL 2**, **PL 3** believes that since traditional leaders don't depend on votes, they must embrace their Venda customs, norms and values, but they must not disregard the Constitution.

All politicians agree that South Africa belongs to every citizen that dwells in it; therefore homosexuals are part of the community. **PL 1** holds that they must be treated equally; **P2** believes that homosexuals copy other people who don't embrace African cultures. **PL 3** believes that every culture must hold on to their believe system.

All politicians advise teachers to be guided by the South African Schools Act and they must not discriminate against a learner based on his/her orientation. In the case of churches, **PL 1** warns the churches to acknowledge that we are living in a secular state where all religions are equal; therefore the churches have to respect homosexuals within the church since they are part of community. **PL 2** holds that churches must be guided by the canons and their doctrines, whereas **PL 3** thinks that the church must take the middle ground since the members of the church comprise homosexuals and heterosexuals respectively.

PL 1 and **PL 3** believe that what President Robert Mugabe, Sam Nujoma and Yoweri Museveni say are just their personal opinions, which is unacceptable because it is against the Universal Declaration of Human rights to call homosexuals pigs and dogs and other insults. They further point out that this behaviour shows clearly what kind of leaders they are. They want to decide for the people, instead of people guiding them. **PL 2** believes that those presidents are right and they make these statements to protect African cultures. They just stress that homosexuality is unaccepted in our African cultures and they point out that we must not accept everything from the Western cultures.

3.6 VIEW OF OTHER AFRICAN LEADERS AND AFRICAN COUNTRIES ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY

It is worth noting that South Africa is the only African country in which same sex rights are constitutionally protected (Morgan, 2005: 1). In the constitution homosexual relationships are protected, but homosexuals are still subjected to treatment that is brutal. Lesbians, for example, are still raped by men who want to “teach them a lesson” and convert them into “real”, heterosexual women. Morgan (2005: 1) continues to say that: “Many people hold the view that homosexuality is unnatural, perverse, a sin, or an import from the depraved Western culture.” Rukweza (2006: 1) supports Morgan by asserting that: “African leaders, historians, anthropologists, clergyman, authors, and contemporary Africans alike have denied or overlooked the existence of homosexuality or same-sex relationships and persistently claimed that such patterns were introduced by Europeans.”

President Robert Mugabe made the headlines in 1995 when he denounced gays and lesbians as “sexual perverts” who are “lower than dogs and pigs”. When President Robert Mugabe rejected the call for gay human rights he said: “We don’t believe they have rights at all”. He charged that homosexuality was unnatural and un-African, saying that it is an alien culture only practised by a “few whites” in Zimbabwe (Rukweza 2006: 1). According to Rukweza, President Robert Mugabe’s attitude and mentality towards homosexuality represents a dominant perception among African leaders.

Archbishop Peter Akinola, in one of his many remarks “cannot imagine two men in sexual relation, even this does not happen in the animal kingdom”. He continues to speak against the appointment of gay bishops, saying that homosexuals are lower than beasts. His views on homosexuality are such that he ranks it alongside polygamy, incest, adultery and bestiality (Macaulay, 2006: 158 & 159).

In January 2003, Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda, was quoted by *The New Vision*, calling on the Ugandan police to arrest all homosexuals or anyone indulging in unnatural sexual practices. He also denounced homosexuality as un-African. Sam Nujoma, while still the President of Namibia in 2003, told a press conference of international journalists that homosexuality was a “borrowed sub culture, alien to Africa and Africans” (Rukweza 2006: 1).

Whilst some leaders in West Africa have not been vocal about gay rights, their attitudes are represented eloquently by the anti-gay laws informing the judicial systems of their countries. Under Sharai law in Nigeria and most of North Africa, homosexuality is a criminal offence punishable by hanging. Laws across Africa do not recognise homosexuality as a way of life: it is generally perceived as unnatural and therefore criminal. Those who practise homosexuality are automatically turned into lawbreakers, social rejects and threats to society (Rukweza 2006: 1 & 2).

Mashau (2008: 66) contends that: “The majority of Africans, in South Africa and the rest of the African continent, believe that homosexuality is a western phenomenon. It is taboo in the African context to engage in such a practice. When parliament passed the Civil Union Act, it also undermined the voices of traditional leaders, who have been very vocal about it. There is no way that in an African context a person can be allowed to pay lobola (bride price) for a person of the same gender whom he or she considers to be unakoti (the bride). The notion of Africanness as expressed in the concept of ubuntu was also disregarded. Individual rights are entrenched within the rights of the collective whole.” He further attests that; “It is clear that in this regard parliament took a more liberal approach, which has some Eurocentric influence. It is in incidents such as this that one starts to realise how the influence of secularism or the secularization process

has impacted on the lives of Africans. We may well ask what kind of democracy we have that ignores the voice of the masses”.

Macaulay (2006: 156) gives the following evidence: “Being born homosexual in African culture is not something that you will understand as a child. Nigerian society has made it a taboo because it cannot deal with the increasing demands of gays and lesbians. If homosexuality were determined in the physical features and identifiable at birth, many Nigerian parents would bury their homosexual child before it has a chance to live. Homosexuality is seen as the influence of sexual corruption and immorality from the west. Parents in Nigeria will seldom accept that their child is gay. Even those who have come to terms with the knowledge will continue to pray for a change. Some parents believe homosexual persons have become members of a cult. It is commonly said, ‘I would rather have the corpse of my child than accept him or her as homosexual.’ In cases where the parents or family know their child’s sexual orientation, they will take further steps to seek counselling, prayers, exorcism and binding the spirit of homosexuality.”

3.7 VENDA CULTURE IN AGREEMENT WITH CHRISTIANITY ABOUT HOMOSEXUALITY

Venda culture and Christianity hold on to different things, but in some ways certain aspects of the culture don’t contradict the Scripture. We must say honestly and without doubt that cultures originated through the will of God, and therefore they are not superior to the Word of God. Wherever necessary the culture must be transformed by the Word of God if the belief system and practice of a particular culture goes against the will of God. Venda culture upholds the heterosexual marriage and denounces homosexual relationships at all cost.

Ward (2006:129) says: “The churches in Africa have a long history of conflict with traditional African cultures over issues of polygamy, marital infidelity and the position of women. In the face of modern threats to stable family life the churches have often made a tactical alliance with traditional African culture values, which, for all their defects, have been seen as providing certain guarantees for stable human relationships. Thus, for example, churches have often upheld

the price of bride price, and sought to ensure that traditional norms have been complied with before agreeing to a church wedding.” In view of Ward’s claim, the church also sides with African cultures concerning the issue of homosexuality, since African cultures denounce homosexual practice very insistently. Evidence of homosexual desire and activity in traditional cultures was passed over in silence or dismissed as trivial.

However, what Ward says is not completely true when he says the church made a tactical alliance with African cultural values. No, the church, which is driven by the Word of God, took its stand long before culture concerning homosexuality. The church is not influenced by culture, but the church rejoices when the culture sees things in a Biblical way. When this is the case, they will support one another in fight for moral decay within the community it serves.

3.8 EVALUATION

The majority of Venda people believe that homosexuality is taboo and won’t speak about it in public should they find out that one of their family members is involved in a homosexual relationship. The traditional leaders clearly revealed that they won’t accept a homosexual couple to stay in their village or have wedding ceremony in their village. The attitude of Venda people towards homosexuals is clearly revealed when the church leaders also say without hesitation that they won’t tolerate homosexuals in their churches. Consequently, ordinary citizens, traditional leaders and healers don’t have tolerance toward homosexuals. Only political leaders value the rights of homosexuals, but the majority of them still believe that homosexual practice is against Venda customs. Teachers and principals are bound by the South African Schools Act that does not allow them to discriminate against any learner based on race, belief, sexual orientation, etc. The majority of principals and teachers clearly revealed that they are not in favour of homosexual relationships. In view of the empirical research, we can deduce that homosexuality goes against Venda customs, morals, norms and values. The majority of Venda people don’t have tolerance of homosexuals, and they believe that homosexuals can change and live a straight life. As for the church leaders, they believe that homosexuality is a curse. The majority of people indicated clearly that homosexual relationships are taboo and it does not have room in Venda culture. Homophobia can be seen in all these findings. Political leaders differ concerning this

issue. Some believe that homosexuals should have rights; some politicians accept homosexual relationships for the sake of receiving votes from them since they don't know how many homosexuals are out there, but the majority of them hold the view that it is wrong, and they simply don't have any tolerance towards it since they believe that it is un-African practice. A more ethical evaluation will be done in chapter five of this study.

3.9 CONCLUSION

Homosexuality is legal in South Africa. Venda people, church leaders, politicians, traditional leaders, traditional healers and all people must prepare themselves on how they would deal with the issue of homosexuality. Homosexuals must also be treated with respect. Respect does not mean approving the behaviour, but it means accepting someone as a human being created by God, and for whom God's grace is enough. Denying that homosexuals exist within our community will drive us away from dealing with the homosexual issue diligently. The church must proclaim the Gospel truth in love. We must acknowledge that we are living in a secular state that is not guided by the Word of God or by cultural beliefs, and therefore as cultural people and Christians we must uphold the teaching of our culture and the Bible. The debate around the issue of homosexuality can end for us if and only if we hold on to the teaching of the Word. If we allow God's Word to have final say in our lives, then we won't do what we feel, but we will obey what God says to us in His word.

CHAPTER 4

4 A CHRISTIAN ETHICAL PERSPECTIVE ON HOMOSEXUALITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Vorster (2007: 240) correctly says: “Although homosexuality is “contra naturam”, the homosexual person is like all people, an image bearer of God. Dehumanisation of others through discrimination and maliciousness inhibits the process of becoming humane.” He further asserts that: “the commandment of love demands a love towards all people. Christian love can not be limited to persons of the same group, nation, race, class or sexual orientation. As depraved people that fight against their own depravity, Christians should love all people unqualified, although they hate sin”. Vorster condemns homophobia in all its forms.

In support of Vorster, Christians are left with a big responsibility towards their homosexual brothers and sisters. Hating them is no solution at all. Christians are obliged to have a Christ-like attitude. When they see sinners, compassion must drive them towards them, because sinners are harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. The church must urge Christians by the grace and mercy of God to be transformed through the renewal of their minds and remain careful not to conform to the standards of this world. In actual fact the state and the church must act as the servants of God.

Bahnsen (1978: 16) correctly points out that: “Men can accept God’s prescriptive will for behaviour or they can reject it (out of their own free will – PTM), but they cannot tamper with it.” The church of God cannot afford to sacrifice the Biblical truth in favour of new developments. Bahnsen continue to point out that: “The church cannot condone what God condemns in Scripture without losing its own integrity and coming under His judgment. For the true disciple of Christ, moral boundaries are never drawn by man but only and always by God.” The duty of the church is firstly to carry a Scriptural testimony into society. Scriptural principles should especially be emphasised these days (Vorster, 2007: 241).

4.2 HOMOSEXUALITY IS A CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE

4.2.1 Men's doubts concerning the authority of the Bible

Botha (2008: 10 & 11) in his introduction uses the following quotes from Father Benedict Groeschel, Marshall King and Hunter Madsen: "Homosexuality is a condition; gay and lesbian is a decision. Almost any behaviour begins to look normal if you are exposed to enough of it." Our culture is saturated with the idea that homosexuality is normal, proper and accepted expression of love between persons. This notion is strengthened by the affirmation of homosexual marriages in courts of law and the constitutional laws of the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, Spain and South Africa. Barnett (1979: 7) brought this forward: "actually the Bible appears unequivocally to condemn only three things: (1) homosexual rape; (2) the ritual homosexual prostitution that was part of the Canaanite fertility cult and at one time apparently taken over into Jewish Practice as well and (3) homosexual lust and behaviour on the part of heterosexuals. On the subject of homosexuality as an orientation, and on consensual behaviour by people who possess that orientation, it is wholly silent. The orientation as such was apparently unknown to or at least unrecognized by the Biblical authors." He further says that: "homosexuality and homosexual behaviour are never anywhere in the Bible mentioned either by Jesus Christ himself or by any of the Old Testament prophets. If it really a sin in God's sights surely he or they or both would have inveighed against it (sic)."

The proponents of homosexuality who are indifferent to the authority of God's Word and its teaching about homosexual practice will obviously require a basic defence of authority of the Bible. Homosexual proponents hold that there is no clear revelation of God's will that prohibits homosexuality as we understand that condition today. Moreover, they believe that scriptural ethics focus on personal considerations and situational factors, while condemning preoccupation with rigid legal stipulations (Bahnsen, 1978:17).

Ryan (2008:43 & 44) is not comfortable with the view of those churches that hold traditional views or who are conservative with regard to their approach to the Scripture when it comes to homosexuality. He says: "The United Reformed Church, Presbyterian Church, and Dutch

Reformed Church (whom Ryan refers as – PTM the denomination mostly associated with the conservative morality of the Apartheid era) were, in that order, the least welcoming to homosexuals, and this was reflected in the answers that were geared to measuring the extent of pastoral care available to homosexual person in the various Churches. It seems the ecclesiastical leopards have not changed their spots in South Africa!” Comments like this clearly prove that Ryan wants the church to agree with him with regard to his view about homosexuality and understanding of the Scripture.

In contradiction to Ryan’s claim, the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa decided in October 2004 to be officially confused on the matter of homosexuality. As a result, the floodgates are open and the proliferation of literature teaching this revisionist morality under the guise of correct understanding of the relevant biblical portions is resulting in the twisting of the Bible truths, enhancing the confusion of many and the weakening of the mainline church (Botha 2008: 12).

“Germond is a typical spokesperson for the revisionist when he labels the Bible as heterosexist and misogynistic in its sexual orientation. This judgment then renders the Bible useless in giving guidance within the current controversy (Botha, 2008: 20).” The current confusion in the church is the result of theological failure to know what the Bible says about sexuality as well as marriage. The relentless and increasing challenge by the homosexual fraternity to its normative teaching on sexuality has left the church reeling in a confused daze, quite prepared to give up its Holy Book to be secularized by the liberal homosexual agenda. Thus the holy Book is turned into an unholy Empty Testament for modern times. The push for endorsement of homosexual practice represents a determined attack today on the Bible’s teaching on human sexuality. The debate on homosexuality and the Bible acutely raises the question of the Bible’s place and authority in the church (Botha, 2008: 21 & 22). We can conclude that a man without the Holy Spirit will never recognise the authority of the Scripture.

4.2.2 Men's doubts towards Bible passages that deal with homosexuality

It is not an easy task to expose the Scripture without subscribing to a certain view of Biblical exposition. One can never approach Scripture from a neutral position. Bearing these in mind, we will expose the Scripture with the belief and full conviction that the Bible is the authoritative Word of God. It is not time bound but time addressed, therefore since the Scripture is the authoritative Word of God we won't defend it, but it will defend itself as we start to do our exegesis. In 2 Timothy 3:16–17 the apostle Paul puts it this way: “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” Without any hesitation, we can conclude that whenever the Word of God is exposed to us, four things happen, namely teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness. Bearing this in mind, the exposition of Biblical passages that deal with homosexuality will do the same to us, some will be taught, some will be rebuked, and some will be corrected, whereas some will be trained in righteousness. Teaching, rebuking, correcting and training consequently equips men to do good works.

This study acknowledges the authority of the Scripture. De Klerk and Van Rensburg (2005:10) put it in this way: “To acknowledge the authority of the Scripture therefore entails that we do not hold the Bible responsible for the interpretation we make. On the other hand, we refuse to merely throw in the towel and declare, like relativist, that any explanation is correct. No, we prayerfully keep on searching for valid interpretations, to acquire more and more clarity, also with regard to uncertainties that remain. In this way we approximate the correct interpretation”.

4.3 EXEGESIS OF LEVITICUS 18: 22 and 20: 13

4.3.1 Introduction

There are many passages in the Old Testament and the New Testament that condemn homosexuality. However, in this study we will concentrate mostly in Leviticus 18: 22 and 20: 13 from the Old Testament, and Romans 1 from the New Testament because both passages

handle the issue of homosexuality in the most relevant way. Other Scripture texts will be used as references.

Starting with Leviticus, in these chapters, there is no doubt that God condemns homosexual relationships very seriously. “Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.” This word ‘detestable’ means to dislike intensely. Having homosexual intercourse is clear a rebellion against God and is a punishable sin that God will never tolerate. It is also against the procreation principle. In Old Testament times, those who practice same sex relations were put to death. Those who put them to death were considered innocent of their killing. “They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.” It is clear therefore that homosexuals in the Old Testament were condemned and detestable before God the Creator. Maybe it is too early to jump into this conclusion. Let’s look at these verses closely.

4.3.2 Place of the book in the Bible

Leviticus forms part of the Pentateuch in the Old Testament. It is one of the books that were written by Moses.

4.3.3 Background

The historical background of Leviticus 18 reveals a practice amongst Canaanites while they were still residing in Canaan, a land that God promised to the Israelites. As a result of the Canaanites’ trespassing of laws of sexual morality, as documented in Leviticus 18:6–23, God cast them away from Canaan and gave Canaan to the Israelites, who were warned not to commit similar sexual sins.

Spence-Jones (2004:276) puts it in this way: “The reason why the Canaanites were cast out before the Israelites was that they were defiled in all these things ... and the land was defiled by them. God visited the iniquity of these debased races, and the land itself vomited out her inhabitants on account of their abominations. The fate of the Canaanites was therefore a witness

to them of what would be their fate if they did like them. ‘Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways. ... You must not do any of these detestable things ... And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you’ (Lev. 18:24–28). Special penalties are appointed for particular sins further on. Here there are but two punishments denounced, one for individual sinners, and the national sin. The individual sinner is to be cut off from the nation by excommunication, for whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit them shall be cut off from among their people. The nation, if it does not thus purify itself by cutting off from itself the authors of these corruptions, is to perish like the Canaanites. The words vomited (ver. 25) and cut off (ver. 28) are in that tense of the Hebrew verb which is generally called by grammarians a preterite, but this tense does not necessarily imply a past time; the time referred to depends on the context. The previous verbs, ‘I cast out,’ ‘I do visit,’ being present in sense, the two verbs, ‘vomited out (her inhabitants),’ and ‘cut off (the nations that were before you),’ are present also.”

After this firm warning to Israelites about the practice of Canaanites and Egyptians, God in Chapter 19 stipulates what he expects from them. In Leviticus 19:1–2 the Word of God says: “And the lord spoke to Moses, saying, speak to all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.’”

4.3.4 Semantically important features

Lev 18:22 אָמַרְתִּיךְ לֹא תִשְׁכַּב בְּמִשְׁכַּב־אִשְׁוֹה תִּוְעַבְהָ הוּא:

אָמַרְתִּיךְ = noun, common, masculine, singular, absolute

אָמַרְתִּיךְ = male; son :

אָמַרְתִּיךְ = verb, qal, imperfect, second person, masculine, singular

אָמַרְתִּיךְ = lie down; make lie down or over

אָמַרְתִּיךְ = noun, common, masculine, plural, construct

אָמַרְתִּיךְ = bed; bier

אָמַרְתִּיךְ = noun, common, feminine, singular, absolute

□□□□□□□: = **woman; wife**

□□□□□□□□□□ = noun, common, feminine, singular, absolute

□□□□□□□□□□: = **detestable thing; idol**

Literal Translation: With male not thou wilt lie down beds of woman.

4.3.5 The structure of the chapter

The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part is the introduction from verses 1–5 where God the Father introduces himself to Moses and warns him about what God expects from them, namely being careful of not copying the lifestyle of Egyptians amongst whom they lived while they were still in bondage. God also expects them not to copy the lifestyle of Canaanites whom he is driving out of Canaan. The second part is from verses 6–23, where God lists all the unlawful sexual relations for the Israelites. The last part is from verses 24–30, where God gives the final warning and the end result of disobedience. He reminds Israelites of what He has done to the Canaanites who defiled themselves, and how the land responded as a result of their sinful behaviour. The land vomited them out. God didn't spare the Egyptians and Canaanites when they sinned, He punished them. He will also not spare Israelites when they sin, He will punish them but before He punishes them he teach them how they must behave. If they don't take heed of his special warning then He will vomit them as well.

We can deduce that God does not punish anyone before He teaches that particular person or the nation the truth. Individuals and nations are punished because they are ignorant and do not take heed of God's Word. This also applies to homosexuals. God revealed the truth to them as we read in verse 22: "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable."

4.3.6 Findings and challenges from Leviticus

Even though these Scripture readings are relevant concerning the condemnation of homosexuality, it is not strong enough to the proponents of homosexuality. They hold the view that like the ceremonial laws that were fulfilled by Christ Jesus in the New Testament, this same condemnation of homosexual behaviour no longer holds water today. They contend that with the new law of love that is written in the hearts of men, this condemnation no longer has a place in the hearts of believers. This view can't be true, because if it was true, the Apostle Paul and Jude would not have addressed it again in the New Testament. Vorster (2007:233) correctly points out that: "The traditional view sees the ban on homosexual behaviour in these holiness laws as an ethical prescription that is relevant for all times, which do not, like ceremonial laws of the Old Testament, find fulfilment in the New Testament."

In Leviticus 18:7 we read "Do not dishonour your father by having sexual relations with your mother. She is your mother; do not have relations with her." The question will be, is this law still applicable today, or is no longer necessary to keep it? Can we have sexual relations with our mothers as long as both of us agreed to do so as adults? If no, why then disobey Leviticus 18:22; 20: 13 and obey 18: 7? If Leviticus 18: 22 is no longer applicable to us, that means even 18: 7 is no longer applicable to us. As much as we cannot have sexual relations with our mothers, we can also not have sexual relations with people of same gender. In Leviticus 20:13 we read that those who practice homosexuality must be killed. However, based on the law of love in the New Testament, God no longer allows us to take life, but rather asks us to witness about His grace towards sinners. Homosexuality is a sin. It is a forgivable sin in New Testament, but it is a sin. In view of Botha (2005: 19 - 22); "The attitude towards homosexual practices, as reflected in the Old Testament, is certainly not one of approval or even toleration."

The challenge we have comes from Christians who want to compromise the truth of the Bible to accommodate homosexuals. Accepting homosexuals is not a sin at all, but promoting their behaviour or lifestyle using the Word of God is tampering with Biblical truth. Bahnsen (1978:21) observes that: "Modern Christians ethics fails to understand that our situation is structured by redemptive history and includes a clear directive from God. It fails to understand that love is not

without content of Form (principles – PTM) but is defined by God’s law. It fails to understand that the law is the pattern of sanctification and life for the believer – that by it he can pursue God’s glory and kingdom, achieve the good God intends form, and walk freely, loving, and spiritually.” The righteous man can declare, “Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long” (Psalm 119: 97). Righteous men won’t see the Law as a burden but as the way to thank God for what He has already done for them in Christ Jesus. In the same breath, we must say: “Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by sinful nature cannot please God” (Romans 8: 5 – 8). This explains why the debate about homosexuality will go on and on.

4.4. EXEGESIS OF ROMANS 1: 18–31

4.4.1 The place of the book in the Bible and its genre

Romans is part of the New Testament, the genre of Romans is Epistles.

4.4.2 Author of the book of Romans and the date written

Romans was written by Apostle Paul in AD 57 from Corinth with Roman citizens in mind (Romans 1: 7; cf. Fitzmyer 1992: 85). Surely, he wrote this letter while he was not in Rome (cf. Romans 1; 11 & 15: 23 – 33).

4.4.3 Background

Greek men were commonly bisexual. Not only was homosexual behaviour approved (some writers, like speakers in Plato’s *Symposium*, preferred it to heterosexual behaviour), but elements of the culture socialized boys in this direction. Men and women were segregated growing up, and

male bonds became close. Apparently due to a deficiency in the number of women (which many attribute to female infanticide), marriages were often arranged between thirty-year-old men and fourteen-year-old girls, whom the men saw as children. Men had access to only three forms of sexual release until such late marriages: slaves, prostitutes and other men. Introducing boys to homo-erotic pleasure was a favourite pass-time of Greek men in this period.

Wiersbe (1996) says that although many upper-class Romans were affected by Greek ideals, many other Romans, especially Roman philosophers, regarded homosexual practice as disgusting. Greco-Roman moralists sometimes opposed gender reversal as “against nature,” which would resemble the Jewish argument of God’s original purposes in creation (Gen 2:18). Although Jewish texts speak of Jewish adulterers and thieves, they nearly always treat homosexual behaviour as a Gentile practice. Socialization clearly affected one’s sexual development.

Paul did not choose this example of sin to be controversial with his readers. His Jewish and Roman Christian readers alike would have agreed with him that both idolatry and homosexual behaviour are sinful. This example is a preparation for his critique of sins less often denounced (Rom 1:28–32).

4.4.4 Outline of Romans 1

Paul opens his letter to the Roman church by talking about God’s anger with sin. The opening chapter may be thought of as a trial, where God is the judge and sinful humans are the accused.

- I. THE COURT RECORDER (1:1–17): Here Paul, author of Romans, provides his readers with some pre-trial introductory material.
 - A. **His credentials** (1:1, 5): Paul relates four facts about himself.
 1. *He is a servant of Jesus* (1:1a).
 2. *He is an apostle* (1:1b).
 3. *He has been set apart to preach the gospel* (1:1c).
 4. *He is a missionary to the Gentiles* (1:5).

- B. **His Christ** (1:2–4)
 - 1. *The Messiah was prophesied in the Old Testament* (1:2).
 - 2. *The Messiah is now proclaimed in the New Testament* (1:3–4).
 - a. With regard to his human nature (1:3) : He is a descendant of David.
 - b. With regard to his divine nature (1:4) : His resurrection proves his deity.
- C. **His congregation** (1:6–15): Paul writes this epistle to a local church assembly.
 - 1. *The identity of this church* (1:6–7): It is the congregation in Rome.
 - 2. *The intercession for this church* (1:8–10)
 - a. His praise of them (1:8): Paul praises them for their universally known faith.
 - b. His prayers for them (1:9–10): He prays for the church and asks God that he be allowed to visit them.
 - 3. *The interest in this church* (1:11–13)
 - a. Paul desires to see them (1:11–12).
 - b. Paul desires to serve them (1:13): He desires to sow seed among them.
 - 4. *The indebtedness to the church* (1:14–15): Paul feels an obligation to minister to them.
- D. **His confidence** (1:16–17): Paul expresses his full assurance in the power of the gospel to accomplish two things.
 - 1. *To bring about saving faith for sinners* (1:16): Through faith a sinner may be saved.
 - 2. *To bring about sanctifying faith for saints* (1:17): Through faith a righteous person may have life.
- II. **THE COURT RECORD** (1:18–32): Paul records the evidence presented at this trial.
 - A. **The general charge** (1:18–19): “God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who push the truth away from themselves. For the truth about God is known to them instinctively.”
 - B. **The specific charges** (1:20–32)
 - 1. *First indictment—inexcusable ignorance* (1:20): God has always revealed his existence and power to mankind.
 - 2. *Second indictment—ingratitude* (1:21): People are thankless, refusing to worship their Creator.
 - 3. *Third indictment—insolence* (1:22): Claiming themselves to be wise without God, they become fools instead.

4. *Fourth indictment—idolatry* (1:23): They exchange God’s glory for idols resembling mere people, birds, animals, and snakes.
5. *Fifth indictment—immorality* (1:24–27): They are guilty of lesbianism and homosexuality.
6. *Sixth indictment—incorrigibility* (1:28–32)
 - a. They embrace their wicked deeds (1:28–31).
 - b. They endorse their wicked deeds (1:32)

[From: Willmington, H. L.: *The Outline Bible*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1999, S. Ro 1:32]

4.4.4.1 *Deduction from the out line*

- ✓ Homosexuals know the truth about God and what He wants from them; He revealed the truth to them generally through nature and specifically through the Bible (1:19).
- ✓ The problem with homosexuals is that they excuse themselves through ignorance from the truth God revealed to them (1:20).
- ✓ Homosexuals don’t want to glorify God or live a life of thanksgiving with their lifestyle. It is all about how they feel and think, instead of looking at what God says in His word (1:21).
- ✓ Homosexuality is wisdom according to those who practice it, but foolishness according to the Word of God (1:22).
- ✓ Homosexuals don’t glorify God (1:23). Some will say they glorify God. But how can one glorify God while ignoring the truth revealed to you generally and specifically by God Himself? Why would you excuse yourself from the truth revealed to you through your own ignorance? Do homosexuals have the final say concerning the Word of God, or does the Word of God have the final say over them?
- ✓ The results of the above behaviour by homosexuals are the following:
 1. God gave homosexuals up. He didn’t allow them or approve of their homosexual practices; he let them follow their hearts (1:24).
 2. Homosexuals exchange the truth of God for a lie (1:25). The truth is marriage, and sexual relations are reserved only for heterosexuals in marriage (Genesis 2:18–25).

3. Homosexuality is a shameful lust, indecent behaviour and unnatural (1:26; 27). Homosexuals themselves denounced natural relationships while following their own hearts rather than God.
4. Homosexuals have the opportunity to return to the truth of God, but unfortunately most of them think that it is not worth it (1:28).
5. Homosexuality, like other sins, gives birth to more sin (1: 29–32).
6. Telling homosexuals that God punishes sin with death is just but a reminder, they know that (1:32. Cf. Also James 1:13–15).
7. Homosexuals don't practice homosexuality alone, they also approve of others who do it. That is why we have gay organisations to fight for the rights of gays and lesbians (1:32).

4.4.5 Word study of important concepts in the key verse

(1:25) “Change” is *metallassō* (μεταλλάσσω), “to exchange one thing for another.” Instead of the truth of God, humanity embraced a lie. “Creature” is *ktisis* (κτίσις) “the creation,” or “the created thing.” “Worshipped” is *sebazomai* (σεβάζομαι), “to honour religiously, to worship.” “Served” is *latreuō* (λατρεύω), “to render religious service or homage.” “More” is *para* (παρά), which means “alongside, beside.” Vincent says: “The preposition indicates *passing by* the Creator altogether, not merely *giving preference* to the creature. Hence, *rather than* (Rev.)” “Who” is *hoitines* (οἱ τίνες), referring back to those in verse 24 whom God gave up to their own passionate cravings. The word emphasizes character or nature. They were of such a nature or character as to have exchanged God’s truth for a lie. That is exactly what would be expected of persons so constituted. “Blessed” is *eulogētos* (εὐλογητός), made up of *legō* (λέγω), “to speak,” and *eu* (εὖ), “well” or “good,” thus, “to speak well or good” of a person, to eulogize him. Our word “eulogy” is derived from this Greek word.

Translation. *Who were of such a character that they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and rendered religious service to the creation rather than to the Creator who is to be eulogized forever. Amen.*

(1:26) “Affections” is *pathē ma* (□□□□□□), “an affection, a passion.” “Vile” is *atimia* (□□□□□□), “dishonour, ignominy, disgrace.” The Greek word for “honour,” *timē* (□□□□), comes from *tiō* (□□□), the verbal form, “to estimate, honour.” Thus to honour someone is to evaluate the worth of that person and to treat him with the consideration, respect, and love due his character and position. To dishonour a person is to either put an incorrect appraisal upon his worth and treat him accordingly, or, having properly evaluated his character, to refuse to treat him with the respect and deference which is his due. The passions controlling these of whom Paul is speaking caused them to put an incorrect estimate upon the sacredness, dignity, and purity of the physical body and thus to use it in a way which dishonoured it. Vincent’s note is helpful: “As distinguished from *epithumia* (□□□□□□□□) (lusts) in verse 24, *pathē* (□□□□) (passions), is the narrower and intense word. *Epithumia* (□□□□□□□□) is the larger word, including the whole world of active lusts and desires, while the meaning of *pathos* (□□□□□□) is passive, being the diseased condition out of which the lusts spring. *Epithumia* (□□□□□□□□) are *evil longings*; *pathē* (□□□□), *ungovernable affections*. Thus it appears that the divine punishment was the more severe, in that they were given over to a *condition*, and not merely to an evil desire.”

The word for “women” is not the word used as in John 4:9, *gunē* (□□□□), but *thē lus* (□□□□□□), “a female,” and the word for “men” in 1:27 is not *anthrō pos* (□□□□□□□□), or even *anēr* (□□□□), a male member of the human race, but *arsen* (□□□□□□), male as distinguished from a female. Vincent says that these terms are used “because only the distinction of sex is contemplated.” “Change” is *metallassō* (□□□□□□□□□□), “to exchange one thing for another.” “Use” here is *chrē sis* (□□□□□□□□), used of the sexual use of a woman. “Natural” is *phusis* (□□□□□□), “the nature of things, the force, laws, order of nature, as opposed to that which is monstrous, abnormal, perverse.” “Against nature” is *para phusin* (□□□□ □□□□□□), “that which is against nature’s laws.”

Translation. *Because of which God gave them over to dishonourable passions, for even their females exchanged their natural use for that which is against nature.*

(1:27) “Burned” is *ekkaiō* (□□□□□□□□), “to burn out.” Vincent comments. “The terms are terrible in their intensity. Literally, ‘burned out.’ The preposition indicates the *rage* of lust.” Robertson defines, “to inflame with lust.” The word *ek* (□□) prefixed to the verb, intensifies its meaning. Their lust was satiated. It was an all-out endeavour to satisfy their totally-depraved

natures. “Lust” here is not the usual word used, *epithumia* (ἐπιθυμία), “a passionate craving,” but *orexis* (ὄρεξις), “eager desire, lust, appetite.” “Working” is *katergazomai* (κατεργάζομαι), “to perform, accomplish, achieve, to do that from which something results, to carry to its ultimate conclusion.” “Unseemly” is *aschē mosunē* (ἀσχη μωσυνή), “want of form, disfigurement, deformed, one’s nakedness, shame.” The word refers here to that which is unseemly in that it is immodest, shameful. “Recompense” is *antimisthian* (ἀντιμισθίαν) “a reward given in compensation, requital, recompense.” The word here refers to that natural result of their sin which pays them back for what they have done, as a person says who contemplates doing something wrong, “I suppose I shall pay for this.” “Was meet” is *edei* (ἐδει), “a necessity in the nature of the case.” The evil consequences were necessary as ordained by divine law. When one violates the laws of nature, one must pay the price. “Error” is *planē* (πλάνη), “a wandering, is roving,” thus, “a deviation.”

Translation. *And likewise also the males, having put aside the natural use of the females, burned themselves out in their lustful appetite toward one another, males with males carrying to its ultimate conclusion that which is shameful, receiving in themselves that retribution which was a necessity in the nature of the case because of their deviation from the norm.*

4.4.5.1 Deduction from word study

- ✓ “Worshipped” is *sebazomai* (σεβάζομαι), “to honour religiously, to worship.” “Served” is *latreuō* (λατρεύω), “to render religious service or homage.” “More” is *para* (παρά), which means “alongside, beside.” Vincent says: “The preposition indicates *passing by* the Creator altogether, not merely *giving preference* to the creature”. That explains why homosexuals are also part of the church; they worship creation via God the Creator. God does not want to be worshipped with anything else he created, but homosexuals do so, they worship the Creator alongside with creation.
- ✓ Vincent’s note is helpful; “As distinguished from *epithumia* (ἐπιθυμία) (lusts) in verse 24, *pathē* (πάθη) (passions), is the narrower and intense word. *Epithumia* (ἐπιθυμία) is the larger word, including the whole world of active lusts and desires, while the meaning of *pathos* (πάθος) is passive, being the diseased condition

out of which the lusts spring. *Epithumia* (□□□□□□□□) are *evil longings*; *pathē* (□□□□), *ungovernable affections*. Thus it appears that the divine punishment was the more severe, in that they were given over to a *condition*, and not merely to an evil desire.” When homosexuals asked about the sexual preference, they say it is the condition that they were born with. According to this study it is a condition that they are given over to because of their sinful behaviour out of ignorance.

- ✓ “Recompense” is *antimisthian* (□□□□□□□□□□) “a reward given in compensation, requital, recompense.” The word here refers to that natural result of their sin which pays them back for what they have done, as a person says who contemplates doing something wrong, “I suppose I shall pay for this. Homosexuality is compensation of the sin done.
- ✓ The word for “women” is not the word used as in John 4:9, *gunē* (□□□□), but *thē lus* (□□□□□□), “a female,” and the word for “men” in 1:27 is not *anthrō pos* (□□□□□□□□□□), or even *anēr* (□□□□), a male member of the human race, but *arsen* (□□□□□□), male as distinguished from a female. Vincent says that these terms are used “because only the distinction of sex is contemplated.” God does not approve sexual relationship between two people of the same gender.

4.4.6 The revelation historical place and meaning of the passage

Theme	Scripture reference	Relevance and place in revelation history
H O M O S E X U A L I	Romans 1:26-27: Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lust. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.	<p>Relevance: It is clear here that God does not approve of homosexual relationships. Homosexual relationships are unnatural, shameful and indecent. It is driven by lust, i.e. What men want, not what God wants. Homosexual relationships are perversion.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: In this passage it is clear that God is the ultimate judge and He punishes sin. Even in this situation God is still in control, because he is the One who gave them up.</p>

T Y		
I N T H E	<p>1 Corinthians 6:9-11: Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our Lord.</p>	<p>Relevance: Even though this passage reveals that wicked people will not inherit the kingdom of God, it shed light on homosexuality in the sense that homosexuals are in the list of evildoers who cannot inherit the kingdom of God.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: God is revealed here as the Judge who does not tolerate sin. He punishes sin. It is also evident here that God is gracious and merciful Father. Because of His grace some homosexuals received grace and changed their behavior. They were washed, sanctified and justified.</p>
C H U R C H	<p>Jude 7: In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.</p>	<p>Relevance: Jude here refers to sexual immorality and pervasion of Sodom and Gomorrah. Pervasion in this context stands for doing something abnormal or unnatural. In view of the background of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 we can conclude that perversion here refers to homosexual relations, which led God to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: God is revealed here as the great Judge, who hates sin and punishes it. He did not tolerate Sodom and Gomorrah's sexual immorality and homosexuality; therefore He cannot tolerate homosexuality in His church and our country today.</p>
T O D A Y	<p>Ephesians 5:31-33: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also</p>	<p>Relevance: In this passage we learn about the ideal marriage relationship. That means that proper sexual relation is between married man and woman. Homosexual relationship is not approved at all in view of this passage. Marriage between man and woman symbolizes the</p>

	<p>must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.</p>	<p>marriage that is going to take place between Christ and His church.</p> <p>Place in revelation history: God is the founder of heterosexual relationships and it is the one and only marriage relationship that He loves and approves of. In view of this, homosexual relationships have no space before the eyes of God.</p>
<p>Conclusion: The revelation historical significance of our Scriptural reference</p> <p>The above scriptures clearly reveal that homosexuality is sin before God. It is also relevant that God's wrath is revealed to those who practice homosexuality. It is also clear that homosexual behaviour is unnatural and flow from men's perversion. The ideal relationship that God approves of is a heterosexual marriage. In all these, our Father is a gracious and merciful Father. Some homosexuals heard the Gospel and received it, and they were pardoned and changed. God is full of forgiveness (John 3: 17).</p>		

4.4.6.1 *New Testament teaching about homosexuality*

In Romans 1: 26-27 it is clear that God does not approve of homosexual relationships. It is also clear in this passage that homosexual relationships are regarded as unnatural, shameful and indecent. The apostle Paul also concluded that this kind of relationship grew out of perversion. Botha (2005:137) is correct when he says that the structure of Romans 1:23-32 has been built around the verb (*metellaxan*) 'to exchange' on the part of man and woman and the verb (*paredoken*) 'to give over/abandon' on the part of God. The phrase 'exchange natural use for what is against nature' lies at the core of the argument in Romans 1:26-27. In this passage, it is also revealed that God is the ultimate judge who punishes homosexual sin severely. Due to the fact that God does not take pleasure on people who exchange natural relationships for unnatural ones, He gave them up or abandoned them. Here it is clear that same sex relationships are self-destructive and those who practice it are destroying themselves, and they will also be punished now and in the second coming of Christ.

1 Corinthians 6: 9-11 explicitly reveals to us that wicked people, including homosexuals will not inherit the kingdom of God. It is clear that in the second coming of our Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ God will judge evildoers and homosexual. God does not tolerate sin, He punishes it. However, in this passage God is revealed as a gracious God and merciful Father as well. We learn here that Christ's work on the Cross has the power to wash our sins away, including homosexual sin. It is relevant here that many of us were as lost in sin as homosexuals are, but due to God's grace we are washed, not only washed, but also sanctified, not only sanctified, and also justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our Lord. In view of Paul's usage of words in this passage, Botha (2005: 179) says: "A translation of *'arsenoikoites* renders, the ones (male) who lie/sleep with men. As in the case with Romans 1: 26-27 Paul's choice of words in 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10 does not imply only *pederasty* but in general condemnation of male same-sex relation." Botha is correct when he says *'arsenoikoites* refers to same sex intercourse and this is strengthened by its pairing with *malakos*". What Paul finds to be wrong in this case of sexual intercourse is the fact that those who are participating in it are of the same sex/gender.

As Paul did in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, in 1 Timothy 1:9-10 the first word *pornois* refers to male fornicators and the second word *'arsenoikoitais* to male same-sex relations. Botha (2005:193) says that these two words describe two ways of breaking the seventh commandment. *'Arsenoikoitais* has the meaning of a male having intercourse with a male. This argument in Timothy is based on Leviticus 18:22 and 20: 13. Placing the prohibition of same-sex intercourse under the rubric of the seventh commandment against adultery, points to the fact that Christianity in the first century rejected same-sex intercourse because the commandment concerned any sexual intercourse outside of marriage, marriage being a monogamous union between a man and a woman, as *proveia* (sexual immorality). Therefore, 1 Corinthians 6: 9-11 and 1 Timothy 1: 9-10 collectively indicates that the term *'arsenokoitai* has inter-textual connection with Levitical prohibitions on same-sex intercourse and with the exclusive endorsement of monogamous heterosexual marriage based on the creation intention and design according to Genesis 1-2 (Botha, 2005:193). In conclusion Botha says: "*Arsenokoitai* is best interpreted as homosexuals, based on the actual deed of the homosexual sexual act".

Jude 7 reads as follows: “In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire”. Brash (1995: 40-41) says: “The passage in Jude uses Sodom – as did all the Major Prophets and Jesus – as an illustration of the destruction that inevitably follows sinfulness.” Some Scholars say that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was based on a lack of hospitality; and that may be true. But it is also relevant that the main point for Sodom and Gomorrah’s destruction is based on homosexual sin. When the men of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 refuse to have sexual relations with the daughters of Lot in favor of having sexual relations with the men who visited Lot, it clearly shows that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was now overboard. God saw it fit that Sodom and Gomorrah could now be destroyed. In conclusion, amongst other sins that Sodom and Gomorrah committed, homosexual sin showed the maturity of sin of Sodom and Gomorrah. Clearly enough, in view of the background of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 we can conclude that perversion here refers to homosexual relations that led God to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. In the same manner in this verse, we learn that God is a great judge, who hates sin and punishes sin, including homosexual sin. God did not tolerate Sodom and Gomorrah’s sexual immorality and homosexuality, and therefore even today He cannot tolerate homosexuality in His church.

Van Rensburg (2005:1) says that there is no ambiguity in the Bible regarding homosexual relationships. In Ephesians, instead of being taught what God disapproves of, we are given what He approves of in the relationship. In this we clearly learn about the ideal marriage relationship. That means that a proper sexual relationship is between married man and woman. Homosexual relationships are not approved at all in view of this passage. In Van Rensburg (2005: 1)’s words: “According to the Bible God created sexuality for the permanent, one-on-one trust relationship between man and woman. A sexual relationship between persons of the same sex is, according to the Bible, not God’s will. There is to my mind no ambiguity on this topic in both the Old and New Testament: Homosexual relationships are against the will of God, and people who continue with such practices are engaging in a very serious sin.” Van Rensburg (2005:60) further attests that: “The whole Bible is clear about the fact that sexuality is not a case of personal preference. In the first

place it is limited to the marriage as permanent trust relationship between two persons, and in the second place marriages are limited to persons of opposite sexes". We can agree here that Van Rensburg's view clearly supports how marriage should be according to Ephesians. It is also relevant in this passage that God is the founder of the heterosexual relationship, and it is the one and only kind of marriage that He loves and approves of. In view of this passage, homosexual relationships have no space before the eyes of God.

We have now viewed the Biblical views about homosexuality. Let's now study the possible roots of homosexuality. The following are the possible roots: early childhood development, family background, temperament and interests, peer pressure and sexual abuse. Davies et al. (1993: 43) with right says "we don't look at the roots of homosexual development to dredge up dirt from our childhood or lay blame on our parents. We do it because understanding homosexual development points the way to true resolution." We can look back and see what we are responsible for and what we are not. When we bring to light our own wrong actions and attitudes, we can confess our sin and receive God's forgiveness. Where we were victims of circumstances and the hurtful actions of other people, we can gain understanding and learn to forgive. I do not believe that homosexuality is primarily inborn. Believers should base their beliefs on the Bible's teaching about homosexuality, backed up by the lack of conclusive scientific proof for such a theory. But even if homosexual tendencies were an inherited trait, we would not interpret that as an endorsement of gay or lesbian involvement. Davies et al. (1993:44) claim: "Many studies have indicated that tendencies towards alcoholism or depression are inherited. But we do not embrace alcoholism and depression as 'acceptable alternative' life style. Rather, we try to help people who suffer from these tendencies find healing and recovery." God's grace and mercy is enough even for a homosexual. We can learn this from John 3:16.

4.4.7 The facts of salvation in the passage and the exhortations based upon it

- God the Father taught the truth to homosexuals in His general (i.e. nature) and specific (i.e. the Bible) revelation. The Holy Spirit convinces them of this truth in their heart but they reject it and follow their futile mind and hearts.

- God hates and punishes sin. He gave them up to fulfill their sinful lustful desire.
- God is gracious and merciful, he gave men enough time to return to the true knowledge of God, but men chose to continue in ignorance.
- God is the perfect judge; he warned beforehand what the end results of men's perversions will be.

We can deduce that men do not have any excuses that they don't know the truth because God revealed it to them, but men chose to reject it. God hates and punishes sin. Since he is full of grace and mercy he gave men time to repent and warned men about coming judgment; but men in their own ignorance and perversion rejected the truth of God, therefore we cannot hold God responsible for homosexual behaviour and action. God has done His part; He taught them, warned them of the coming judgment and gave them time to return to the truth, but they ignored the truth. Therefore we can learn here that God is just, He teaches first, gives time to repent and then if you don't repent, the end result is punishment.

4.4.8 The communication goal of the Passage

God teaches us that homosexuals know the truth about God, but they reject Him out of perversion and ignorance. God also teaches us that homosexuality is an unnatural and shameful lust. God punishes them by giving them up to the sinful desires of their hearts and depraved mind.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The above scriptures clearly reveal that homosexuality is a sin before God. It is also relevant that God's wrath is revealed to those who practice homosexuality. It is also clear that homosexual behaviour is unnatural and flows from men's perversions. The ideal relationship that God approves of is a heterosexual marriage. Homosexual relationships distort the truth about the marriage plan that God founded in the creation order when He created male and female to live together and reproduce. In a homosexual relationship, there is no reproduction and it is based on human sinful nature not God's will.

God warns Israel to avoid the family relations common to the Egyptians and Canaanites (18:1–30). In Canaan particularly, the fertility cult associated with the worship of pagan deities meant that temple priests and priestesses engaged in immoral relationships with the worshipers. Israel had to have nothing to do with this immorality (Elwell, 1996). Once God briefly mentions the unacceptable lifestyle of the families of Canaan, he provides Israel with guidelines for acceptable behaviour. By using the formula of authority, “I am the LORD” (v. 6), God declares that no sexual relations must take place between close relatives within a family (vv. 7–17).

In Leviticus 18: 22 we read: “Thou shalt not lie with mankind.” The perversions mentioned here and in verse 23 can not produce offspring, and thus they defeat the purpose for which mankind was given such responsibility and capability. This, therefore, is rebellion both against God and against a God-ordered society (Pfeiffer, 1962)

CHAPTER FIVE

5 AN EVALUATION OF THE VENDA CULTURAL CUSTOMS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Very little literature deals with the issue of homosexuality in Venda culture specifically, and therefore few literature sources could be consulted regarding homosexuality in the Venda culture and South Africa. Consequently, empirical research in qualitative and quantitative form was conducted in Venda in order to validate the findings. Quantitative research was conducted amongst ordinary citizens of all age groups, church leaders from different churches, principals and teachers from primary level and secondary level. Qualitative research was conducted amongst political leaders from different political parties, traditional leaders from different (villages) tribal authority and traditional healers. Different people from different backgrounds were consulted to give their views concerning homosexuality. We can clearly deduce from the results the Venda cultural customs concerning this controversial issue of homosexuality.

5.2 FINDINGS IN VENDA CONCERNING HOMOSEXUALITY

5.2.1 Ethical issues revealed by ordinary citizens

The majority of ordinary citizens are aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa and know that there are homosexual people in South Africa, but the majority of them contend that there are no homosexuals in Venda. The greater percentage of ordinary citizens revealed the following attitude towards homosexuals: 1. If they find out that one of their family members is homosexual, they won't speak about it. 2. They don't have tolerance towards homosexuals. 3. They won't accept homosexuals in their houses or village. 4. They won't pay lobola (Bride price) in case a homosexual person wants to marry. 5. They consider homosexuality as dangerous to the community. 6. They also consider homosexuality as taboo. They are not at all in favour of homosexual relationships because in their view homosexuality is new thing in Venda and it is against Venda customs, values and norms. They say Venda people don't practice

homosexuality, and they believe that a homosexual person can change to become heterosexual as he/she was created by God to be so.

5.2.2 Ethical issues revealed by church leaders

The majority of church leaders are aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa. The greater percentage of them report that they don't have any homosexual member in their churches and they don't know of any homosexual practices in Venda. The majority of church leaders preach against homosexuality. They also revealed that the churches are not tolerant towards homosexuality. They reveal this lack of tolerance towards homosexuals by asserting that if a homosexual person joins the church, they won't treat him or her as Christian. Without any reservation the greater percentage of church leaders say they won't ordain a homosexual priest or marry homosexual partners. They consider homosexuality as a curse. They hold that their denouncement of homosexuality is not based only on the Venda morals as such, but they stem from the Word of God. The majority of church leaders believe that there is hope for homosexuals if they seek help. They can change their homosexuality to be heterosexual.

5.2.3 Ethical issues revealed by principals and teachers

The majority of principals and teachers know that homosexuality is legal in South Africa, but they don't have any homosexual learners in their schools and they also don't know of any homosexuals and any homosexual practices in Venda. The greater percentage of them considers homosexuality a problem and they believe that teachers and learners don't have to tolerate homosexuals. However, the majority of them say that they will register a homosexual learner in their schools and also accept a homosexual co-worker in their midst. The majority of them believe that if they find a learner with homosexual tendencies they would try to change him/her. They also consider homosexuality as dangerous to learners and as a taboo. The greater percentage of them is not in favour of homosexual relationships. The majority of them believe that Life Science and Life Orientation as a subject in school teach enough about homosexuality

and that this helps learners to make good sexual choices. They hold that if a homosexual person finds help they can change from homosexual to being heterosexual.

5.2.4 Christian ethical evaluation of the findings concerning homosexuality in the Venda culture gathered from quantitative research conducted amongst ordinary citizens, church leaders, principals and teachers

The findings clearly reveal that the government of South Africa did not do enough research or have enough public hearings concerning legalisation of homosexual civil union. Homosexual civil union without a doubt is against Venda traditional customs. The majority of Venda people believe that there are no homosexuals in Venda. This view gave birth to these ethical issues: 1. Venda people don't want to speak about homosexuality. 2. No tolerance towards homosexuals. 3. No marriage rights to homosexuals, no ordination of homosexual priests and no citizenship for homosexuals in the village. 4. Homosexuality is seen as dangerous, a curse and taboo. 5. Homosexuality is seen as a new thing in Venda. 6. Homosexuals can change to be heterosexuals. Below we will give Biblical evaluation of these ethical issues.

5.2.4.1 *Venda people don't want to speak about homosexuality*

We need to understand that when the government legalised homosexual practice in South Africa, they were giving rights to a minority of people at the expense of the majority. The legalisation of homosexuality goes against Venda morals that teach that marriage must be between male and female partners. Homosexuals' relationships frustrate and humiliate Venda people, and that is why they react with silence about it, even if they find out that one of their family members is homosexual. Is keeping quiet a solution? In Psalm 137:1–4 we read “By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the poplars we hung our harps, for there our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, ‘Sing us one of the songs of Zion!’ How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land!”

The majority of Venda people experience South Africa with regard to moral issues as a modern oppressive Babylon, as an unjust, pagan and secular state that approves legislation that is against

be changed. He claims that five decades of psychiatric evidence demonstrates that homosexuality is immutable”. According to Burr, scientific research has clearly shown that homosexuality cannot be changed. Myers states boldly that efforts to change one’s sexual orientation usually fail. De Bruyn (1998: 190) gives us the following information from Rothuizen: “Rothuizen (1972: 21) declares that Paul condemned homosexuality in Romans 1 because he didn’t know better. According to him, Paul thought homosexuality was something that could be changed or cured, and that a homosexual person could convert to a normal life. Today we know better (Rothuizen claims). Any psychologist would be able to tell Paul that his view of things is wrong. Some aspects of homosexuality can be changed or cured, but in essence it cannot be changed. Had Paul know what is known today, he would not have written something like that.” De Bruyn (1998: 191) challenges Rothuizen by saying: “Rothuizen’s view undermines the authority of Scripture, because it is actually nothing else than a disregard for the inspiration of the Scripture by the Holy Spirit. In a typical humanistic way, man is used as a point of reference. Unregenerate man at that, who practices homosexuality in defiance of the will of God, is made to make the Bible conform to man.”

The vast majority of Venda people believe that homosexuals can change. This view is also supported by Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians (6: 9 – 11), which says: “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexual immoral nor idolaters no adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor swindlers will inherit the Kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” According to Paul, homosexuals were changed, and he therefore concludes that a homosexual can become straight. In Luke (1: 37) we learn that there is nothing impossible with God. God’s amazing grace changed the worse sinner of them all, Paul, to prove that he can bring change to anyone who seek him (cf. 1 Timothy 1:12–17). Contrary to the claim made by Rothuizen that Paul did not know better, Paul says that he himself used to be a sinner and he received grace. That is why he is also pointing out other sinners, including homosexuals, who can receive change by washing away their sins, sanctification and justification in the name of Jesus Christ. Homosexuals can change; change can mean to become heterosexual or to be in celibacy.

5.2.5 Christian ethical evaluation of the findings concerning homosexuality in Venda culture gathered from qualitative research conducted amongst politicians, traditional leaders and traditional healers

The findings clearly reveal that political leaders differ in terms of the constitutional rights of homosexuals. Some believe that homosexuality is just a right that someone must have, but some hold that homosexuality is not a right to be given to someone since it is against morals, customs and values of black people. Some claim that since there are more challenges that drive people to be homosexuals, we must accept this new Bill. They claim that by doing so we will be embracing democracy. Politicians contend that traditional leaders are bound by the constitution and they must treat homosexuals as the constitution spells out. They must not discriminate against them, and they must hold on to their Venda customs, norms and values. Some politicians hold that traditional leaders must put homosexuals in their tribal authority structures. Contrary to that, some believe that as Africans, we must hold on to our traditions. Our tradition teaches us that a man and a man or a woman and a woman cannot marry one another. In the case of teachers, politicians clearly pointed out that teachers are governed by the South African Schools Act; therefore they must do what the department expects from them. They hold that the task of a teacher at school is to teach and nothing more. In case of how churches must handle homosexuals, some politicians say churches must acknowledge that South Africa is a secular state, therefore all religions are equal. Some hold that the church has the Bible and doctrinal books; therefore they must follow their own doctrine concerning the homosexual issue. Concerning the views of President Robert Mugabe, Yoweri Museveni and Sam Nujoma concerning homosexuality; some politicians' say that the declaration of Human Rights binds them, therefore these three Presidents must accept that homosexuals have rights. Some have an opinion that these three presidents were just fighting for African culture, norms and values that are endangered by homosexuality.

Traditional leaders and traditional healers have different views compared to politicians. Traditional leaders say that homosexual civil union was passed by government without proper consultation. Traditional leaders and healers hold that homosexuality is against Venda cultural norms and values. They also believe that it is against God's creational order. Both traditional leaders and healers hold that historically speaking, homosexuality was never practiced in Venda.

Both contend that homosexuality is taboo because ancestors do not approve it and it is against the Venda culture. Traditional leaders hold that they won't allow homosexuals to stay in their village and both traditional leaders and traditional healers claim that they won't marry homosexuals or allow them to marry in their village. If homosexuals want to go to initiation school; traditional leaders hold that he or she will be insulting Venda cultural norms. Traditional healers revealed that only a female traditional healer can marry a female partner for the sake of domestic work in the house. As for sexual relations, the woman married to the female traditional healer will be given to the healer's brother or any male of her choice for procreation and entertainment. However, the children born from this marriage are considered to be the female traditional healer's children.

Ethical issues deduced from this survey: 1. Homosexuals have rights and we are living in democratic country. 2. Traditional leaders are bound by the constitution. Teachers are bound by South African Schools Act. 3. South Africa is a secular state and all religions are equal. 4. Homosexuality is un-African. 5. Homosexuality is against Venda cultural norms and values and is against God's creation order. Below we will give Biblical evaluation of these ethical issues.

5.2.5.1 Homosexuals have rights and we are living in a democratic country

The question before us is not whether homosexuality is right, but whether people have a right to pursue homosexual relations. Christians are convinced that Biblically, homosexuality is a sin and unacceptable according to Venda customs. In recognising that homosexuality is as sin and unacceptable according to Venda customs, both the Christians and the Venda people must go on to ask whether it is a civil right. Bahnsen (1978: 101 & 102) holds that to answer the issue of civil rights, one has to distinguish between different senses of "civil rights". In Bahnsen's words; "To maintain that homosexuality is a civil right might mean one of three things: (1) people have a right to pursue homosexual relationship, and the state ought to refrain from bringing sanctions against that pursuit (i.e., homosexuality is a freedom right), or (2) people have a right to receive homosexual favours, and others have the duty to provide them (i.e., homosexuality is a benefit right), or (3) people have a right to be granted employment, housing, etc., without discrimination

against homosexuality, and others have a duty not to regard adversely sexual preference in such situations (i.e., homosexuality is a non-discrimination).”

Homosexuality can be a right as the South African government passed it, but it cannot be a beneficial right and it is also not practical that it can be non-discriminatory right. By asserting that homosexuals have rights and they must not be discriminated against based on their sexual orientation, would be at the cost of Christians and others who have a right to shun contact with moral perversion. If someone feels that Christians are wrong by not ordaining homosexual priests and they must be compelled by the Constitutional Court to refrain from discrimination, that person will be imposing his own moral principle or conviction onto Christians. Since South Africa is a secular state, we can say homosexuals have freedom rights, limited to non-discriminatory rights and non-beneficiary rights.

Democracy means rule by the people. Concerning the issue of homosexuality, democracy was not followed. The majority of South Africans believe that homosexuality is an illegal and unacceptable practice. In this case, the voices of masses were not heard, but the voice of the Law had the final say. “In 2006 the Constitutional Court instructed Parliament to promulgate a new marriage law where marriage is defined in such a way that it can include a homosexual marriage” (Vorster 2007: 227). The parliament was instructed not to deliberate on the issue. Therefore we can see that sometimes democracy can be under the jurisdiction of the constitutional dictatorship. As Christians, our democracy must be limited by Theocracy; i.e. society ruled by God (cf. Vorster 2004: 213 – 219). In Psalm 24: 1 we read: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.” In Matthew 28: 18 we read: “Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me”. Based on the above given Scriptures, whatever decision we take must bring glory to the one who owns the universe and who possesses all authority. In 1 Corinthians 10: 31, we read: “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” Article XXXVI of the Belgic confession says: “... the Magistrate (Civil government) is not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also to protect the sacred ministry, that the kingdom of Christ may thus be promoted (Anon, 1986: 13).” Protecting and promoting the sacred ministry also means taking decisions that do not contradict the Word of God.

5.2.5.2 Traditional leaders are bound by the constitution and teachers are bound by the South African Schools Act

We cannot deny the fact that traditional leaders are bound by the Constitution of South Africa. Does that mean that traditional leaders have to give up all the authority vested in them by villagers to obey the constitution? We can say to a certain extent yes, but on the other hand they are responsible to lead villagers to make good moral decisions either guided by their religious belief or the Venda customs. In the case of homosexuality, the Venda customs, norms and values do not allow homosexual relationships, and therefore with respect to freedom and equality of religion, traditional leaders can also practice what they believe. The South African government was preaching about African Renaissance as a part of an African moral renewal, saying that black South Africans must go back to their roots (cf. Vorster 2004: 193). How can one go to his/her roots while the government legalises something that Africans consider taboo. This is a contradiction from the government. We must also consider that traditional leaders believe that they are born leaders; there is no democratic election when it comes to traditional leaders. Their leadership style is influenced by traditional beliefs. We can only soften the hearts of traditional leaders to allow homosexuals to stay or marry in their villages challenging them on ethical grounds to apply the law of loving your neighbour as yourself i.e.; ubuntu. Ubuntu implies a basic respect for humanity as a whole. They must learn to hate the behaviour but love the person. Biblically speaking, traditional leaders must show love to everyone, including homosexuals. The law of love in Matthew (22: 37 – 40) binds them. “Civil authority (tribal authority – PTM) should be first of all obedient to God because they represent God’s tribunal on earth, and accountable to the people in their exercise of power. It is the task of the civil authority (tribal authority – PTM) to maintain law and order because the sin of human nature creates the need for civil order. In his commentary on Jeremiah 30: 9 Calvin says: it would, indeed, be better for us to be wild beast, and to wander in forest, than to live without government and laws; for we know how furious the passions of man are. In the maintenance of morality the king (chief – PTM) should be an example to the people because: it is especially notorious, that the anger of God is provoked against the whole body of people, in the person of the king” (Vorster 2004: 32).

Politicians that claim that homosexuals must be put in a tribal structure is pushing homosexual rights too far because traditionally and biblically homosexuality is unacceptable. He is giving homosexuals beneficiary rights. As much as the constitution gives the homosexuals rights, traditional leaders must know that they have the right to resistance; when any authority resists the authority of God as in the case of homosexuality, it should be disobeyed.

Teachers for sure must be bound by the South African Schools Act, but we must not forget that teachers are parents too. Limiting teachers to the South African Schools Act will also bring disaster to our learners. Teachers have a responsibility towards the government, children and School Governing Body. Schools in Urban Areas cannot run in the same way as the schools in rural areas. In rural areas African customs, values and norms are upheld, and therefore teachers must be given the opportunity to teach learners in view of their cultural belief system. If the Venda morals teach that homosexuality is unacceptable, we must not hold teachers responsible for teaching that homosexuality is unacceptable, that is what the Venda customs, norms and values teach. Biblical speaking, teachers who are parents of all learners in the school must not exasperate learners but they must bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord (cf. Ephesians 6: 1 – 4; Colossians 3: 21). Training and instruction of the Lord will also mean saying without wavering that the Bible says that homosexuality is unnatural and sexually perverse.

5.2.5.3 South Africa is a secular state and all religions are equal

Mulaudzi (2009: Oral interview with the author), when asked how the churches must handle the issue of homosexuality, quickly answered that South Africa is a secular state and therefore the church has to acknowledge and accept homosexuals in their congregations as part of community. Yes, homosexuals must be accepted in the church and, yes, South Africa is a secular state. The problem with the emphasis on South Africa as a secular state is: Does that mean secular states don't have morals? Mulaudzi also points out that our country promotes freedom and equality of religion. Even though Christians will argue that the moral standard must stem from the Bible, in the case of homosexuality, no religion in South Africa promotes homosexual relationships. Furthermore, all South African tribes denounce homosexuality. As a nation we must have a

source from which we can draw our principles and morals. It is fitting to ask from where the South African Constitutional Court and government draw their principles and morals. The results of the empirical research clearly show that according to the majority of ordinary citizens' homosexuality is a taboo. If it is taboo in our African cultures, and it is called unnatural and perverse by the Bible, and if it is condemned by Muslims, African Traditional religion, Christians, etc. homosexuality was legalised to cover which culture or religion?

In view of homosexuality in the church and South Africa as a secular state that promotes freedom and equality of religion, the state has to let religious groups enjoy their freedom; therefore they must leave religious institutions to make their own laws based on their own religious convictions and doctrines. The state has to acknowledge that homosexuality is not a religion; therefore if a homosexual person is ready to join the church, he/she must be ready to follow the teaching of the Word of God as it is spelled out by the Bible. When an alcoholic person joins the church, that alcoholic person who decided to join the church is obliged to follow the teaching of the church. The church will not change her view just to make the alcoholic person feel at ease. Homosexuals don't have beneficiary rights, which means wherever they go things have to change to suit them. To the contrary, homosexuals like any sinner who has to acknowledge that he/she lives in a secular state where the judiciary has power over the religions and African belief system. However, this does not mean that religions and African beliefs no longer exist. Homosexuality is considered normal in the legal world, but in most religions and the African belief system it is unacceptable. Rambau (2009: Oral interview with the author) clearly asserted that we are living in a time of the constitutional or jurisdictional dictatorship. If things are okay in the legal world, therefore it must be okay to everyone. Rambau denounces this kind of dictatorship.

5.2.5.4 *Homosexuality is un-African*

Famous African Presidents that aired their view against homosexuality publicly are President Robert Mugabe, Yoweri Museveni and Sam Nujoma. President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe believes that homosexuals should not have rights; according to him they are sexual perverts who

are lower than pigs and dogs. In the same note, Archbishop Peter Akinola believes that homosexuals are lower than beasts (Macaulay 2006: 159). Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda, believes that all homosexuals should be arrested (cf. Ward 2006: 134); whereas Sam Nujoma, the former President of Namibia believes that homosexual relationships is un-African, it is a borrowed culture from the West. In support of Sam Nujoma, most bishops in Kenya believe that homosexuality is western.

In Uganda the objection that is often immediately raised is the claim that homosexuality is totally incompatible with African values and morality. It is fundamentally un-African, contradicts the structure of the African extended family and violates the sanctity of gender roles, on which the stability of African communities rests (Mukasa 2006: 169).

In Nigeria, the prohibition of homosexuality is not only confined to legislation but it is also strongly affirmed within the culture. As far as Nigeria is concerned, homosexuality is an abuse of traditional values. Nigerian tradition and culture is less likely to accept gays and lesbians; homosexuality is seen as a condition that brings shame to the community (Macaulay 2006: 154 & 155). In the current constitution of Kenya sodomy is a crime that is liable to imprisonment for 14 years with or without corporal punishment (Mombo 2006: 142). 90 percent of ordinary citizens in Venda hold that homosexuality is taboo, whereas 91 percent of them believe that it is against Venda culture. All findings and attitudes point out that homosexuality is seen as unacceptable by the vast majority of Africans.

However, from an ethical perspective, we must stop stigmatising homosexuals by calling them lower than beasts and pointing fingers to the western culture whenever we are confronted by an unusual problem. Mombo (2006: 142) correctly says: "Homosexuality is not western or African. It is a human issue." The fall of man affected both western and Africans, which teaches us that if witchcraft is more in Africa, it is still not something African, therefore, if homosexuality is more prevalent in the Western culture that does not make it western. It is indeed a human issue. The Word of God in Romans 3: 23 says "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." All is all, Africans and Westerners have sinned. From this starting point, we can say both African

homosexuals and western homosexuals can be justified and freed by Christ Jesus through the redemption He brought through faith (cf. Romans 3: 22 & 24).

Calling people beasts creates hatred and homophobia (cf. 5.2.4.2), because by saying so, you are claiming that homosexuals don't deserve to stay with people. Biblically, homosexuality is a sin, therefore; homosexuals must be treated the way other sinners are treated in our midst. In Matthew 9: 12 & 13 Jesus Christ answered the Pharisees who were accusing him of eating with tax collectors and sinners in this way, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." We must have a Christ-like attitude when dealing with homosexuals. We must have compassion towards them, just like a sheep without a shepherd. They are already troubled by their status; therefore let's call them to freedom in Christ Jesus. Freedom to do God's will, rather than their own personal will (cf. Galatians 5: 13). Paul distinguishes between freedom to sin and freedom to serve. Freedom or license to sin is no freedom at all, because it enslaves you to Satan, others, or your own sinful nature. Christians, by contrast, should not be slaves to sin, because they are free to do right and glorify God through loving service to others (Anon 1991: 2124). We can clearly correct President Robert Mugabe and Sam Nujoma by saying; homosexuals are not pigs and are not lower than pigs and dogs, they are sinners like other sinners who want to be treated with love and respect as we are dealing with their orientation. Insulting them won't help them, but can only create homophobia. Associating certain sins with a certain race is a grave mistake, because that will waste time pointing fingers instead of dealing with the real issue. Homosexuality is a human issue that needs to be addressed as a human issue. It has nothing to do with being African or not.

Yoweri Museveni, who claims that homosexuals must be arrested, is not solving the problem of homosexuality in the community. Propper (1981: 187) reveals that; "The increasing visibility of homosexuality could contribute to prison homosexuality because it gives inmates and staffs the impression that homosexuality is more common than outside prisons where people enjoy the privacy of their own homes and bedrooms. Visible participants (in homosexual act – PTM), could also act as role models that the uninitiated may imitate, and veterans can assist potential participants in overcoming any feelings of inhibition and guilt by teaching them the appropriate

sexual scripts. These would include learning about the benefits and pleasures that homosexual acts and relationships can offer and the kinds of justifications one can employ to make homosexuality compatible with existing moral values.”

Arresting homosexuals won't be a solution to the problem we are facing as Sam Nujoma suggested. The challenge goes to the community and all stake holders, including all churches, to be pro-active concerning the issue of homosexuality in our community. Being pro-active in the church and community means teaching our children to make good sexual choices and spelling out what our culture and the Bible teach about homosexuality and ideal relationship. 73 percent of principals and teachers say that Life Science and Life Orientation address homosexuality and 90 percent of them hold that both subjects teach children to make good sexual choices. Only 59 percent of pastors in Venda once preached about homosexuality directly or indirectly. In order to conquer the sexual sin we are facing in the name of homosexuality, teaching and tolerance is the way to go.

“Social-learning theories point to the fact that people learn to behave through interaction with their social environment. We learn to define good and bad through listening to others, and observing the nature of the consequences attached to our own and others' behaviour. Once the homosexual act is experienced, either in or out of prison, it is more likely to be repeated if the lover is skilled and if the experience is physically and emotional gratifying. Those who find homosexuality satisfying are more likely to repeat the experience both during their incarceration and when they leave (Propper 1981: 187).”

Putting homosexuals in prison is no solution at all. Since in South Africa homosexuality is not crime, we have the responsibility as Christian to witness with love and compassion what the Bible teaches about homosexuality. For the sake of the African states that consider homosexuality a crime, one must be aware that prison is not a solution because according to Propper (1981: 188 & 189): “Available evidence suggests that two of the most effective steps that could be taken to reduce homosexuality are to decrease the length of prison sentences and to establish more weekend-furlough programs. These would enable inmates to maintain and

establish long-term family and friendship bonds that would make prison homosexuality less necessary.”

5.2.5.5 *Homosexuality is against Venda cultural norms and value and is against God’s creation order*

Compare the evaluation in 5.2.4.3 and 5.2.4.4. The above-mentioned evaluation clearly revealed that homosexuality is taboo according to Venda culture and it is an unnatural and perverted relationship according to the Bible. It is against creation order because God’s plan for sexual relations is between two heterosexual partners in marriage.

5.3 CONCLUSION

We have realised how homosexuality has affected the community. We have realised how different people from all walks of life view homosexuality. Some of course have tolerance towards homosexuals, whereas some show homophobic attitudes. The majority of African people and authors are not in favour of homosexuality based on their religious convictions and cultural norms and values. Some insist that homosexuality is a western practice and it is totally un-African. The majority of ordinary people contend that homosexuality is a taboo. Other than homosexuality as learned behaviour, some hold that it is an inborn condition and which they contend they cannot change. There is no conclusive research that indicates that some homosexuals are born with this condition. If it is so, does that mean it is justifiable to allow someone who has a strong sexual drive to sleep around because he was born that way? If the Bible says that sleeping around is a sin, it will also apply to the one that has a strong sex drive.

In the other hand we must condemn all who react to homosexuals with homophobia because by doing so we are transgressing the law of love that teaches us to be the keepers of our brothers and also to love them as we love ourselves. Yes, homosexuals can change as we know that there is nothing impossible with God, but the first and important question is “Do homosexuals want to change?” According to Drakeford (1977: 103): “not many homosexuals want to change, and this

fact precludes any possibility of doing anything with them.” We as church of God we must not lose hope in homosexuals. The love of God and compassion must draw us near to them so that we can really witness to them God’s grace. Homophobia will only create unnecessary tension that will make the preaching of the Gospel difficult.

We have to acknowledge homosexual rights and the fact that South Africa is a secular state that will protect everyone without looking at race, gender, sexual orientation etc. However, as faithful citizens we have to challenge the state concerning moral issues that concern us. We have to ask the state where the state draws its morals from. Does the state recognise that it leads people who come from different cultural and religious background that do not accept homosexual practices? Since we know that we won’t change the Constitution, we must strive to have a positive way forward, that means helping a brother or a sister that is caught in homosexual sin with the love of Jesus Christ and to educate the community to accept them, especially the churches. The church is the only institution in the world that accepts sinners. If the community rejects them, and the church rejects them, where would homosexuals get help? The church of God must hate the sin of a person, not the person. There is hope for homosexuals, they can change. Paul in 1 Corinthians 6: 9 – 11 know of some homosexuals in Corinth that received change. In our daily live we know of homosexuals who changed. Change in the sense of being heterosexual or in celibacy.

6 *ADDENDUM*

❖ **ADDENDUM 1**

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TRADITIONAL LEADERS AND TRADITIONAL HEALERS IN VENDA IN THE NORTH OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR RESEARCH CONCENING THEIR VIEW AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY.

INSTRUCTION

- Please read the question carefully.
- Please answer the questionnaire carefully and legibly.
- Please answer all questions
- Assurance is given to respondents that all information will be treated as confidential and as objectively as possible.
- The respondents/responses will be used for research only
- The purpose of the survey is to investigate the perception and attitude of Venda people toward homosexuality.

Research with Traditional Leaders and Traditional Healers will be done in Qualitative form.

6.1 *Traditional Leaders (Tribal Authority)*

- 6.1.1 Are you aware of the fact that homosexuality is recognized as legal in South Africa? What is your view about the recognition of homosexuality in our country?
- 6.1.2 Is legalizing homosexuality relationships against Venda tradition? Why?
- 6.1.3 Do you know of any homosexual practices that once happened in the history of Venda or now?

- 6.1.4 On your own merit, can you allow active homosexual partners to stay in your village?
- 6.1.5 Is homosexuality taboo? Why?
- 6.1.6 How would you react if it comes to your attention that there are homosexual people who want to get married in your village?
- 6.1.7 How would you handle a case of lesbian who wants to go for initiation?

6.2 *Traditional Healers*

- 6.2.1 Are you aware of the fact that homosexuality is recognized as legal here in South Africa?
- 6.2.2 Is legalizing homosexuality relationships against Venda tradition?
- 6.2.3 Do you know of any homosexual practices that once happen in history of Venda or currently?
- 6.2.4 If a homosexual couple approaches you and ask for your blessing over their marriage or for the success of their marriage, how would you respond?
- 6.2.5 Is homosexuality taboo in our culture? Why?
- 6.2.6 There is a myth that says homosexuals are controlled by the evil spirit; where is this coming from?
- 6.2.7 There is a myth that says some traditional healers do marry a person of same sex, what is your standpoint on this?
- 6.2.8 Is it possible that one's ancestors may reveal a partner of the same sex as marriage partner?
- 6.2.9 Is it possible for you as traditional Healer to change the orientation of a homosexual to a heterosexual?

❖ ADDENDUM 2

Research with Church leaders, ordinary citizens, principals and teachers will be done in quantitative form.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CHURCH LEADERS, ORDINARY CITIZENS, PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS IN VENDA IN THE NORTH OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR RESEARCH CONCENING THEIR VIEW AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY.

INSTRUCTION

- Please read the question carefully.
- Please answer the questionnaire carefully and legibly.
- Please answer all questions
- Assurance is given to respondents that all information will be treated as confidential and as objectively as possible.
- The respondents/responses will be used for research only
- The purpose of the survey is to investigate the perception and attitude of Venda people toward homosexuality.
- Please mark with a tick in only one box per question.

6.1 CHURCH LEADERS

SECTION A

- Homosexuality = Relationship between people of the same gender. E.g. A man marrying another man or a woman marrying another woman
- Legal = Allowed/permitted by Law.

Demographic Information

1. What is the gender of the respondent?

Male	1	
Female	2	

2. What is your age at your last birthday?

Between 13 and 19	1	
Between 20 and 35	2	
Between 36 and 48	3	
Between 49 and 60	4	
More than 60	5	

3. What is your highest level of education?

Never attended school but able to read and write	1	
From Grade R to 7	2	
From Grade 8-12	3	
High education (Certificate, Diploma, degree)	4	

SECTION B

- ❖ Questions for Church leaders, ordinary citizens (youth and old), principals and teachers

AWARENESS AND EXISTENCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY

	Yes	No
6.3.1 Are you aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa?	1	2

	Yes	No
6.3.2 Do you have any homosexual person in your church?	1	2
6.3.4 Do you know of any homosexual practice in Venda?	1	2

ATTITUDE

	Yes	No
6.3.5 Do you preach against homosexuality?	1	2
6.3.6 Does a church have to tolerate homosexuals?	1	2
6.3.7 If a homosexual person joins your church, would you treat him/ her as Christian?	1	2
6.3.8 Can you ordain homosexual person as a Priest?	1	2
6.3.9 Can you marry or bless homosexual partners?	1	2
Natural Curse		
6.3.10 Is homosexual natural or a curse?	1	2

STANDARD USED TO APPROVE OR DISSAPROVE HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICE

	Morals	Bible
6.3.11 Do you denounce homosexual practice based on Venda moral standards or the Bible?	1	2
Yes No		
6.3.12 Do you know of any passage in the Bible that denounces homosexuality?	1	2
If yes, give those passages.....		
6.3.13 Are Venda people practising homosexuality?	1	2

POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE

	Yes	No
6.3.14 Can homosexual person change his/ her orientation to be heterosexual?	1	2

6.4 ORDINARY CITIZENS (youth and old)

AWARENESS AND EXISTENCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY

	Yes	No
6.4.1 Are you aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa?	1	2

	Yes	No
6.4.2 Do you know that there are homosexuality people in South Africa?	1	2
6.4.3 Do you know of any homosexual person in Venda?	1	2

ATTITUDE

	Yes	No
6.4.4 If you find out that one member in you family is homosexual, would you speak about it openly?	1	2
6.4.5 Can you tolerate homosexuals?	1	2
6.4.6 Would you accept homosexual person in your house or village?	1	2
6.4.7 If you find out that your child has homosexual partner, would you pay lobola (pride price) for him or her?	1	2
6.4.8 Do you consider homosexuality dangerous to our community?	1	2

6.4.9 Is homosexual taboo?	1	2
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STANDARD USED TO APPROVE OR DISSAPROVE HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICE

	Yes	No
6.4.10 Are you in favour of homosexual relationships?	1	2

Yes No

6.4.11	Is homosexuality new thing in Venda community?	1	2
6.4.12	Do Venda customs approve homosexuality?	1	2
6.4.13	Are Venda people practicing homosexuality?	1	2

POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE

		Yes	No
6.4.14	Can homosexual person change his/ her orientation to be heterosexual?	1	2

6.5 PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

AWARENESS AND EXISTENCE OF HOMOSEXUALITY

		Yes	No
6.5.1	Are you aware that homosexuality is legal in South Africa?	1	2

		Yes	No
6.5.2	Do you have any homosexual learner in your school?	1	2
6.5.3	Do you know of any homosexual practice in Venda?	1	2

ATTITUDE

		Yes	No
6.5.4	Do you consider homosexuality a problem?	1	2
6.5.5	Do teachers and learners tolerate homosexuals?	1	2
6.5.6	Would you register homosexual learner in your School?	1	2
6.5.7	Can you accept a fellow co-worker who is homosexual in your midst?	1	2
6.5.8	If you find out that a child has homosexual tendencies,	1	2

would you try to change him or her?		
6.5.9 Is homosexuality dangerous to learners?		

6.5.10 Is homosexual taboo?	1	2
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STANDARD USED TO APPROVE OR DISSAPROVE HOMOSEXUAL PRACTICE

	Yes	No
6.5.11 Are you in favour of homosexual relationships?	1	2
	Yes	No

6.5.12 Does Life Science or Life Orientation teach about homosexuality?	1	2
6.5.13 Does Life Science or Life Orientation help learners to make good sexual choices?	1	2
6.5.14 Do Venda people ever practice homosexuality?	1	2

POSSIBILITY OF CHANGE

	Yes	No
6.5.15 Can homosexual person change his/ her orientation to be heterosexual?	1	2

❖ ADDENDUM 3

6.6 POLITICAL LEADERS

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POLITICAL LEADERS IN VENDA IN THE NORTH OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN SOUTH AFRICA FOR RESEARCH CONCERNING THEIR VIEW AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY.

INSTRUCTION

- Please read the question carefully.
- Please answer the questionnaire carefully and legibly.
- Please answer all questions
- Assurance is given to respondents that all information will be treated as confidential and as objectively as possible.
- The respondents/responses will be used for research only
- The purpose of the survey is to investigate the perception and attitude of Venda people toward homosexuality.

Research with Political leaders will be done in qualitative form (Question for political leaders in local level)

6.6.1 As an African person, how do you feel about the new Bill that was passed on the 14 November 2006 that legalise same sex marriage? As politician, how do you regard homosexual?

6.6.2 Venda is a traditional place. How would you expect the traditional leaders to deal with issues of homosexuality?

- 6.6.3 How should African people who are traditional handle the issue of homosexuality in a democratic country?
- 6.6.4 In the situation of education, how do you consider teachers should treat homosexual children?
- 6.6.5 On the side of the church, how should Christians handle the issue of homosexuals in their churches especially since our country is democratic?
- 6.6.7 President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe believes that homosexuals don't have rights; according to him they are sexual perverts who are lower than pigs and dogs. Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda believes that all homosexuals must be arrested whereas Sam Nujoma, the former President of Namibia believes that homosexual relationships is un-African, it is a borrowed culture from the West. What is your opinion about all these claims?

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and good management as an important key success factor. In the case of Wine farm attributes, there is not a significant difference between the *Festinos* and the rest but the difference between *Epicureans* and *Social Adventurers* is significant at the 10% level. For *Social adventurers* wine farm attributes is clearly important. Effective marketing is significant at a 10% level for the *Festinos* but not found significant for the *Epicureans* and the *Social adventurers*. In the case of Route development, there is not a significant difference at a 10% level between the *Festinos* and the rest but there is a significant difference between the other two groups. Festival attractiveness is significant at a 10% level between the *Epicureans* and the *Social adventurers*. There is a significance difference at a 10% level for Entertainment and activities between the *Festinos* and the rest of the groups. The last factor, Accessibility showed no significance difference at a 10% level between the *Festinos* and the rest but the difference between the *Epicureans* and the *Social adventurers* is significant. Therefore accessibility is important for the latter.

3.5 FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

From the results indicated above the following findings and implications are evident:

Firstly, the analysis indicated that the three different visitors groups or markets (*festinos*, the *epicureans* and the *social adventurers*) had different ratings regarding the key success factors when managing a wine festival. Therefore this research confirms the notion that different markets have different needs and therefore have different views on what is important from a managerial point of view. In fact there were significant differences between the markets. The implication is that results from the evaluation of events in terms of how successful events are cannot be generalised. In fact it requires a more in depth analysis in order to ensure that the needs of different markets are catered for.

Secondly, that niche markets such as the *Epicureans*, are more critical on the aspects that affect their main motive of travel directly namely to taste the food and wines. Therefore they are concerned with issues related to food and wine and aspects such as the accessibility and the marketing of the event is not regarded as prominently important. The implication therefore is that if the organisers/managers fulfil the main needs and purpose why the *Epicureans* visit the wine festival, the visitor group will be satisfied. This in turn will lead to positive word of mouth as well as the competitiveness and sustainability of the event.

3.6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this article was to determine visitors' perceptions of the aspects contributing to the success of the Wacky Wine Festival and to determine if different markets have different perceptions. Seven key success factors were identified through visitors visiting the Wacky Wine Festival. The visitors rated each of the key success factors according to what is important when managing a wine festival.

Three different visitors groups were identified in this study namely the *festinos*, *epicureans* and the *social adventurers*. This innovative approach revealed that each group identified different managerial factors that must be managed and therefore it is important for managers to know what the visitors' perceptions are and how to satisfy their needs and meet their expectations. Hence this research confirms that visitor groups have different perceptions when it comes to management aspects that contribute to the success of an event.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

4

*Let us watch well our beginnings, and results
will manage themselves. ~Alexander Clark*

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to determine the key success factors of managing a wine festival. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were set in Chapter 1 and achieved in the respective chapters.

- The first objective was to identify the key aspects important in managing a wine festival, which was achieved in Chapter 2 (Article 1). The research identified key success factors important for managers when managing a wine festival.
- The second objective was to determine whether visitors had different perceptions regarding managerial aspects of a wine festival. This goal was achieved in Chapter 3 (Article 2). The different visitor groups of the wine festival had different management aspects. Visitors emphasise the importance of the management aspects of a wine festival.
- The third objective, which is also the aim of the present chapter, is to draw conclusions and make recommendations regarding the management aspects of a wine festival.

4.2 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions that will follow will be discussed with regard to the literature review and the survey done at the Wacky Wine Festival.

4.2.1 CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO THE LITERATURE STUDY

- The tourism industry (specifically the event and festival sector) is a very competitive environment due to an increase in tourism products and markets (c.f. 3.2).
- Wine tourism forms part of special interest tourism and therefore it is important for wine-growing regions because they need to be aware of the characteristics and behaviour of the visitors visiting the wine festival (c.f. 1.1).
- It is important to create key experiences for tourists as this leads to being competitive and being sustainable over the long term (c.f. 1.1).
- An increase in wine routes has led to an increase in regional wine festivals of which the Wacky Wine Festival is South Africa's largest (c.f. 2.1).
- The Wacky Wine Festival is one of the most popular wine festivals in South Africa, currently attracting more than 16 000 visitors each year (c.f. 2.1).
- The event manager has to plan ahead (proactively) of the event and identify important key issues or key success factors (KSFs) for managing this event (c.f. 2.1).
- Key success factors are very important to every manager in the wine tourism industry. The manager must be capable of managing the wine festival and should concentrate on achieving and marketing competitiveness (c.f. 1.2).
- Key success factors in events tourism are (c.f. 2.2):
 - To plan for the event,
 - To ensure high levels of hygiene,
 - To deliver quality services,
 - To ensure sufficient parking at all the venues,
 - To ensure accessible venues,
 - To ensure a safe environment for visitors,
 - To create a positive image of the event.
- Tourism trends are changing. This phenomenon is created by the change in needs and expectations of tourists (c.f. 3.1).

- Event managers have to consider offering the wine tourism experience that include (c.f. 2.2):
 - Events, festivals and celebrations
 - Restaurants
 - Wine touring
 - Tasting and cellar door sales
 - Education concerning the wine and how to interpret the wine
 - Accommodation facilities
 - Specialist accommodation in or close to the wine route
 - Travelling – including other tourism attractions
 - Retail outlets – selling local handcrafts, art and specialty foods

- The key success of any event is the manager's ability to measure or evaluate the event on the following (c.f. 3.2):
 - To determine the success of the event
 - To determine whether visitors' needs are met
 - To determine whether the event programme satisfies the visitors
 - To determine whether visitors are satisfied with the accessibility to the event, the levels of hygiene and sufficient parking
 - Whether there is enough information available before and during the event
 - To identify gaps when managing an event and how to create solutions for these gaps to meet the visitors' needs

- Each target market has its individual needs and expectations. Therefore different visitor groups have different perceptions regarding the managerial aspects of managing a wine festival (c.f. 3.2).

4.2.2 CONCLUSIONS WITH REGARD TO THE SURVEYS

In Article 1, a factor analysis was done to identify the key success factors visitors find important which managers need to take into consideration when organising and managing a wine festival. The results revealed the following seven success factors:

- Quality and good management

- Wine farm attributes
- Effective marketing
- Route development
- Festival attractiveness
- Entertainment and activities
- Accessibility

By determining the key success factors, the managers/organisers of the Wacky Wine Festival are able to address certain factors when they organise and manage the festival. Entertainment and activities are rated as the factor that visitors feel is very important and need to improve to manage a successful festival. Therefore the managers must organise a programme with a variety of activities on the different wine farms that entertain every target market (children, students, young people, married couples, older people and wine experts) visiting the festival. To ensure quality services, management must ensure that all staff must be trained and know what their responsibilities are and what is expected from them. Visitors have a certain expectation of what the festival can offer them and managers and their staff must ensure to deliver services that satisfy the visitors' needs.

An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied in Article 2, based on the key success factors identified in Article 1 and the three different visitor groups (*festinos*, *epicureans* and *the social adventurers*) to determine whether visitors have different perceptions regarding the managerial aspects of managing a wine festival. The research concluded that each visitor group has different key success factors they find important and must be focused on.

A distinction should be drawn between the three visitor groups. Managers must know why the *festinos*, *epicureans* and the *social adventurers* visit the festival and what each group needs in terms of the festival. The *festinos* want to relax, spend time with friends and meet new people. The *epicureans* are the connoisseurs who come mostly for the food and wine offered at the Festival and the *social adventurers* love spending time with family and they enjoy benefits for children together with the good food and wine offered at the Festival.

The significance of each key success factor was determined through the ANOVA, and the following factors had a significance smaller than 0.05:

- Quality and good management

- Effective marketing
- Entertainment and activities

The different visitor groups' perception regarding the key success factors can assist managers/organisers in attracting more visitors to the festival and ensuring that each visitor group's needs and expectations are met. Therefore the managers/organisers must focus on the key success factors and on how they are going to improve them and manage a successful wine festival.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions discussed above and the research results, the following recommendations can be made:

- From a management point of view, the focus should primarily be on what key success factors are important to visitors for the managers to organise and manage a successful wine festival that will be competitive and sustainable in the long term. This includes conducting a market analysis and needs analysis on a regular basis at the Wacky Wine Festival.
- With the constant growth of other wine festivals, it is important to position the Wacky Wine Festival very strongly in the minds of their current audiences. The Wacky Wine Festival has a strong base of loyal visitors, and the managers of the festival should therefore focus on continuing to satisfy the visitor groups' needs. The managers also need to focus on attracting more visitors to the festival through effective marketing of the variety of entertainment and activities the wine festival offers.

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS WITH REGARD TO FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on this research, the following aspects need to be researched further:

- This research also needs to be conducted at other wine festivals such as Cultivaria and the Stellenbosch Wine Festival to compare the results for some of South Africa's large wine festivals to determine the unique characteristics of each wine festival's market as well as what they identify as important key success factors to manage a wine festival.

- Managers need to conduct a market and needs analysis to determine who the wine festival's market is and what the visitors needs are in terms of the wine festival and what it offers. This will assist managers/organisers in identifying their target market and to reach them through effective marketing.
- Further research can be done to determine the impact that the wine festival has on the image of the different wine farms that participate and to determine whether wine sales are increasing due to the Wacky Wine Festival.
- Market research should be carried out on a regular basis for the wine festival managers/organisers to continuously stay aware of changes and new trends in the visitors' needs and expectations. Through effective marketing, and aiming at the right target market, the festival numbers will increase and the festival will be competitive and sustainable.

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APPENDIX

AFDELING A / SECTION A

1. Geslag / Gender?

M	<input type="checkbox"/>
V/F	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Watter jaar is u gebore? / What year were you born?

3. Huistaal / Home language ?

Afrikaans	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engels / English	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ander (Spesifiseer) / Other (Specify):	<input type="text"/>

4. Beroep / Occupation ?

Professioneel / Professional	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bestuur / Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-werkgewend / Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tegniese personeel / Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verkoopspersoneel / Sales	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boer / Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mynbou / Mining	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administratief / Administrative	<input type="checkbox"/>
Staatsdienswerknemer / Civil service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opvoeding / Education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Huisvrou / Housewife	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pensionaris / Pensioner	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student	<input type="checkbox"/>
Werkloos / Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ander (Spesifiseer) / Other (Specify):	<input type="text"/>

5. Insluitend uself, hoeveel persone is in u reisgeselskap / Including yourself, how many people are travelling in your group?
Aantal / Number

6. Insluitend uself, vir hoeveel persone betaal u tydens die fees? / Including yourself, how many people are you paying for at the festival?
Aantal / Number

7a. Hoeveel dae spandeer u by die fees? / How many days are you staying at the festival?
Aantal / Number

7b. Hoeveel nagte bly u in Robertson? / How many nights do you stay over in Robertson?
Aantal / Number

8. Provinsie / Province?

Wes-Kaap / Western Cape	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gauteng	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oos-Kaap / Eastern Cape	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vrystaat / Free State	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noordwes / North West	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mpumalanga	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noord-Kaap / Northern Cape	<input type="checkbox"/>
KwaZulu-Natal	<input type="checkbox"/>
Limpopo	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buite RSA-grense / Outside RSA borders	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. In watter dorp of stad woon u permanent? / In which town or city do you live permanently?

10. Naastenby hoeveel Rand bestee u gedurende u besoek aan die Wacky Wine-fees op die volgende items? / Estimate how much you spend on the following items during your visit to the Wacky Wine Festival

Wyn paspoort / Wine passport	R
Akkommodasie / Accommodation	R
Voedsel en restaurante (stalletjies uitgesluit) / Food and restaurants (excluding stalls)	R
Inkopies by stalletjies (aandenkings uitgesluit) / Shopping at stalls (excluding souvenirs)	R
Inkopies by kleinhandelwinkels (Voedsel & drank uitgesluit) / Retail shopping (Excluding food & drinks)	R
Vervoer na Wacky Wine (Retoeer) / Transport to Wacky Wine (Return)	R
Aandenkings(bv. wynglase) / Souvenirs(e.g. wine glasses)	R
Ander (Spesifiseer) / Other (Specify):	R

11. Watter tipe verblyf gebruik u? / What type of accommodation do you use during your stay?

Plaaslike inwoner / Local resident	Ja/Yes	Nee/No
Familie of vriende / Family or friends	Ja/Yes	Nee/No
Gastehuis of B&B / Guesthouse or B&B	Ja/Yes	Nee/No
Hotel	Ja/Yes	Nee/No
Lodge	Ja/Yes	Nee/No
Huur 'n woning / Rent a house	Ja/Yes	Nee/No
Dagbesoeker / Day visitor	Ja/Yes	Nee/No
Ander (Spesifiseer) / Other (Specify):	Ja/Yes	Nee/No

12. Is die fees die hoof-/enigste rede vir u besoek aan Robertson? / Is the festival the only/main reason for your visit to Robertson?

Ja / Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nee / No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Inwoner / Local	<input type="checkbox"/>

AFDELING B / SECTION B

13. Beoordeel volgens die skaal waarom u die Wacky Wine-fees besoek / Rate on the scale of importance why you visit the Wacky Wine Festival

Uiters belangrik / Extremely important					
Baie belangrik / Very important					
Belangrik / Important					
Minder belangrik / Less important					
Glad nie belangrik / Not at all important					
1. Om weg te kom van my normale roetine / To get away from my routine	1	2	3	4	5
2. Om te ontspan / To relax	1	2	3	4	5
3. Om tyd saam met familie te spandeer / To spend time with family	1	2	3	4	5
4. Om tyd saam met vriende te spandeer / To spend time with friends	1	2	3	4	5
5. Om nuwe mense te ontmoet / To meet new people	1	2	3	4	5
6. Wacky Wine is anders as ander feeste / Wacky Wine Festival is different to other festivals	1	2	3	4	5
7. Die fees bied 'n verskeidenheid wyne / The festival offers a variety of wines	1	2	3	4	5
8. Die fees bied kwaliteit produkte / The festival offers quality products	1	2	3	4	5
9. Dit is 'n lekker sosiale fees / It is a sociable festival	1	2	3	4	5
10. Die fees is waarde vir geld / The festival is value for money	1	2	3	4	5
11. Dit is die naaste fees vir my / It is the closest festival for me	1	2	3	4	5
12. Dit is tot voordeel van my kinders / It is for the benefit of my children	1	2	3	4	5
13. 'n Geleentheid om wyn te proe / An opportunity to taste wine	1	2	3	4	5
14. Om vars/handgemaakte produkte te koop / To buy fresh/home-made products	1	2	3	4	5
15. Ek beskou dit as 'n jaarlikse instelling / It is an annual commitment	1	2	3	4	5
16. Om die omgewing te verken / To explore the environment	1	2	3	4	5
17. Om my kennis rakende wyn te verbreed / To increase my knowledge of wine	1	2	3	4	5
18. Die fees kombineer kaas, wyn en vermaak sinvol / The festival combines cheese/wine and entertainment in a useful way.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Om nuwe idees rakende kaas en wyn te kry / To obtain new ideas regarding cheese and wine	1	2	3	4	5
20. Omdat die fees 'n statussimbool is / Because this festival is regarded as a status symbol	1	2	3	4	5
21. Hierdie fees bied vir my 'n unieke ervaring / This festival is a unique experience	1	2	3	4	5
22. Omdat ek myself as 'n wynproewer beskou / Because I consider myself to be a wine connoisseur	1	2	3	4	5

14. Gebruik u die roetekaart? / Do you use the route map?

Ja / Yes	1
Nee / No	2

15a. Is dit u eerste besoek aan die fees? / Is this your first visit to the festival?

Ja / Yes	1
Nee / No	2

15b. Indien nee, **insluitend 2009**, hoeveel jare van te vore het u al Wacky Wine bygewoon? / If no, **including 2009**, how many years have you previously been at the Wacky Wine Festival?

Aantal / Number:

16. Sal u Wacky Wine weer besoek? / Would you visit the Wacky Wine again?

Ja, beslis / Yes, definitely	1
Nee, beslis nie / No, definitely not	2
Miskien / Perhaps	3

17. Spesifiseer watter ander feeste u die afgelope 3 jaar bygewoon het? / Which other festivals have you attended in the past 3 years?

	Ja/ Yes	Nee/No
Cultivaría		
Knysna Oesterfees/Oyster festival		
Stellenbosch wynfees/wine festival		
Ander (spesifiseer) / Other (specify)		

18. Hoe het u van die Wacky Wine gehoor? / How did you hear about the Wacky Wine?

	Ja/ Yes	Nee/No
Televisie / Television		
Radio		
Webwerf / Website		
E-pos / Email		
Nuusbrief / Newsletter		
Tydskrifte / Magazines		
Koerante / Newspapers		
HRRsr / Word-of-mouth		
Ander (Spesifiseer)/Other (Specify):		

AFDELING C / SECTION C

19. Hoe sal u die Wacky Wine-fees evalueer in terme van die volgende aspekte? / *How would you evaluate the Wacky Wine Festival according to the following aspects?*

	Stem volkome saam / Totally agree			
	Stem saam / Agree			
	Neutraal / Neutral			
	Stem nie saam nie / Do not agree			
	Stem glad nie saam nie / Totally disagree			
1. Inligting oor die fees is maklik bekombaar / <i>Information about the festival is available</i>				
2. Die wynroete is goed beplan / <i>The wine route is well organised</i>				
3. Die bekendstelling van die roete/fees is goed / <i>The introduction of the route/festival is good</i>				
4. Volledige roetekaart is beskikbaar / <i>A complete route map is available</i>				
5. Verskeidenheid aktiwiteite by die wynplase is voldoende / <i>Variety of entertainment at the wine farms is adequate</i>				
6. Verskeidenheid aktiwiteite op die wynroete is voldoende / <i>Adequate variety of activities on the wine route</i>				
7. Vriendelike en behulpsume personeel gedurende die fees / <i>Friendly and helpful staff during the festival</i>				
8. Genoegsame aktiwiteite vir kinders / <i>Adequate activities for children</i>				
9. Effektiewe dienslewering by wynplase / <i>Effective service at wine farms</i>				
10. Genoegsame akkommodasie-fasiliteite / <i>Adequate accommodation facilities</i>				
11. Kwaliteit akkommodasie-fasiliteite / <i>Quality accommodation facilities</i>				
12. Bekostigbare akkommodasie-fasiliteite / <i>Affordable accommodation facilities</i>				
13. Publieke fasiliteite op die wynroete is voldoende / <i>Public facilities on the wine route is adequate</i>				
14. Verskeidenheid van restaurante gedurende die fees is voldoende / <i>Adequate variety of restaurants during the festival</i>				
15. Bekostigbare pryse by restaurante / <i>Affordable prices at restaurants</i>				
16. Voldoende parkering by wynplase / <i>Adequate parking at the wine farms</i>				
17. Voldoende parkering in Robertson / <i>Adequate parking in Robertson</i>				
18. Genoegsame personeel aan diens gedurende die fees / <i>Adequate number of staff members available during the festival</i>		2		
19. Wynplaasfasiliteite is gerieflik ingerig / <i>Wine farm facilities are comfortable</i>		2		
20. Duidelike aanwysings na wynplase / <i>Clear indications/signage to the wine farms</i>		2		
21. Wacky Wine word goed bestuur / <i>Wacky Wine is well-managed</i>		2		
22. Die verskeidenheid van wynplase wat deelneem is voldoende / <i>Adequate number of wine farms participate in the festival</i>		2		
23. Min verkeersopeenhopings tydens die fees / <i>Minimal traffic congestions during the festival</i>				
24. Voldoende wynsoorte om te proe / <i>Great selection of wines to taste</i>				
25. Voldoende wynprodukte om te koop / <i>Adequate wine products to buy</i>				
26. Bekostigbare wyn- en ander produkte / <i>Affordable wine and other products</i>			3	
27. Higiëne by die wynplase is goed (bv. skoon wynglase) / <i>Hygiene at the wine farms are good (e.g. clean wine glasses)</i>				
28. Die wynfees is familie-vriendelik / <i>The wine festival is family friendly</i>				
29. Navrae word goed hanteer / <i>Enquiries is managed effectively</i>				
30. Die wynfees is waarde vir geld / <i>The wine festival is value for money</i>				
31. Veiligheidsmaatreëls is voldoende (bv. kinders/motors) / <i>Security measures are appropriate (e.g. children/cars)</i>				
32. Die webtuiste is gebruikersvriendelik / <i>The website is user friendly</i>				
33. Die wynpaspoort is waarde vir geld / <i>The wine passport is value for money</i>				
34. As gevolg van goeie bestuur is die Wacky Wine 'n kompeterende fees / <i>The Wacky Wine route is a competitive route due to the excellent management of the festival</i>				4
35. Inligtingsborde by wynplase is voldoende / <i>Adequate information signs at wine farms</i>				4
36. Bemaking van die wynfees is goed / <i>Marketing of the wine festival is good</i>				4
37. Besprekings op webtuiste vir akkommodasie/aktiwiteite is effektief / <i>Effective bookings on the website for accommodation/activities</i>				4
38. Voldoende inligting oor wynplase is beskikbaar / <i>Adequate information available about wine farms</i>				4

20. Hoeveel wynplase gaan u besoek tydens die fees? /
How many wine farms will you visit during the festival?

Aantal / Number:

21. Waar het u, u wynpaspoort gekoop? / *Where did you
buy your wine passport?*

22. Watter wynplas(e) het u die meeste geniet en verskaf
ook redes vir u voorkeur asb. / *Which wine farm(s) did
you enjoy the most and provide reasons for your preference.*

23. Enige aanbevelings? / *Any recommendations?*

Dankie vir u samewerking! / Thank you for your co-operation!