

The Pulpit and the Rainbow: Preaching and Transgenderism in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper, *The Pulpit and The Rainbow: Preaching and Transgenderism in Nigeria*, deals with the issues relating to the rights of members of the LGBTQ community in Nigeria and what are the proper responses of the Nigerian pulpit. The research is descriptive, and a structured interview was used to gather data from the field. A total of 100 individuals were interviewed, including 60 pastors and 40 non-pastors. The research revealed that transgenderism is a controversial subject in Nigeria. Individuals who identify as transgender face significant challenges in accessing healthcare, employment, legal recognition, and stigmatization and discrimination from other members of their communities. Also, it was discovered that there are organizations and individuals that have taken up the responsibility of advocacy for transgenderism in Nigeria. These organizations and a growing movement of transgender individuals work to support transgender rights and advocate for greater acceptance and recognition of transgender in Nigeria. These movements saddle themselves with the task of continued advocacy and education for Nigerians to ensure that Nigeria can become a more inclusive and accepting society for all its citizens, regardless of gender identity. The research also revealed that many people do not consider transgenderism an African challenge as they are ignorant of the rate of growth of the transgender movement in Nigeria. Again, the researcher notes that transgenderism is not a matter that is deliberately addressed on the Nigerian pulpit, and 65% of those interviewed believed that transgenders should not be allowed in Church.

Also, 95% of pastors interviewed have never addressed the matter of transgenderism from their pulpit, while of the forty non-pastors interviewed, only seven have heard sermons that specifically address transgenderism. The research recommends, among other things, deliberate crafting of sermons that address transgenderism spelling out the biblical perspective of the scripture. Also, the pulpit should encourage people against violence against transgender individuals but advocate for mass evangelization of this group.

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the LGBTQ community seems to be growing in popularity and acceptability worldwide. LGBTQ activists are rigorously attempting to extend the boundaries of their rights from country to country. Recently, Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) came under serious fire from critics for hosting the just concluded men's world cup in Qatar. Among several other criticisms is the fact Qatar as a country, criminalizes homosexuality. This led to some countries' football associations attempting to withdraw their teams from the competitions. Some teams showed solidarity with the Transgender community by taking their team pictures with their hand covering their mouths.

Also, Western leaders like the president of the United States of America and other officials have visited African countries with the aim of advocating for the rights of transgenders on the continent. The pressure on African leaders to legalize transgenderism and advance the course of LGBTQ+ rights on the continent becomes a matter of concern for the Church, particularly in Africa.

This paper aims to provide a proper homiletical response to transgenderism in Africa, borrowing from the Nigerian experience. Against this backdrop, the paper will discuss transgenderism in Nigeria and identify the proper response of the African Pulpit to transgenderism.

TRANSGENDERISM IN NIGERIAN

There is the understanding that individuals who were born in the wrong body exist. These people are believed to have feelings that are different from what their biological sexes accommodate. This ideology promotes that gender is a social construct, and a person may identify as a sex other than their biological (assigned) sex. The complexities in categorizing this phenomenon posed a challenge for this research regarding the title selection. Tarynn M. Witten et al. admits that the varying phraseology assigned for the “gender” community is dynamic to an extreme level. The variation in terminologies used does involve not only the descriptors of gender but also the body, sex, sexuality and medical status descriptions associated with a given gender identity.⁴¹⁰ In selecting the title for this research, it was challenging to decide on adopting transgender, transsexual, bi-sexual, or gender non-conforming.

The challenge was also to select the right terminology to describe individuals within a particular gender categorization. For instance, a biological woman who feels she is a man could be referred to as a female-to-male transsexual, transman, lo-ho, hi-ho transman, pre-op transsexual, post-op transman, and men-born trans (MBT). The terminological problem made by Witten et al. insists that categorizing group members of the transgender community are exceedingly difficult.⁴¹¹

It would be necessary to explain the various terminologies that could potentially describe the transgender phenomenon. Basically, transgenderism is viewed as separating gender roles and gender identity or crossing the boundaries of a particular

⁴¹⁰ Tarynn M. Witten, Esben Esther Pirelli Benestad, Ilana Berger, R. J. M. Ekins, Randi Ettner, Katsuki Harima, Dave King, Mikael Landén, Nuno Nodin, Volodymyr P'yatokha, and Andrew N. Sharpe “Transgender and Transsexuality” in Carol R. Ember, and Marvin (eds) *Encyclopedia of Sex and Gender: Men and Women in the World's Culture* (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum, 2003), 218

⁴¹¹ Witten et al., 219

gender to another gender.⁴¹² Individuals who are referred to as transgender hold to gender identities outside the typical heteronormative definitions and, according to Bornstein, may or may not require gender reassignment surgeries.⁴¹³ Transgenderism is a nonheteronormative theoretical orientation for how gender identity is to be understood.

Transgender is an umbrella term for people who express gender identity and behavior different from those in most cases associated with their assigned sex at birth. Other concepts related to the transgender umbrella are transsexuals, crossdressers, androgynous people, genderqueers, and gender non-conforming people. Transgender is a broad category, and it is the preferred term to be used by non-transgender people.

Another term that relates closely to transgenderism is transsexuality. According to the Centre for HIV and Sexual Health, this term represents individuals who use hormones and/or surgery to alter their gender identity from the identity given at birth.⁴¹⁴ Transsexual people believe their gender identity differs from their assigned sex at birth. This set of individuals would often alter their bodies through hormonal therapy or surgery in order to make them match their gender identity.⁴¹⁵

In order for transsexuals to change their bodies to align with their sexual identity, a range of modifications may be required. These modifications may include taking hormones, using electrolysis for hair removal, breast implants or breast

⁴¹² Jamison Green, *Becoming a visible man* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004)

⁴¹³ Bornstein, K. (1994). *Gender outlaw: On men, women, and the rest of us*. New York, NY: Vintage Books

⁴¹⁴ Center for Hiv and Sexual Health, "Living My Life: Information for People Who Currently Identify as Trans or Who are Beginning to Explore their Gender Identity"
<https://www.nhs.uk/livewell/transhealth/documents/livingmylife.pdf>

⁴¹⁵ National Center for Transgender Equality, "Transgender Terminology"
https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/Transgender_Terminology.pdf

reductions, and removal and/or construction of genitals and other reproductive organs. In the past, such procedures were often called “sex changes,” but often, the person going through this process does not believe that they are changing their sex, just making their body congruent with the sex they always were.⁴¹⁶

Another term with close relations to transgenderism is the term gender non-conforming. This idea is used to refer to a person who does not adhere to societal pressures to conform to gender norms and roles.⁴¹⁷ According to Personnel Bulletin No: 13 -03 of the United States Department of the Interior, gender non-conforming means displaying gender traits that are not normatively associated with the biological sex of such individuals. “Feminine” behavior or appearance in a male is gender - variant as is masculine” behavior or appearance in a female. Gender-variant behavior is cultural.⁴¹⁸

Gender non-conforming is a broad term delineating persons who do not conform to social expectations of gender identities or gender expressions. People identifying as gender non-conforming often adopt terms like non-binary or agender to describe their gender identity. Usually, non-binary’ is viewed as an essential aspect of gender non-conforming identity and ‘agender’ is sometimes perceived as a political rejection of society’s traditional gender practices. There are gender non-conforming persons that consider themselves transgender, and there are others who do not identify in that category.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

⁴¹⁷ Anti-defamation League “Terminology Related To Transgender And Gender Non-Conforming Identity”
<https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/terminology-related-to-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-identity.pdf>

⁴¹⁸ United States Department of the Interior “Transgender and Other Gender Non - Conforming Employee Policy”
<https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/elips/documents/Transgender%20and%20Other%20Gender%20Non-Conforming%20Employee%20Policy.pdf>

Transgenderism is a controversial subject in Nigeria. The country is known for its conservative views on sexuality and gender identity, and there are many obvious challenges facing transgender people in Nigeria. One of the biggest challenges for transgender individuals in Nigeria is the lack of legal recognition. Nigerian laws do not recognize transgender identities, and there are no legal pathways for individuals to change their gender on official documents such as passports or identification cards.⁴¹⁹

Generally, same-sex sexual relationships are criminalized in many African countries, including Nigeria. In 2014 Nigeria's then-President Goodluck Jonathan signed a bill that criminalizes same-sex relationships, defying Western pressure over gay rights and provoking US criticism. The bill imposes penalties of up to 14 years in prison, criminalizing gay marriage, amorous relationships, and membership in gay rights groups. In most parts of sub-Saharan Africa, anti-gay sentiment and persecution of homosexuals are popular; the new legislation is, therefore, popular in Nigeria.⁴²⁰

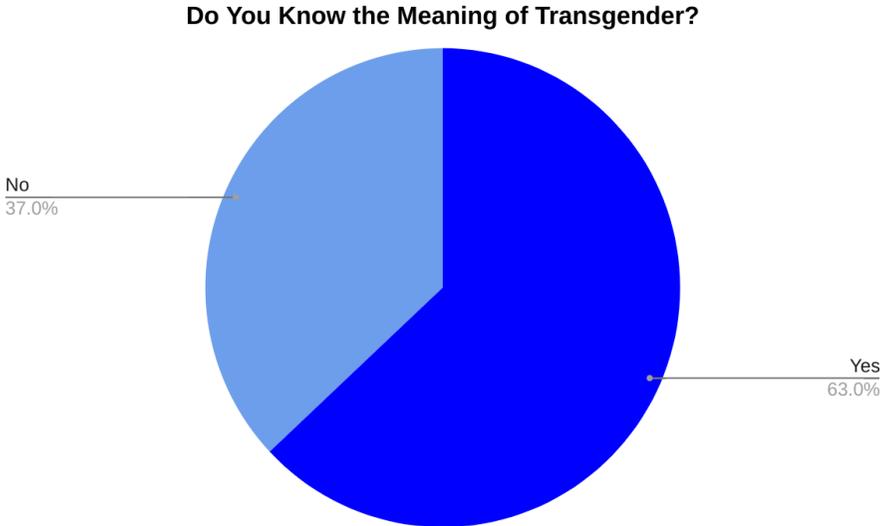
On Sunday, May 1st 2022, about fifty individuals gathered in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, to protest a bill that sought to amend a 2013 act banning same-sex marriage. The amendment would mean that queer people who dressed outside of expected gender norms could be imprisoned for up to six months or could be required to pay a fine. The protestants were particularly concerned for the welfare of Nigeria's transgender community because of this law.⁴²¹ This protest provides evidence of the

⁴¹⁹ The Guardian "Nigerian's President Signs Law Imposing Up to 14 Years Jail for Gay Relationships"
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/13/nigerian-president-signs-anti-gay-law>

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ Patrick Kelleher "Queer Nigerians Stage Defiant Protest as Government Tries to Ban 'Crossdressing'"
<https://www.thepinknews.com/2022/05/03/nigeria-lgbt-trans-crossdressing-bill/>

presence of transgender individuals in Nigeria. The bar chart below represents the summarized views of interviewees on whether there are transgender individuals in Nigeria. The pie charts below represent the responses from 100 interviews, as summarized by the writer.

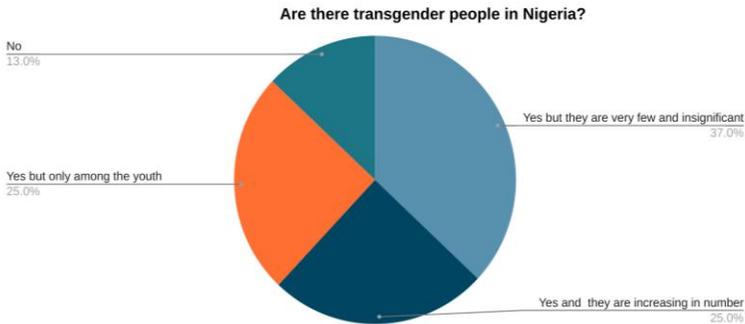


It was quite revealing that about 37 individuals, including gospel ministers, did not understand the meaning of transgenderism. Many among those who claimed possession of the term’s meaning appeared to know very little about it. About 40 interviewees of the 63 individuals who stated they knew what transgenderism meant only limited it to merely being gay or lesbian. This significant lack of knowledge of the term may be due to the lack of research in transgender-related matters, as attributed to in Geoffrey Jobson’s research.⁴²²

Again, transgenderism, as a subject matter in Nigeria, seems to be popular among individuals in their early 20s and early 30s,

⁴²² Geoffrey Jobson, “Transgender in Africa: Invisible, inaccessible, or ignored?” *SAHARA Journal of Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance / SAHARA , Human Sciences Research Council* 9(3):160-3

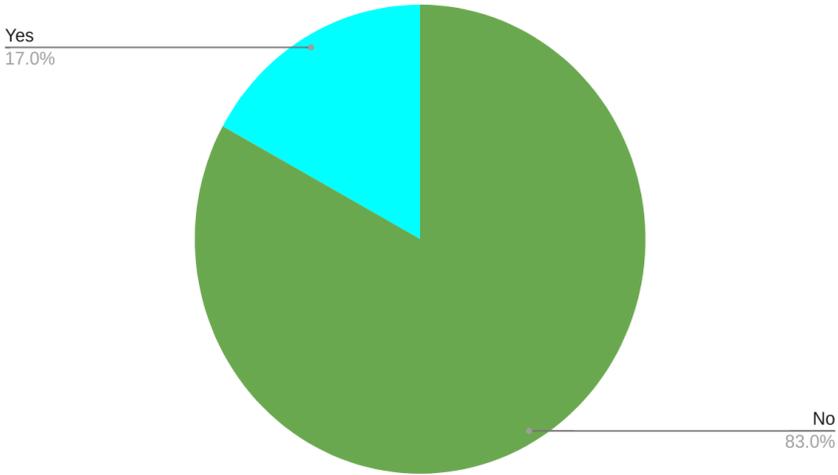
as many of those who had a good grasp of the term fell within that category.



In answering the question of whether there are transgender individuals in Nigeria, 13 of the people interviewed answered in the negative. These individuals insisted that a phenomenon like transgenderism is completely opposed to the African culture, and it would be practically impossible to suggest that a full-blooded African would be trans. In the opinion of these individuals, transgenderism is a completely Western idea.

The interview produced three categories of yeses. The first category contains 37 individuals who believe that there are people in Nigeria who identify as trans. Still, their numbers are very small and cannot significantly impact the Nigerian church and society. The second category belongs to the 25 people who agree that there are transgender individuals in Nigeria, and their numbers have been increasing over the years. The third category of yes is the group of 25 individuals who also agree that there are Nigerians who identify as transgender but that most of them are young adults and a few teenagers.

Have You Meet A Transgender Person Before?

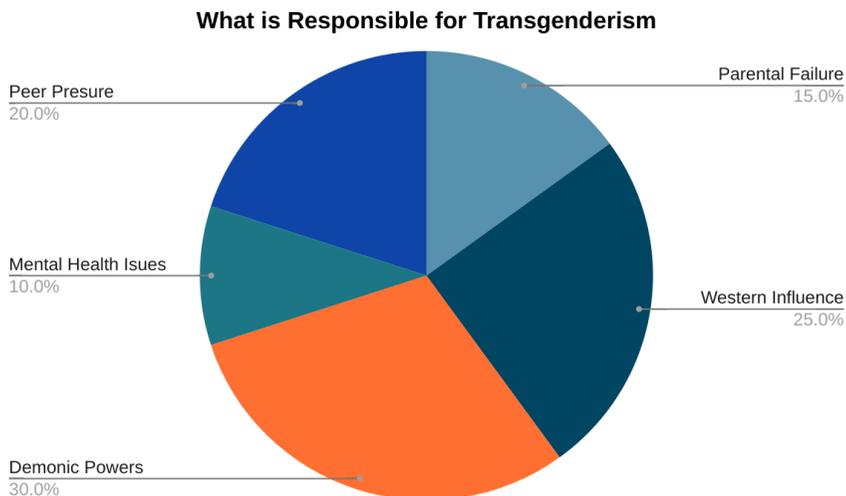


Based on interviews conducted, only 17 persons out of 100 interviewees have had personal contact with or are personally aware of individuals that identify as transgender. Again, the intriguing thing about this is that many of those who specifically said they know individuals who identify as transgender explained that they met them while in boarding school during their secondary school days. On whether they were in contact with them till the moment of the interview, only 25 persons stated that they were, and 18 of them noted that the individual they mentioned had left the country for fear of their lives, family rejection or other reasons.

Also, 78 of the 83 individuals interviewed who have met a transgender person stated that non of the person they refer to are openly transgender. This particular revelation suggests the possibility of several individuals that may be transgender secretly and are not open because of the ramifications of the consequences of being openly transgender in Nigeria and Africa. Geoffrey Jobson correctly suggests that the invisibility of transgender people in Africa correlates with the criminalization of same-sex relationships in many countries and the fear of

negative repercussions that may follow a public declaration of their status.⁴²³

The research of Jobson and others revealing that transgenders in Africa are basically either invisible, inaccessible or ignored is confirmed by this study. The fact that more than 60% of the individuals interviewed have met a transgender person who is not openly transgender is enough to speculate that there might be a large number of individuals who are transgender “in the closet.” The extremely confrontational attitude of many Africans to the issue of transgenderism may be a major factor. Research in this area is definitely necessary to further provide valuable data in this regard.

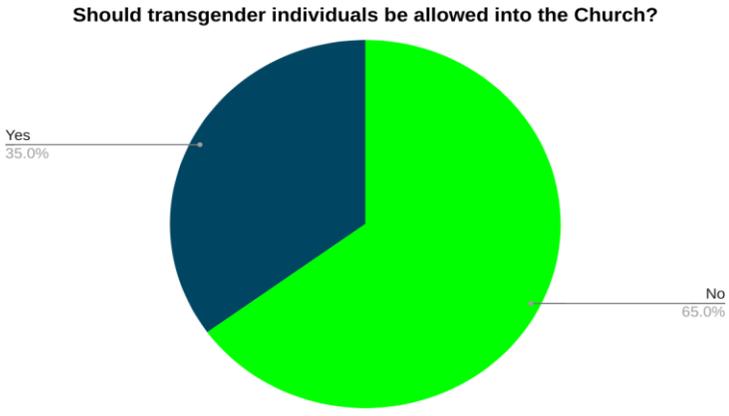


As many as 30% of interviewees believe transgenderism is a spiritual phenomenon. The influence of demonic powers is attributed to the cause of transgenderism. A particular interviewee stated that the phenomena are a reflection of the involvement of satanic entities in the world due to the climax of the end of days as prophesied in the Bible. 25% of those interviewed attribute transgenderism to the influence of

⁴²³ Ibid.

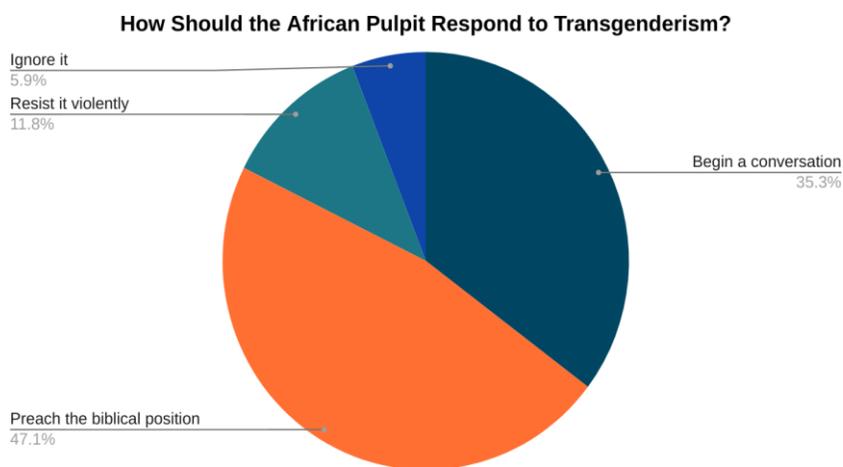
Western countries on African countries. Some mentioned that this influence is achieved through movies that portray transgenderism as an acceptable practice, books that promote inclusivity and social media movements that advocate for the rights of transgenders. Many of the young interviewees unanimously agree that it may have been impossible for them to know anything about transgenderism without their involvement on social media.

Peer group influence represents the option of 25% of interviewees as the cause of transgenderism. This group believes that as young people interact with themselves, they can spread tendencies like transgenderism among themselves. 20% of the interviewees explain that the root cause of transgenderism is bad parenting. These people believe that parents of transgender individuals could take drastic steps to prevent the spread of transgenderism. The remaining 10% of interviewees leaned towards mental illness. These groups believe that transgenderism is a mental illness, and due to the country's social, political, and economic state, mental health issues have reached epidemic proportions. One of the interviewees, who was not educated and transgenderism had to be explained to him, stated that the rate of poverty in Nigeria could make people so demented to commit such atrocious acts.



The question of whether transgender people be allowed into the church in Africa or not is another conversation this research intends to pioneer. The result of the interviews clearly shows that a large percentage of people interviewed believe that individuals who identify as transgender should not be allowed into the Church. Some expressed the need to protect the integrity and sanctity of the Church. Allowing people who identify as transgender into the Church, according to some interviewees, means that the Church accepts and condones their sins. This could lead to the spread of transgenderism in the Church. An interviewee suggested that because of some believers whose faith is not strong enough and could be easily swayed, transgender people should not be allowed into the Church.

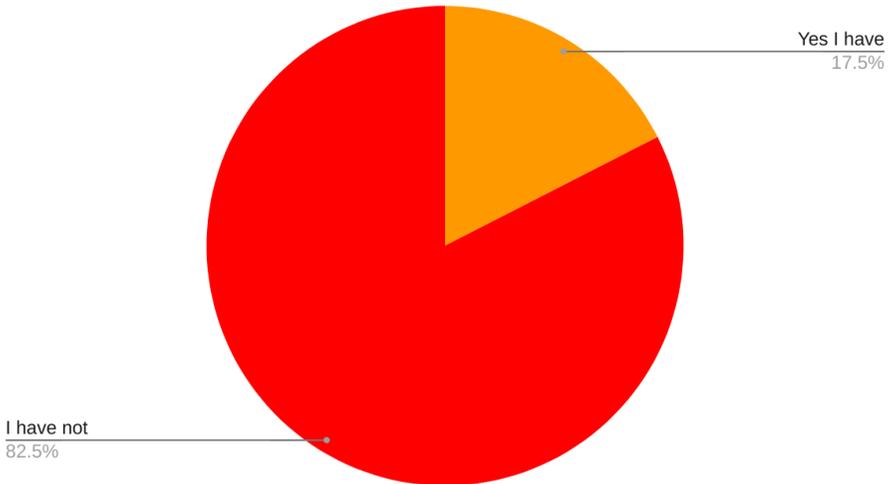
Those who believe that transgender people should be allowed into church hold the idea that these groups of individuals are included in the promise of salvation and should, therefore, not be denied the opportunity. A particular interviewee noted that the door of the church must be left open to all people regardless of how they are perceived. If murderers are allowed in and become saved, transgender people should be given the opportunity.



The African pulpit is left with no choice but to respond to transgenderism. The question, however, would be what the appropriate response should be. The interview result reveals that 5% believe that preachers should ignore the subject of transgenderism. This group believes that transgenderism is not an existential threat to the Church in Africa. Preaching about it, therefore, would only make it popular.

10% of the people interviewed hold on to the notion of the violent resistance of transgenderism. According to this group, the African pulpit must vehemently condemn transgenderism in all its forms, preserving the integrity of the Church of God. Another 20% believe that the African pulpit should kick-start a conversation that the continent can be involved. Those who hold to this notion believe that the pulpit is a good point to initiate a discussion that would lead to an understanding between the Church and society. An overwhelming majority of 50% of interviewees hold that the response of the pulpit should be to preach the word of God.

Have You Heard a Sermon on Transgenderism Before?



Since the larger percentage of interviewees believed that the Church should concentrate on preaching the word of God, it

was invariably important to find out how many had heard a sermon on transgenderism before. Only those who were not gospel ministers were asked this question. Of the 40 individuals interviewed, only 7 had heard a sermon on transgenderism before. The remaining 33 had never heard such a sermon. This underscores the perception of the church in relation to the issue of transgenderism. While the subject has risen to a subject of global concern, the church in Nigeria seems to be silent on the issue. When asked whether they felt there should be sermons prepared periodically to address such an issue in the Church, more than 30 persons indicated that it was important for the Church to do so, considering the growing number of transgender individuals.



Only 3 of the pastors interviewed had preached a sermon focused on transgenderism prior to the time of the interview. All of these 3 pastors had preached sermons focused on transgenderism minister among university students. This coincides with the claim of some interviewees that transgenderism flourishes among young people in Nigeria. The 57 pastors who had not preached about transgenderism before noted unanimously that the subject was not an existential

threat, nor was it a subject of concern for members of their congregation. Many of them noted that there are more serious issues of concern their congregants grapple with daily that are of primary concern to them than transgenderism.

THE AFRICAN PULPIT AND TRANSGENDERISM

Considering the foregoing, the African pulpit is saddled with the task of responding appropriately to the issue of transgenderism. In this section, the paper provides a league of recommended responses appropriate for the pulpit in Africa in light of the data gathered and the resulting finding.

First, the African pulpit's response should deliberate. It is the pulpit's responsibility to educate the pew. Preachers in Africa should deliberately prepare sermons that address the subject of transgenderism. This research's findings suggest that transgenderism is not considered a significant issue among many Africans. On September 29, 2017, during a speech to the United Nations assemble President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe unequivocally stated that "Africans are not gay"⁴²⁴, echoing the opinion of the former President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta, during an interview with legendary CNN reporter Christian Ammapour⁴²⁵ a position he reiterated again during a state visit to the White House who noted that gay rights are not of the foremost concern to the Kenyan people.⁴²⁶ During the visit of US President Obama to Kenya, Rev Mark Karuiki, one of the leaders of the Evangelical Alliance of Kenya, stated categorically that the President was to stay off gay talks and leave the matter of gays rights in America as the African culture does not room for it. The Reverend noted that of primary importance to the Kenyan people are the matters of development, education,

⁴²⁴ "World leader to U.N.: 'We are not gays'"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=upjpdV5yvx4>

⁴²⁵ President: Gay rights 'of no importance in Kenya

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwTgU-RZLHQ>

⁴²⁶ Obama and Kenyan President clash over gay rights in Africa - Daily Mail

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00u9Bd7O7RU>

health and the advancement of long-standing bilateral relations with America, rather than homosexuality which holds no significance for African people.

The African pulpit must not wait for transgenderism to become a challenge before addressing the issue. African preachers should accept that several factors are causing transgenderism to become popular in Africa. As of 2014, there was only one publicly known crossdresser in Nigeria, Idris Olarenwaju Okunneye, popularly known as Bobrisky.⁴²⁷ Due to his influence, fame and wealth, several men have joined the cross-dressing lifestyle. In 2019, Bobrisky publicly declared he wanted to be addressed as she and referred to himself as a trans woman.⁴²⁸ Now, there are at least sixty publicly documented crossdressers in Nigeria. Most of them are men who prefer to be called women, a few renowned among them are Bryan Nwakoro, Onyx Godwin Ogaga, Michelle Page, Daniel Anthony Nsikan popularly known as Jay Boogie, Jay Bugatti, Nsogbu Di, Josh Agai, Buchi Alexandra, J.P Blush, and James Brown. These individuals listed all refer to themselves as trans women, and all have a huge following on social media. There are no statistics to show exactly how many transgender persons are in Nigeria, but recent trends reveal that those publicly declaring themselves transgender are increasing. African preachers must therefore rise to the occasion of deliberately addressing this growing phenomenal from the pulpit.

Second, the African pulpit's response should be biblical. It has been observed that some ministers only respond to transgenderism with the rage of social, cultural and personal sentiments, which lacks the capacity to convince and convict. Jesse L. Nelson, in the introduction to his book *Preaching Life-Changing Sermons: Six Steps to Developing and Delivering*

⁴²⁷ "Why Snapchat king Bobrisky is definitely not Nigeria's Kim Kardashian". *Nigerian Entertainment Today*. 18 January 2017. Archived from the original on 4 February 2017.

⁴²⁸ Ajumoke Nwaeze "Who is Bobrisky?" <https://buzznigeria.com/bobrisky-nigerian-guy/>

Biblical Sermons notably suggests that the sermon that will change lives must have a good blend of information, inspiration and instruction but its very heart must be the infallible word of God.⁴²⁹ The African pulpit cannot base its response to transgenderism on mere moral arguments and cultural innuendos that hold no ground in the court of public opinion. African preachers cannot expect to produce lasting results concerning transgenderism by confronting it with sermons entrenched in culture and social practices.

The word of God remains the only viable means through which truth that causes lasting change can be conveyed. The Bible encourages the minister of the gospel in 2 Timothy 4:2 to preach the word. One effective means of affecting and changing cultures is preaching God's word. Biblical preaching can serve as a fruitful response to the challenge of transgenderism in Africa as preachers expose the heart of their congregation to the double-edged sword of God's word, which has the capacity to pierce into the heart and the soul. African preachers must realise the grave consequence of preaching culture and popular social opinion as possessed to the word of the living God. Haddon W. Robinson puts it more potently when he states:

The man in the pulpit faces the pressing temptation to deliver some message other than that of the Scriptures—a political system (either right-wing or left-wing), a theory of economics, a new religious philosophy, old religious slogans, a trend in psychology. A preacher can proclaim anything in a stained-glass voice, at 11:30 on Sunday morning, following the singing of hymns. Yet when a preacher fails to preach the Scriptures, he abandons his authority. He confronts his hearers no longer with a word from God but only with another word from

⁴²⁹ Jesse L Nelson, *Preaching Life-Changing Sermons: Six Steps to Developing and Delivering Biblical Sermons* (Kregel Ministry: Grand Rapids, 2022), 17-18.

men. Therefore most modern preaching evokes little more than a wide yawn. God is not in it.⁴³⁰

This stupendous ideology reflects the propensity of God's word to change the vilest of men and the reality that the pulpit has no other weapon in its arsenal other than the power of the Scripture. Robinson's comment accentuates the notion that the word of man, rapped eloquently and delivered with charisma and precision, achieves nothing because it is void of the presence and power of God.

Biblical preaching is beyond stating mere obvious facts, it is allowing the text of God's word to state God's opinion about the chosen subject. It allows the Bible to reveal God's worldview, God's mindset, and God's ideology. Indeed, the preacher allows himself to become a conduit through which God communicates his perception. If the African pulpit responds meaningfully to any societal issue, transgenderism included, it must respond as biblically as possible.

Third, the African pulpit's response should be pastoral. In the context of this paper, being pastoral is beyond being involved in pastoral preaching. It also involves serving the church equipping role appointed for gospel ministers. In Ephesians 4:12, Paul writes that the pastor's duty is equipping the saints, which can be done through the instrumentality of preaching the word of God. In homiletical parlance, pastoral preaching is a category of preaching that prioritises the existential needs of the congregation. Tom Hicks mentions that pastoral preaching is expository and Christ-centered. He considers the redemptive history of scripture but also touches on how the scripture intercepts with the existential realities of listeners. Hicks

⁴³⁰ Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages* (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, 1980), 18.

further explains that pastoral preaching is personal and focused on a specific issue in a particular local church.⁴³¹

The African pulpit must engage a pastoral theological perspective in addressing transgenderism. Hiltner emphasises an approach focusing on healing, sustaining, guiding, communicating and organising. His understanding of the pastoral theological approach is that of bringing the shepherding perspective to bear upon the minister's functions and operations. This shepherding ideology is necessary as African preachers should promote a sense of care and healing for those who are willing to come to the fold from the transgender community. The Church's door must be constantly open for all to come, regardless of who they are or what they have done. The African pulpit should emphasize and care for transgender people. African preachers should not carry a sense of confrontation and conflict in relation to transgenders but rather an ideology of care, concern, and compassion.

Fourth, the African pulpit's response should be evangelistic. The great popular commission in Matt 28:19 is instructive to the African church. In the great commission, Christ instructs his followers to go into the world and make disciples of all men. All men include straight men, and it also includes queer people. The African pulpit should recognize the massive potential for salvation within the transgender community and provide avenues to bring in the harvest. In responding to transgenderism, African preachers should address transgenderism with the intention of making Christ known. An evangelistic mindset promotes the cross of the Lord Jesus with the understanding that Christ died for all men, including transgender individuals.

To respond evangelistically is to concentrate on the advancement of the good news that Jesus Christ died for all

⁴³¹ Tom Hicks "What is Pastoral Preaching"

<https://founders.org/articles/what-is-a-pastoral-preacher-2/>

sinner and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures and that Christ now offers the forgiveness of sins and the power of the Spirit to all who believe the gospel and repent of their sins.⁴³² While there are obstinate individuals everywhere, including among transgender people, the Church should ensure that individuals in the transgender community are offered the opportunity to come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION

Transgenderism is an existential reality in present-day Africa. Though many individuals are grappling with the concept's sensibility, evidence of its existence and potentiality in Africa exists. This paper proffers that the African Church and its pulpit must raise and respond to the challenge of the phenomenon in the continent. While the writer recognizes the various ways in which the African church has responded to transgenderism in time past, the paper recommends that to achieve a more lasting effect, African preachers should respond deliberately, biblically, pastorally, and evangelistically.

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⁴³² David L. Larsen, *The Evangelism Mandate: Recovering the Centrality of Gospel Preaching*, 14

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