

**THE EXPERIENCES FACED BY LESBIAN, GAYS, BISEXUAL, AND  
TRANSGENDER STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE.**

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**A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of the  
Master of Social Work (MSW)**



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**November 2014**

## DECLARATION

I, **Esther Rutendo Nyakwima**, Student Number **200909688**, do solemnly declare that this dissertation is a result of my own original work and includes nothing that is a result of collaboration. The work has not been previously submitted in part or in whole for an award at any other university or institution of learning. Information derived from other works has been duly acknowledged in the text, and a list of references is also given. I am fully aware of the University Of Fort Hare's policy on plagiarism and I have taken every precaution to comply with the regulations. I further declare that I am fully aware of the University Of Fort Hare's policy on research ethics and I have taken every precaution to comply with the regulations.



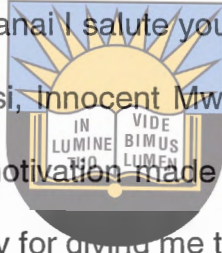
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Date 30-01-2015

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## ABSTRACT

Sexual orientation is one of the vital aspects that a person's identity, persona, self-esteem, solidarity, equality and worthlessness are determined. Misconceptions and prejudices often lead to emotional, psychological and verbal discrimination or victimisation and even physical violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender life. This study explored the experiences, challenges faced by LGBT students at the University Of Fort Hare and the strategies they employ to deal with these challenges and policies which are in place to protect them. The study utilized the psychodynamic theory and the social cognitive theoretical framework to illustrate the homosexuality nexus. The study employed a qualitative and quantitative research methodology which utilised questionnaires and interviews as a methods of data collection. The study revealed that the homosexual population at the University Of Fort Hare is experiencing homophobia, condemnation, homophobic attacks, prejudicial remarks, discrimination and abuse. It was noted that perceived discrimination is rampant among homosexual students in every category related to discrimination. While the findings do not prove that discrimination causes mental health problems, data collected takes a step towards demonstrating that the social stigma felt by LGBT students has mental health consequences. Inequitable experiences may affect stress levels because discrimination is shadowed by prejudice remarks against homosexuals. The results of the study have further revealed that homosexual students are resilient to harsh circumstances like violence and discrimination. They are by no means secure within their own gendered and sexual lives. They have an idea as to what strategies and implementation tactics would work best for them, given their socio-cultural framework. Homosexual students successively adopt various strategies to protect themselves, such as boundary



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setting, avoiding certain circumstances, hiding identities, revenging and some openly admitting that they are gay students. Although there are policies in place to protect homosexual students at the University Of Fort Hare, gay and lesbian students have adopted their own strategies to protect themselves as they are unaware of these policies. However, in terms of policies safeguarding homosexuals, it can be noted that the University Of Fort Hare has generally adopted a top-down policy, one-size fits all approach to solving gender issues on campus. The policies are mainly centred on the distribution of resources and strict guidelines on the way people or inmates should conduct themselves towards each other.



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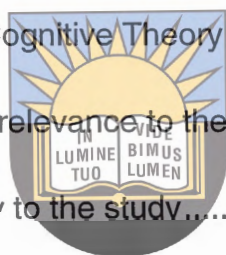
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background to the study .....	1
1.2. Problem statement.....	2
1.3 Aim and objectives.....	2
1.3.2 Research questions .....	3
1.4 Significance of the study .....	3
1.5 Definitions of key terms/concepts .....	4
1.6 Structure of the dissertation .....	6
CHAPTER TWO .....	8
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	8
2.1 Introduction .....	8
2.2 Defining homosexuality.....	8
2.3 Theoretical framework .....	11



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2.3.1	The Psychodynamic Theory .....	11
2.3.2	Evaluation of the Psychodynamic Theory .....	15
2.3.3	Theoretical Application to the Study (Psychoanalytic Perspectives An Overview).	15
2.3.4	Shortfalls of the Psychodynamic theory .....	18
2.4	Social Cognitive Theory .....	19
2.4.1	Basic Assumptions of the Social Cognitive Theory .....	20
2.4.2	Concepts of the Social Cognitive Theory .....	24
2.4.3	Social Cognitive Theory relevance to the study .....	25
2.4.4	Application of the Theory to the study .....	26
2.4.5	Weaknesses of the Social Cognitive Theory .....	27
2.5	Towards a theory on Gays, Lesbians, bisexual and transgender (LGBT).....	28
2.6	Conclusion .....	31
CHAPTER THREE .....		32
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....		32
3.1	Introduction .....	32
3.2	The concept sexual orientation .....	32
3.3	Homosexuality in African countries .....	34
3.4	Policies relating to homosexuals in Africa .....	37
3.5	Challenges faced homosexuals in African countries .....	42
3.5.1	Social challenges .....	42
3.5.2	Economic challenges .....	44



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3.6	Strategies used by LGBT's in Africa .....	45
3.7	Comparative analyses of the challenges faced in Africa and in Western countries .....	47
3.8	Experiences of LGBT's at various institutions of higher education. ....	50
3.9	Conclusion .....	54
CHAPTER FOUR .....		55
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....		55
4.1	Introduction .....	55
4.2	Description of the Study Area .....	55
4.3	Research Design .....	56
4.3.1	Qualitative method .....	56
4.3.2	Quantitative method .....	58
4.4	Population of the study .....	58
4.4.1	Sampling Strategy.....	59
4.5	Data Collection.....	62
4.5.1	Primary Data Collection .....	62
4.5.2	Instruments of Data Collection .....	63
4.5.3	Questionnaires for students and staff members.....	63
4.5.4	In-depth Interviews.....	64
4.5.5	Secondary sources of data collection (Document Analyses) .....	65
4.6	Data Analysis .....	66
4.6.1	Analysing Qualitative Data from In-Depth Interviews .....	66
4.7	Analysing Quantitative Data ; Questionnaires of Staff Members and Students .....	67



**University of Fort Hare**  
*Together in Excellence*

4.7.1	Data Coding of the Questionnaires .....	68
4.7.2	Pre-testing the questionnaire .....	69
4.8	Validity and Reliability .....	69
4.9	Ethical considerations .....	70
4.9.1	Privacy .....	71
4.9.2	Informed consent .....	71
4.9.3	Voluntary participation .....	72
4.9.4	The right to fair treatment.....	72
4.10	Conclusion .....	72
CHAPTER FIVE.....		73
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....		73
5.1	Introduction .....	73
5.1	Biographical information of participants .....	73
5.2	Quantitative findings .....	74
5.3	Qualitative findings.....	82
5.3.1	Homosexual identity and coming out .....	82
5.3.2	Victimisation and rejection .....	86
5.3.3	HIV AND STI'S.....	88
5.3.4	Homophobic attitudes and self-consideration experiences .....	90
5.4	Strategies used by homosexuals .....	92
5.4.1	Hiding identity .....	92



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5.4.2	Dealing with victimisation and HIV/AIDS.....	93
5.4.3	Coming out process strategy .....	94
5.5	Policies protecting homosexuals.....	95
5.6	Discussion .....	97
5.7	Conclusion .....	100
CHAPTER SIX.....		101
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....		101
6.1	Introduction .....	101
6.2	Summary of findings .....	101
6.2.1	Challenges and experiences.....	101
6.2.2	Strategies.....	104
6.2.3	Policies .....	105
6.3	Conclusions .....	106
6.4	Limitations of the study .....	107
6.5	Implications for social work practice.....	108
6.6	Recommendations .....	109
6.6.1	Awareness campaigns about homosexuality .....	109
6.6.2	Integrate GLBT Issues/Concerns into the Curriculum.....	109
6.6.3	Institutional Commitment to GLBT Issues/Concerns.....	110



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REFERENCES .....111

APPENDIX 1 .....135

APPENDIX 2.....141

APPENDIX 3.....144



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## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 5.1: Kinds of victimisation experienced by homosexuals.....	74
Figure 5.2: Understanding homosexuality and networking .....	76
Figure 5.3: Treatment of homosexuals .....	77
Figure 5.4: Homosexuals who are faced with HIV/AIDS, STI's and barrenness .....	78
Figure 5.5: Experiencing suicidal thoughts .....	78
Figure 5.6: Dealing with victimisation.....	79
Figure 5.7: Strategies used by homosexuals .....	80
Figure 5.8: Heterosexual students helping homosexual students.....	81
Figure 5.9: Policies relating to homosexuals.....	82



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the study

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) refers to a sexual orientation whereby men do not have a sexual desire for women, they only have a desire for men and women are also attracted to women (Diamond, 2003). It is known to have been influenced by different factors and personal choices. Public attitudes toward LGBT or homosexuality diverge greatly in different cultures, locations and in many societies, but they still remain as personages who are quite mythical, unknown, and strange even disgusting (Mbatha, 2012).



Homosexuality is a topical issue that has sparked a lot of controversy across the world. Homosexuality, which is commonly referred to as same sex relationship or marriage has been rejected not only on grounds of destroying the sense of identity of those who engage in it, but also on the basis of negating the order of creation thereby threatening the viability of many African communities, Brown, (2004). (Ottosson, 2007) point out that 40 of African countries have deemed LGBT illegal in various capacities. Shoko (2010) goes on to indicate that the Zimbabwe head of state Robert Mugabe, has likened homosexuals to “dogs and pigs”. Hence, if the African society views homosexuality or LGBT’s in this context, it would be interesting to know the experiences and challenges faced by students in universities.

## 1.2. Problem statement

Parahoo (2006) says that research questions assists the researcher to focus on the questions which need to be answered, and it is therefore, fundamental to the research process. Since time immemorial, LGBT groups have been invisible and dormant, but since they have started to surface up it has brought so much confusion and chaos in societies (Nyanza, 2013). According to Bayer (1987:15) non pro-active sexuality presents not only a violation of God's nature, but a dangerous diversion of energy from the task of human survival. Many people's beliefs about homosexuality and actions towards LGBT's are religiously based (Mbatha, 2012). With these prejudice remarks it becomes a concern on how LGBT group is living. The concern of this research is that how they are surviving after all these negative remarks, they are given in the societies they live in. Hence this study is going to explore the experiences and challenges faced by LGBT students at the University of Fort Hare.



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## 1.3 Aim and objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate the experiences faced by LGBT's students at the University Of Fort Hare.

The specific objectives of this study include the following:


- ❖ To examine how LGBTs are treated by students who have a different sexual orientation.
- ❖ To identify strategies that are used by LGBT's to deal with the challenges they face.
- ❖ To assess if there are any policies which protect or advocate for LGBTs at the University Of Fort Hare.

### 1.3.2 Research questions

The research questions that guided this study are as follows:

- ❖ What are the challenges faced by LGBT's, who are students at the University Of Fort Hare?
- ❖ What are the coping strategies which are used by LGBT's when dealing with the challenges they face?
- ❖ What policies are in place which advocate or protect LGBT students?

### 1.4 Significance of the study



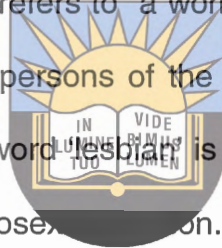
The study will be a significant attempt to contribute new information giving a broader understanding of the challenges faced by this group. Exploring the challenges faced by homosexuals fulfils a literature gap and gives a practical recommendation on how to help LGBTs (Brown, 2005). By understanding the challenges of homosexuals' people are likely to change how they perceive homosexuals and start developing a positive, non-judgmental attitude and help LGBTs to function fully in their respective communities. The output of this study is to provide a source material towards the development of policies that will be able to teach other people who have negative perceptions towards LGBTs and how they create challenges for them in various societies. For students, this study can be a learning paradigm in the field of social work and the social work field. To policy makers it gives them insight on how best to protect this group.

## 1.5 Definitions of key terms/concepts

The following definitions are included in order to create a common understanding of the constructs.

**Bisexual** refers to men or women who have sexual and emotional attractions to both men and women (Hughes & Eliason, 2002). It is important to note that bisexual individuals do not necessarily engage in a sexual relationship with both men and women at the same time.

**Lesbian woman or gay man** refers to “a woman or man whose primary sexual and emotional attractions are two persons of the same sex” (Hughes & Eliason, 2002: 266). In the current study the word ‘lesbian’ is used to refer to a female, homosexual and ‘gay’ refers to a male homosexual person.



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**LGBT** refers to a collective group of lesbians, gay, transgender and bisexual people, (Epstein, 1996).

**Sexual orientation** refers to an enduring pattern of or disposition to experience sexual or romantic desires for, and relationships with, people of one's same sex, the other sex, or both sexes (Herek, 2006). When the object of sexual attraction has the opposite sex, a heterosexual orientation is said to exist. When the object of sexual desire has the same sex as the person who is attracted, homosexual orientation exists. This includes all sexual relationships that people engage in, namely, same-sex attraction only, opposite-sex attraction only and sexual attraction to both same-sex and opposite-sex (American Psychological Association, 2000).

**Gender identity** is a person's internal sense of being masculine or feminine, or something other than or in between masculine and feminine (Ottosson, 2007).

Gender identity can be congruent or incongruent with one's sex assigned at birth based on the appearance of the external genitalia (National Academies Press (US), 2011).

**Hate crime or bias crime** refers to a crime against a person, property or organisation, motivated, in whole or in part, by feelings of prejudice (American Psychological Association, 2009).

**Homophobia** is a fear of and hostility towards homosexual people. It is often expressed verbally and at times violently (Moore & Rosenthal, 1993).

**Homosexual** refers to lesbians, gays and bisexuals.

**Transgender** refers to an individual with biological characteristics of one sex who identifies himself or herself as the opposite gender. Transsexuals usually desire to change their bodies to fit their gender identities and do this through hormone treatment and gender reassignment surgery (American Psychological Association, 2009).



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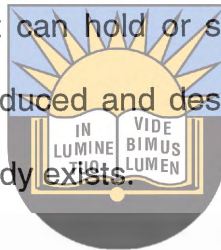
## 1.6 Structure of the dissertation

### Chapter 1: introduction

This chapter outlined the background of the study and also presaged the problem. It also clearly elucidated the aims and objectives of the study.

### Chapter 2: Theoretical framework

This chapter concentrated on the theoretical frameworks. The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduced and described the theory which explains why the research problem under study exists.



### Chapter 3: Empirical review of related literature

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This chapter reviewed the relevant literature to the study. It involved outlining philosophical or even methodological principles which underpinned this study. It included a historical discussion that can be used to refer back to the implications of the principles and methods in evaluating the study.

### Chapter 4: research methodology

This chapter outlined the research methods which were employed for effective data collection. This section sought to explain to the reader the rationale for utilising the mixed method approach as the methodology or research design for this study. Furthermore, the chapter gives an in-depth overview of the population and sampling techniques that were employed in this study. Lastly, the chapter offers a description of how the research findings were analysed and interpreted. It further shows how the researcher conducted the reliability and validity tests of the study.

## **Chapter 5: Presentation, analysis and discussion of findings**

This chapter is a presentation of the research findings of the study. The chapter also gives a discussion of the findings linking them with scholarly work that has been done with regards to LGBTs.

## **Chapter 6: Summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations**

This is the final chapter and it offers a synopsis of the main findings of the study. The chapter also gives future recommendations for academics and policy makers emanating from the study.



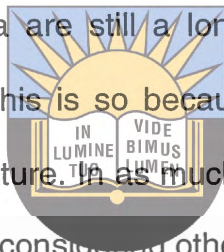
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## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.1 Introduction

Sex and sexuality are fundamental magnitudes of the human experience and an important determinant of well-being. A person's sensual behaviour and sexual health cannot be disjoined from their societies and traditional background. Examining the lives and experiences of gays, lesbians and transgender students in institutions of higher learning in most institutions is a daunting task (Nel & Judge, 2007). Most institutions, especially in Africa are still a long way to go in accepting people of different sexual orientations. This is so because most of these institutions identify themselves with the African culture. In as much as they accept diversity of students, cultures and norms, especially considering other students from other countries, there is still this culture that is 'uniquely African and is found in most Africans, that doesn't tolerate gays, lesbians and transgender people, (IGLHRC, 2012). While marriages of same sex people are considered illegal in some African countries, most religious churches, fanatics and Christians have gone a little bit in castigating gays, lesbians and transgender sexual people as barbaric, satanic, evil or even more bizarre connotations like 'worse than dogs (Toronto Committee for the Liberation of Southern Africa, 1987: 13).



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#### 2.2 Defining homosexuality

The term 'homosexuality' was coined in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by a German psychologist, Karoly Maria Benkert. Benkert invented the term 'homosexuality' as part of an argument that it was an ordinary, private behaviour which should be beyond the interference of the law (Norton, 2002).

The vast majority of gay people are completely normal genetically, they are entirely male or female. Having various definitions on what homosexuality really is, causes major confusion among communities. People with diverse opinions and interpretations of homosexuality create conflicting definitions that would make communication, dialogue and debate impossible hence creating challenges for homosexuals. According to the Pew Research Centre (2013) there is a strong relationship between a country's religiosity and opinions about homosexuality. There is a far less acceptance of homosexuality in countries where religion is central to people's lives and it is measured by whether they consider religion to be very important or whether they believe it is necessary to believe in God in order to be moral, (Layte et al, 2006).



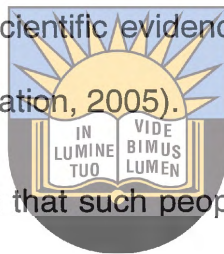
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Homosexuality encompasses more than merely a sexual act. Greenberg, (1988) contends that the terms homosexual, gay or lesbian are, strictly speaking, anachronistic. People who use these terms, hold that homosexual behaviour is a manifestation of who they really are inside, their true self. But according to Greenberg's social constructivist perspective, homosexuality is an orientation produced and interpreted in different ways by different societies at different times. Homosexuality is not an inner essence or disorder that some people have and others do not. It is not a marginal orientation that a certain population has and, when they discover their orientation, they become liberated to conform to their true nature. It's all about what the culture says and their principles on same sex love and different set of treatments given to persons that brings challenges to homosexuals living in those communities.

According to Greenberg (1988) homosexuality is a symptom of a disturbed personality. He believed that homosexuality is a learned behaviour which is

prejudiced by a number of factors, a disturbed family life, and a lack of love on the part of either a parent or failure to identify with the same-sex parent. In future, these complications can result in a pursuit for love, envy of people of the same sex, being always fearful and even suffering rejection. Gunkel (2009) defines homosexuals as people who are motivated, in adult life, by a definite preferential erotic attraction to members of the same sex and who usually, but not necessarily, engages in overt sexual relations with them. Most homosexuals believe that they were born gay. This certainly often gives them comfort, relieving them of any responsibility to change. However, there is no tangible scientific evidence that people are born homosexual, (American Psychological Association, 2005).



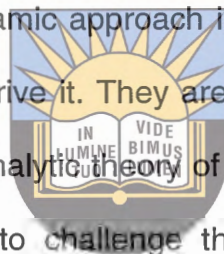
Scientifically it has been proven that such people may have genes that attract them to people of the same sex, American Psychological Association (2009). While this is still debatable, there are psychological theories that try to explain this from the perspective of the psychology of human behaviour. The most familiar two theories are the psychodynamic and social cognitive theories. This study will adopt these two theories to explain the experiences of gays, lesbians and transgender students at the University Of Fort Hare in South Africa. These theories are relevant to the study because they suit the nature of the research and will help this student cover a lot of ground, especially in a more conservative, evasive and not so clear field. It should, however, be noted that, these two theories, though not exactly explaining or giving straightforward answers to the behaviour of gays and lesbians, they better explain the factors that determine or influence gay, lesbian or transgender students behaviours.

## 2.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of a research project relates to the logical origin on which the research takes place and forms the link between the theoretical aspects and practical components of the enquiry undertaken (Creswell, 1998). This study is underpinned by two theories; psychodynamic theory and social cognitive theory. These theories are discussed in details in the next section.

### 2.3.1 The Psychodynamic Theory

The essence of the psychodynamic approach is to explain behaviour in terms of its dynamics, i.e. the forces that drive it. They are many theories that can be used for the study, but Freud's psychoanalytic theory of personality will be more appropriate. Sigmund Freud was the first to challenge the view that mental disorders were caused by physical illness. Instead, he proposed that psychological factors were responsible (Bandura, 1997).



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The psychodynamic theory consists of many different psychodynamic theories that have evolved over time. More so, like any theories, psychodynamic theory is a social construction. Psychodynamic approach assumes that our behaviour is determined by unconscious forces of which we are unaware. Each visible thought, exclamation or behaviour hides a dormant intention. The concealed motives for our behaviour mirror our inborn biological drives and our early experiences, particularly before the age of five (Sammons, 2007). Most particularly, it is the way we are treated by our parents as children that shapes our adult behaviour. Psychodynamic psychologists see behaviour as the result of a compromise between three parts of the psyche (personality). Each person has biological drives (eating, drinking, sex, aggression)

from their identity. These need to be satisfied, but this is prevented by the superego, the moral part of the psyche, which uses anxiety and guilt to prevent us from acting on the id's impulses. Between the two is the ego, which tries to find ways of satisfying the id in a way that the superego will accept and that is in line with reality, (Sammons, 2008). This often involves the use of defence mechanisms which convert unconscious impulses into more acceptable forms. For example, with displacement an impulse may be redirected away from its original target into a more acceptable one (e.g. Being angry with your mother, but taking it out on your friend) (Sammons, 1997).



The father of modern psychoanalysis is Sigmund Freud. Freud's contribution to debates about gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgender can be seen in various ways. Spencer (1995; 319).has argued that Freud's contribution, whilst influential, was 'highly equivocal' indeed, ~~we contended that~~ Freud's perspective may have been crucial to the development of a climate in which the professional pathologisation of same-sex sexualities became possible and legitimate. However, the opposite has also been suggested that by considering human sexuality as 'polymorphously perverse', Freud problematised sexuality in general rather than one particular form of sexuality. It has been claimed that this made it legitimate to consider diverse forms of sexuality, together with their potential benefits and problems (Cohn, 1997).

The psychodynamic approach discards the thought that individuals have free willpower. A person's behaviour is determined by their unconscious motives which are shaped by their biological drives and their early experiences, making this a deterministic approach (Diamond, 2008). With reference to the nature-nurture debate, the psychodynamic approach takes an interactionist position, it agrees that

we are driven by innate, biological instincts (nature) but also maintains that the expression of these is heavily modified by our upbringing (nurture) (Spencer, 1995). The psychodynamic approach also occupies the middle ground in the debate between nomological and ideographic approaches to psychology. Whilst Freud argued that human behaviour is governed by universal processes that apply to everyone (the psyche, the psychosexual stages), reflecting a nomological (laws of birth) understanding, psychodynamic psychologists agree that the exact ways in which these processes manifest themselves in the individual is unique in every case. Their case-study approach to research reflects this uniqueness and exemplifies an ideographic way of studying people, Harrison (2000). However, because the psychodynamic approach commonly elucidates multifaceted behaviours as manifestations of more embryonic organic drives, it is broadly regarded as a reductionist approach to psychology rather than a holistic one Sammons, (2007). More so, it should also be noted that the theory is an explanatory and change theory. It is a change theory in that it provides principles to direct practice and predictions about treatment outcome. To note is that, the theory is a social construction and its tenets are shaped by culture and socio-historical contexts (Nel, 2007).



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Moreover, the psychodynamic theory is represented by four classical schools of theories namely, the drive theory, ego psychology, object relations and self-psychology. The psychodynamic theory on its own is a theory that maps the way forward for psychotherapy. The psychodynamic theory is a theory that looks and opens us up to the not so clear problems that most individuals face from childhood to their adulthood. One is of the view that, it is a theory that tells us why individuals behave the way they do and what influences them. However, according to Cohn

(1997) when analysing the theory other factors outside childhood and adulthood come into play. We live in a world where we have very many pressing issues and as such people react and respond to those situations differently and we should not be tempted to think that, all such tendencies emanate from childhood's unsolved issues, in as much as we should not also assume that outside factors don't play a role, (Leiper *et al*, 2004).

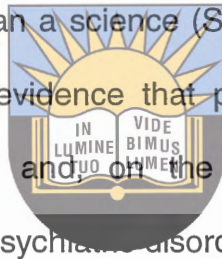
Moreover, according to Cohn (1997) psychodynamic theory is distinguished by its vision of human life as problematic and conflictual and this is no less true of therapy. In seeking to promote change, few things are pure and simple. This outlook is true of the theory itself. It is characterised by different perspectives and competing models. It has also changed in many ways since its conception. The complexities of the issues that it addresses are reflected in the intricate and sometimes elusive conceptualisations to which it has given birth. What they hold in common is the idea that individuals exist in a state of tension with themselves, other people and the world in general (Leiper, *et al*, 2004). The development of the psyche and of emotional difficulties has its foundation in the ways in which this struggle is worked out. It is this 'dynamic' character that marks human existence and which suggests that although change is the business of therapy, it is not an idea that can be taken for granted. In a sense, change is as problematic as staying the same. He goes further that the theory attempts to encompass a vision of life. More so, on this aspect, Cohn, (1997) cites that maturity is about facing what is painful and unacceptable in ourselves; our problems are not just about bad things happening to us but rather our own questionable motives.



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### 2.3.2 Evaluation of the Psychodynamic Theory

Many criticisms of the psychodynamic approach centre on its methods, (Chambless *et al*, 2001). The need for interpretation of the material gathered means that psychodynamic psychologists are often accused of researcher bias, they are likely to favour interpretations of the data. Evidence of efficacy in terms of rigorous controlled trials has also been lacking (Daines & Perrett, 2000). It is claimed by some that the lack of objectivity in the methods and the dependence on unobservable constructs makes the theory impossible to test in an empirical manner, giving Freud's approach more the status of a religion than a science (Sammons, 2007). Leichsenring *et al*, (2004) indicates that there is evidence that psychodynamic theory or therapy is superior to control conditions and, on the whole, as effective as cognitive-behavioural therapy in specific psychiatric disorders.

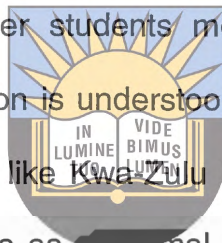


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### 2.3.3 Theoretical Application to the Study (Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Same-Sex Sexualities: An Overview).

Modern South Africa was founded on democratic values, and a constitution that enshrines the principles of human dignity, equality, and social justice. In stark contrast with constitutional guarantees of freedom and human rights for all, research indicates that homophobic victimisation is an endemic part of the South African landscape (Nel & Judge, 2008). Homosexuality has entered the public space in a more extensive and diverse way than before (Kuyper & Vanwesenbeeck, 2009). This has been necessitated by the violent culture that was left behind by the previous government's dispensation. This homophobic act should not be taken lightly as it has also left a number of gays, lesbians, and bisexual and transgender people dead (Nel, 2007).

South Africa treats each and every student equally as enshrined in its constitution. However, gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people have not come out in the open simply because they are untrustworthy of the environment. Laws protecting LGBT rights may influence whether people choose a partner of their own gender and may cause those with same-sex partners to be more open about their orientation (Kuyper & Vanwesenbeeck, 2009). According to Freud (1986) gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgender people behave so because it is a psychological condition. While students of psychology at the University would understand this condition, it's difficult when it comes to other students more especially those from religious backgrounds. While this condition is understood as a psychological condition, most students in learning institutions like Kwa-Zulu Natal University who has an African cultural background regards this as abnormal and intolerable (Mbatha, 2012). The line of limit to respect the rights of others to their sexual orientation and cultural standards and norms are in conflict and end up promoting hate crimes (Nel, 2005).



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Sexual orientation-based hate crimes are extreme expressions of homophobia (also known as homo-prejudice, (Hattingh,1994) through criminal acts (such as rape, assault, or damage to property) committed against people, their property, or organisations because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation (Eliason, 1996). Violence against LGBT people motivated by sexual orientation-related bias is not an individual injury alone, but can be classified as a 'hate crime' that is part of a larger system of domination against LGBT people (UNISA Centre for Applied Psychology and Out LGBT Well-being, 2008). This links hate crime to issues of identity, social power and public attitudes (UNISA Centre for Applied Psychology and Out LGBT Well-being, 2008). Such crimes against LGBT people are often calculated to send a

message to the victim/survivor that his or her sexual orientation and/or gender non-conformity is deviant and must be changed.

While some governments might be tolerated because of the checks and balances and equal freedom to every student, research continually confirms that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and adults are vulnerable to abuse and violence in the larger community (Jenkins, 2001). Mental pressures confound any understanding of behavioural health problems in this population. These people suffer psychological problems not only because of the nature of their sex, but more so to do with emotional stresses they go through after abuse and name calling (Nel & Judge, 2008). Research supports the conclusion that lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults suffer from specific psychological problems at higher rates than their heterosexual counterpart and as such they should not be treated as possessing as others would call them. Furthermore, knowing someone who is gay tends to lead to more positive attitudes towards gays and lesbians (Gentry, 1987; Herek, 1988; Schneider & Lewis, 1984). Further and more recent studies confirm these findings (Ellis and Vasseur, 1993; Herek & Capitanio, 1996). However, this analysis has been criticized methodologically because just as having openly gay relatives and friends could make one more likely to have positive attitudes, the direction of causality could be in the other direction, so that it could be argued that people who support gay rights tend to associate with people who are openly gay (Jung, *et al*, (1964).

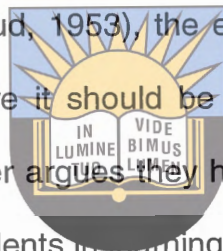


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Apart from the above is the idea forwarded by Freud of 'affect trauma model. Here Freud opens us into the world of LGBT people. According to Freud, (1964) LGBT may be in this condition not because they want, but because of real trauma or abuse

they would have suffered at an earlier childhood. Factors at this stage might have played a role in shaping the behaviour of individuals into what they are. More so, Freud's psychodynamic theory rather than concentrate mainly on one's childhood goes a little bit in highlighting that individuals have drives and feelings suppressed only to be unleashed when mature. Here the point should be understood from both girls and boys. These two sexes (boys and girls) desire to be opposites when growing up, hence students who have liked for the same sex in learning institutions.

Furthermore, according to (Freud, 1953), the environment has little impact on how certain individuals behave. Here it should be noted that Freud does not rule out environmental factors, but rather argues they have an impact on altering behaviour. However, the same cannot be said of students in learning institutions like Fort Hare, who under peer pressure or exclusion from their group might end up gay or lesbian so as to identify themselves with their peers. Here it can therefore be seen that Freud skipped an important factor that might help us explain certain behaviours among students to behave in ways that are considered abnormal to those set by societies.



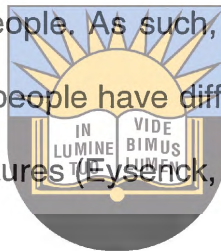
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#### **2.3.4 Shortfalls of the Psychodynamic theory**

Psychodynamic theories offer us insights into the human behaviour and development field. It suggests that behaviour is pre-determined and people do not have free will. Psychodynamics theory's weakness is that most of Freud's ideas are based on findings from a single individual case studies, where the cases are often unique and there are problems with generalisation, (Grünbaum, 1986). Grünbaum (1986:228) concludes that in order for psychoanalytic hypotheses to be validated in the future, data must be obtained from extra clinical studies rather than from data

obtained in a clinical setting. In other words, Grünbaum and other critics assert that psychoanalysis theory lacks in empirical data (Colby, 1960: 54).

Many other powerful criticisms about Freud's inaccurate and subsequently flawed evidence have been published. These critics contend that Freud's evidence is flawed due to the lack of an experiment, the lack of a control group, and the lack of observations that went unrecorded (Colby, 1960:54). Sigmund Freud also did not take into account cultural variations. Most of his research and his predecessors were done on white, middle class people. As such, it should be taken into consideration that every class and culture of people have different ways and values so his findings cannot be generalised to all cultures (Eysenck, 2000).



## 2.4 Social Cognitive Theory

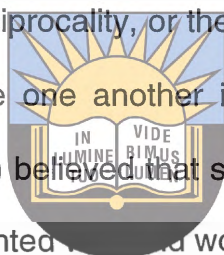
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The Social Cognitive Theory refers to a psychological model of behaviour that emerged primarily from the work of Albert Bandura. Initially developed with an emphasis on the acquisition of social behaviours, social cognitive theory continues to emphasise that learning occurs in a social context and that much of what is learned is gained through observation (Bandura, 1997). The social learning theory cites that human behaviour has often been explained in terms of one-sided determinism. In such models of unidirectional causation, behaviour is depicted as being shaped and controlled either by environmental influences or by internal dispositions. Social cognitive theory favours a model of causation involving triadic reciprocal determinism. In this model of reciprocal causation, behaviour, cognition and other personal factors, and environmental influences all operate as interacting determinants that influence each other bidirectional (Wildemeesch, 1991). Although

cognitive theories are broad, systematic characteristics that influence people's responses are different. It identifies the persons' stylistic behavioural attributes that they exhibit in their perceptual, social and intellectual activities. These attributes indicate the person's mode of understanding, thinking, remembering, judging and solving problems, (Saracho, 1997).

#### **2.4.1 Basic Assumptions of the Social Cognitive Theory**

SCT rests on several basic assumptions about learning and behaviour. One assumption concerns triadic reciprocity, or the view that personal, behavioural, and environmental factors influence one another in a bidirectional, reciprocal fashion. (Bandura, 1997). Piaget, (1952) believed that social cognitive development occurred when an individual were confronted with tasks that works through cognitive conflicts. At the same time, learning is affected by students' own thoughts and self-beliefs and their interpretation of the classroom context. More so, a closely related assumption within SCT is that people have an agency or ability to influence their own behaviour and the environment in a purposeful, goal-directed fashion (Bandura, 2001).



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Considering the use of external sources of information for self-definition, persons selectively attend to the human content of their environment. For instance, they focus on the persons' face during their discussions (Konstadt & Forman, 1965; Ruble & Nakamura, 1972). FD persons look at the face of others to know and understand their thoughts and feelings. SCT does not deny the importance of the environment in determining behaviour, but it does argue that people can also, through forethought, self-reflection, and self-regulatory processes, exert substantial influence over their own outcomes and the environment more broadly.

A third assumption within SCT is that learning can occur without an immediate change in behaviour or more broadly that learning and the demonstration of what has been learned are distinct processes. Saracho (1997) suggests that play consists of many constructs (i.e., cognitive, creative, language, social and manipulative constructs), that lead children toward themselves and their world. Hence the SCT assumes that learning involves not just the acquisition of new behaviours, but also of knowledge, cognitive skills, concepts, abstract rules, values, and other cognitive constructs. Learning these social skills and how to use them may require children to consider their social world, the others' point of view, making moral judgments, and friendship concepts (Saracho, 1997). It also means that students can learn, but not demonstrate that learning until motivated to do so.



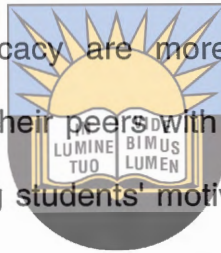
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According to SCT, observational learning of novel behaviours or skills is dependent on four interrelated processes involving attention, retention, production, and motivation (Bandura, 1997). Attentional processes are critical because students are verbally fluent, attentive, competent, and reflective. They use reason to respond to a situation (Saracho, 1997). On the other hand, they pursue others to attest their self-worth, are anxious to please, control others by flattering themselves, though they easily are insulted and depend on others for assistance (Kogan & Block, 1991 cited in Saracho *et al*, 2003).

Students' may inhibit their engagement in behaviour if they observe a model they stay with. For example Studies on preschool children's cognitive style and their social orientation indicate that children are the ones who play more in physical, manipulative, block, and dramatic play and manipulative play (Saracho *et al*, 2003).

Those children who are able to participate in the play are warmer and socially oriented. These outcomes imply that the play behaviours could be interpreted in two-dimensional trends that include both field independence cognitive style and social orientation (Saracho, 1997). It is in this context that sexual orientation can be regarded as a learned phenomenon.

**Perceived Self-efficacy.** Self-efficacy also has emerged as a prominent and influential concept within SCT. Self-efficacy reflects individuals' beliefs about whether they can achieve a given level of success at a particular task (Bandura, 1997). Students with greater self-efficacy are more confident in their abilities to be successful when compared to their peers with lower self-efficacy. Self-efficacy has proven useful for understanding students' motivation and achievement in academic contexts. Higher levels of perceived self-efficacy have been associated with greater choice, persistence, and with more effective strategy use (Pajares, 1996).



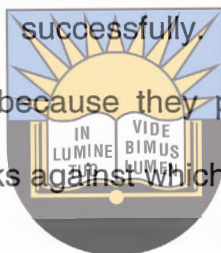
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Consistent with the tenets of SCT, self-efficacy is viewed as a product of individuals' own past performances, the observation and verbal persuasion of others in the environment, and individuals' on-going physiological state (Bandura, 1997). Rather than directly affecting their self-efficacy, however, these sources of information are weighed and filtered through a process known as cognitive appraisal. For instance, a prior failure may not be detrimental to self-efficacy if students believe there was some no-longer relevant reason for the poor performance (e.g., prior sickness). Interventions based on SCT and designed to increase self-efficacy in school-aged children have proven effective (Pajares, 1996).

**Goal Setting.** Goal setting is another central process within SCT (Bandura, 1986). Goals reflect cognitive representations of anticipated, desired, or preferred

outcomes. Hence, goals exemplify the agency view within SCT that people not only learn, they use forethought to envision the future, identify desired outcomes, and generate plans of action (Schunk, 1990). Goals are also closely related to other important processes within SCT. For instance, models can provide goals in the form of specific behavioural outcomes or more general standards for acceptable levels of performance. Goals also are intricately related to students' outcome expectations and their perceived self-efficacy. Goals are a function of the outcomes students expect from engaging in particular behaviours and the confidence they have for completing those behaviours successfully. Finally, goals are an important prerequisite for self-regulation because they provide objectives that students are trying to achieve and benchmarks against which to judge progress (Bandura, 1986).



**Self-regulation.** Explanations for students' management or control of their own learning behaviours have arisen from within many distinct theoretical perspectives, (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). Many of the most common models, however, have strong roots in SCT. SCT models of self-regulation assume that self-regulation is dependent on goal setting, in that students are thought to manage their thoughts and actions in order to reach particular outcomes (Schunk, 2001). SCT views of self-regulation initially emphasized three sub-processes (Bandura, 1986; 1991). Self-observation reflects students' ability to monitor or keep track of their own behaviours and outcomes. Self-judgment is the process through which students' evaluate whether their actions are effective and allow them to make progress toward their goals. Finally, self-reaction occurs when students' respond to the evaluations they have made by modifying their behaviour, rewarding it, or discontinuing it (Schunk, 1990). Self-regulation is a prominent and increasing aspect of SCT that exemplifies the underlying assumptions regarding agency and the influence of personal factors

on behaviour and the environment. As noted above, self-regulation is also dependent on other processes within SCT, including goal setting and self-efficacy. Unless students have goals and feel efficacious about reaching them, they may not activate the processes needed for self-regulation. Modelling can also affect students' self-regulated learning (Zimmerman, 2000). The skills needed to manage one's behaviour, as well the beliefs and attitudes that serve to motivate self-regulation, can be obtained through model.

#### 2.4.2 Concepts of the Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory incorporates a large amount of discrete ideas, concepts, and sub-processes into an overall framework for understanding human functioning. Below are lists of terms that can be used to describe the social cognitive theory by Bandura.



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*Environment:* The natural world, as a whole or in a particular geographical area, especially as affected by human activity (Angus, 2010).

*Situation:* refers to the state of affairs or a combination of circumstances (dictionary.com).

*Self-control:* the way one handles himself, particular one's emotions and desires, especially in difficult situations (Zondervan, 2012).

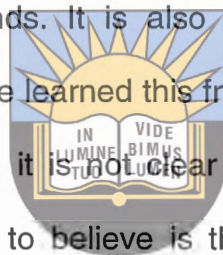
*Observational learning:* Behavioural acquisition that occurs by watching the actions and outcomes of others' behaviour; Include credible role models of the targeted behaviour (Bandura, 1997).

*Self-efficacy:* The person's confidence in performing a particular behaviour; Approach behavioural change in small steps to ensure success (Bandura, 1997).

*Reciprocal determinism:* Reciprocal determinism is proposed as a basic analytic principle for analyzing psychosocial phenomena at the level of intrapersonal development, interpersonal transactions, and interactive functioning of organizational and social systems (American Psychological Association, 2000).

### **2.4.3 Social Cognitive Theory relevance to the study.**

Given the basic assumptions of the Social cognitive theory, the experiences of gay, lesbians, bisexual and transgender students must be understood from the perspective of their backgrounds. It is also true that some gays, lesbians and transgender students might have learned this from their peers as the social cognitive theory has indicated. However, it is not clear as to what drives students into this behaviour, what one is forced to believe is that some of the gays, lesbians and bisexual students at the University could have modelled or copied their behaviour from that of their peers. Moreover one is that, much of this community is not that open and hence giving a clear cut assumption in what motivates them is not that clear.



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Behaviour is influenced by the environment and personal behavioural factors such as cognition, biological events. Some of these factors are beyond the students' circumstances of control. People also evoke different reactions from their social environment by their physical characteristics, such as their age, size, race, sex, and physical attractiveness, quite apart from what they say and do, (Lerner, 1982). People similarly activate different social reactions depending on their socially conferred roles and status (Lawrence, 1999). For example, children who have a reputation as tough aggressors will elicit different reactions from their peers than

those reputed to be unassertive. Thus, by their social status and observable characteristics people can affect their social environment before they say or do anything. The social reactions so elicited affect the recipients' conceptions of themselves and others in ways that either strengthen or alter the environmental bias, (Snyder, 1981).

Because of the bi-directionality of influence between behaviour and environmental circumstances, people are both products and producers of their environment. They affect the nature of their experienced environment through selection and creation of situations. People tend to select activities and associates from the vast range of possibilities in terms of their acquired preferences and competencies (Bandura, 1997). Through their actions, people create as well as select environments. Aggressive persons produce hostile environments wherever they go, whereas those who act in a friendlier manner generate an amiable social milieu (Raush, 1965). Thus, behaviour determines which of the many potential environmental influences will come into play and what forms they will take. Environmental influences, in turn, partly determine which forms of behaviour are developed and activated. The growing recognition of reciprocal causation has altered the way in which socialization is viewed. One-sided developmental analyses of how parents influence their children have given way to transactional analyses of how parents and children influence each other (Cairns, 1979).



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#### **2.4.4 Application of the Theory to the study**

Social-cognitive theories of personality have three defining features. First all is the idea of reciprocal determinism or interactions (Bandura, 1997). Here the emphasis is on social and personal settings, the social relationships people enter tend to alter

their behaviour in certain ways. If this is so, then one is sure that people tend to take certain aspects they like in interactions and discard those which they think are unhelpful. Although the study of reciprocal influence processes is defining of social-cognitive theory, it is not unique to it. Several theories of personality development and functioning recognize that individuals develop through reciprocal person–situation interactions in which people genetically contribute to their development (Magnusson & Stattin, 1998). Moreover, personality factors, in turn, partly determine which environments people experience and how they interpret the socio-cultural settings they encounter. In this systems view of personality, the principle of reciprocal interaction can be extended from the analysis of person situation interactions to the study of interactions among personality variables. Distinct personality processes reciprocally influence one another in the course of development and functioning. In this instance it is easy to notice why students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender would be-friend students with same sex orientation; it is the reciprocal interaction principle at play. For example, should an individual in the group fail to fit in the group it's most likely that he or she may be chased?

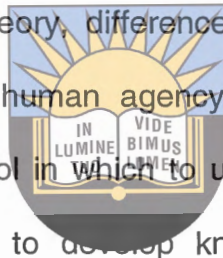


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#### **2.4.5 Weaknesses of the Social Cognitive Theory**

The social cognitive theory fails to unite its concepts under one unified opinion. Bandura tries to cover broad aspects of human behaviour, which causes a disorganization of concepts. The observational learning concept states that humans learn vicariously through observation with or without direct reinforcement. People may or may not change their behaviour based on what has been observationally learned (Not all of the concepts are clearly connected with one another (Perry,

(1986). The concepts Bandura uses are used to explain elements of social behaviour amongst human beings. Not all of the concepts are clearly connected with one another (Perry, 1979) goes on to say that the theory of social cognitive development was not tested against a theoretical model that tasks and individual difference approach. Unlike Freud, Bandura's conceptual use of human agency indicates self-control of mind, with no consideration for the subconscious. Bandura's belief is that thoughts can be controlled through the use of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). Bandura fails to connect biological processes and hormonal responses to explain human behaviour. According to the theory, differences relating to biology and hormonal responses have no effect on human agency or self-efficacy. Bandura's Social-Cognitive Theory provides a tool in which to use the natural learning environment provided by social interaction to develop knowledge that can be adapted for personal.

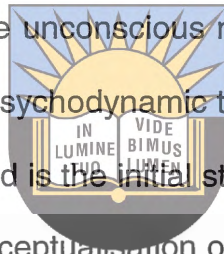


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## **2.5 Towards a theory on Gays, Lesbians, bisexual and transgender (LGBT).**

It is now apparent from the discussion above that the two theoretical perspectives outlined have some differences in the manner in which they conceptualise the notion of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender and how harmonisation of the two theories can solve debates surrounding the sexual orientation of gays, lesbians, and bisexual and transgender people. The psychodynamic approach emphasised the importance of how childhood and adulthood experiences and behaviours are shaped by biological drives and their early experiences, making this a deterministic approach (Freud, 1960).

The psychodynamic approach further underscored the view that adulthood behaviours in certain people can be best explained by looking back at their past as this will help explain why certain individuals have/are showing certain traits. In sharp contrast, the social cognitive theory emphasised the notion of the interaction between the environment and human activity in shaping human behaviour (Nardi 2007). However, despite some criticisms of the two theories, their combination in this research is believed to give a solid and comprehensive theoretical framework from which the research will benefit immensely. Inherent in the psychodynamic theory is a strong belief in the ability of the unconscious mind to influence behaviour in people (Freud, 1953). In this vein the psychodynamic theory argues that exhibiting of certain characteristics in early childhood is the initial stage of the development process (Kim and Hunter, 1993). Such a conceptualisation of the notion of childhood development has utmost relevance in this research as a starting point of defining the notion of sexual behaviours in LGBT people.



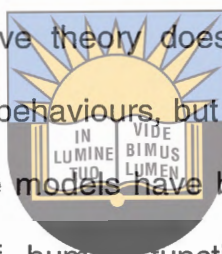
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Despite well founded criticism of the psychodynamic perspective that it is biased towards western countries and that it amounts to cultural decadents, the theory provides a broad framework of analysing sexual behaviour and how studying gays, lesbianism, bisexuality and transgender people has transformed modern psychology from the days of Freud to modern psychology. Given the homophobic situation in South Africa where most homosexuals have adequate rights, but have found themselves victims of homophobia, it can be argued that the country needs to modernise and improve the human rights image on this aspect and improve services for these people since they are also discriminated against when it comes to service provision (Polders & Wells, 2004). This will not only improve the quality of gays,

lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people's lives but will go a long way in curbing the spread of AIDS/HIV and other serious sexual transmitted diseases (Nel & Judge, 2008). The psychodynamic theory prioritises a change of attitude and creation of new defence mechanisms especially in the flight versus the fight since "conflicts occur at various psychosexual stages of development might impact an individual's ability to operate normally" (Bartol, 2002), and this explains why certain people exhibit cowardice traits in themselves.

Furthermore, the social cognitive theory does not rule out the influence of the environment in shaping certain behaviours, but rather it focuses on several aspects of human behaviours. Cognitive models have been accused of failing to recognise the major made up parts of human functioning, unrealistic and deliberately disregarding the biological effects and positioning of mental processes (Hill, 1998). Hill continues to say that cognitive theories have been accused of being too cold to an extend of ignoring the emotional life of humans and their conscious experience and possible use of free will.

Despite some weaknesses in both psychodynamic and cognitive approaches, humans today have achieved treatment to various disorders of the mind and brain through theories and practical treatments such as psychoanalysis therapy which is an effective form of treatment. Cognitive behavioural therapy is also a popular and successful form of treatment for issues such as obsessive disorders (OCD-UK ,2003).



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## 2.6 Conclusion

The chapter has tried to create a synergy of the two theories and tried to show the links and the similarities on the basic assumptions of two theories. It should however be noted that researches are still being carried in an attempt to explain the behaviour of gays, lesbians, bisexual and transgender people and as such these two theories may not be an end in themselves but they try to explain a certain pattern in the behaviour of people. It should also be emphasised that the above two theories are still being tested to prove their relevance if they have stood the test of time and have adapted to the demands of the changing nature of the subject under study. As such new ideas have come up which also adds other dimensions to the new theories thereby making them more relevant to the study of behaviour.



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## CHAPTER THREE

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 3.1 Introduction

Neither the etiology nor prevalence of transgender is well understood. Because sex, gender, and sexuality are at the very core of individual identity, it is difficult to dislodge one's ideas and feelings about them (Pearson, 2009). The research presented in this article is aimed at exploring the challenges faced by LGBT's. Literature review in this chapter sought to answer two main questions: What are the main challenges faced by LGBT's in Africa and what are the strategies they use to cope up. A comparative analysis of the challenges faced by African Countries and the Western countries is provided.



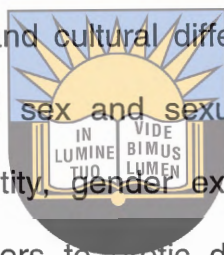
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#### 3.2 The concept sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation can be defined as the way of one's sexual interest toward members of the same, opposite, both, or multiple genders. It is based on whom a person is emotionally, physically and sexually attracted to. Foucault (1981) suggests that sexuality is just assumed to be any given aspect of human experience. According to American Psychological Association (2009) sexual orientation refers to an enduring pattern of emotional, romantic and/or sexual attractions to men, women or both sexes.

An understanding of sex, gender and sexual orientation are often mistakenly truncated into one all-encompassing, but they are ultimately misleading concepts (Reeves, 2012). Hence there is a need to distinctively define gender and sex so as to get a better understanding. Currently, sexual categories relate to the social and

cultural organisation of the sexes. Sex and gender are interchangeably, but, increasingly there is a difference between biological sex and social (gender) relations (American Psychology Association, 2007). It is one thing to have a vulva, vagina, clitoris, breasts, ovaries, 46XX karyotype, etc, but it may be quite another thing being female, feminine, or a woman (Ahmed *et al*, 2004). Against this background, the OED (2012) defines sex as either of the two main categories (male or female) into which human and the most other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions. Whereas gender is the state of being female or male typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones, (OED, 2012). Unlike biological sex and sexual orientation, gender has several aspects such as, gender identity, gender expression, and gender classification (Pearson, 2009). Sexuality refers to erotic desires, sexual practices, or sexual orientation. In the Western culture, individuals are often socially identified as homosexuals or heterosexuals as if a person's sexual orientation encapsulates the total personality and identity, (Ahmed *et al.*, 2004).

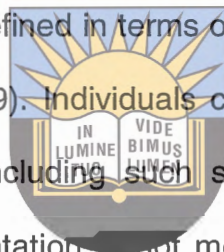


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Sexual orientation refers to the sex of those to whom one is sexually and romantically attracted. Categories of sexual orientation usually have included attraction to members of one's own sex gay men or lesbians, attraction to members of the other sex heterosexuals, and attraction to members of both sexes' bisexuals, (American Psychological Association, 2005). While these categories continue to be widely used, research has suggested that sexual orientation does not always appear in such definable categories and instead occurs on a continuum, Kinsey *et al.*, (1953). In addition, some research indicates that sexual orientation is fluid for some people, this may be especially true for women (Diamond, 2008). Sexual orientation is

distinct from other components of sex and gender; including biological sex the anatomical, physiological and genetic characteristics associated with being male or female, gender identity the psychological sense of being male or female, and social gender role the cultural norms that define feminine and masculine behavior (American Psychological Association, 2007).

Sexual orientation is commonly conversed as if it were wholly a characteristic of an individual, like biological sex, gender identity or age. This point of view is incomplete because sexual orientation is defined in terms of relationships with others (American Psychological Association, 2009). Individuals communicate their sexual orientation through actions with others, including such simple actions as holding hands or kissing. Therefore, sexual orientation is not merely an individual attribute within a human being.



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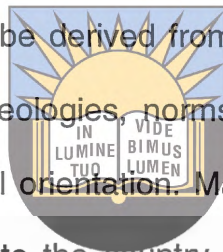
Harro (2000:15) notes that we are all “born into a specific set of social identities, related to categories of difference, we get systematic training in “how to be” each of our social identities throughout our lives.” To a certain extent, one’s sexual orientation defines the group of people in which one is likely to find the satisfying and fulfilling romantic relationships that are an essential component of personal identity for many people (American Psychological Association, 2009).

### **3.3 Homosexuality in African countries**

Since time in memorial homosexuals in African societies have had little to do with personal fear but much to do with their religious values and strong identification with antigay organizations. Homosexuality in African countries is believed to be non-existent or that it is a borrowed culture. Many are adamant to believe it exists

because it is contrary to their religious beliefs. Mokhobo (1989:22) says that, those who want the world to believe that homosexuality is non-existent in current African society, and says that, the concept is abhorrent.

Africans would rather speak of acts and emotions rather than categorising people (Dlhamini, 2006). Riddinger (1995) observes that in African literature, many writers continue to view homosexuality as a phenomenon of European or American expatriates, with more general considerations of recent African history as one of cultural trauma. This idea may be derived from the colonial era whereby, colonists brought an entire change of ideologies, norms and culture, the experience of the colonial rule brought this sexual orientation. Many black Zimbabweans believe that homosexuality was introduced to the country by white settlers and is now mainly propagated by the West, (Epprecht, 1998). The denial of indigenous homosexual behaviours and identities is often so strong that critics have been quick with accusations of homophobia (Epprecht, 1998).

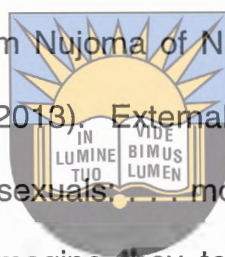


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The denial of homosexuality in African societies has evoked the existence of LGBT'S. Murray and Roscoe (1998) assert that popular images of Africa as the 'dark' continent, the 'cradle' of humanity, where distinctions between human and animal, civilised and savage are tentative and easily reversed. Hence traditional African ideas of homosexuality have exerted a strong influence on LGTB's and many courses or principles of action have been adopted by different organisations or individuals in different countries and communities so as to ensure their existence. The colonialists did not introduce homosexuality to Africa, but rather intolerance of it

and systems of surveillance and regulation for expressing it, as suggested by (de Vos, 1996), (Kendall,1996), (Murray and Roscoe,1998) and (Riddinger, 1995).

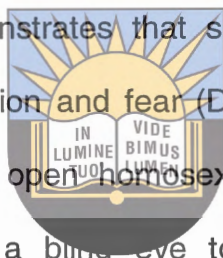
Homosexuality was not an unknown behaviour over much of the African continent before Colonialism (Dhlamini, 2006). Homosexuality in Africa is strongly viewed as a borrowed concept, structuring on interpretations made by various presidents in Africa it is easy convince citizens that homosexuality is not only sinful abomination, but it is a phenomenon that is learned from the Western cultures (Nyanzi, 2013). For example in 1996, President Sam Nujoma of Namibia condemned homosexuals as negative influences (Nyanzi, 2013). Externalising homosexuality to foreigners, Nujoma alienated African homosexuals: . . . most of the ardent supporters of these perverts are Europeans who imagine they to be the bulwark of civilization and enlightenment. . . . We made sacrifices for the liberation of this country and we are not going to allow individuals with alien practices such as homosexuality to destroy the social fabric of our society (Reddy, 2002:168). It is in this context that homosexuality does not originate in Africa.



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On the other hand, (Shoko, 2010) suggests that homosexuality has always been there, though it was named differently for example when women in villages would practise lesbianism especially when their husbands had left for work in mines. This is a good example that homosexuality existed in Africa it's just that it was given an excuse that the husband was missing. But from a research point of view this is a type of sexual orientation existed. Summer (2004) as cited in Dlamini (2006) reveals homosexuality as being African. He additional says that the notion homosexuality might have not existed historically, but the acts and emotions were present.

Whether sexual orientation is an attribute we are born with or is caused by the environment we are raised in, it has been discussed by scientists, religious leaders, elected officials, and the general public. Traditional versions of masculinity that once bestowed privilege and power onto heterosexuals are being challenged and destabilized. Today, queer theorists and activists are directly challenging the veridicality and necessity of sexual and gender categories, and some empirical research demonstrates that heterosexuality and homosexuality are not always neatly separable, mutually exclusive categories (Diamond, 2003). The visibility of homosexuality in Africa demonstrates that same-sex practices generate heated public opinion, debate, opposition and fear (Dhlamini, 2006). The African cultures unquestionably disapprove of open homosexual behaviour. They are, however, prepared to tolerate or turn a blind eye to discreet, eccentric or 'accidental' homosexual acts provided the proper compensations and social fictions are maintained (Epprecht, 1998).



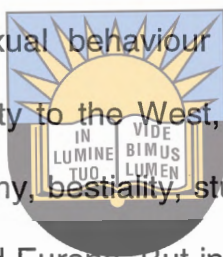
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### **3.4 Policies relating to homosexuals in Africa**

While legislation and initiatives that discriminate against lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people have been enacted for decades (Smith *et al*, 1987), there has been a dramatic increase in such enactments during the past several years. However, these policies have failed to protect these groups of people because that it is viewed that it is un-African hence leading to the condemnation of homosexuality. Some structures of these enactments have been accepted by states and other jurisdictions that restrict the rights of lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people in a selection of spheres as well as limiting access to the rights and responsibilities of marriage,

restricting parental rights, and constraining access to legal recourse in the face of discrimination transphobia (Nel & Judge, 2008).

Over the years, national and religious leaders from different parts of Africa have increasingly pronounced that homosexuality is alien to African culture, tradition and heritage (Reddy, 2002). African countries, such as Zimbabwe and Zambia, have extreme and irrational aversions to homosexuality. Homosexuality in Zimbabwe is widely seen as a result of the moral decadence that has gripped society and as originating in promiscuous sexual behaviour (Shoko, 2010). In 1997, Mugabe candidly assigned homosexuality to the West, dissociating it from Zimbabwe: "Let the Americans keep their sodomy, bestiality, stupid and foolish ways to themselves. Let them be gays in the US and Europe. But in Zimbabwe, gays shall remain a very sad people forever" (Reddy, 2002:164). Laws in Zimbabwe passed in 2006 were to criminalize any actions perceived as homosexual. The Zimbabwean government has made it a criminal offense for two people of the same sex to hold hands, hug, or kiss. The "sexual deviancy" law is one of 15 additions to Zimbabwe's Criminal Code quietly passed in Parliament (Criminal Law Codification and Reform Act [Chapter 9:23] of Zimbabwe). However there is no statutory legislation prohibiting homosexual activities in Zimbabwe, but there are criminal offences under Common law which effectively make homosexuality illegal in Zimbabwe. However, this kind of policy in Zimbabwe characterised homosexuality as a threat to an idealised patriarchal culture and national values, often and openly linked to Western imperialism and 'reactionary forces'. This aversion to homosexuality allowed Mugabe's followers to portray him as 'brave' and to flatter anti-gay vigilantes as 'heroic' in a nationalist sense (Epprecht, 1998).



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African countries such as Uganda have enacted, the Uganda Anti-Homosexuality Act, 2014. Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill of 2009 aimed at protecting the cherished culture of the people against emergent threats to the traditional heterosexual family (Nyanzi, 2013). The Anti-Homosexuality Bill received widespread public media attention, because it proposed the death penalty for 'aggravated homosexuality' (Ssebagala, 2011; Strand, 2011). Less publicised were other proposed crimes and penalties, including: (1) three years, imprisonment for not disclosing homosexuality to the police within 24 hours of knowing, (2) seven years' imprisonment for the promotion of, conspiracy to engage in, aiding and abetting of or attempting to commit homosexuality and (3) life imprisonment for same-sex-marriage or the offence of homosexuality. Legal analyses of the Bill (Ewins, 2011; Hollander, 2009; Tamale, 2009) reveal that it replicates existent laws, is unconstitutional and requires Uganda to opt out of previously ratified international treaties that go against the spirit of this Bill. The bill was signed into law by the President of Uganda on 24 February 2014 (Strand, 2011). This bill has strongly disapproved homosexuality and citizens of nations are to be jailed for 14 years or be imprisoned to death sentence (Anti-Homosexuality Bill, 2014). While these imagined foreign sexual rights activists are active, the people of Uganda are projected as passive powerless beings easily bullied or fooled into accepting whatever impositions are thrust at them (Nyanza, 2013).



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By these kinds of policies being constructed it clearly creates homophobic responses from and within citizens which does not only affect Ugandans only but the rest of Africans. With these policies LGBT's have to hide in the shadows remain invisible

and voiceless especially on the fringes of society. One unanticipated effect of the Anti-Homosexuality Bill (2009) in Uganda has been the galvanising and strengthening of a localised grassroots-based social movement of sexual minority rights activists (Oloka-Onyango, 2012; Ssebagala, 2011). According to human rights activists this bill would eventually also make it easier to discriminate against, “writers, artists, scholars of any sexual orientation, whose work might be interpreted as promoting homosexuality” (Strauhs, 2013). These policies will not only affect LGBT’s but everyone instead.



But while these policies in some African states may to some extent try to accommodate homosexuals such as South Africa and Kenya, where the law has been changed to improve rights for gays and lesbian people still they aim ultimately to control and enforce conformity. Epprecht (1998) quoted the former President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi, as claiming that “words like lesbianism and homosexuality do not exist in our languages”. Mr Moi variously argued for acceptance and protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation.

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South Africa has a comprehensive and varied history regarding LGBT rights. The legal and social status of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people has been influenced by a combination of traditional South African customs. The equity clause [9(3)] in the South African Constitution (Government Gazette of South Africa, 1996) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and states that:

“No person shall be unfairly discriminated against on the grounds of race, gender, sex, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, birth, or marital status.”

South Africa is the first country in the world to offer gay and lesbian people unequivocal protection in its constitution (Gevisser & Cameron, 1995).

Gays and lesbians are permitted to tie the knot, come out in the open about their sexual orientation. Thabo Mbeki, former President of South Africa when he visited Uganda, also defended the rights to privacy, self-determination, security and freedom from harm for consenting adults who engage in homosexual practices, (Nyanzi, 2013). Gay and lesbians are permitted to operate freely, policies regarding sexual orientation are very flexible in some African countries. It can be safely concluded that sexual orientation policies are best determined by the leader. If the leader is modernized and westernised sexual policies are likely to be friendly and if the president is traditional policies are harsh.



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Despite all this, colonial influence is still pervasive, according to (Shoko, 2010; Judge, 2007), Africans see homosexuality as being both “un-African and un-Christian”. According to (Epprechet, 2007) because in these countries where homosexuals are accepted they are still facing challenges mostly persecution. In South Africa, in spite of the liberal constitution, homosexuality is met with intolerance and violence in many instances. The Pew Research Centre (2010) indicated that 86 per cent of South Africans view homosexuality as morally wrong. Homosexuality, therefore provides a potent idiom and rhetorical technique that leaders employ to maintain state-power over the electorate. However, it is noteworthy that not all African presidents espouse homophobia (Nyanzi, 2013). The bulk of this scholarship is from Southern African contexts (Epprecht, 2004:15).

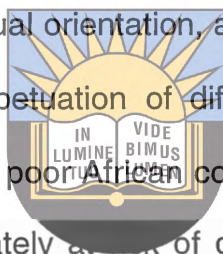
### 3.5 Challenges faced homosexuals in African countries

This part is going to focus on challenges of homosexual people. What are the other challenges are being faced by homosexuals who are not in a university setting but in Africa generally? It is important to note that the literature used is rather broad. Social and economic challenges will be discussed.

#### 3.5.1 Social challenges

Traditional identity markers that have served so long as vital pillars of power, nation, race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, are all powerful anchoring-points both for the establishment and perpetuation of difference (UCAP & Out, 2008). It is claimed that LGBT people from poor African communities and black lesbian women in particular, are disproportionately at risk of discrimination (Smith, 2004). Studies have shown that lesbians face violence twice as often as heterosexual women (Graham & Kiguwa, 2004). Unlike GLBT students, who are often in the coming out process and grappling with issues connected to their own sexual orientation, many children of GLBT parents have grown up “culturally queer,” regularly confronting homophobia in all its manifestations and anxious to protect their families from further discrimination (Cahill & Jones, 2001).

Cabaj, *et al* (2001) contents that homosexuals’ experience stress as a result of being stigmatised because of their sexual orientation and of being members of a social minority. Sigmund Freud wrote to the anxious mother of a homosexual son that, “Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness...” (Freud, (1964). It is in this light most of them are faced hate speech (such as harassment, slurring, name-

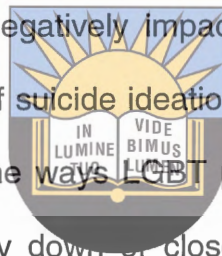


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calling and other forms of verbal abuse) this creates the breeding ground for hate-based attacks. For example, homophobic speech is often shaped by so-called religious and cultural narratives, Homosexuality is unAfrican taken to its logical conclusion, may be used to 'justify' a hate crime and homosexuality is a sin, may also be used in the same manner (Judge, 2007).

LGBT's in Africa were said to be faced with a challenge of discrimination, from a study conducted in Kwa-Zulu Natal in South Africa (Nel & Judge, 2008). The fear of discrimination was shown to negatively impact on markers of well-being and, by example, it increases the risk of suicide ideation (Wells, 2006). Fears such as these can have a chilling effect on the ways LGBT people present themselves in public, often encouraging them to play down or closet their sexual orientation or gender non-conformity. Not only do these strategies of self-presentation force LGBT people to choose between their safety and their identity, but they also reduce the visibility of the LGBT community as a fully functioning part of South Africa's diverse society (Reid & Dirsuweit, 2002). Murray and Roscoe's (1998) treatment of homophobia is that people fear homosexuality. The fear is occasioned by the lack of understanding. Not knowing the causes of homosexuality, some find an easy answer by ascribing it to evil forces and associating it with evil.

Nel and Judge (2008) conducted a study in Gauteng and found out that LGBT's were facing challenges of being victimised when they accessed services after being victimised. Prejudice rendered LGBT people frequent targets of further victimisation when they turn to service providers for assistance after the assault, a phenomenon known as secondary victimisation (DSD, 2005). Negative attitudes and prejudice on



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the part of criminal justice officials and healthcare services play a role in secondary victimisation, which in turn can be referred to as institutionalised homophobia (Eliason, 1996). The Out/UCAP research found that approximately 33% of the respondents experienced the police as “not interested” in assisting them when they had reported discrimination (Polders & Wells, 2004). This bias can extend beyond the police to bias against LGBT people in the court system and in incarceration facilities (Nel, 2004). The research indicates that only 41,2% of incidents of rape and sexual abuse against lesbian and gay people in Gauteng are reported to the police, (Polders & Wells, 2004).



### 3.5.2 Economic challenges

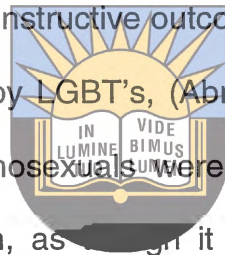
Knowing the law is a very important part of any effective human rights work to counteract homophobia. Access to houses, jobs even basic food or clothing is a challenge when it comes to LGBT issues. This can be due to speedily changing permissible provisions, contradicting sources, and the inaccessibility of certain legal provisions in the public domain. One challenge noted especially from Uganda stated that, “There have increasingly been unlawful house raids of suspected homosexuals, arrests, blackmail from landlords threatening tenants with eviction,” says Jay, who works for Freedom and Roam Ugandan (Farug, 2014). Following the raids they are brutally abused, left homeless thus they become ill. LGBT’s in Uganda they can’t even access health facilities since they are illegal. When they are ill they can’t continue with their daily lives (Charmaz, 19950; Green and King, 2007, 2009; Hinojosa *et al.*, 2008). This confirms that illness disrupts an individual’s ability to maintain the same identity as before illness because the material (the body) and symbolic resources (gender identification) may be no longer relevant in the post-

illness situation. The policing of lesbian women has included 'corrective rape' and murder as in the case of Eudy Simelane (Prinsloo, 2011). Wells and Polders (2006) study indicated that some homosexuals are either unaware of their rights or afraid to put them into practice.

### 3.6 Strategies used by LGBT's in Africa

Shih (2004:180-183), reveals that "coping strategies" defines strategies or methods enhanced to avoid negative consequences, through which individuals are motivated to protect themselves from unconstructive outcomes. Reviewing the current literature based on the strategies used by LGBT's, (Abrams, 1995:19) notes studies on the strategies used chiefly by homosexuals were conceptualizing the process as an "identity management" problem, as though it was the identity itself that was the problem. In addition to this criticism, (Wilson and Miller, 2002: 376) argue that early studies on managing identity for coping with heterosexism suggested concealment of sexual identity as the primary strategy for functioning in a heterosexist society.

LGBT's in South Africa for instance, have resorted to online dating, to remain anonymous and to reach out to others of the same sex orientation as a strategy to cope up with the identity challenges they are facing. Prinsloo (2011) says there are dedicated gay and lesbian sites where young and teen gay, bisexual and lesbian people meet and their identities are hidden. He continues to say they are explicitly orientated towards young LGBTI persons. The dating sites are virtual spaces for non-heteronormative people (and in this case lesbians) to speak to and engage with others in terms of friendships and romantic relationships.



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Another strategy which is being used by LGBT's was raising the awareness of all citizens about their right to receive accessible and non-discriminatory services, and to empower citizens/victims to seek redress when their rights are denied them by service providers (Nel, 2007). In Uganda gay rights expression was sometimes made available to people through the media. Nuance (2013) states that sexual minority rights activists boldly staged peaceful protests and demonstrations at national gatherings and international forums in the country, most notably the Commonwealth Heads of Government and Ministers' meetings held in Kampala. He further states that LGBT's in Uganda they had to fight against the Anti-homosexuality Bill by going for court rulings for the visibility of the existence of self-identified homosexuals in contemporary Ugandan society.



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According to Epprecht (1988), in a polygamous society, sexual frustration among neglected junior wives also purportedly led to lesbian-like affairs. LGBT's in Zimbabwe have strategized to disguise (Shoko, 2010). As a strategy to cope in an environment where homosexuality has been illegalised, citizens fake to be straight and get married, but they will be sneaking out to meet with people of the same orientation. The strategies that are used in a gay-friendly contexts where role flexing (such as conforming to masculinity norms, being sanctimonious, concealing sexual identity, and passivity), keeping the faith (by remaining close to God), standing your ground (openly confronting people who spoke unfavourable of homosexuality), and changing sexual behaviour (Bakacak & Oktem, 2013). The main strategy used in a gay-friendly contexts, on the other hand was "creating gay-only spaces". Besides, "accepting self" was a strategy that is used in all contexts (Wilson & Miller, 2002: 380-384). Although the existing of heterosexism in the lives of gay and bisexual

students is well established, little is known about the strategies they use to cope in their communities (McDavitt et al, 2008).

### **3.7 Comparative analyses of the challenges faced in Africa and in Western countries**

In contemporary European and North American cultures, sex and gender have traditionally been based on binary opposites male and female, man and woman, homosexual and heterosexual. There are a number of other cultures where there is greater gender diversity and gender does not always neatly divide into male and female. In these cultures, this gender variance has often been idealised and romanticised by many in the Western world (Ahmed *et al.*, 2004). Research continually confirms that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and adults are vulnerable to abuse and violence in the larger community (Martell *et al.*, 2014). Agreeing that being homosexual, bisexual or transgender is, in itself, problematic, does not account for the emotional toll that living in hostile environments has on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and adults (Francis & Msibi, 2011).

Like many South Africans, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) people face challenges of common violence and crime. However, because they are stigmatised for their perceived sexual orientation, LGBT people are also frequently discriminated against, through criminal acts, because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity (Nel & Judge, 2008). Likewise, it was noted in the US, LGBT's are victimized in their family of origin and more are likely to run away from home. Cochran *et al* (2002) found that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth run away from home more frequently than their heterosexual counterparts, and are

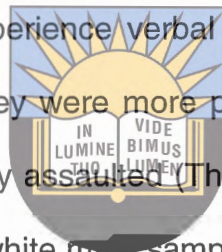


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victims of physical violence from family members (particularly for males) or following homelessness. In their study of lesbian, gay and bisexual homeless youth in Seattle (United States of America), the authors found reports of higher incidence of substance abuse, higher self-report ratings of symptoms of psychopathology, and more sexual partners than heterosexual homeless youth.

A comparison of the findings of seven USA anti-gay violence victimisation surveys (1988 - 1991) with a South African study conducted in 1992 found that, while South Africans were less likely to experience verbal abuse and threats of violence than their American counterparts, they were more prone to be physically assaulted and substantially more often sexually assaulted (Theron & Bezuidenhout, 1995). In their research with a predominantly white male sample, (Theron and Bezuidenhout, 1995) report that 22% of gay hate victimisation involved rape or sexual assault, 22% physical assault, and 67% involved hate speech. Similarly, a study by (Theuninck, 2000) found that 75% of the sample, again consisting primarily of white gay males, had experienced hate speech, 22% had been physically assaulted, and 17% had been victims of sexual assault. According to Plug *et.al.* (2011) sexual orientation, prejudice and segregation estimates intolerance seems most severe in Turkey, Azerbaijan and Armenia (80-90 percent).

The African and Western LGBT's were confronted by the same challenge of psychological problems due to homophobia. It was noted from a research conducted in Kwa-Zulu Natal (Francis and Msibi, 2011). One of the participants an African woman described to the class the negative reactions from a teaching colleague when she saw the button with the slogan "Homophobia is a social disease." This



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student told the class that her colleague believed that homosexuality is a disease and un-African and that we, as teachers, were brainwashing the students. Other students made similar claims and questioned whether being gay or lesbian is 'African (Francis & Msibi, 2011:162). Conclusively lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults suffer from specific psychological problems at higher rates than their heterosexual counterparts. The Benjamin Society also suggests that transgender individuals are vulnerable to psychological distress. Gilman *et al.* (2001) analysed data from the National Co-morbidity Study and compared rates of mental disorders among people who have had same-sex sexual partners to rates among those who report exclusively opposite-sex partners and LGBT's had a higher rate.



Though the situations are not similar, bisexual and transgender people might find themselves affected by anti-gay adoption laws. Adoption is the legal establishment of a parent/child relationship between individuals who are usually not, with the exception of kinship adoption, related by birth (Ryan & Whitlock, 2007). Bisexuals in same-sex relationships will face the same prejudice and lack of recognition as gays and lesbians (Cahill & Jones, 2001). This challenge is not only faced in Africa or Western countries, but those who are single or in opposite-sex relationships might find their situations determined by whether the court has knowledge of past same-sex relationships and how those relationships are framed. There are no laws explicitly denying transgender people the right to adopt. However, transgender people may face discrimination by an adoption agency. If a transgender person is legally the same sex as his or her partner, then he or she could face the same obstacles that gay and lesbian individuals and same-sex couples do (Cahill & Jones, 2001). Little is known about the adoption experiences of LGBT adoptive parents,

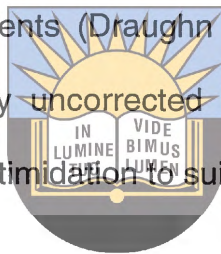
(Ryan & Whitlock, 2007). But the existing data suggest that LGBT persons experience legal barriers to adoption as well as agency attitudes and practices that are either covertly or overtly discriminatory against adoption by LGBT persons (Ryan, Pearlmuter, & Groza, 2004; Ryan, 2000). In 1977, Florida enacted a law to prohibit gays and lesbians from adopting. Its statute reads, "No person eligible to adopt under this statute may adopt if that person is a homosexual." (Cahill *et al.*, 2001). This ban was upheld by a federal court in 2001. In Africa they face the same challenge basing on the fact that homosexuality is considered to be un-African.



### **3.8 Experiences of LGBT's at various institutions of higher education.**

Student advancement is normally influenced by the environment and according to (Bandura, 1997) social learning and human ecological models of development emphasize that human behaviour and thoughts are inevitably tied to the acts of observing and modelling the behaviour, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Mallon (1998) contents those college students' perspectives toward LGBT individuals are established, nurtured, and sometimes revised through the interpretive process of trying to understand and evaluate the social cues that come from the individuals, communities, and social institutions surrounding them. The college years are significant in the (re) socialization of core values and belief systems, and only a modest amount of this research focuses on the shifts that may take place in attitudes toward the LGBT community. The experiences of college students are ever changing, which means that staff and faculty members have to recognize and act on these changes or they will quickly find themselves left behind (Beemyn & Rankin, 2011).

Higher education institutions have made policies or advancements to make LGBT people comfortable. Messinger (2011) says that making inclusive spaces for LGBT students is a priority for many universities nationwide. Accordingly, many institutions implement LGBT speakers' bureaus, ally/safe space programmes, and other educational programmes that aim to promote awareness, understanding, and acceptance of LGBT people (Rankin, 2005). Such programmes often focus on LGBT people as a group, rather than focusing on each identity individually. Yet there is concern that these programs are often not based on a systematic understanding of campus climate for LGBT students (Draughn *et al.*, 2002). According to Taylor (1983) stereotypical and largely uncorrected beliefs about homosexuals are still alleged by many people as an intimidation to suitable male and female behaviour.



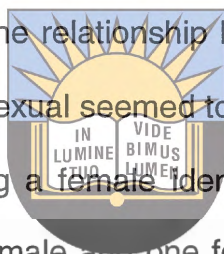
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Looking at the experiences of LGBT's from a global perspective (Pope *et al.*, 2007) indicates that many LGBT international students do not go through the process of sexual identity development in their home countries because they have been exposed to homophobia there. LGBT students face certain issues in the disclosure of their sexual orientation or gender identity, such as how to manage, hiding, partially disclosing, or openly coming out with their sexual orientation to their friends and families, in their schools, and workplaces (Arthur, 2004). LGBT people in the United States and international students also struggle with their sexual orientation and how to define their sexual identity, as international students and as natives in their home countries. Because they have hidden their sexual identities in their home countries, they stay in the closet, feel isolated and hopeless with their futures in the United States (Oba & Pope, 2013). LGBT international students may not have had an opportunity in their home countries to learn about sexual risks, the practice of safe

sex, preventing sexually transmitted diseases, and the location of and how to access health systems (Pope *et al.*, 2007). They seem resistant to change their sexual identity and do not know how to cope with their growing awareness of the identity because of their own internalized heterosexism, as well as simply a lack of knowledge of how to do this effectively (Oba & Pope, 2013).

In this light, (Francis and Msibi, 2011) argue that identity crisis does not only lie within LGBT students, but also with other students and that there is much confusion among our students regarding the relationship between homosexuality and biology. For most, the words gay and bisexual seemed to be quite difficult to understand. Gay men were perceived as wanting a female identity. Bisexual people were seen as having two sexual organs (one male and one female). This similarity has been noted by (Msibi, 2008). The misunderstanding uttered by students when the diverse forms of sexual identifications were discussed, highlights the gendered nature of homosexuality. As one student stated, “A man that is gay no longer is a man. He is like a woman. He does things that women do and acts like how women act (Francis & Msibi, 2011). Not only identity crisis was a problem, but they also experience being called names that are disheartening.

Relating to a research conducted from Turkey universities (Öztürk & Kozacio—lu, 1996), they revealed that Turkish homosexuals who disclosed their homosexual identity were less anxious and depressed than those who did not. This meant that after “coming out” homosexuals who get support from their families or friends are more comfortable than others who don't. This also meant that learning about homosexuality and having social interaction with a homosexual person might reduce



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heterosexual individuals' prejudiced behaviours, and so the homosexual individual feels less depressed and anxious.

Ellis and Vasseur (1993) contended that students who had a homosexual friend were more positive toward homosexuality and homosexuals than those who did not have any homosexual friends. Having a homosexual friend might lead people to recognize that cultural stereotypes of homosexuals do not seem to fit (Sakalh & Ugurlu, 2002). Hence it can be said that identity has much effect on LGBT's because it determines the way they are going to communicate and build relationship with other students whether they share the same orientation or not.



Regardless of a much shown campaign through You Tube that "It Gets Better" for youth when they graduate for high school and enter higher education, colleges and universities also remain largely hostile environments for gays and lesbian students (Beemyn & Rankin, 2011). LGBT students are experiencing harassment because of their sexual orientation. Mason (2001) revealed that students, who experienced this kind of oppression, were negatively affected in their well-being. In a 14 university study of campus climate for LGBT students, approximately 30 percent of respondents reported experiencing harassment because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, and 51 percent reported keeping silent about their sexuality or gender identity (Rankin, 2005). In many instances, the perpetrators do not realize the harmful impact that these labels inflict on people who are gay or lesbian. Rey and Gibson (1997), for example, argue that (like many of our own students) there is a failure to recognize that negative comments and labels about LGB youth impact negatively on *all* students. Mostly, however, it creates a negative environment for

LGB students, whether or not they are open about their sexual orientation (Rey & Gibson, 1997). As copying strategy Helping LGBT international students establish a social network is important to maintaining their psychological well-being (Tseng & Newton, 2002).

### 3.9 Conclusion

Optimal policies for gender and sexuality are needed so as to be a balance between our knowledge of the effect of biological determinants that influence long term gender identity and the power of the affected individual in making decisions about his or her own outcome (Ahmed *et al.*, 2004). It is in this context that one can safely conclude that most countries in the world lack legal protection against sexual orientation and gender based discrimination (Samelius & Wägberg, 2005), despite the fact that LGBT persons are subject to violence, discrimination any other forms of abuse. Even in countries with permissive social attitudes towards lesbian and gay people, such as the Netherlands, where same-sex orientation has long been decriminalised and gender variations socially and legally accommodated, responses to sexual orientation-based hate crimes are still visible (Schippers, 1997).



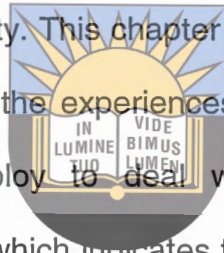
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## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 4.1 Introduction

Research is based on some core theoretical assumptions about what constitutes valid research and determining which research methods are suitable for the development of data in a given study. The previous chapter, chapter three, discussed challenges, policies and coping strategies underpinning the study and factors influencing homosexuality. This chapter discusses the research methodology which was used to investigate the experiences, challenges faced by homosexuals and the strategies they employ to deal with those challenges. A research methodology is the framework which indicates the methods and procedures that are followed when collecting and analysing data in research (Welman *et al.*, 2005: 53).



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The research methodology is regarded as the most important part of the research because it highlights how data would have been collected, analyzed and how ethical aspects would have been considered. It simply describes an outline, for conducting the study in such a way that utmost control would be exercised over factors that could obstruct with the validity of the research results.

#### 4.2 Description of the Study Area

The University Of Fort Hare is a proud black African University with an illustrious history spanning 96-years, founded in 1916. The University has now reached the 11 000 mark in the number of students enrolled and continues to grow not only in the quantity but the quality of students who graduate from it (UFH Student Guide, 2014). The graduates of the University Of Fort Hare are found in all spheres of social,

economic, cultural and political life. The University continues to fulfil its mandate in the core areas of teaching/learning, research and community engagement. The main campus of the University of Fort Hare is situated in the fertile Tyhume valley, some 120 km due west of the city of East London. It lies adjacent to the town of Alice, the capital of the new Nkonkobe Municipality. The University and Alice are served by road and rail links. Alice is a small town in a rural setting, lying within the former Ciskei. Nearest population centres are Fort Beaufort (20km), Hogsback (30 km), Middledrift (20 km), Dimbaza (40 km) and King William's Town / Bhisho (60 km) (UFH Student Guide, 2014).



### 4.3 Research Design

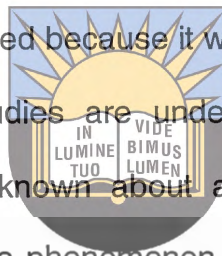
Burns and Grove (2003:195) define a research design as “a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings”. A mixed method approach was adopted for this study whereby both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analyses were used. This proved useful as the aim of the study was to find out the experiences, challenges faced by homosexuals or LGBT’s and strategies they employ to deal with those challenges.

#### 4.3.1 Qualitative method

Burns and Grove (2003:19) describe a qualitative approach as “a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and situations to give them meaning”. A qualitative research was conducted so as to form a social enquiry that focused on the way people interpret and make sense of their experience and the world in which they live (Holloway and Wheeler, 2002:30). This qualitative approach

was used so as to discover the behaviour, viewpoints, experiences and state of mind of people and emphasizes the understanding of these elements. The researcher focused more on the experiences of gays and lesbians from the participants' perspective. In order to achieve this emic perspective, the researcher became involved and immersed in the study. The rationale for using a qualitative approach in this research was to explore and describe challenges faced by homosexuals or LGBT's and strategies they employ to deal with those challenges.

Qualitative methodology was used because it was explorative and according to (Polit *et al* 2001:19) explorative studies are undertaken when a new area is being investigated or when little is known about an area of interest. It was used to investigate the full nature of the phenomenon and other factors related to it. Since the topic of gays and lesbians was new this approach was appropriate to capture the opinions of participants in the study. Qualitative research emphasized on the significance of looking at variables in the natural setting in which they are found because communication between variables was vital. Therefore a plan of action was consciously designed to find out the issues affecting gay, lesbians, bisexual and transgender at the University of Fort Hare. This is why the University of Fort Hare was specifically selected as the specific area of study. This design helped the researcher to plan and implement the study in a way that will help obtain the intended results, thus increasing the chances of obtaining information that was associated with homosexual's experiences.



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### 4.3.2 Quantitative method

As mentioned above quantitative method was also utilized. Quantitative methodology can be described as the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. It was used in a wide variety of natural and social sciences, including physics, biology, psychology, sociology and geology (Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 2005). Aliaga and Gunderson (2000) describe quantitative research methods research as 'explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods in particular statistics. Goodwin (2002) quantitative methods are best suited when investigating people's attitudes and challenges and this approach has been used successfully in many research studies.



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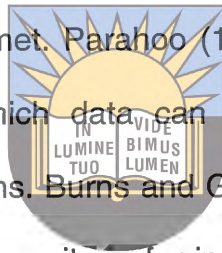
The use of the quantitative research method was based on the generation of statistical data from large-scale surveys, using methods such as structured interviews and questionnaires in order to collect data so as to generalize the results to a wider setting (Tustin *et al.*, 2005:18). In addition, the results obtained through quantitative research were objective and this method was more scientific as compared to qualitative research. These two types of research designs were combined to equal an even larger scale research project that would yield a lot of information (AIU, 2012).

### 4.4 Population of the study

According to Blanche *et al.* (2006:13) a population is a list of all available elements the researcher seeks to investigate in the study. Parahoo (1997:218) defines population as "the total number of units from which data can be collected", such as

individuals, artefacts', events or organisations. Burns and Grove (2003:213) describe population as all the elements that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study.

A population can be defined as a group of individuals of the same species that live together in a particular area, and that possess an average set of properties, such as birth rates and death rates (Roughgarden, 1989). However, Huffaker *et al.* (1984) state that, a population is a group of individuals of the same species that live together in an area of sufficient size that all the requirements for reproduction, survival and migration can be met. Parahoo (1997:218) defines population as "the total number of units from which data can be collected", such as individuals, artefacts', events or organisations. Burns and Grove (2003:213) describe population as all the elements that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study. The population of this study was made up of the following:



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- ❖ All LGBT students and all students who have joined the LGBT club at the University of Fort hare.
- ❖ All other Students at University of Fort hare.
- ❖ All academic staff members

#### **4.4.1 Sampling Strategy**

Burns and Grove (2003:31) refer to sampling as a process of selecting a group of people, events or behaviour with which to conduct a study. Polit et al (2001:234) confirms that in sampling a portion represents the whole population which was selected. There was a clear sampling frame in the current study, but participants self-identified as either homosexual or heterosexual. Sampling was closely related to the generalisation of the findings.

Respondents were students and lecturers and other staff members. Other staff members referred to people employed by the University thus librarians, secretaries, deans, accountants, nurses, etc. All respondents were aged between 18 and 50. This study used a sample of 121 participants. Fifty-two (52) heterosexual students, 33 heterosexual staff members and 36 were gays and lesbians. Larger samples were used because they give more accurate representations of the whole group; it also gave a balance between obtaining a statistical representation and a qualitative valid representation of all the resources around to get information. There was a careful avoidance of research errors through dealing with the issues that would lead to bias information.



Burns and Grove (2003:31) refer to sampling as a process of selecting a group of people, events or behaviour, with which to conduct a study. In this study, both non-probability and probability sampling were used. Random sampling refers to a variety of selection techniques in which sample members are selected by chance, but with a known probability of selection. Purposive sampling strategy was used to select the subject to be included in the study based on the knowledge of the phenomena (Lavrakas, 2008). The main benefit of the simple random sample was that each member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen. This meant that it guaranteed that the sample chosen was representative of the population.

The snowballing sampling technique was also used to select participants. This sampling method was used in this study because students who identify as gay or lesbian were limited. Students who came out openly to be gay indicated or noted some participants who were gay and they would be willing to participate in the study.

Participants nominated other homosexuals. Creswell (2007: 133) asserts that this sampling technique enables the researcher to obtain appropriate participants who are likely to provide trustworthy information to the study.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants who are well known to have different sexual orientation. This was a sampling approach where the selection of a particular research participant was not determined by statistical randomness (Blanche, *et al.*, 2006: 561). The judgment of the researcher was used to select a sample that was composed of the desired characteristics for the study (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:247). This method was useful in this study because it assisted the researcher in choosing specific settings and individuals who provided the researcher with insight about the research phenomena. Purposive sampling helped the researcher to look and give a clear analysis that will disconfirm the area of study and to test it in theory. Here the researcher looked for people with particular expertise that was likely to advance the researcher's interest. Furthermore (Creswell, 2007: 133) asserts that this sampling technique enables the researcher to obtain appropriate participants who are likely to provide trustworthy information to the study. Despite the assertion that research bias is usually found in non-purposive sampling methods (Polit & Beck, 2008), the researcher purposively selected gays, lesbians, and transgender or bisexual students from the LGBT club. And some participants were easy to identify that they are homosexuals through inquiry and observation. Purposive sampling led to greater depth of information from selected small cases whereas non probability sampling greater breadth of information from a large number of units selected to be represented of the population (Patton, 2002). Sampling of the participants was done as follows:

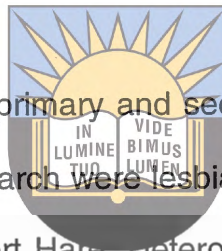


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- ❖ The researcher joined the LGBT club at the university of Fort Hare so as to get access to lesbians and gays.
- ❖ Meetings with staff members were booked so as to be able to interview them.
- ❖ The research project was explained to the prospective participants and they were asked personally if they wanted to take part in the research.
- ❖ Some students who came out openly to be gay and lesbians indicated some students who were gay and linked them to the researcher.

#### 4.5 Data Collection

Data was collected using both primary and secondary sources. The main research participants targeted to the research were lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender students at the university of Fort Hare. Heterosexuals staff members and students who were acting as key informants.



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##### 4.5.1 Primary Data Collection

Primary data is concerned with collecting original data to answer questions which are specifically connected to the objectives of the research and it is usually collected where the required information is not readily available to the researcher (Hair, *et al.*, 2008:39; Burns & Burns, 2008:49). Researcher obtained primary data by conducting field research where data was collected from the relevant respondents and was specific to the requirements of the study. Primary data was collected from sampled LGBT students, students who were key informants, staff members and other students who had joined the LGBT club at the University of Fort Hare.

One on one in depth interviews were conducted so as to ensure that adequate information about a person's thoughts and experiences. Students and staff members

participated in the in-depth interviews. This methodology was used because it produces more in-depth and comprehensive information. Questions asked in this interview allowed participants to express themselves freely and enable the researcher to use probes and prompts to clarify information and encourage participants to reveal their experiences.

#### 4.5.2 Instruments of Data Collection

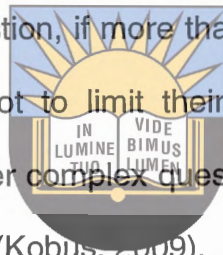
There were two instruments of data collection for this study and these included the questionnaires for staff members and students and in-depth interview guide for homosexual students. In addition, a secondary source of data collection (documents analyses) was also used.



#### 4.5.3 Questionnaires for students and staff members

Questionnaires were used to collect primary data from all respondents in the study. Questionnaires as a quantitative method to collect data they were sent to a large number of people, hence saving the researcher time and money. They were used because people are more truthful while responding to the questionnaires regarding controversial issues in particular due to the fact that their responses are anonymous. As a researcher detailed data was gathered through open ended questions that provided direct quotations. Semi-structured questionnaires, which consisted of open-ended questions were administered. In the process of constructing the questions, data provided from the field research conducted by Lambdaistanbul with 399 LGBT people in 2006 and other published interviews that were conducted with lesbians and gays in Turkey (Özbay & Soydan, 2003). The designed questionnaire was reviewed and reorganized with the assistance of my supervisor.

Two different questionnaires were constructed. One was for heterosexual students and the other one for staff members. The data used for these questionnaires were originally obtained from the first and second sets of questions among which direct questions about homophobic attitudes and management strategies were included. Prearranged questions with answers were used because the researcher was looking for definite answers. Bell (2005) argues that structured questions are easier to analyse. The questionnaire provided responses to choose from, the question asked. Participants chose the answer that best suited them. They were allowed to choose more than one answer per question, if more than one answer best suited them. The researcher did that in order not to limit their responses. Open-ended questions enable the respondent to answer complex questions satisfactorily and to adequately reveal the participant's thinking (Kobus, 2009).



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#### **4.5.4 In-depth Interviews**

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique that involves conducting intensive individual interviews with a small number of respondents to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, program, or situation (Masson, 2001). In-depth interviews with human subjects are considered by some as being core to any qualitative fieldwork (Mikkelsen, 2005). Through the use of in-depth interviews, the researcher obtained greater insight into the human experiences that made up the social phenomenon of homosexuality. The use of questions helped to facilitate in-depth interviews and generate dialogue (Lichtman, 2010). In-depth interviews were conducted over three weeks with thirty-six (36) participants partook in the face to face interview. Dialogues helped to go beyond expressing concern.

Semi-structured questions which were open ended were used to collect information. Through guiding questions, participants were asked to describe their experiences, challenges they face at the University Of Fort Hare and the strategies they used to solve those problems. The structured questions were administered to every participant so that they would also read and understand for themselves. In structured interviews “the researcher ask a standard set of questions and nothing more (Burns & Grove, 2003). In this type of interview the researcher followed the standard set of questions with one or more individually tailored questions to get clarification or probe persons reasoning (Creswell, 2007).

The participants were authorized to speak out without being interrupted, unless the interruption came from another member in the group. At the outset of the interview the researcher had planned to use a tape recorder to record the interviews, but the members were not comfortable and this device was abandoned. So note taking was used instead. This provided the interviewer with something to do while the respondent gave answers, and it slowed the pace of the interview, allowing the interviewer to ensure that all the key points were covered. Participants were provided with an opportunity to reflect or react to the opinion of others which they may disagree or of which they are unaware.



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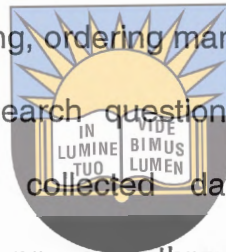
#### **4.5.5 Secondary sources of data collection (Document Analyses)**

Secondary data collection is a method of doing research, basing on historical information about studies that were previously researched. Secondary data collection also referred as documentary analysis was used to collect data. It involved collecting data using journals, published and non-published research documentary analysis since they are researchers who have conducted in depth interviews for

LGBT's students and staff members. Secondary data was collected mostly from electronic sources because it gave the researcher a better insight on trends of sexuality and how it was developing. Secondary data collection was also known as 'desk research' as it includes data from books. Stewart *et al*, (2003) agreed to this, by elaborating that secondary research was concerned with the collation and summary of previous researches, instead of conducting an original new research.

#### 4.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis means categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summing up of data so as to obtain answers for research questions. Data analysis as a process of evaluating and transforming collected data. Creswell (1998) stated that phenomenological data analysis proceeds through the methodology of reduction, the analysis of specific statements and themes, and a search for all possible meanings. Analysis began with the labelling of data as to its source, how it was collected, the information it contained. Data was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively.



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##### 4.6.1 Analysing Qualitative Data from In-Depth Interviews

Analysing data simply refer to the organising, providing structure and elicit meaning to the gathered data. Analysing qualitative data is an active and interactive process (Polit *et al.*, 2001:383). Data analysis, commenced after conducting the second interview. The researcher used reflexivity, bracketing and intuiting so as to lay aside her preconceptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation. Data analysis of in-depth interviews occurred simultaneously with data collection (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002:235). To make sense of the data (Parahoo, 1997:355) states the following steps are necessary. At the first stage of data analysis, the researcher read

all the transcripts independently, identifying the passages in which a respondent indicated their experiences, challenges, strategies and policies. The researcher first listed relevant expressions used by participants themselves, and discovering patterns of behaviours, and tentatively labelled them and grouping all the expressions related to a strategy. Secondly data was coded so as to easily identify the texts. These coded texts were revised and organized into conceptual networks or grounded theories (Gilgun, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Tesch, 1992). Codes emerged directly from the data through a preliminary examination of the data (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002). Lastly themes out of participant's experiences were merged using thematic analyses. The information was analysed and interpreted according to the data collected from in-depth interviews. This method was appropriate for this research because the researcher was able to develop emerging themes out of participant's experiences and at the same time examine different aspects of the study (Smith, 2004).



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#### **4.7 Analysing Quantitative Data from Questionnaires of Staff Members and Students**

To analyse quantitative data from those two questionnaires, the questionnaires were read thoroughly. This was done so as to gain a global impression of what would have been said by respondents. The researcher set aside all prejudgments, bracketing his or her experiences so as to keep balanced between subjectivity and objectivity. Data editing was the activity aimed at detecting and correcting errors in data that has been collected. Logical editing was conducted to ensure that two or more data items do not have contradictory values. This enabled the researcher to sort out large volumes of data with relative ease in a systematic fashion. It was a

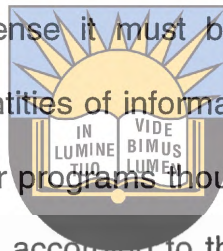
useful technique which helped the researcher to discover and describe the individual viewpoints (Weber, 1990). Consistency editing was conducted to ensure that a precise and correct arithmetic relationship exists between two or more data items were joined.

#### **4.7.1 Data Coding of the Questionnaires**

Data coding involves reading through transcribed data and dividing it into meaningful analytical units (Kobus, 2009). Working with original data, can be very burdensome, for gathering data to make sense it must be coded. Coding data allowed the researcher to reduce large quantities of information into a form than could be easily handled, especially by computer programs though not all data needed to be coded.

Coded text were then reviewed according to the revised definitions and the coding process continued until all questionnaires were satisfactorily coded.

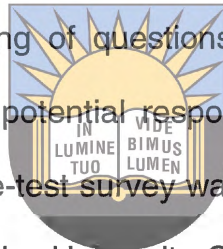
In this study, two approaches to coding were done. The first was pre-coding, which refers to assigning codes to response options before field work begins and hence printing the relevant codes on the questionnaire. Pre-coding was done to all questions by assigning numbers to each question. After completion of questionnaires, each questionnaire was numbered for analysis purposes. Final coding was done; data were entered into Microsoft Excel so that it could be compatible for data analysis software. Data entry was the act of transcribing information into another medium, usually through input into a computer program. A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was used to transcribe quantitative data; it included handwritten documents (questionnaires), and sequences of numbers, as well as computer code. Data in the excel spreadsheet was transferred to the SPSS version 22 for statistical analysis.



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#### 4.7.2 Pre-testing the questionnaire

A very important part of the questionnaire was the structuring process, its piloting, known as pre-testing. (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002:80) pilot studies are not usually used in qualitative studies, but novice researchers could conduct interviews as a pre-exercise, to get used to the type of data collection. A pre-exercise was conducted to familiarize the researcher in the research project and provide the researcher with insight into the phenomenon. This involved testing, research instrument in conditions as similar as possible to the research, but not in order to report results, but rather to check for glitches in the wording of questions, lack of clarity of instructions etc. Questionnaire was sent out to potential respondents. To test the reliability of the questionnaire in this study, a pre-test survey was conducted amongst fifteen LGBT's and ten random students from the University Of Fort Hare. These students did not participate in the final study. *Together in Excellence*

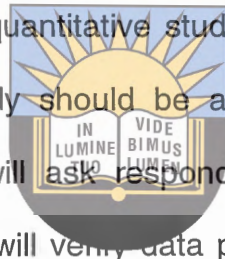


From the pre-test survey, it was noted that some respondents were not familiar and comfortable with the topic. The questionnaire had to be rephrased again anything that could impede the instrument's ability to collect data was deleted or adjusted. The benefits of pre-testing cannot be overstated, whether you go to the extent of a soft launch or not because pre-tests should be conducted systematically, with potential respondents and using the same method of administration. It was helpful to pre-test the questionnaire with because the researcher was able to pick up potential difficulties which might not be revealed in a pre-test with respondents.

#### 4.8 Validity and Reliability

Guba and Lincoln (1981) stated that while all research must have “truth value”, “applicability”, “consistency”, and “neutrality” in order to be considered worthwhile. A verification process was going to be conducted to check, confirm, make sure, and be

certain that the process of research ensures reliability and validity of the study. The criteria for determining the trustworthiness and validity of qualitative research are established by using the following norms credibility and dependability. Credibility is defined as the confidence of the data and it is similar to internal validity in quantitative research (Polit *et al.*, 2001:32). It exists when the research findings reflect the perceptions of the people under study. To ensure credibility the researcher identified and corrected errors before presenting collected data. Dependability refers to stability of data over time and over (Polit *et al* 2001:315), and can be likened to reliability in quantitative studies. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:161), a dependable study should be accurate and consistent. To ensure dependability the researcher will ask respondents to read and confirm the interpreted data. Respondents will verify data presented to ensure that it is correct and reliable.



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#### **4.9 Ethical considerations**

Ethical issues arise out of our interaction with other people, animals and the environment, especially where there was possibility for a conflict of interest (Phiri and Webb, 2002). Certain factors need to be considered. This relates to moral standards that the researcher should consider in all research methods in all stages of the research design. After approval from the ethical clearance committee at the University of Fort Hare was obtained to conduct the study. The researcher followed principles of privacy, informed consent, voluntary participation as well as justice (Polit *et al.*, 2001).

#### 4.9.1 Privacy

Brown (1993) says that, control of personal information is viewed as an expression of autonomy and an individual's right to protect his or her social vulnerability and identity. Every human being has the right to privacy. Hence, research participants may not want with information about themselves or their views and attitudes, to be identified and made available to the public. All respondents who volunteered to participate in the research were asked to sign an agreement form. Confidentiality was upheld which places strong obligation on the researcher to guard jealously against information that was confided to the respondents (De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 90). To ensure 100% confidentiality participants were ensured that their real names will not be use so that they remain anonymous.



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#### 4.9.2 Informed consent *Together in Excellence*

LGBT's are considered to be a vulnerable group; consent form one was signed by the participant who agreed to participate in the research. In order to ensure an informed consent, participants had to read the document explaining purpose of study or as a researcher I explained it to them. Silverman (2000) highlights the need to provide information written in a language that the respondents can understand. The informed consent entailed that all possible information on the goal of the investigation and procedures which will be followed during the investigation as fully given to the subjects so that they can make a voluntary thoroughly reasoned decision about their possible participation (De Vos *et al* 2005:89). Participants understood what I was doing so that they did not make irrational decisions they had been fully informed to freely decide whether to participate in the study or to withdraw at any time without any consequences.


### 4.9.3 Voluntary participation

This opinion means that potential participants should not be forced into taking part in the study. Participants had the right to decide whether to participate without incurring any penalty (Polit *et al.*, 2001:78). Participants were approached and the purpose of the study was explained. No payment was offered and they were informed of the opportunity to withdraw at any stage of the research. Verbal and written consent were obtained. Individuals who refused to participate were not forced.

### 4.9.4 The right to fair treatment

Fair conduct with selected participants was based on the requirements of research.

- Non-damaging treatment of participants who turned away to withdraw
- The participants had right to contact the researcher at any point in the study to elucidate information.
- Compassion and respect for the participants' beliefs, habits, lifestyles, culture and emotions was practiced.
- Courteous treatment at all times (Polit *et al.*, 2001:81).



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### 4.10 Conclusion

The chapter provided a description of the research methodology which was used in this study. Details of the scope of the study, the research method and research instruments and the sampling methodology applied for this study, were outlined in this chapter. Furthermore, the chapter provided a detailed description of the data analysis process followed for this study as well as the test for validity and reliability. The research results and findings are presented in chapter 6 which follows.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the data that was collected and discusses the research findings. According to Mouton (2003) data analysis “is the process of bringing order, structure and adding meaning to the mass of collected data, making sense of what respondents would have said”. The chapter starts off with a presentation of the data collected from the two questionnaires which were administered to students and staff members and lastly a presentation of data gathered from the in-depth interviews conducted with gays and lesbian students. The findings on the experiences, strategies and challenges faced by the homosexuals in this study are discussed thematically. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were used. Data analysis process allows the researcher to generalize the findings from the sample used in the research to the larger population in which the researcher is interested in (Creswell, 2003).



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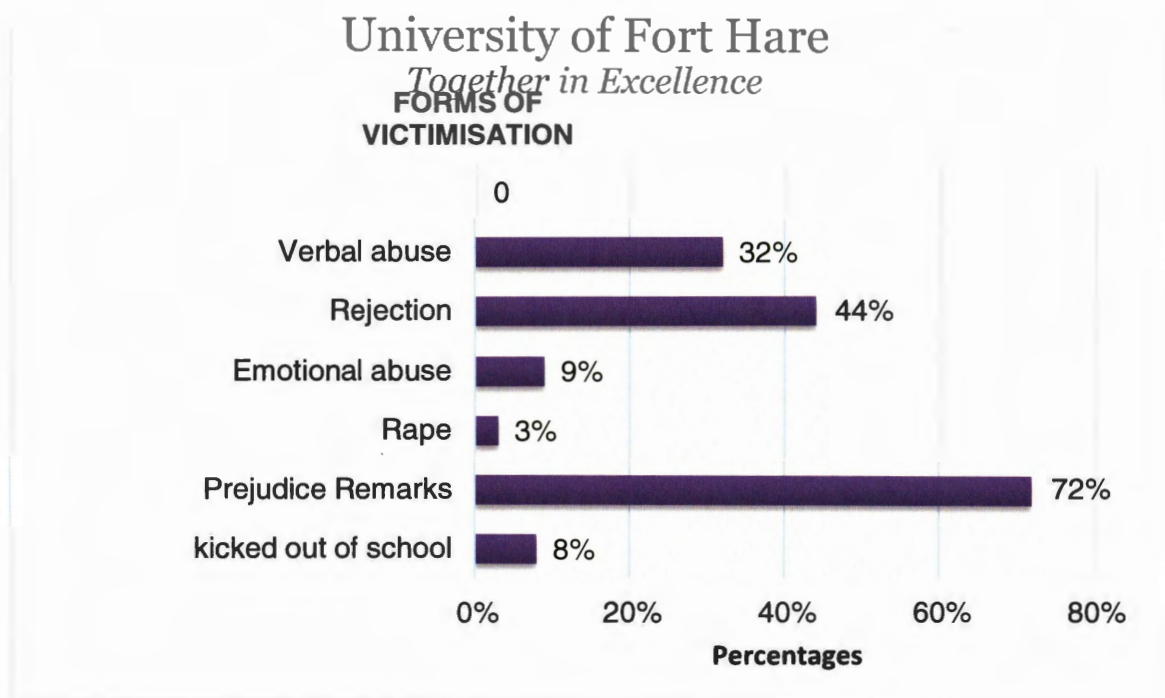
#### 5.1 Biographical information of participants

Thirty-six (36) homosexual students participated in the in-depth interviews. Fifty-two (52) students who had a non-homosexual sexual orientation participated by answering a questionnaire and thirty-three (33) staff members participated and these included lecturers and other staff members. All the participants were aged between eighteen to fifty (18-50) years. Fifty-one (51) participants were undergraduates, twelve (12) were honours students and nine (5) were master's students. No PhD or post-doctoral students participated as gay or lesbian. PhD students who were homosexuals refused to participate due to their own personal reasons. The only

significant demographic difference was in students' religious affiliations. Fifty nine (59) respondents were Christians, (eight) 8 Muslims and (five) 5 had no religious affiliation. This subsample included a higher number of heterosexual students than staff members because more students were willing to participate in the study.

## 5.2 Quantitative findings

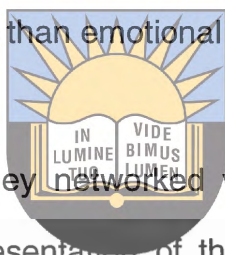
These findings were derived from respondents who are heterosexual students and staff members at the University Of Fort Hare. Graphs and pie charts have been used to present the data and opinions of respondents. The respondents were asked to indicate the forms of victimisation that were being faced by homosexual students.



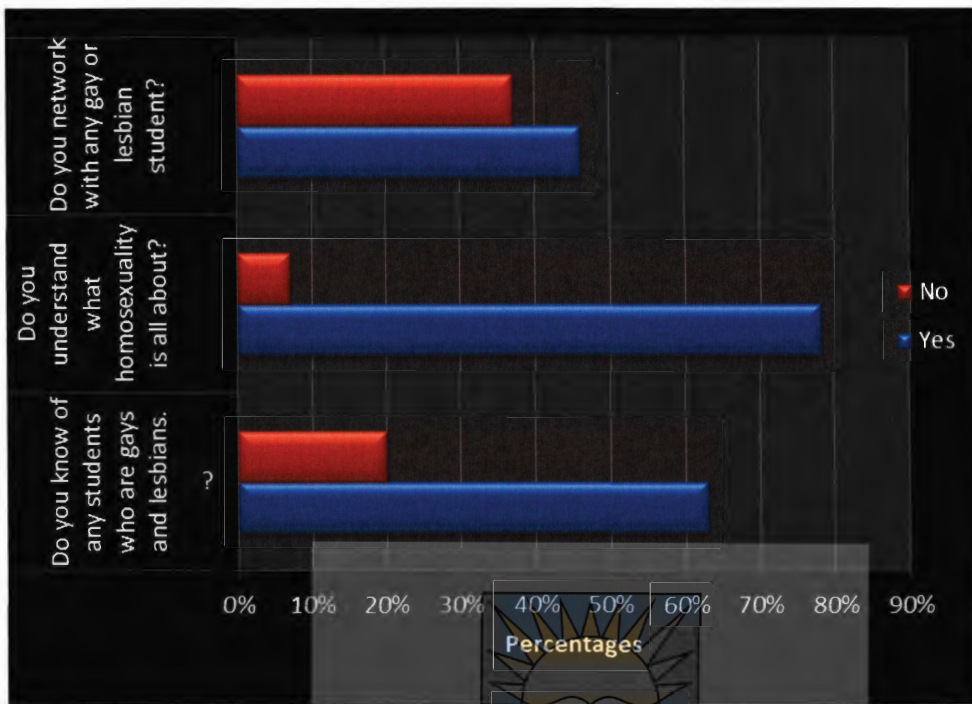
**Figure 5.1: Kinds of victimisation experienced by homosexuals**

Figure 5.1 above illustrates the distribution of the responses. As indicated in the figure, 72% of the respondents highlighted that homosexual students were

experiencing prejudice remarks. Prejudice remarks were the predominant answer given. Forty-four percent (44%) respondents highlighted that homosexual students were being rejected around campus. Thirty-two percent (32%) respondents said that gays and lesbians are verbally abused. Nine percent (9 %) respondents suggested that homosexuals experienced emotional abuse. Eight percent (8%) respondents suggested that homosexual students were being kicked out of schools. Only 3% staff members said homosexual students experience the challenge of being raped around campus. This suggests that homosexuals experience prejudice remarks and rejection at slightly higher levels than emotional abuse, rape or verbal abuse.



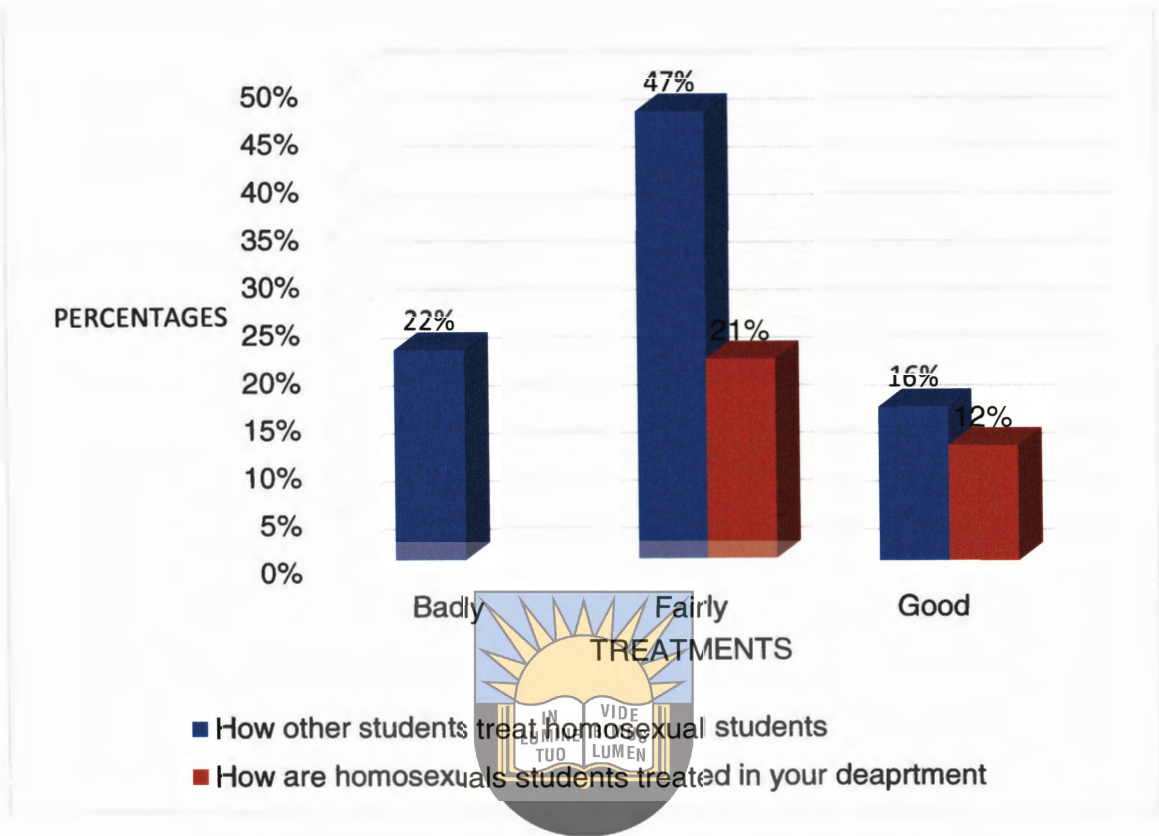
Respondents were asked if they networked with any gays and lesbians around campus. Figure 5.2 is a representation of the findings regarding if heterosexual population networking with homosexual students. Seventy-eight per cent (78%) of the participants indicated they understood what homosexuality is all about and only 7% did not really understand what it was. Sixty-three percent (63%) respondents indicated that they knew students who were homosexual. Only 20% respondents said they did not know any students who were gays or lesbians. Further the results of the study reveal that 46% respondents networked with gays, and 37% did not network with gays and lesbians.



**Figure 5.2: Understanding homosexuality and networking**

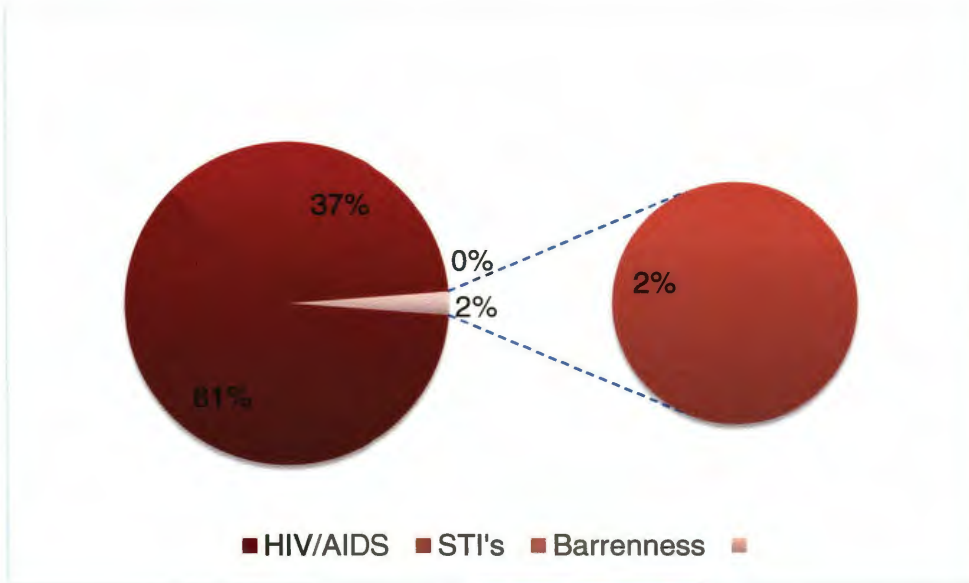
In the below graph, (figure 5.2) the respondents in the study were asked how other students treated homosexual students. As indicated in Figure 5.3 below, 47% of the respondents indicated that homosexual students were treated fairly by other students. On the other hand, 22% respondents felt that other students treated homosexual students badly. Only 16% respondents felt that they were being treated well by other students. High scores in the heterosexual population suggest that homosexual students were treated badly.

Staff members asked how homosexual students were being treated in their departments by other students or staff members. As shown in the figure, out of all the staff member respondents, 21% said they were fairly treated and 12% said they were treated well. No staff member indicated that they were being treated badly.



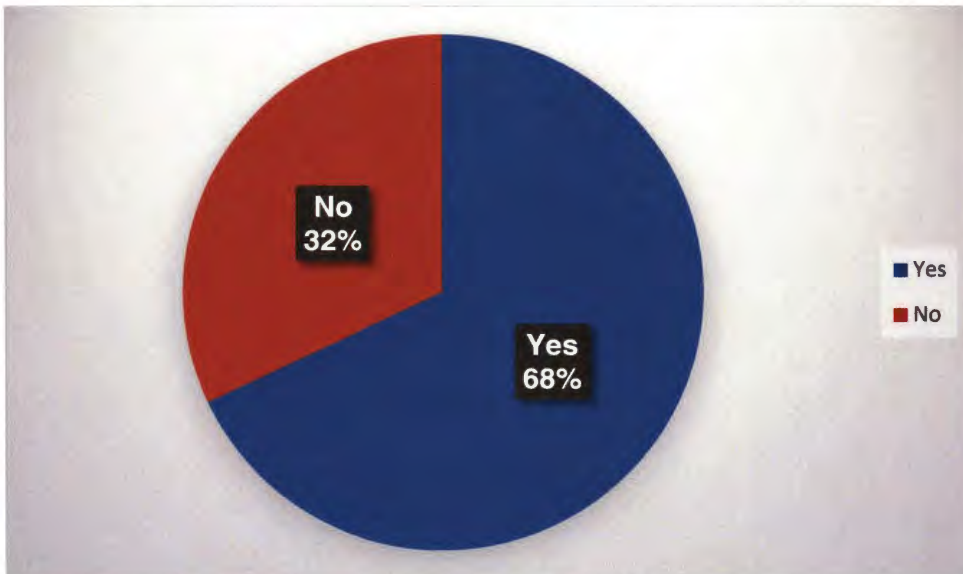
**Figure 5.3: Treatment of homosexuals**  
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The respondents were asked to indicate the challenges that they viewed as being faced by homosexuals at the University. The pie chart in figure 5.4 indicates that 61% of the respondents thought that homosexual students were faced with the challenge of HIV/AIDS. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of heterosexual respondents said that homosexuals were faced with STI's. Two percent (2%) of respondents mentioned that homosexual students experienced the problem of barrenness.



**Figure 5.4: Homosexuals who are faced with HIV/AIDS, STI's and barrenness**

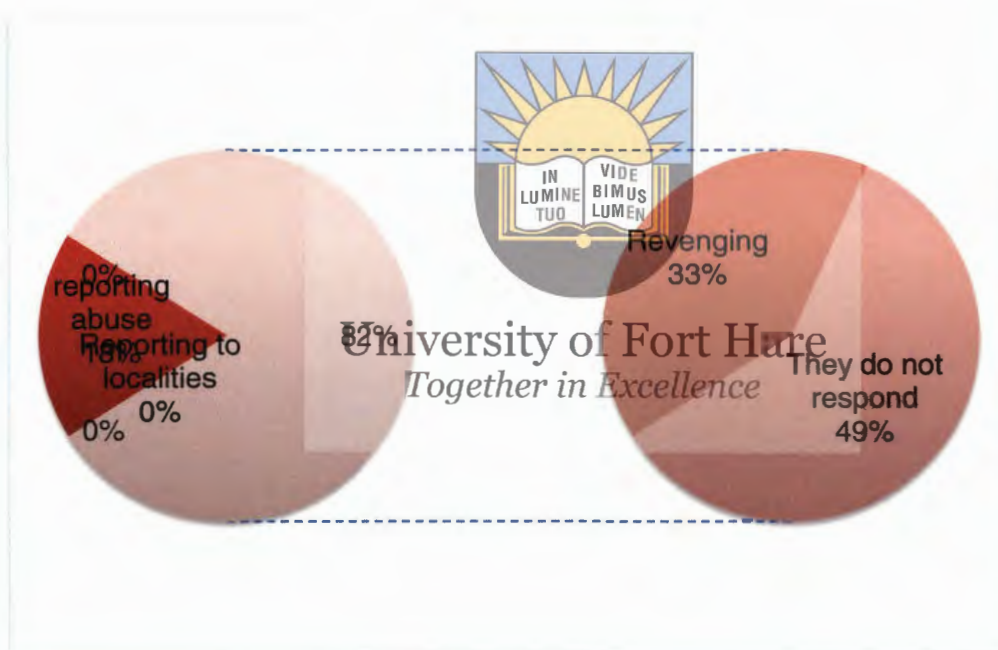
In figure 5.5 below, 68% of the respondents indicated that homosexuals were challenged with suicidal thoughts. Thirty-two percent (32%) of the respondents indicated that homosexual students did not have suicidal thoughts.



**Figure 5.5: Experiencing suicidal thoughts**

When asked on how homosexuals dealt with the kind of victimisation that they faced, heterosexual staff and students suggested that they dealt with it in different ways.

The pie chart in figure 5.6 represents data on how homosexual students react or deal with the victimisation they face. Forty-nine percent (49%) of respondents suggested that homosexuals do not respond after being victimised due to fear of further victimisation. Thirty-three percent (33%) of respondents said that homosexuals revenge just like any other heterosexual students. Only 18% of the staff members said that they report to local authorities about the abuse they are facing.



**Figure 5.6: Dealing with victimisation**

Gays and lesbians students adopt different strategies to cope with the challenges they face. Pie chat in Figure 5.7 is indicating that 87% of respondents indicated that homosexual students did not disclose to anyone how they really cope because they do not even associate with heterosexuals. Seventy-two (72%) of the respondents indicated that they seek for medical attention, especially when they are faced with a challenge of sickness mainly HIV/AIDS or STI's. Sixteen percent (16%) of

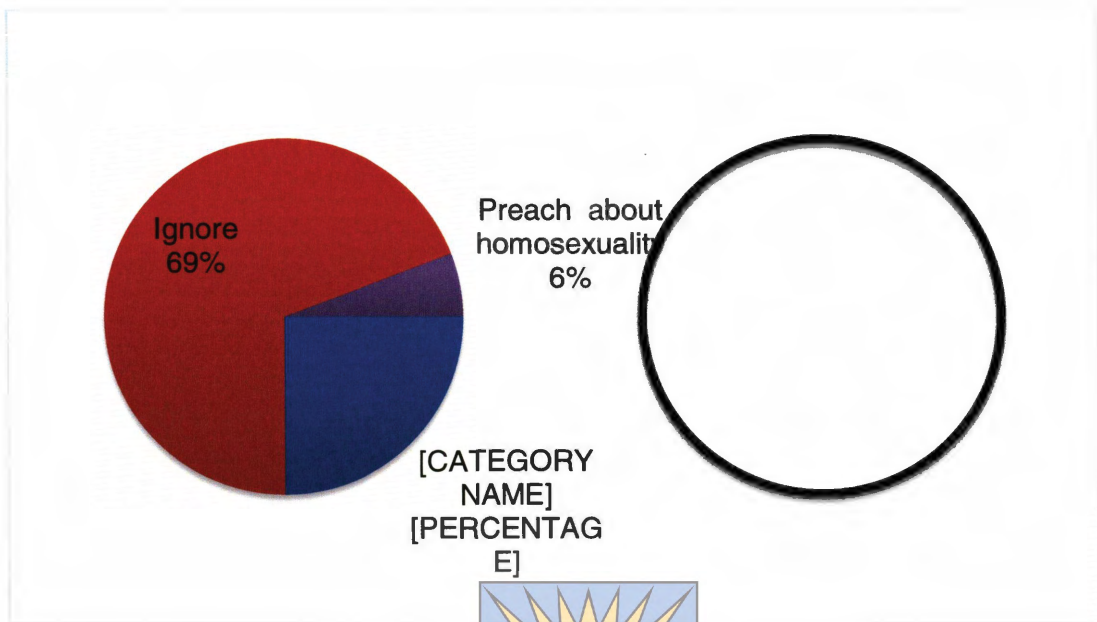
respondents who were staff members indicated homosexual came for counselling to them or they sought aid somewhere they were accepted.



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**Figure 5.7: Strategies used by homosexuals**

Heterosexual students were asked if they would help homosexual students who are in need. In the Figure 5.8 below, 69% of respondents indicated that they would ignore a gay or lesbian student if they asked for help. Only 25% respondents indicated that they would help out a homosexual student. Six percent (6%) of respondents indicated that if they met a homosexual student instead of helping out they would rather take that opportunity to preach to them.

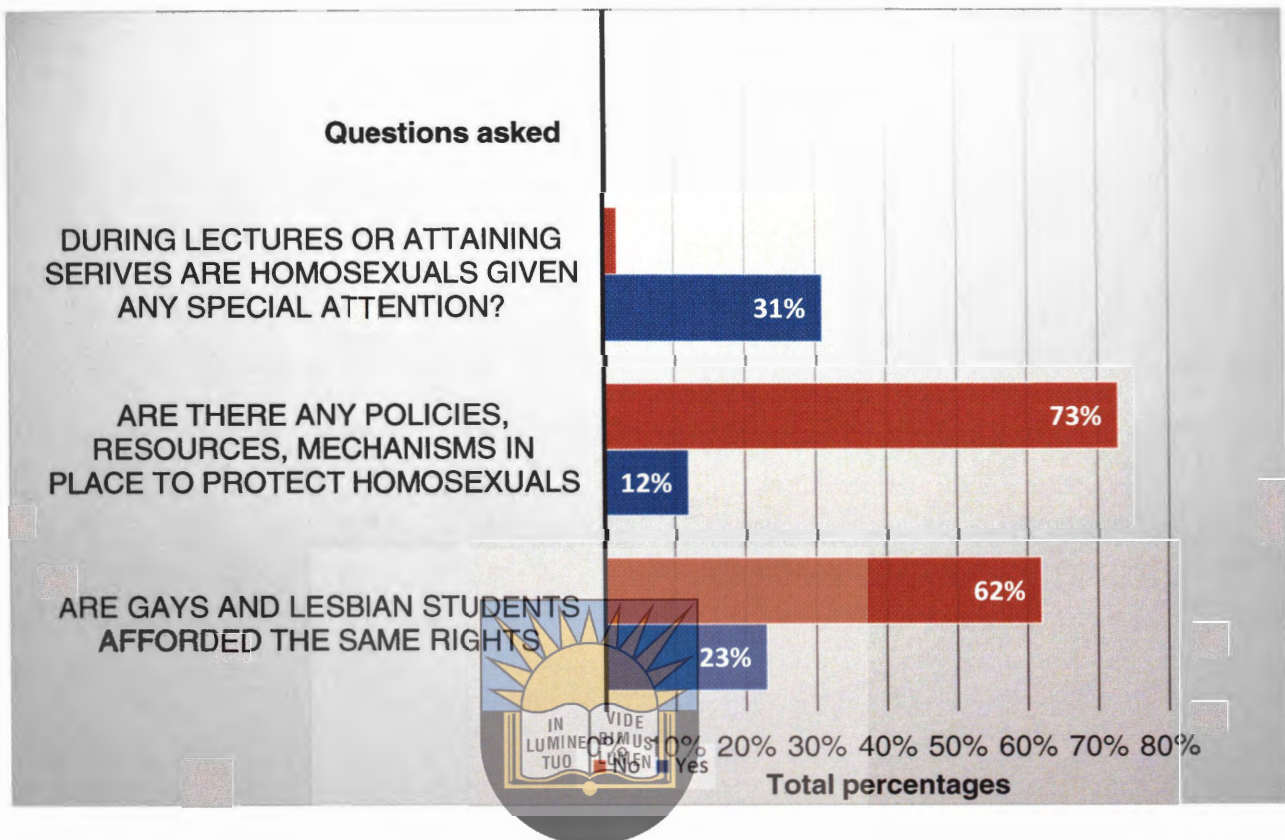


**Figure 5.8: Heterosexual students helping homosexual students**



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The graph below in figure 5.9 it is interesting to note that 73% respondents stated that there are no policies that protected homosexuals. This does not suggest that there are no policies, but heterosexual students are not aware of these policies as they are not concerned. However, 12% of the respondents indicated that there were policies that protected homosexuals. Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondents said that gays and lesbians around campus are not afforded the same rights, whereas 23% respondents said that they were afforded the same rights as heterosexual students. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the respondents indicated that homosexual students are given special attention during lectures or attaining services as any other heterosexual student. Whereas about 2% of respondents indicated that they are not given any attention at all.



**Figure 5.9: Policies relating to homosexuals**  
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### 5.3 Qualitative findings

Qualitative data was generated from 36 lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender students through in-depth Interviews.

#### 5.3.1 Homosexual identity and coming out

The present study noted that three participants during the identity formation phase, were experiencing feelings of anxiety and confusion. One of the participants went on to indicate that;

*“I felt useless and inferior the first days I found out that I was gay. I did not know what to do”.*

Another participant went on to indicate that,

*"I started noticing that I was becoming interested in girls. I went from saying I wish I looked like her or "I wish I was her" to "I'd date her". At first, I thought this was just a phase that I was going through. I thought to myself. I can't like girls, I'm straight. There was a never-ending battle going on in my head. I became depressed and I started to harm myself. A few months later, I came to terms with the fact that I actually do like girls, but I thought to myself. I can't be a lesbian, I like boys. I became confused more than ever"*

Four participants went on to indicate that coming out can be daunting because the news may come as a surprise to people they are informing. One participant clearly indicated that;



*"It was stressful, next it took me a great deal of time to think about and lastly, it made me anxious to an extent that i can only tell other gays only".*

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Another participant went on to indicate that;

*"It became clear to me, as I really thought about it and really prayed about it, that homosexuality prevents us from finding our true self within."*

During the interview one participant went on to indicate that;

*"I felt maybe that I hadn't thought about everything 100 per cent,"*

One female participant indicated that coming out is one thing she regretted and she is not sure if she is going to ever come out again to people who are close to her. This is noticeable when stated that:

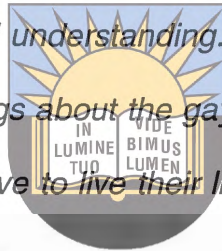
*"I've only come out to a close person before but it already feels like I've done it a million times over, because it was just that hard for me to come out to myself, something I struggled with every day from the time I was 10 to now that I'm 20"*

However, two participants indicated that, during the identity formation phase, they felt proud of their sexual orientation because they had accepted that they were lesbians and gays. One participant went on to say that;

*"I can honestly say that coming out to family and everyone around me I love, it was the best thing I ever done".*

Another participant stated that;

*"I feel that I've made considerable progress on my own personal path of self-acceptance and personal understanding. I don't get angry or upset at people when they say awful things about the gay lifestyle, in fact, I feel bad for them. They are the one that have to live their life with hatred in them, because all it does it eat you up inside".*



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Three participants indicated that, firstly it was exciting because they had support from friends and family, secondly, it was not stressful to reveal to other people. One participant went on to indicate that;

*"In my experience coming out to identify as homosexual was the most liberating, beautiful and astonishing thing I've ever experienced in my entire life".*

Two participants indicated that they found out they were gay or lesbian by their reactions towards people of the same sex. One participant went on to indicate that,

*"I found out that I was gay because I always wanted to touch other women's breast or I become lustful towards them".*

The other participant went to indicate that;

*“One night I was cuddling with my best friend as we watched a movie. We had been each other’s best friend for a year. We were both very religious and very straight. The cuddling that night had so much tension, chemistry and emotions. I left feeling confused and when she brought it up I denied that it meant anything. But as time went on i realized i was a lesbian i had fallen in love with her too.”*

Data collected from participants indicated that they found out through observing others or from the books and articles they read. Participants indicated the same thing that, we knew that we were gay because we were interested in reading books and magazines about gays and lesbians only. One participant went on to say that;



*“I had been following a homosexual blog for a while and I remember reading all this different stories about gays and lesbians, some were funny, others were sad, but the thing is somehow I could relate to all of them. That’s how i found out i was gay”.*

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Two participants during the interview indicated that they found out through certain people who were close to them that they are gay or lesbian. One participant went on to indicate that,

*“When my mother told me I was gay I trusted her, and I went on to try a relationship with another lesbian. I enjoyed and I really felt contentment that’s when I really found out that I was gay”.*

Another participant indicated that;

*“My friends had to tell me that I was gay”.*

Three participants indicated that revealing their sexual orientation to other students was very stressful that they had to hide their identity because of fear. Two different participants during the interview participant went on to say;

*“I have to hide my sexual orientation because homosexuality is not an accepted phenomenon in the society I am scared of what people would do to me”.*

Another participant indicated;

*“It was stressful because I was not sure how other students would take it. I feared to be stigmatised”.*



Two participants indicated that they had to interact with other homosexual to reveal their identity because of other homosexuals, it was acceptable they did not have to explain it to anyone but they would just conform to it. However, participants who were interviewed indicated that homosexuals who do not disclose their sexual orientation may be at a greater risk of developing psychological problems.

### **5.3.2 Victimization and rejection**

Participants from the interview indicated that prejudice remarks were unavoidable because of the different religious beliefs people had. One male participant went on to say that he was once told, *“mboko idzi dzinofanirwa kuurayiwa”* by other students this means that these idiots should be killed. Another participant went on to indicate he experienced prejudice remarks such as *“these dogs should be removed from Fort Hare”*. Rejection for interviewed participants was mainly experienced through prejudice remarks. Participants stated that they were subject to social segregation through tagging. Slang words were used to insult homosexuals (such as “fagot”,

“ass” and “hole” to seizure special attention among expressions mostly used for labelling.

Apart from those words, some adjectives such as ‘soft’ and ‘polite’ signifying character traits which are linked with feminineness and are used for referring to male homosexuals. Idioms such as “like a man” or “tomboy” are generally used for female homosexuals while male homosexuals are described as individuals acting like a woman. One participant went on to indicate that heterosexual students would say to him things like;

*“Gays and lesbians are not real people they are evil spirits which manifest into the physical so as to pollute the righteous people of God”.*

Participant’s description of their experiences indicated that they were victimised mostly through prejudice remarks and homophobic verbal harassment. Homosexual participants who were interviewed explained why it was easier for them to be persecuted. One of the reasons mentioned by a participant was that;

*“It is socially unacceptable for homosexuals to be seen kissing, holding hands in the public”.*

When they are seen publicly displaying their affection this might cause them to be victimised. Two participants indicated that they experienced physical abuse from heterosexual students, they said that,

*“We are bullied”* and another participant said, *“We are physically ambushed especially when we walk in the evening around campus”.*

The other participant indicated that,

*“Sometimes we are physically abused for no apparent reason”.*

Four participants went on to indicate that they are openly rejected by other heterosexual students or even some homosexual students who hide their identity as gay or lesbian. One participant clearly stated that,

*“As I enter the gym and If heterosexual students notice that I am in the gym, especially changing room, its either they go out or I am chucked out. They can’t afford to do anything around me”.*

Two participants went on to say,

*“If we arrive at a place where they are heterosexual students, they clearly chase us away or they take their belongings and leave. They do not want to associate with us”.*



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It is in this light that they are openly rejected by heterosexual students they do not want to associate with them. Another participant claimed that;

*“I was victimized for wearing a ribbon on his head and waist to mark a gay pride event around campus.”*

Three participants went on to indicate that the way they dressed in some scenarios it caused them to be victimized.

### **5.3.3 HIV AND STI'S**

When participants were asked if they were challenged by HIV/AIDS, participants' claimed that they occasionally found themselves in a difficult position which caused them to contract HIV/AIDS. Nine participants indicated that, we contracted the HIV/AIDS virus after being raped by people we stay with, other gay people or anyone. The following statements were cited from participants.

*"My uncle raped me because he wanted me to feel how it is to be with a person of the opposite sex that's when I contracted HIV/AIDS".*

*"I was raped at an entertainment bash around campus that's how I contracted the deadly disease".*

*"I was raped in room by my friends, I contracted HIV/AIDS and the bad thing I could not report it because I feared to be stigmatised".*

*"HIV/AIDS is a pandemic that challenges everyone in this era, but I think homosexuals contract it more because of the way people treat us".*

Five participants from the interview reported experiencing sexually transmitted diseases. They made the following statements;

*"I have contracted STI's several times from heterosexual students; I sometimes sneak to have unprotected sex with them"*

*"I have experienced STI's only with other homosexual people"*

*"STI's and HIV/AIDS are experienced by everyone, one sexual orientation does not determine if you going to experience this deadly disease" "Everyone is at the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS despite your sexual orientation".*

But they went on to indicate that it was difficult for them to attain medical services because of the beliefs people have. One participant indicated that when she went to the clinic, she was told,

*"We do not treat gays and lesbians until you stop this idiotic behaviour".*

Another participant said,

*"The nurse who attended me was even scared to touch me; she even thought that homosexuality is contagious".*

Another participant said;

*"I had to switch hospitals so that I could attain the medical service I felt I deserved".*

### **5.3.4 Homophobic attitudes and self-consideration experiences**

All participants indicated that they were experiencing relational aggression harassment. They went on to say, "We are bullied in such a way that even higher authorities or security around campus can't even notice". Relational aggression harassment is a sneaky and insidious type of bullying that often goes unnoticed by parents and teachers. Participants made statements like,

*"We are shunned out socially and mentally"*

*"Other heterosexual students gossip about us openly and we can't do anything because everyone is titled to their own opinion".*

*"Other students they spread false lies against us".*



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Another participant was once told by heterosexual student that,

*"We don't really have to worry about your orientation getting out of hand. If he acts like that now that he's in university, someone will beat the stuffing out of him and we won't have to deal with his crap two days later I was beaten by people I did not know."*

From the interview the researcher noted that participants were experiencing homophobic attitudes through cyber bullying or through the internet. Fifteen participants indicated that, we received offensive messages through internet. People who send those messages wanted to hide their identity, but they wanted to express

their views about homosexuality. Participants from the interview indicated how they are cyber bullied by making the following statements:

*"I always receive text messages through my phone different people insulting me".*

*"A video was once sent through internet showing me with my gay boyfriend, it was graphical. The sender of that video wanted to prove that I am gay"*

*"A blog was once created so that other students would make fun of me".*

*"A fake social network page (Facebook and twitter) were invented with my name so as to ridicule and imitate me in an embarrassing way".*

Individuals who participated as homosexuals did not freely choose to be secretive about their orientation, but they were forced into the closet by the stigmatisation and homophobic verbal harassment that surrounds homosexuality. Data collected revealed that it was better for participants to hide their sexual orientation than to be victimised by these heterosexual students. One participant clearly said,

*"I will only open up to other homosexuals because they will not cyber bully me like heterosexual students"*

Another participant went on to say:

*"I have had bad experience through cyber bullying, so these days I do anything to protect my identity and sexual orientation than be embarrassed".*

However, they continued to indicate that not all students treat them badly, this is noticeable when they said, "we have friends that have accepted us the way we are so they treat us nicely". Some participants indicated that, "some students are generally nice to us for no apparent reason and this makes us view ourselves as special like any other human being".

## 5.4 Strategies used by homosexuals

During the interview participants indicated that they constructed different strategies in many areas in order to live in the patriarchal societal system. This study focused on the strategies used by students who are strictly gays or lesbian. Three different categories of strategies were formed, these strategies were formulated when participants are victimised, strategies specifically for the coming-out process and when hiding their identity.

### 5.4.1 Hiding identity

Hiding the identity of gays and lesbians was one of the main strategies indicated by all the participants. They hid their identity so as to avoid challenges they experience because of their sexual orientation. All of the participants said that they resorted to such tactics as leaving a place or remaining silent. A participant who articulated that she pursued the hiding identity strategy when she is expected to make a comment during a conversation had this to say:

*“I change the topic unless I am the key subject of a discussion. But, if they do ask me directly, I pursue an avoiding strategy. When they ask whether or not I have a boyfriend, I say “No” or “I do not want”. I give such oblique responses”.*

Commenting on this subject another participant said:

*“I am very silent around people because I do not want them to know much about me, neither do I want to be telling them about myself”.*

Another participant went on to say,

*“I use disguise, I try to behave normally like them (heterosexual student) I pretend that to be like them. I even speak about men and sometimes say that*

*a certain man is very handsome so that they won't even suspect what I am really".*

Imposing a question mark on other heterosexual students was another strategy that was noted during the interviews it was mentioned by one respondent. She gave the following remarks;

*"I do not hide myself. But, I always leave a question mark on their minds. "Is she homosexual or not?" Nobody can understand me".*

Participants did not have to hide or lie about their identity; they just left them in suspense. When hiding their identity participants indicated that they had to lie the names of their partners, so that other heterosexual students will not have a clue that they are gay or lesbian. One participant clearly stated that;

*"I use false names for my partner I say that the name of my boyfriend is Patrick or Douglas but I later forget the name that I had used. Some people think that he works in the government or he is at a University, but the truth is I would lied to protect my gender"*

#### **5.4.2 Dealing with victimisation and HIV/AIDS**

Avoidance was a strategy used by individuals who do not want to be affected by homophobia and victimisation. To avoid victimisation and the deadly HIV/AIDS sickness participants indicated that they avoided situations that put them at risk of contracting the HIV virus or being victimised. Six participants indicated that, "we avoid walking in the evening around campus so as to avoid being raped, beaten or harassed". Participants indicated that,

*"I made the rules and set boundaries on who should talk to me or who touches my things to avoid being victimised".*

*"I make sure I report any funny incident which is linked to victimisation, I don't tolerate being abused".*

*"I make sure I revenge on everyone who victimises me".*

Only one of the participants revealed that she managed to overcome victimisation by being the best:

*"I would not want to be victimised because I am homosexual. I must be so successful that nobody should refuse me on the grounds that I am homosexual. I must be that successful."*



#### **5.4.3 Coming out process strategy**

It was also noted that participants had adopted certain strategies specific to the coming-out process as a result of their desire to express who they really are. Participants had formulated different strategies depending on the people they want to tell about their sexual orientation. Waiting for the right time, dropping hints and telling the truth directly were some of the strategies mentioned during the coming out process.

Waiting for the right time, according to the participants, the "right time" for coming-out is the moment when the person to whom they will disclose their sexual orientation is ready to hear that they are gay. They will know it is the right time because of the reactions they are given by heterosexual students. One participant specified that,

*"I knew it was the right time because my friends asked me in a calm way and they are able to join scenarios to explain my sexual orientation".*

**Dropping a hint** means when someone tells you something indirectly. He or she does not want to come out clear with you. One participant exhibited that;

*“I do not tell lies, I said “Pamela is my girlfriend and we live together” and I frequently speak about her. I do that purposefully in order to show that there is a significant person in my life because it is better than telling lies. If I can comfortably speak about her, they would eventually understand what is going on. That is how I come out that I am a lesbian”.*

During the coming out process, they told the truth as a strategy. Telling the truth directly helped the participant to live openly around campus. A participant noted;

*“I told other heterosexual and homosexual students point blank that I was gay. I did not care how they felt about it because it is my own life and I determine how to run it”.*

The logo of the University of Fort Hare, featuring a shield with a sunburst at the top, an open book in the center, and the Latin motto 'IN LUMINE VIDE BIMUS' on either side of the book. Below the shield, the text 'University of Fort Hare' and 'Together in Excellence' is displayed.

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Other participants indicated that,

*“When we meet with our lovers, we walk openly holding each other hand even kissing at times”.*

## **5.5 Policies protecting homosexuals**

Finding a legal and policy response to the perpetration of victimised participants was particularly challenging more on a practical level. At the university of Fort Hare only fourteen homosexual participants were aware of the policies that protect gays and lesbians around campus. However, certain homosexual students were able to highlight some of the policies.

One participant said:

*“There’s Code of Conduct which fully subscribes to Principle 8 of the Charter, which states that the University community will commit itself “not to*

*discriminate, directly or indirectly, on the grounds of birth, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or social origin, gender, age, illness or disability, language, culture, political or other opinion, religion, conscience, belief, marital status, pregnancy or sexual orientation". This clause, therefore ensures that the University complies with relevant human rights legislation and fosters an environment free of conduct that might be hurtful or offensive".*

No student was going to be discriminated based on their sexual orientation. They are to be treated equally in all areas of the University of Fort Hare.



Another participant indicated that:

*"The University will not tolerate any form of harassment of its employees or students in any form. All students are responsible for ensuring that the university is free from sexual harassment. Any sexual advances, inappropriate physical contact or sexually orientated gestures, pictures, literature, jokes or statements may result in disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal".*

This is a clear indication that gays and lesbians are protected. But since they are not aware of these policies they need to be educated and be made aware of these. If one is mistreated on the basis of their sexual it could lead to dismissal of that person.

Another participant indicated that;

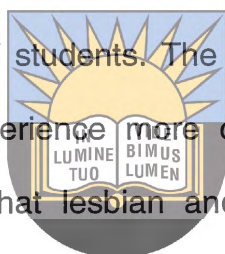
*"The University recognises that exceptional quality begins with individuals and it will support individuals who use their capabilities to the fullest in making their area of work and influence a place of excellence. The University therefore supports personal growth and continuous learning for all its students. The will is to provide an equal opportunity to access goods and services for all University*

*students. This includes equality to even accessing services that heterosexual's students gain. The University commits itself to processes and efforts to redress the imbalances of the past".*

An equal access to goods and service is highly promoted at the university more specially designed to protect minority groups like homosexuals which are viewed as vulnerable.

## **5.6 Discussion**

The results of this exploratory study focused more on the experiences, challenges and strategies employed LGBT students. The results from this study indicate that lesbian and gay students experience more challenges because of their sexual orientation. The challenges that lesbian and gay students face in reaction to prejudice and hostility foster a greater sense of tolerance and acceptance.



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Cognitive processes associated with developing an identity that is not part of the dominant group assist lesbian and gay students in their ability to think with more complexity about broader intellectual and social issues (Jones & McEwen, 2000). When homosexual students keep their sexual orientation a secret, they experience moderated feelings of self-worth and increased feelings of guilt and anxiety. Psychological health professionals are of the opinion that disclosure of sexual orientation to significant others is a prerequisite for the development of a positive gay identity and the achievement of psychological wellness (APA, 2000).

It is well known that non-disclosure of sexual orientation is undesirable (Pachankis & Goldfried, 2004). However, from the findings of this research, it was noted that disclosure of sexual orientation is no easy matter for lesbian and gay individuals who

have realistic fears of discrimination and rejection and they should lift the veil of secrecy under which they may have hidden for so long (Goldfried, 2001). Coming out for homosexual students caused to reject themselves, for who they are by virtue of their sexual orientation (APA, 2000; Pachankis & Goldfried, 2004). Coming-out process involves risk, conflict, and anxiety, it is essential that lesbian women and gay men who experience related difficulties should receive assistance to accept their homosexuality and to manage society's reaction. Distressing emotions related to the coming-out process can be alleviated to a certain extent by, among others, the sharing and comparing of experiences with similar others within formalised group settings (Hollander, 1989).



The current study results have revealed that many lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals, at some point or another in their lives, experience perceived rejection by society, friends, and family. It was noted that whether homosexuals disassociate themselves from other students, harassment and rejection were irresistible, they had to experience it. Though participants indicated that they were proud of their sexual orientation, despite their experiences, but being proud about one's sexual orientation is said to be linked with social dysfunction. This suggests that their pride is a reaction to rejection (Mbatha, 2012). There is a possibility that participants are socially conditioned to feel less guilty to relieve guilt through religion and culture.

The psychodynamic theory described homosexuality in line with the consequences of childhood traumas. Homosexuality can be placed in the same category as other disorders that have their source in childhood. Some of the participants in the current

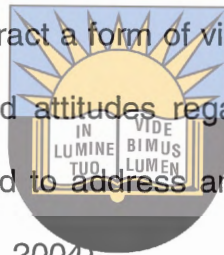
study reported that they regard themselves as sinful with respect to their religion and rebellious attitude towards their culture. If a homosexual individual experiences disapproval which is mainly about him or her as opposed to his or her behaviour, that individual begins to view the self as bad, shameful and unlovable especially when he relates to what he/she experienced in her childhood. This resulted in internalised homophobia. Homosexuals with internalised homophobia have internal schemas that guide their interpersonal perceptions and their interpretations of ambiguous situations.



It was clear that the perceived rejection of gay and lesbians by other students led many individuals with homosexual aspects to their sexuality to employ strategies that require them to maintain a veil of secrecy around their sexuality. Relating to the social cognitive theory, it is clear that some of these strategies are a way of survival; the human race is reliant on the replication of the actions of others. Participants who applied the hiding identity strategy attempted to tell small lies every now and then or at least shun revealing their actual sexual orientation. Hiding identities is a strategy that is commonly used by anyone to protect themselves, it's a social aspect that can be learned. Participants hid their identity so as to conform to the society and for them to be accepted, gay men in this were acting in a manner consistent with traditional masculinity norms of their community (Wilson & Miller, 2002). An individual who is forced to tell lies and conceal hers or his sexual identity among friends faces the greatest difficulty in her or his family.

Many gays and lesbians students at the University of Fort hare experienced non-acceptance from the general population around campus. In a university, more than

any other geographic setting, conformity is not strongly urged, Foster, (1998) but people are expected to learn by observing from others. However it is in this line that deviation from the traditional way of living is strongly discouraged (Martin & Martin, 1978), because this is the reason why most gay student experience victimisation such as rape, physical abuse and psychological violence. In this study, heterosexual students' attitudes toward gays, lesbians, and bisexuals indicated anti-LGBT attitudes were prevalent on Alice Fort Hare campus. It is in this light that if homosexuals divert from the normal social accepted norms or if they do not learn how things are done this will attract a form of victimisation. For that reason there are widely varying perspectives and attitudes regarding the climate for LGBT issues, multiple approaches are needed to address and improve the campus environment for LGBT students (Brown *et.al.*, 2004).



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## 5.7 Conclusion

The overall results of the current study suggest that students who are homosexuals face difficult experiences. Homosexual students are more likely to experience physical and sexual assaults. Feelings of internalised homophobia have also been noted among homosexuals. Problems with disclosing their sexual orientation to everyone and, having to experience social rejection will continue to be encountered because of the different views and beliefs towards homosexuality. However, students at the University Of Fort Hare are gradually coming to terms with homosexuality and laws have been created to protect against discrimination of marginalised groups. This is because no-one can go against the law. Despite the heterosexual population still abusing homosexual students being aware of our own personal prejudices and biases and guarding against homosexuals imposing our own values onto others are one of the steps towards a new and united South Africa.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter consolidates the work done from the first chapter where the research problem was presented up to the outcomes of the study in chapter five. It summaries on the experiences, challenges, strategies and policies as faced by homosexual students. Based on the findings of the study, some conclusions regarding the challenges and experiences faced by gays and lesbians are deduced and recommendations for the implementation of the study are to be provided in this chapter.



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#### 6.2 Summary of findings

The present study had aims that needed to be achieved as listed in Chapter 1. The study was able to explore the experiences and challenges of homosexuals at the University Of Fort Hare. The current study examined how LGBT's are treated by other students and staff members who have a different sexual orientation. Moreover, it identified strategies used by LGBT's to deal with the challenges they face. And lastly it assessed if they are any policies which protects or advocates for LGBT's at the University of Fort Hare. All of the aims were achieved.

##### 6.2.1 Challenges and experiences of LGBT's

The overall results of the current study indicate that the homosexual population at the University of Fort Hare is experiencing homophobia, condemnation, homophobic attacks, prejudicial remarks, discrimination and abuse. These kinds of treatments

towards LGBT's are more visible in the lives of students who come openly as gay as and lesbians. The main concern expressed by the participants in this study was that of anonymity and confidentiality. Quite a number of participants were vigilant about being identified as gay or lesbian in public because they were being treated harshly. They experience relational aggression harassment, which is sneaky and hideous and often goes unnoticed by authorities in charge which makes it difficult for them to come out in the open. There is a need to implement educational programmes to heterosexual students to encourage them to be tolerant and not carry judgmental attitudes.

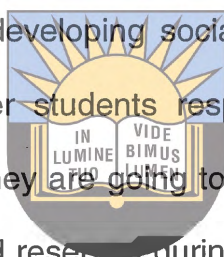


It was noted that perceived discrimination is rampant from heterosexual students in every category related to discrimination. While the findings do not prove that discrimination causes mental health problems, data collected takes a step toward demonstrating that the social stigma felt by LGBT students has mental health consequences. Inequitable experiences may affect stress levels. Discrimination is concurrently followed by prejudice remarks against homosexuals. These remarks are highly prevalent and most heterosexual students do not want to network with homosexuals as a result of religious beliefs or inclinations. Data presented in the previous chapter clearly showed that the heterosexual community of Fort-Hare is overwhelmingly conservative which makes it extremely difficult to disclose their sexual orientation to other heterosexual students and staff.

Most participants of the current study indicated that homosexual students were treated as suspects of carrying sexually transmitted diseases. HIV/AIDS or STIs is predominant in both homosexuals and heterosexual. Most homosexuals considered

themselves to be at risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases because they are often raped as a way to punish them or to trying to change their orientation. The evidence from the study suggests that respondents also admit that gays and lesbian students face more risk of diseases, premature death and are prey to very traditional notions of what they can expect of their own right to control their sexual bodies and lives.

Rejection by other heterosexual students is seemingly inevitable. Rejected homosexual students end up developing social withdrawal because of feelings of being disconnected. How other students responded to them about their sexual orientation it determined how they are going to reveal or identify themselves. Some of those who were very shy and reserved during revealing their identities if they had positive responses they would become very assertive, confident in expressing themselves and very eager to take part in various leadership roles. Being accepted and receiving social support after disclosing homosexual orientation is affected by changing times, globalisation and the diversity that exists in communities today (Mbatha, 2012).



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The process of accepting one's sexuality, for LGBT students can be described as an emotional rollercoaster. It involves more than just the realization of feelings towards the same sex. It incorporates different facets underlying their inability to accept their homosexuality. The first one is the internalization of basic heterosexist judgments. The second one is the individual's attempt to compare her or his personality with the common image of homosexuality among the public.

Although homosexuals are victimised it is prominent that they cannot report to local authorities around campus because of fear of further victimisation or fear to be judged. Homosexual students encounter higher levels of negative treatment, and disturbingly high levels of threatening behaviour, physical abuse and sexual abuse.

### 6.2.2 Strategies

The findings of the study revealed that despite the protection offered to homosexuals, they are by no means secure within their own gendered and sexual lives. Homosexual students successively adopt various strategies to protect themselves, such as boundary setting, avoiding certain circumstances, hiding identities, revenging and some openly admitting that they are gay students. Other homosexual students coped by adopting the defence mechanism strategy, which encompassed faking exaggerated heterosexual images (Smith & Smith, 1998). It was noted that their strategies were not adequate for their own protection. They need to go an extra mile to make the environment more comfortable.



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It should be noted that some homosexual students are resilient to harsh circumstances like violence and discrimination. They have an idea as to what strategies and implementation tactics would work best for them, given their socio-cultural framework. There is need to learn from them and build on strategies that have worked for them as interventions are made to alleviate homophobic behaviour or harassment. The empirical evidence shows that homosexual students have strong friendship bonds that allow them to pool resources. Every homosexual student would employ a different strategy to cope and they are able to decide how best they protect themselves from other members of the Fort Hare community.

### 6.2.3 Policies

Though there are policies in place to protect homosexual students at the University of Fort Hare and furthermore, gay and lesbian students have adopted their own strategies to protect themselves. It is noted that they did not know much about the university policies hence they had to devise their own strategies. Heterosexual students most of them are not concerned in knowing these policies concerning LGBT's because they feel it's none of their business. Both the heterosexual and homosexual students to some extent are reluctant to learn about the institutional/university policies.



However In terms of policies safeguarding homosexuals it can be noted that the University Of Fort Hare has generally adopted a top-down policy, one-size fits all approach to solving the issues of gender around campus. The policies are mainly centred on the distribution of resources and strict guideline of the way people or inmates should conduct themselves towards each other. However, this approach is not sustainable since it is not structured within a clear gender perspective which targets both the homosexual and heterosexual population at the university.

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Policies such as no student was going to be discriminated based on their sexual orientation and an equal access to goods and service is highly promoted at the university more specially designed to protect minority groups like homosexuals which are viewed as vulnerable. Homosexual students are simply not aware that these legal protections exist, or that certain types of discrimination are illegal. There is no reason to take the law into their hands as to protect themselves. The laws protecting homosexual are in place and they just need to be observed by people who are

affected mostly. If they become better known, attitudes can be expected to slowly change in the same way that has been seen with other civil rights laws. Still, increased awareness takes time and may not provide much protection at first.

### 6.3 Conclusions

The study sought to explore the challenges faced by LGBT students and came up with the conclusion they are facing serious victimization at the University Of Fort Hare. The most sensational discovery is that they are experiencing physical, sexual assaults, externalised and internalised homophobia and rejection mostly. Although certain students and staff are gradually coming to terms with homosexuality and the policies that have been designed to protect against discrimination of this marginalised groups, challenges are still ubiquitous. Support and awareness is the best option in tackling this issue.



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Freedom of belief is a basic human right but when opinions result in practices which hurt and threaten the lives of a negligible group, it is socially unacceptable. Homophobia at the University Of Fort Hare, as experienced by the participants in this study, does not only violates constitutional rights but also disrupts social sentimental values hence making it ethically reprehensible. There may be various rationales that could explain why the heterosexual community at Fort Hare have behaved in this manner. There is no adequate justification for allowing this to continue because homophobia and discrimination is intolerable in a democratic country. These experiences described by participants are hard hitting and stark. It can be concluded that disclosure of homosexual identity depends on the support structures available and their accessibility for an individual. Personal homosexual experiences as

described by participants suggest that the process of self-identification built their self-image and self-concept.

The study leads to the conclusion that homophobic reactions accompanied by examples of sexual stigmatization and prejudice as well as the stereotypes given above can be observed in overt and covert forms in different numbers and with varying characteristics. We can summarize these homophobic reactions that are expressed by heterosexuals as exclusion from their social reality. Hence making the challenges faced by LGBTs, help in fostering a greater sense of tolerance, acceptance and emphasizing the importance of visible support structures for students who are coming to grips with their newly founded sexuality. The disparagement and victimization of homosexuality around the Fort Hare community is based on misunderstanding. It seems that the society has a generalized opinion of homosexuals as social deviants and sinners who are not conforming to social norms and the dictates of the Bible. Such stereotypes need revisiting.



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#### **6.4 Limitations of the study**

A large number of participants were chosen in the study, but it was still difficult for participants to agree to participate. The researcher had aimed to have an equal number of participants from the three groups. However, due to the challenges faced during the study, the researcher was forced to have 33 staff members, 55 heterosexual students and 32 lesbian and gay students to participate in the study. The topic of gays and lesbians seemed to be a sensitive topic. Most people did not even want to hear the word homosexual due to their religious beliefs or some were just not comfortable hence they could not participate. Some students wanted to

participate but because of peer pressure and fear to be linked with homosexuality they couldn't participate. Data collection was challenging but it was a success. Most of the participants who agreed to participate were able to answer the questions without experiencing problems. Though some asked for money to participate in the study there were no funds allocated for participants. For those who encountered problems, the researcher was available to immediately help them.

### **6.5 Implications for social work practice**

Social work seeks to enhance and restore the psychosocial functioning of people. Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman (2004) discovered that many social workers in the USA had negative views about homosexuality. As a first step in working with gays and lesbians, it is crucial for social workers to confront their homophobia. They need to change the way they view the homosexual clients. Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman (2004) also noted that, one of the worst things a practitioner can do is negatively label a gay or lesbian client and criticize that client for his/her sexual orientation. This contradicts the basic social work value of the client's self-determination. A negatively biased practitioner can unknowingly work against a client's development and maintenance of a positive self-image. Hence social workers and homosexual clients must go further than simply avoiding the most destructive and blatant forms of homophobia. Instead, better modalities ought to be grounded in strength perspectives that recognize, avow, and support the identities, experiences, and rights of homosexual clients.

Social workers are urged to change the oppressive and destructive social conditions affecting the lives of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people. Social work



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core values related to service, social justice, respect for the person, importance of human relationships, integrity and competence are universally either implicitly or explicitly adopted as guidelines for social work conduct. They should embrace social diversity and should not discriminate people based on sexual orientation since they are in a better position than most professionals to deal with the challenges faced by homosexuals that ranges from discrimination, health issue, internalized homophobia, fear, stress and isolation among other things.

## **6.6 Recommendations**

The study suggests the following recommendations:



### **6.6.1 Awareness campaigns about homosexuality**

Education can be an effective method of social change as a method of prejudice, homophobia and discrimination reduction in the field of gender equality. It is momentous for students and staff to be educated both in lesbian and gay awareness as well in human rights. Heterosexuals can be challenged through awareness campaigns. By doing so this would encourage inter- action and facilitating positive social change for lesbian and gay individuals. The notion is that, via exposure to lesbian, gay and realities of homosexual lives, students prejudice can be overcome. Most importantly, it is hoped that the findings presented herein contribute to increase awareness. There is a need for proactive strategies that challenge intolerance and discrimination and offer effective support to those who have been victims.

### **6.6.2 Integrate GLBT Issues/Concerns into the Curriculum**

Positive attitudes towards gay and lesbian could be achieved through social science curriculum. Homosexuals are still under social pressure to become heterosexuals. In

a liberal notion of 'free choice' individuals who claim they only want to help homosexuals who really want to be heterosexual, should also be prepared to help those heterosexuals who want to expand their sexual repertoire and become homosexual, (Davison 1991:146) When we are discussing ethical issues regarding homosexuality, we should focus on addressing the institutional level, so that the question of individual therapists and their clients falls under broad professional ethics. Schools should include gay and lesbian issues in their definition of multiculturalism and should encourage and nurture the self-worth of all their students (Graziano, 2003). To do so would go a considerable way of encouraging social actions and facilitating positive change for lesbians and gay.




### **6.6.3 Institutional Commitment to LGBT Issues/Concerns**

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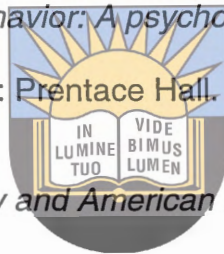
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There's a need to incorporate homosexual/ gender disquiets into all aspects of the institutions' management and policies acknowledging the existence of Fort Hare community. Simple steps, such as creating inclusive wording on documents, creates space in which homosexuals students feel free to be themselves. In regards to the high rate of harassment experienced, policies that directly respond to acts of intolerance, including harassment and violence, should be Integrated into university documents/publications (grievance procedures, housing guidelines, application materials) that advise the students and staff on the consequences of victimising homosexuals. Homosexuals should no longer be judged, mistreated nor be humiliated because the word of God says "For everyone has sinned and we all fall short of God's glorious standard" (Romans 6;23 NIV bible) hence there's need to love one another and treat everyone with respect and dignity. No man is better than the other.

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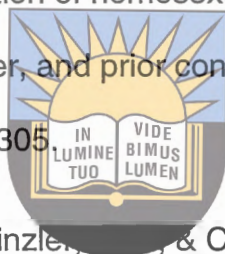
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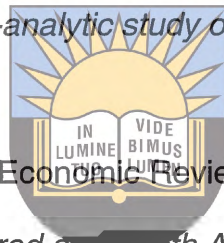
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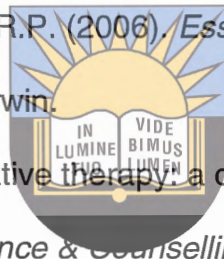
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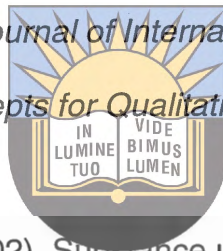
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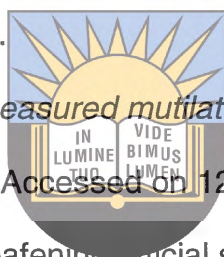
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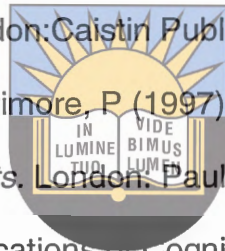
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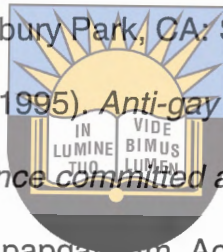
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## APPENDIX 1



**University of Fort Hare**  
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### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LECTURERS AND OTHER STAFF AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE.**

#### **INTRODUCTION**



My name is Esther Rutendo Nyakwima and I am doing my Masters in Social Work at the University Of Fort Hare, in Alice. This questionnaire is part of my research and I would be really grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete it. The University Of Fort Hare, like many other South African universities, is currently enrolling students with various sexual orientations there is need to become aware of challenges some students are facing pertaining their sexuality. This questionnaire is aimed at finding experiences of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender students at the University Of Fort Hare and the strategies they use to deal with these experiences. Your answers and identity will be treated completely confidentiality. Other comments added will be welcomed and treated anonymously.

Filling in the form should take approximately 20 minutes.

**PLEASE NOTE:** It does not mean that by participating you are a gay or lesbian; you are acting in as a key informant.

**Instruction**

In this questionnaire, you are requested to respond according to your experiences, opinions, and feelings about LGBT's. Shade the square next to the answer(s) with a pencil or pen that best suits you. If more than one answer best suits you, you are allowed to mark more than one answer.

**General Information**

Age .....

Gender .....

Department .....

Religion.....



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1. Do you understand what homosexuality is all about?

No

Yes

2. Do you know of any students who are gays, lesbians, bisexuals or transgender?

No

Yes

3. Do you network with any gays and lesbians around campus?

Yes

No

If no why? .....

4. Are gays and lesbian people afforded the same rights as other people with regard to the dignity, privacy, freedom and security of their person?

No

Yes

5. In what way do you think homosexual students are treated?

They are abused verbally.

They are abused emotionally.

They reject them openly.

They accept them as they are.

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



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6. What are the kinds of victimisation that could be experienced by gay and lesbian people in your department?

Rape

Prejudice remarks

Kicked out of school or work

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. How do they deal with the above mentioned victimisation?

They report to local securities

They revenge by themselves

They do not respond

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. From experience or observation of homosexuals, do you think they have suicidal thoughts?

Definitely not

I don't think so

Definitely has

9. From the experiences you have had with homosexuals are they faced with the challenge of ?

HIV or AIDS

STI's

Barrenness

Other illnesses



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10. What strategy do they take to cope with the challenge mentioned above?

They go for counselling

They seek for medication

They don't disclose it to anyone

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

11. What would you do to if a student who is gay or lesbian asks for help?

Ignore

Help him/ her out

Preach to him/ her about homosexuality

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. What challenges do you think are faced by homosexuals?

.....  
.....

13. How are homosexual students treated in your department by other lecturers or staff?

Badly

Fairly

Good.



14. How are homosexuals coping in your department?

Hide their identity

They fight for their rights

They join with other homosexuals to find conformity

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

15. What other strategies do you that are used by homosexuals to cope around campus.....  
.....

16. Are lesbian and gay students afforded same right in their education?

No

Yes

17. Are there any policies in place to protect lesbians and gays at the University of Fort Hare.

No

Yes

May you please mention them.

.....  
.....

18. During lectures or when attaining any form of services are lesbians and gays given any special attention?



No

Yes

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If yes mention them

.....  
.....

19. Are there any resources or organisations that in place to protect gay and lesbian victims about their rights?

No

Yes

Not aware of them

If yes mention them


## APPENDIX 2



**University of Fort Hare**  
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### **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LESBIAN, GAYS, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER STUDENTS ONLY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**



My name is Esther Rutendo Nyakwima and I am doing my Masters in Social Work at the University of Fort Hare in Alice. This questionnaire is part of my research and I would be really grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete it. The University of Fort Hare, like many other South African universities, is currently enrolling students with various sexual orientations there is need to become aware of challenges some students are facing. This questionnaire is aimed at finding out the challenges faced by gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender students at the University of Fort Hare. Your answers and identity will be treated completely confidentially.

1. What is your age?
2. What is your sexual orientation?
3. What is your level of education?
4. What is your religion?
5. Have you ever disclosed to anyone about your sexual orientation.

6. Disclosing your sexual orientation to other students, do you find revealing your identity secret as:

7. During your homosexual identity formation, did you go through any of the following?

8. How did you find out that you were homosexual or bisexual?

9. Do you have support from your family?

10. Do you have friends around campus?

11. Which of the following have you experienced because of your sexual experience?



12. If you have experienced any of these, how did you feel?

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13. How are you being treated by other students because of your sexual orientation?

14. Given the status of your orientation, how do you view yourself with any of the following?

15. Has the idea of taking your own life kept coming into your head?

16. Which of the following challenges have you ever faced at the University of Fort Hare due to your sexual orientation?

17. Do you use alcohol or drugs to cope with any of the issues you have mentioned above?

18. How do other students react or respond to you based on your sexual orientation?

19. Which of these strategies as a coping mechanism to your sexuality?

20. Kindly mention the strategies you use to cope in your day to day living

21. Are there any policies at the University of Fort Hare that you know that are in place to protect people who have a different sexual orientation?

22. Are there any programme (s) within campus that supports homosexuality?

23. Kindly mention other challenges you are facing due to your sexual orientation?

24. How would you like to be helped by the university and other students regarding your sexual orientation?



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## APPENDIX 3



**University of Fort Hare**  
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### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

#### INTRODUCTION



My name is Esther Rutendo Nyakwima and I am doing my Masters in Social Work at the University Of Fort Hare in Alice. This questionnaire is part of my research and I would be really grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete it. The University Of Fort Hare, like many other South African universities, is currently enrolling students with various sexual orientations there is need to become aware of challenges some students are facing pertaining their sexuality. This questionnaire is aimed at finding experiences of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender students at the University Of Fort Hare and the strategies they use to deal with these experiences. Your answers and identity will be treated completely confidentiality. Other comments added will be welcomed and treated anonymously.

Filling in the form should take approximately 20 minutes.

PLEASE NOTE: It does not mean that by participating you are a gay or lesbian you are acting in as a key informant.

### Instruction

In this questionnaire, you are requested to respond according to your experiences, opinions, and feelings about asked questions. Shade the square next to the answer(s) with a pencil or pen that best suits you. If more than one answer best suits you, you are allowed to mark more than one answer.

1. What is your age range?

18-24

30-34

40-44



25-29

35-40

45-50

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2. What is your sex?

Male

Female

3. What is your level of education?

Undergraduate

Honour's

Masters

PHD

Post doctorate

4. What is your marital status?

Single       married       divorced

5. What is your religion?

.....

6. Race

Black       Coloured       Indian       White

7. Do you understand what homosexuality is all about?

No

Yes



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8. Do you know of any students who are gays, lesbians, bisexuals or transgender?

No

Yes

9. Do you network with any gays and lesbians around campus?

Yes

No

If no why? .....

10. Are gays and lesbian people afforded the same rights as other people with regard to the dignity, privacy, freedom and security of their person?

No

Yes

11. How do other students treat homosexuals?

They are abused verbally.

They are abused emotionally.

They reject them openly.

They accept them as they are.

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



12. What are the kinds of victimisation that could be experienced by gay and lesbian people in your department?

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Rape

Prejudice remarks

Kicked out of school or work

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

13. How do they deal with the above mentioned victimisation?

They report to local securities

They revenge by themselves

They do not respond

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

14. From experience or observation of homosexuals, do you think they have suicidal thoughts?

Definitely not

I don't think so

Definitely has

15. From the experiences you have had with homosexuals are they faced with the challenge of ?

HIV or AIDS

STI's

Barrenness

Other illnesses



16. What strategy do they take to cope from the challenge mentioned about?

They go for counselling  **University of Fort Hare**  
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They seek for medication

They don't disclose it to anyone

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

17. What would you do to if a student who is gay or lesbian asks for help?

Ignore

Help him/ her out

Preach to him/ her about homosexuality

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

18. What challenges do you think are faced by homosexuals?

.....  
.....  
.....

19. How are homosexuals treated in your department?

Badly

Fairly

Good.



20. How do you think homosexuals cope in your department?

Hide their identity

They fight for their rights

They join with other homosexuals to find conformity

Others (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

21. What other strategies do you think are used by homosexuals to cope around campus.

.....  
.....

22. Are you aware of any resources, mechanisms and procedures or policies in place to protect gay and lesbian victims about their rights?

No

Yes

If yes mention them

.....

.....

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION . IT IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED**



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