

Attitudes toward Homosexual Practices among the Karanga People: A Religious Perspective

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Abstract: *Issues relating to homosexuality have ignited endless debates in the fields of religion, theology, politics and human sexuality. Throughout history, various moralists have condemned homosexuality as immoral and many societies have outlawed it. Philosophers have insisted for centuries that homosexuality is immoral. The bible proclaimed that it is an abomination (Lev 18v22), politicians call homosexuals the festering figure; the courts send them to jail. In our time, some nations have repealed laws discriminating against homosexuals and others have given legal recognition to homosexual relationship basing on human rights. Other communities have denounced homosexuality as unAfrican. In Zimbabwe homosexuality is widely seen as a result of the moral decadence that has gripped society and as originating in promiscuous sexual behaviour. It is in light of this background that this paper has explored the Traditional Karanga people's attitude towards homosexuality. The paper interrogated and examined the stance and the basis of moral position of the Karanga people in relation to homosexuality. The paper managed to find out that the practice is not rooted in Karanga tradition hence it emanated as a new phenomenon from other cultures. Homosexuality though it could have been prevalent among Karanga societies, it was not tolerated. Documentary analysis and interviews and focus group discussion were used to glean data for this paper.*

Keywords: *Homosexuality, Sexuality, Religion, Traditional, Karanga*

I. Introduction

Issues relating to homosexuality have often incited extreme reactions in many African communities and it has become controversial in Zimbabwe. This discussion is propelled by the escalating debates on whether the act is African or un-African. Homosexuality in Zimbabwe is widely seen as a result of moral decadence that has gripped society originating from promiscuous sexual behaviour. This article seeks to explore the attitudes of the traditional Karanga people toward homosexuality. Research for this article included interviews conducted with six youths, ten elderly people in Runesu, Mauka, Vutete, Chaputsa, Gwapedza and Sivara villages and five headmen in Chivi, Bikita, Zaka, Mwenezi, Gutu. The interviews were meant to explore the traditional Karanga people's attitudes toward homosexuality and find out if the practice is rooted in Karanga tradition or it was a new phenomenon emanating from other cultures. The paper will examine the moral implications of homosexual practices from the Karanga community's perspective. The paper will begin by discussing who the Karanga are; the religion of the karanga, karanga sexuality and finally look at the attitudes of the karanga toward homosexuality.

Methodological Concerns

The sociological and the phenomenological methods were utilised for this study. The sociological method was handy because it is concerned with describing and explaining social behaviour, social structures and interactions in relation to the environment. It is therefore suitable in this research, which endeavours to comprehend the attitudes of the karanga towards homosexuality. The phenomenological approach was particularly significant because it is concerned with seeing a phenomenon, behaviour or religion as the adherents see them, rather than imposing any sort of external value judgment. In fact, the phenomenological approach provided a means for investigating the way people come to know reality¹. Through the process of epoche, the researcher was able to gather data after the suspension of any value judgments and preconceived notions about the beliefs, practices and attitudes of the karanga towards homosexuality².

Who Are the Karanga?

The Karanga are a group of Shona speaking people who occupy parts of Masvingo province in Zimbabwe. Masvingo is a Province in Zimbabwe found in the south-eastern section of the landlocked country. It

¹ James L Cox, *Expressing the Sacred*, Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 15

² Ezra Chitando "Sprit-Type Churches As Holistic Healing Movements: A study of the Johane Masowe Wechishanu Church" Unpublished B.A. Honours Dissertation, Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1989.

borders Mozambique on its eastern border and the provinces of Matabeleland South to the south, Midlands to the north and west and Manicaland to the north east. The province is largely populated by members of the Karanga tribe, who are the most populous tribe in Zimbabwe. Masvingo is divided into seven administrative districts, which are Bikita, Chivi, Zaka and Masvingo in the center of the province, Gutu in the north, and Mwenezi, and Chiredzi in the south and east respectively. All these seven districts are inhabited by the Karanga people.

Religion of the Karanga

Like any other Shona tribe, the Karanga people were and are notoriously religious and it is difficult to separate their religious life from their everyday life. African traditionalists integrate all aspects of life. Therefore, it is difficult to separate the sacred from the profane. Mbiti in Amanze argues that:

Wherever the African is, there is his religion: he takes it with him to the beer party or to attend a funeral ceremony; and if he is educated, he takes religion with him to the examination room at school or in the university; if he is a politician he takes it to the house of parliament³.

This entails that religion in the Karanga tradition can be talked, danced, acted or even shown in their art and symbols since there is no boundary separating what may be called the religious and non - religious. Africans do not know how to exist without religion. Religion to the Karanga is a way of life; hence it is lived as well as practiced. The Karanga's cultural values, religion and moral aspects cannot be distinguished. Rather, every human encounter is seen and interpreted through the religious eye.

In Karanga religion, the general moral argument is that, as Mwari is and does, so human beings must be and do. Rather, the understanding of Mwari is the standard against which the moral standards are measured among the Karanga. The nature of Karanga morality leads to concrete action in the form of rituals in which the needs and desires of human life are reflected. This culminates to the contention that Karanga religion is the source of their moral values, culture and perceptions.

Ethics of the Karanga people

The notion of ethics among the Karanga people cannot be isolated from the broader ethical discourse obtaining across Africa today. Thus, African ethics as it has come to be known could arguably include the ethics of everybody who lives in Africa⁴. What is important to note is that whatever religious orientations people from Africa may have, they are first and foremost Africans before they choose for instance Christianity, Islam and so on. African ethics will always influence their day to day lives including how they ought to conduct themselves wherever they are. Having said that, it is important to focus on one type of African ethics known as hunhu as found in Southern Africa.

It is instructive to note that among the Karanga a person who has hunhu exudes moral goodness and anyone who has hunhu behaves in a decent, good, rational and responsible way. Hunhu is, therefore, the ethical benchmark of the Karanga society⁵. A person who possesses hunhu can control himself/herself, his/her passion and instincts; but should his/her desires overcome him/her, then he/she is defined as having no hunhu.

According to the Karanga people, a person with hunhu is gentle and respectful; such character traits manifest themselves in the way in which the Karanga women or girls greet their elders as they bend their knees as a sign of respect. Men and boys clap hands when greeting their elders. Hunhu includes a sense of good foresight and an appreciation of the situation, a person who acts without hunhu is said to be immoral. A person who has hunhu must never be harsh to the young or old; and when he is at a beer party, he conducts himself well and with dignity, is patient and he shares a laugh with others. Sharing a laugh with others is a sign that the person mixes well with other people in the community and is ready to contribute to its sustenance as a member of the group. It is this kind of friendship approach to life which sits well with hunhu philosophy as celebrated in Karanga society.

A man who has built up a reputation because of hunhu finds that other families are eager to have their daughters marry his sons. Coming to the issue of murder, adultery and homosexuality, the Karanga people say that they are among the people who are not good persons in Karangaland. A man with hunhu possesses good

³ J.N Amanze, African Christianity in Botswana: The Case of African Independent Churches. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1998.

⁴ R. Nicolson, (Ed.) Persons in Community: Ubuntu in the Global Village. Scottsville: University of KwaZulu Natal Press, 2008,7.

⁵F. Mangena, On Ubuntu and Retributive Punishment in Korekore-Nyombwe Culture: Emerging Ethical Perspectives. Best Practices Books: Greendale, Harare, 2012.

manners, good morals, good intelligence and knowledge⁶. A good man teaches his children to love everyone and to respect elderly people. The children of a good man naturally follow their father in his good manners and behaviour. It would appear, judging from the above view, that morality among the Karanga people is ascribed, and that is, one inherits it from his parents.

A bad man on the other hand causes discord in society, and so does his progeny. It is helpful to note that there are two main categories of the bad man in Karanga society, namely the witch (muroyi) and the malicious man. Muroyi is among the most hated moral deviants because he or she kills far more people, while the malicious man has a jealous streak in him and does not respect social order⁷. A bad man may also be one who has a lust for other men's wives. He covets somebody else's wife and attempts to have sexual relations with her. The greatest example of badness is murder. A person who murders another person has total disrespect for human life which is sacred in Karanga society, and he or she therefore fits the description of a bad person. It is critical to remark that a person never dies 'munhu haafi.' This means that the Karanga people believe that the end of bodily life marks the beginning of spiritual life. Hence the morality of Karanga people is anchored on spirituality. The elders make moral rules and principles which the spirit world endorses through various sanctions that include misfortunes, deaths, and illnesses directed toward the moral deviant. When misfortunes such as mysterious deaths, illnesses and failure to get married occur, they act as clear indicators that certain moral rules have been broken and the cosmic balance has been disturbed. Then the Karanga people will say there is an evil spirit causing all the mishaps.

There is also the context in which the spirit of ngozi or avenging spirit operates. Thus, the Karanga society subscribes to both vertical (supernatural ethics) and horizontal (secular ethics). The Karanga believe that if a person's life is deliberately taken away through cold-blood murder or beer poisoning, then that person's spirit will come back and fight for justice by haunting the family of the perpetrator until reparations are made. When the spirits of the dead victim is not appeased, there is moral disorder and so the spirit fights back in order to bring back sanity. Among the Karanga, the guilty family lives in fear and anxiety for so long as restitution is not paid. Once restitution has been paid, the spirit of the dead victim will allow the guilty person's family to live in peace. Within the Karanga people's code of ethics, as is also the case with other Shona cultural groupings, there is no proportional retribution when the guilty family has failed to own up and clean its mess by paying restitution; ngozi may strike viciously and harshly by not only targeting the perpetrator of the crime but also his kinsmen. Ngozi underlie the Shona conceptions of religion and ethics. So, in the Karanga moral view, what a person does has to be levelled against the communitarian moral codes. If an action does not promote the communitarianism or togetherness it is regarded as wrong.

Karanga Sexuality

According to Shoko African Traditional religion in Zimbabwe subscribe to the view of sex which silences any discourse relating to it⁸. Sex in the traditional Karanga society was mysterious and sacred and the subject was rarely discussed openly. Sexual language was a taboo to the Karanga. Sex is private but is conducted in the presence of light. This is done to brighten sex. Rather, for the Karanga sex represent God symbolically in the process of creation⁹. Sex is vital among the Karanga as long as it produces children. The Karanga believe that sex is aimed at producing children so as to promote the growth of the clan. Children provide continuity between the living and the dead. Boys and girls approaching marriageable age were taught by the aunts and uncles how to handle a wife or husband in bed. Girls were taught skills for sex to please their husbands. This shows that sex among the Karanga was sacred and important. Sexual intercourse was vital in promoting fertility. If the reason for sex was not to procreate then it was considered an abomination. Sex for the traditional Karanga was a reservation of the elderly and was restricted to a husband and wife. The Karanga had taboos to prohibit incest, endogamy, pre-marital sex and the shunning of pre-marital pregnancy.

All these imply that in Karanga societies, sex was directed towards procreation hence heterosexual marriage was viewed as normative. More to this, since interest was on procreation, having sex for its own sake was not allowed. Rather, in Karanga sexuality, pleasure and affection were unintended consequences of the sex act. Since homosexuals cannot procreate, their experiences of intimacy and sexual gratification were trivialised. Elders in Karanga communities used idioms and imagery to communicate matters of sexuality. According to Aschwanden the Karanga often used the symbols such as *duri* (the mortar) and *musi* (pistel) to represent the vagina and penis respectively¹⁰. Sexual organs themselves were regarded as taboo and not looked at or named in

⁶ M.Gelfand, *Tropical Victory: An Account of the Influence of Medicine on the History of Southern Rhodesia, 1890-1923*. Cape Town: Juta Company, 1968,54

⁷ M.Gelfand, 1968, 55

⁸ T. Shoko, *Karanga Indigenous Religion in Zimbabwe: Health and Well-Being*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006

⁹ T. Shoko, 2006

¹⁰ H. Aschwanden, 1989. *Karanga Mythology: An analysis of the Consciousness of the*

public. So, for the Karanga any pleasure outside the premise of procreation was a sin. Sex without the intention to produce children was simply not advisable.

For the Karanga, sexual relations were important for the purposes of procreation. So, sex becomes important in so far as it helps to secure descendants. Many children meant more people to remember you as an ancestral spirit. Failure to produce children disallowed a person from receiving full burial rite. His or her spirit will quickly fade and be forgotten by later generations. Aschwanden found out that among the Karanga, there is a belief that a man's semen makes him immortal, that the act of procreation is sacred, and that a male orgasm is comparable to God descending to the people¹¹. The Karanga people had praise poetry which celebrated sexual intercourse resulting in male orgasm and female pregnancy. A common belief among the Karanga is that an orgasm without the goal of making children is meaningless. Women also understood the need to receive sperm vaginally on a regular basis as a crucial part of maintaining their physical and emotional good health. This makes Karanga sexuality to be highly centred on child bearing and good health or well-being. In Karanga communities women who had many pregnancies over their fertile years earned almost much prestige in the eyes of the community. Sexual virility was also highly praised in men. Abstinence in some situations was allowed and even preferred notably in the late stages of pregnancy and while breast feeding a child. The wife of a polygamous wife was expected to wait patiently for her turn with him than to seek sex outside the marriage. Female sexuality among the Karanga also included knowledge of methods to balance the expectations of the husband. At other extremes a woman who failed to receive or carry pregnancy would become the object of scorn and pity and could result in divorce.

The Karanga people also allowed other non-penetrative sexual acts like thigh sex which they called *kugangisa*. Among girls certain kinds of sex play were also considered a normal and desirable phase that helped to prepare them for marriage¹². *Kusenga*, for example, was the practice of unmarried girls to manually stretch their labia majora through a daily exercise. Girls could spend hours at *kusenga*, alone or with the help of a close friend. *Kusenga* was thought to be primarily in the interest of pleasing the future husband.

Generally, in Karanga sexuality, sex acts that did cross the forbidden lines could bring much stronger penalties. A case of adultery, incest, homosexuality and bestiality were considered as threats to the social cohesion of the society. These acts were linked to witchcraft or deliberate evil, hence were not tolerated. Same-sex intercourse was detested because it was potentially wasteful of the precious male seed.

Historical background of homosexuality

The term homosexuality was first coined by a Swiss doctor K.M. Benkert, in 1869. Etymologically the Greek word *homo* was added to Latin *sexualis* to formulate the term *homosexualis* meaning an attraction to sexual preference for the same sex. This definition is quite adequate in reference to relationship or sexual act or relations involving two parties of one sex¹³. Female homosexuality is described as Lesbianism, taking its name from the Island of Lesbos, where the Greek poet Sappho once lives in a female community. Discussions about sexuality in general and same-sex attraction in particular, have occasioned philosophical discussion ranging from Plato's *Symposium* to contemporary queer theory. It is generally agreed that homosexuality is not a matter of choice. There can be no doubt that homosexuality is not a modern phenomenon. There are many stories about homosexuality in the Bible. This implies that the act has been prevalent from time immemorial. Homosexuality is caused by lack of strong stable affairs. The person would then resort to homosexuality as a way of quenching passion.

Homosexuality can also be said to be caused by abnormal hormones. It is often argued that male homosexuals have female hormones which will give them strong feelings towards other males. This is necessarily because such males will be having women characteristics and body structure. On the same note lesbians will have characteristics and bodies of males. These are features which are fashioned by natural hormones hence homosexuality is not a matter of choice but a natural phenomenon. This implies that homosexuality is genetically determined.

According to Sigmund Freud, "Every new arrival on this planet is faced by the task of mastering the Oedipus complex; anyone who fails to do so falls victim to neurosis"¹⁴. Freud further taught that homosexuality

Karanga. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1989

¹¹ H. Aschwanden, 1989. *Karanga Mythology: An analysis of the Consciousness of the Karanga*. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1989

¹² T. Shoko, 2006

¹³ John Boswell, "Revolutions, Universals, and Sexual Categories", *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay & Lesbian Past*, Chauncey et al., eds. New York: Meridian, New American Library, Penguin Books, 1989

¹⁴ Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the theory of sexuality*, SE, Vol 7, London: Hogart Press, 1953,226

resulted from this failure to master the Oedipus complex. Freud saw homosexuality as the penalty for the boy child's failure to win the Oedipal battle against a seductive, overbearing, over-affectionate mother—the classic Mrs. Portnoy.

Instead of finally identifying with the hated father as the resolution of the oedipal rivalry, the child identifies with the mother. Thereafter, the now homosexual male seeks other men as his love object. In the Freudian homosexual model, the penis-adoring child also shows disgust for the penisless woman. This is coupled with his castration fear at the hands of an angry father-rival¹⁵. So, for Freud, homosexuality is a psychological illness.

The political and traditional cultural understanding of homosexuality as a form of mental disorder has been used to demonstrate that homosexual persons like other sick people in society do not need rights to be sick but deserve compassion and treatment, hence the idea that society must not eliminate the patient but rather the disease. To that extent, Zimbabwean political and traditional cultural custodians as well as members of the public argue that homosexual persons have no right to be that sick and to publicise that sickness.

Some people have attributed the causes of homosexuality to demonic attacks linking it to the biblical story of Sodom and Gomorrah. So, homosexuality could be caused by some of the issues raised above and many others not highlighted in this paper.

Incidences that could have promoted homosexual practices in traditional Karanga societies

According to Garlake, Africans knew, practiced and in some cases even honoured sexual relations between members of the same sex¹⁶. Epprecht noted that it can be deduced from Khoisan rock paintings in Zimbabwe that homosexuality existed in pre-colonial Africa¹⁷. The Bushmen were the original inhabitants of Zimbabwe and they are similar to those found anywhere in the continent today. A rich legacy of paintings on the wall of caves they sometimes occupied attests to their way of life and spiritual beliefs. Homosexual experiments among the adolescence were common too in pre-colonial Africa. Out in the bush herding cattle, homosexual play with each other was actually expected at the age of puberty. Epprecht reiterated that girls often had same-sex encounters among the Shona when older, experienced girls gradually socialised young girls into adult female roles and relationships¹⁸. Sexual intimacy was a real aspect of these relationships where homo-erotic touching and kissing accompanied the mutual lengthening of the labia. However, adult men who were seen engaging in same sex acts were seen as having been bewitched or being witches themselves. Goddard, posited that traditional institutions in Zimbabwe where a spirit medium may sometimes be possessed by a spirit of the opposite sex has given room for thinking that this was one way in which homosexuals were able to fit in the society and gain acceptance¹⁹. More to this African boys or girls were sleeping in one room on the same mat typically in the nude, and huddled together for warmth against the cold winter nights; hence chances of arousing each other through fondling were high especially under the influence of alcohol or natural over excitement. So, homosexuality has been part of African societies from the pre-colonial times²⁰.

The concept of polygamy could have also propelled the incidences of homo-erotic chances. The wives of a polygamous man were expected to wait for their turns patiently. This could have prompted lesbianism so as to quench sexual desires after long deprivations.

Fertility examination in boys approaching marriageable age could have also promoted homo-erotic plays. Boys were allowed to masturbate into water to see if their sperms would sink or float. The sinking sperms would send message that the boy is fertile and the floating ones would mean the boy is infertile hence action to help him would be taken.

In girls the virginity tests were done by elderly women through inserting their finger into the vagina and this had chances of letting girls test each other on their own and later on such acts would grow into lesbianism.

Attitudes of the Karanga towards homosexuality

In the traditional history that the researcher gathered, there have been no serious reports of homosexuals among the Karanga people. Sexual relations are regarded by the Karanga as sacred and unacceptable before marriage. This then culminates to the idea that homosexuality was not tolerated. The fact

¹⁵ Sigmund Freud, 1953

¹⁶ P Garlake, *The Hunter's Vision*, London, British Museum, 1995

¹⁷ M Epprecht, *Hungochani, A History of a Dissident Sexuality in Southern Africa*. McGill-Queen's University Press London, 2004

¹⁸ M Epprecht, 2004

¹⁹ K. Goddard *Fair Representation, GALZ and the History of Gay Movement in Zimbabwe* in Wehbi S (ed) Harrington Park Press, London, 2004.

²⁰ M Epprecht, 2004

that homosexuality was in-tolerated implies that it has been totally regarded as an immoral action. The adulterers were severely punished in the traditional societies and this shows that people were supposed to strongly and cautiously control their sexual vigour until the time of marriage.

In a group interview in Chaputsa village, it was postulated that homosexuality was only done by youngsters as they were attending to animals but no serious indulgence was reported in any society. The notorious youngsters would do homosexuality as they were swimming but if they were caught by the elders they were severely beaten. This shows that homosexuality was regarded by the Karanga societies as an act of gross immorality punishable by death.

The traditional Karanga people believed that when humanity was created there was a special purpose. In their views in a group discussion, the reason why we have both male and female species is for us to procreate²¹. This being the case, any sexual relation which was not meant to procreate was abominable. The ancestors are happy if the families are multiplying hence the main intriguing factors that the ancestors would expect from their descendents was procreation. This implies that anything against their will is immoral. In the Karanga moral values, what is morally good is what is willed by the ancestors or vice-versa.

One interviewee in Zaka regarded homosexuality as a sign of gross adulterous mind. For him, the way people were created is such that those of the same sex will not attract each other. He likened the situation to the like poles of a magnet which repel²². This shows that the unlike poles will almost always attract each other. If like poles will one day attract each other it would mean that something has gone wrong? From this analogy of a magnet it can be deduced that the act of homosexuality was unexpected hence immoral action in the Karanga perception.

The village head of Sivara village suggested that homosexuality is a total disrespect of each other's body. For him, each human part of the body has its specific purpose and function. If one would need sexual relations, why not finding a suitable candidate of the opposite sex²³.

Runesu, a village head reiterated that homosexuality is a foreign phenomenon which was caused by the influence of western culture. For him, the Karanga had never heard of this practice before the arrival of the Westerners²⁴. One of the elders in the focus group discussion said that homosexuality was not there among our societies when we grew up. The phenomenon is alien, abominable and un-African he purported. Village head Mauka said that here in our society, we had no precedent of people who had these homosexual relationships. For him, homosexuality is a borrowed tradition²⁵. All these respondents implied that homosexuality was not part and parcel of the traditional Karanga societies. In their social upbringing morality was emphasised. The interviewees also hold that young people grew under the tutelage of the elders who were ensuring that these youngsters are taken care of, hence under such guidance, homosexuality had no place in traditional societies and it was seen as anti-social.

The other group of interviewees admitted that homosexuality was present in Karanga societies but it was not tolerated. For them, homosexuals were there but were regarded as unstable or bewitched by witches or were taken as witches themselves. Because of this label, homosexuals were severely punished either through drowning or were excommunicated from the society.

Homosexuality has been regarded by the Karanga as un-African because it is inconsistent with African values, of procreation and of the belief in the continuity of family and clan. Rather, the Karanga argued that same-sex relationships compromise population growth of the community. Benedict Anderson argues that "nationalisms are built on homo-social bonding and since nationalisms require specific heterosexual gender relations, man to protect and provide and women to mother and care, homosexuality is not representable for the idea of a nation". This was the same notion among the traditional Karanga people who had great emphasis on communism and any act that threatened the growth of the population was unacceptable.

The Karanga shared beliefs with most of African community in the continent. The President of the Republic of South Africa Jacob Zuma once said "When I was growing up an *ungqingili* (a homosexual) would not have stood in front of me. I would knock him out," This implies that same-sex marriages were a disgrace to the Africans and to the ancestors.

The importance placed upon procreation by the Karanga denied same-sex relations the degree of social significance to threaten heterosexuality. The Karanga placed high value on reproduction, forbidding same-sex relations to overrule communitarian obligations and inheriting no social meaning. Nonetheless, same-sex relations were present but if the culprits were found they would be severely punished or be killed.

The Karanga believed sexuality to be related to spiritual powers and possession. Men involved in same-sex relationships were left alone, as they could return as "*ngozi*", an avenging spirit, which could cause

²¹ Chaputsa villagers, interview by C. Makamure, 3 September 2013

²² Tumirai Zendera, interview by C. Makamure, 4 September 2013

²³ Village Head Sivara, interview by Clemence. Makamure, 10 September 2013

²⁴ Village Head Runesu, interview by Clemence. Makamure, 10 September 2013

²⁵ Village Head Mauka, interview by Clemence. Makamure, 11 September 2012

greater havoc to the community's procreation. In many cases Karanga traditional healers regarded same-sex relationships as an offence and usurpation of natural order. Rather, the traditional Karanga people had a negative attitude towards homosexuality. The act has been regarded as alien, abominable, uncultured, un-African and as an act of gross immorality. Homosexuality was not a thing to tolerate and sexuality parse among the karanga was a taboo.

II. Conclusion

Homosexual practices could have been prevalent in the Karanga traditional societies from time immemorial but they existed unnoticed because they were practiced under cover. More to this sexuality among the traditional Karanga people was a taboo. Sex could not be talked about in public, hence homosexuality could have existed among them but it was a taboo. There were practices of karanga sexuality and culture which prompted the existence of homosexuality and lesbianism, but this was unnoticed. Homosexuality though it existed, had no place in the eyes of the Karanga people. If it existed, it does not mean that it was tolerated. Rather it was regarded as an immoral act. The Karanga concept of ubuntu (unhu) disqualified homosexual practices from the moral realms of their perceptions. The karanga people had high regards towards rectitude or uprightness (ururami). Karanga religion and sexuality did not tolerate homosexuality hence the karanga had negative attitudes toward homosexuality. For the Karanga, homosexuality is un-African, unethical and is not a right. It should not be tolerated since it does not promote procreation. The karanga had laws repelling against egoistic mentalities and homosexuality for them is egoistic because it is intended to satisfy one's sexual gratification on the expense of child bearing which to them promoted communitarianism, generation growth and clan stability. So, the traditional Karanga had a negative attitude towards homosexuality.

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