

South African Traditional Healers Perceptions of Ho Mo Sexuality

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Abstract

This qualitative study on traditional healers' perceptions of homosexuality has contributed to indigenous knowledge in the Northern Sotho ethnic group in South Africa. An exploratory research design using snowball sampling was employed. The study was underpinned by Afrocentric theory. The sample consisted of ten traditional healers, seven females and three males. Data was collected using individual, face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the data which yielded several major themes and sub-themes: Theme 1: Homosexuality threatens family structure and values, sub-theme 1.1 Homosexuality and the preservation of family bloodlines and/or surname, sub-theme 1.2 Homosexuality and procreation. Theme 2: Homosexuality is regarded as taboo and a disgrace, sub-theme 2.1: Homosexuality and Northern Sotho culture, sub-theme 2.2 Homosexuality is un-Godly. Theme 3: Homosexuality and western culture, sub-theme 3.1 Homosexuality and modernisation, sub-theme 3.2 Homosexuality and responsibility. The research discovered that the traditional healers had negative views towards homosexuality and offered traditional explanations for this. However, one of the healers said they would help homosexuals who approached them. A recommendation for future research is to find out perceptions of the homosexual community in terms of how they are treated by traditional healers.

Keywords: Afrocentricity, Culture, Homosexuality, Northern Sotho, Traditional Healer
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