

The Clash Between Sexual Choices and Socio-Culturo-Religious Morality in Ghana: Public Perceptions on the Impact of Anti-LGBTQIs Activities on Communal Peace

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Abstract : The promotion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and Intersex (LGBTQIs) rights within the continent of Africa in general and Ghana, in particular, has for some time now, met the fiercest of resistance; premised mainly on socio-cultural-religious factors. This phenomenon contrasts with notions of countries of the Global North where persons within the context of their fundamental freedoms and rights have the right to sexual choices and preferences. A Private Member's Bill was introduced to the Ghanaian Parliament in 2021, seeking to criminalize the promotion and advocacy of LGBTQIs related activities. This paper in assessing public views on the matter also seeks to ascertain the security implications regarding the passage of the law at the community level. The study also evaluates LGBTQIs rights vis-a-vis the provisions of Chapter 5 of the 1992 Ghana Constitution and global legal jurisprudence on fundamental human rights. To that end, the study adopted a mixed design approach (quantitative and qualitative) to gather data from 1,550 respondents from all 'walks of life, across all sixteen regions of Ghana. The main findings are that first, over 85% of Ghanaians abhor the practices of LGBTQIs in keeping with the societal, cultural and religious beliefs of Ghanaians, and will go any length to prevent its survival in the country. Further, the time is not ripe for the acceptance of LGBTQ rights in Ghana as the activities will disrupt family values and poison the existing peace that Ghanaians are currently enjoying. However, it is generally believed that when the bill is passed into law, Ghana's international image will be dented, and 60% of participants and respondents will be unmoved. Against this hostile, intolerant backdrop regarding LGBTQIs rights in the country and in many other African countries, the study foremost recommends that such a law, when passed, should come with a 'human face' that will not just seek to be punitive of LGBTQIs persons but corrective. Additionally, the law should be one that offers them support in line with their rights as Ghanaian and African citizens. Moreover, religious and traditional bodies should endeavor to engage LGBTQIs persons in a friendlier, corrective and loving manner rather than in the current hostile environment that society exposes them to.

Keywords : Ghanaian parliament, LGBTQIs rights, perceptions, socio-culture-religious

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