

LEADING BY EXAMPLE: CAUSES AND TREATMENT BY AN EXPERIENCED LGBT COUNSELLOR

Ahmad Zaharuddin Sani Ahmad Sabri, Musa Yusuf Owoyemi, and Fatinah Mangsor

Institute Of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad's Thoughts,
University of Northern Malaysia,
Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia

Copyright © 2014 ISSR Journals. This is an open access article distributed under the **Creative Commons Attribution License**, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

ABSTRACT: LGBT stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender which had cause a serious issue nowadays. This research deals with the causes and cure or transformation from this sexual orientation to normal sexual orientation. In going about this, this research looks at the experience of an expert who has been in the field for about three decades and has witnessed it all. Through the analysis of his experienced with people of this sexual orientation, the research was able to point out some of the causes of this problem and proffered solution on how it could be curbed and how those with the orientation could be treated and transformed to the normal sexual orientation. This research uses a semi-structured in-depth interview that was completely guided by the topic of this research with detailed exploration on causes, attitude of LGBT people during and after the transformation and preferred technique for better transformation. The findings showed that the LGBT is a natural issue but can be controlled, while its antecedents or causes could be traced to the lack of enlightenment, lack of comfortability, compatibility and sexual abuse among the young ones. Moreover, the finding showed that counselling and follow-up techniques could solve the menace of LGBT in the larger societies.

KEYWORDS: LGBT, sexuality, solution, experienced counsellor, society, Malaysia

1 INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, the issue of LGBT has been described as a major issue which has cut across the public of the universe including Malaysia, while some have described it as the generated issue from the concept of human rights, right to practice and live one's sexual orientation even if it is seen as unconventional by the larger society and the religion of the society. Irrespective of yearning for the right to sexual orientation of individual, some societies have opposed the unconventional sexuality, specifically between the same sexes and those who try to change their sexes, LGBT.

Thus, this research examines how an LGBT practitioner could be transformed to straight by exploring the experience of an LGBT counsellor spanning a period of about thirty years. The need for this study arises because researchers have conducted researches on occurrence, naturality and nurture of homosexuality, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender and their frequencies in the society. However, there has been less research on the causes of homosexuality, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender orientation in the society and how this could be overcome by those who practice it. Therefore, this research is an attempt to fill the gap as it explores the causes of homosexuality and how it can be tamed through the process of transformation. The research uses the qualitative method approach through semi-structured in-depth interview for the collection of data.

1.1 LGBT: CAUSES AND TREATMENT BY AN EXPERIENCED COUNSELLOR

The research on gender appears to men's experiences and showing that it is a complex issue and sometimes focuses the women at the detriment of men (Faulkner, 2002). This implies that gender is considered in heterosexual terms alone, where

heterosexuality is tacitly regarded and accepted as the norm. In other words, women are often considered in relation to a typical family unit comprising one male and one female parent with one or more children. Moreover, gender and sexuality are seen as separate set of things that closely blended at many points with cultural logic that is combined with some components to form a fully articulated social identity (Ben et al., 2008). However, with the passage of time, some formations have been derived from identities through the sexual outlook which leads to the usage of terms such as Lesbianism, Gayism, bisexualism and transgenderism (LGBT) in identifying new sexual orientations.

Furthermore, the assumptions and norms associated with sexualities are closely attributed to the meaning given to it by contemporary culture and society. In the past, the family relationships of lesbian and gay parents and their children were not legally recognised in most countries of the world. But, presently, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) relationships are now gaining recognition in some countries, while their matter is under active debate in relation to social and legal consideration in these nations (Charlotte, 2009). Recently, many crucial debate topics on the issue have undergone the scrutiny of sociobiologists in order to determine the cause(s) and origin of homosexuality and its related practices – LGBT. Indeed, the research by the American psychological association (APA) has recommended that LGBT be treated as a mental disorder and its practitioners, it said, are not fit to be in the society (APA Online, 2003).

In addition, some existing theories have tried to ascertain whether the occurrence of LGBT is natural or an ideology being propagated by certain people (Owoyemi & Ahmad Sani, 2013). However, there has been less research on the causes of LGBT in the society and how those who practice it could be transformed back to normal sexual orientation usually described as straight. This, therefore, is the task that this research intends to undertake through the experience of an expert counsellor who has been on the field for more than thirty years. Nonetheless, it is important to point out that both biological and social theorists have agreed that offspring of different species reared in different or same environment would produce different results and vice versa (Fujita, 2003). Thus, this research adopts the theory of “Born That Way” as the framework for its study of this issue in order to figure out the causes of LGBT and also outline the view of the expert counsellor on transforming LGBT practitioners back to straight.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This part of the research is framed by the theoretical approach of “Born That Way” which was proposed by Le Vay in 1996. According to him, many factors are liable for the existence of homosexual orientation in the society. The theory postulates the causes of people practising homosexuality which developed into LGBT. Besides, the Born That Way theory postulates that temperament and environment are major causes of homosexuality (Julie, 2007). It stresses that temperament is integrated by the combination of genes, brain wiring and prenatal hormonal environment, depicted in equation (1) below. Indeed, environment as one of the causes of homosexuality practices is formed from the combination of parents, peers and experiences as shown in equation (2) below:

$$\text{Genes} + \text{Brain Wiring} + \text{Prenatal Hormonal Environment} = \text{Temperament} \quad (1)$$

$$\text{Parents} + \text{Peers} + \text{Experiences} = \text{Environment} \quad (2)$$

Therefore,

$$\text{Temperament} + \text{Environment} = \text{Homosexual Orientation} \quad (3)$$

By using born that way theory as shown in equations (1), (2) and (3), this research intends to examine the views of the expert respondent (Counsellor) who has been dealing with LGBT practitioners for over thirty years and transforming them back into straight.

2.2 STUDY PARTICIPANT

The ethical approval to conduct the interview with the expert participant was sent by the researchers, while the participant’s consent was obtained. The participant is a full time counselor that has been working on changing/transforming the life of LGBT practitioners into the normal life or straight. He is an elderly man of about 60 years of age with adequate verbal and written English.

Moreover, the participant was selected on the basis of his attributes and profession which could help in producing insights and understandings of the research objectives. The respondent who is a counsellor has been in the counselling practise for more than 30 years. He was discovered on the internet and latter contacted on the phone for the invitation,

while the objectives of the research was made clear to him. Conclusively, the respondent is an experienced counsellor in the field of transforming the life of LGBT as he was able to answer all the questions posed to him and shed more light on the causes of LGBT and how it could be reduced in the society through activities such as his own (counselling).

2.3 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

A convenience sampling method is adapted in selecting the sample for this research which helps us in selecting the best person to produce the best answers to our research questions. Indeed, the main objective of this research is to find the causes and best technique for changing the life of LGBT people. Thus, convenient sampling is the best fit selection style to choose the participant for this research as it is view as an act of taking the available and useful sample to ease data gathering (Sherri, 2011; Creswell, 2012). Meanwhile, the participant was selected on the basis of his characteristics, which could help in producing insights and understandings of the research objectives.

Furthermore, this research uses a semi-structured in-depth interview that was completely guided by the topic of this research with detailed exploration on causes, attitude of LGBT people during and after the transformation and preferred technique for better transformation. The research adopts semi-structured in-depth interview due to the avenue it gives the respondents to give his or her opinion on the subject matter and allows them with freedom of perceptions (Sharlene and Patricia, 2010). Besides, audio recording was used during the interview with the respondent at his counseling center based on his permission and lasted between 45-55 minutes. The interview was conducted in two days due to the schedule given by the respondent (LGBT counselor) as the respondent is a very busy person who has many clients to attend to and always have invitations for seminars. The questions that were used for the interview were derived from the review of literatures that suit the LGBT domain. Interview mode of gathering data is an effective tool to collect data from group or individual respondents and provides the quick and detailed link to the root of the research (Creswell, 2003; 2012).

Data analysis was undertaken using the framework approach to manage the analysis of data gathered from the respondent through the semi-structured in-depth interview and describes the originality of data to the underlying theory. The interview transcripts were indexed and mapped on the basis of recurring themes by using content analysis style. The synthesized data were examined to identify the causes of practicing LGBT and the technique for transforming LGBT people. Moreover, the interview transcript was sent to the respondent (the Counselor) in order to ensure correctness of the data that was collected from the respondent. Besides, the data was validated since the beginning of the interview by ensuring that the research topic guides the discussion with the participant, while the data coding framework were thoroughly checked by the two members of the research group to achieve reliability of the study.

2.4 SAMPLE OF INTERVIEW SESSION WITH LGBT COUNSELOR

1. Question

What methods or ways do you use in changing the life of people engaging in the same opposite sex, specifically on counselling?

Answer (Counsellor)

I am counsellor and have my own clinic where many gays and transgender visit in order to change their life for better one. In changing the lives of gays, I developed statistics and trust for my clients in order to completely transform. My belief is that when they have trust in me and my organisation, it would help them in explaining everything about their lives. Indeed, everything about the characters of the gays needs to be told if they want to accept changes and at the same time should be honest to the counsellor.

Thus, in counselling, we try to develop a self esteem which changes the billy system in arity theory, however this is called "iman" in Islam. Furthermore, in using the counselling to change the lives of gay and transgender, there must be follow-up.

2. Question

Is the problem of LGBT a disease or natural as they used to say?

Answer (Counsellor)

The problem of LGBT is not a disease but is one of the tests from Allah which tells human on how to control the specialisation given to individual by Allah. That is why the sex emotion in LGBT world is given focus so as to help them on how to overcome these unique characteristics, even though they were born with it.

3. Question

There was a story of a woman with two children. She said each time she was with her husband, she does not have feeling of being together and eventually broke-up the marriage and bisexual. What is really causing this issue and is it natural?

Answer (Counsellor)

This is mainly caused by instinct with the woman. It is not natural but this may be cause if someone is exposed with sexual engagement before marriage which may prevent him or her from being honest with the spouse. The easiest way to solve this problem is for the affected person to inform his or her partner about his sex emotion.

4. Question

Does it mean that the affected people are not born with this menace?

Answer (Counsellor)

This can be view in two different ways:

1. The LGBT could be cause by the experience with sex abuse which may be difficult to leave after having a bisexual experience.
2. Some people were born deeply inside with sex emotion and once they could not control it, they would turn to transgender. This can be control by spending time with positive people and reading Alqurian always.

5. Question

Do you agree that there is conflict with what the LGBT are and what they feel?

Answer (Counsellor)

Yes. There is serious conflict in the two terms when it comes to the LGBT world.

6. Question

Do you believe in not preaching counselling to the LGBT people?

Answer (Counsellor)

I believe in preaching to the LGBT people and let them know the effect of the life they living and what would happen to them as the consequences. We counsel them to visit our LGBT friend that have contacted HIV and other diseases caused by the life they are living.

7. Question

What do you think we use to solve this problem in Islam?

Answer (Counsellor)

This could be solved by advising them to be moving with good people and read al-quran regular.

8. Question

How long have you been in this LGBT transformation and have you experience any of your converters moving back to LGBT?

Answer (Counsellor)

I have been doing this for the past 30 years and we make sure we are closer to the people that we have transformed from LGBT and give them monitoring.

3 RESULTS

Some numbers of factors and variables were identified as the causes of LGBT or the underlying factors for forming this sexual orientation and the best fit approach to transform the life of LGBT practitioners was made explicit as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Factors and Variables for the Causes of LGBT Orientation and the Transformation Approach

Factors / Variables	Participant / Frequency
Causes of LGBT Orientation	
Intrinsic	
Lack of conquering inbuilt desire	√
Sex emotion	√
Infant sex experience	√
Individual characteristics	√
Environmental Factor	
Taking time with wrong one	√
Lack of mutual consideration	√
Distance from religion and religious literature	√
Approach for Transforming LGBT People	
Counseling	
Faith	√
Honest	√
Trust	√
Advise	√
Enlightenment	√
Monitoring	√

Table 1 shows the factors and variables that were derived from the data collected from the participant. It shows that the causes of LGBT are categorized into two forms; intrinsic and environmental factors. Intrinsic factor includes Lack of conquering inbuilt desire, sex emotion, infant sex experience and individual characteristics. The environmental factor comprises of taking time with wrong people, lack of mutual consideration and distancing oneself from religion and religious literature. Besides, it was derived from the discussion with the respondent that the best fit approach to transform the LGBT practitioner is to engage them in counseling which is integrated with faith, being honest with them, gaining their trust and confidence, advising them subtly, enlightenment about the harms of the practice and constantly monitoring their progress towards transforming themselves. Monitoring, the respondent points out is most important so as to guard against a reversion after they might have started the process of transformation. At this stage, he says, there is a need for them to change their circle of friends and move with people who will constantly motivate them especially in the practice of religion.

3.1 CONSISTENCY BETWEEN THE FACTORS

According to Xu (2003) and Huang (2007), the consistency or relationships among factors referred to the important information derived during the interview process. In the context of this research, the relationship between factors were extracted from the interview scripts and analyzed via content analysis process as depicted in Table 1.

Table 2: Linkage between the Factors

Factors Link	Frequency
INT → ENVF	√
INT → CNS	√
ENVF → CNS	√

Factors' abbreviation:

INT- Intrinsic

ENVF- Environmental Factor

CNS- Counseling

Table 2 shows the relationship between the factors in column 1 of Table 1 with their corresponding frequency. From the interview granted to the respondent, it was deduced that INT→ ENVF are valid factors due to the fact that both INT and ENVF demonstrate intrinsic and environmental factors that are responsible for the causes of homosexuality orientation and LGBT

in the society. Likewise, INT → CNS have relationship as shown in the factors link since intrinsic factor in individual can be controlled by the advice received during the counseling section to the individual or LGBT practitioner. Meanwhile, ENVF → CNS are found to be related to each other as counseling could be used to engage the LGBT practitioner and prevent him/her from spending their time with bad folks.

4 DISCUSSION

This research has explored the view of the respondent (LGBT Counselor) on LGBT transformation and the causes of LGBT orientation in the society. In the beginning of our interview with the respondent, we asked the respondent to identify himself. *The respondent made us understand that he is a counselor, specializing on the area of transforming the life of LGBT practitioners for more than 30 years.* Thereafter, the respondent was asked to give his view about the causes of LGBT or homosexual orientation in the society. His response was as follow:

“If we were to look at the cause of LGBT critically, we will find that it is intrinsic in human being which starts from the teen age and could be found on individual. The formation of LGBT orientation in individual does not come overnight; it can be categorized into two different factors; intrinsic factor and environmental factor. The intrinsic factor comprises of failure of individual to conquer his inbuilt sex emotion, infant sex emotion and individual characteristics.”

Both the first and second factors highlighted by the respondent (the Counselor) as the antecedent catalysts for LGBT orientation in the individual are in line with the theory of “Born That Way” where Le Vay in 1996 pointed out that one of the causes of homosexual orientation is temperament, which comprises of genes, brain wiring and prenatal hormonal environment. Moreover, the second factor that causes LGBT is environmental factor that comprises of parents, peers and experiences. Indeed, attitude of man is found to be determined by both nature and nurture, showing that one cannot perform in the environment without possessing a gene while gene is solely depended on the environment in order to act.

In addition, sexual abuse during teen age could also lure people to LGBT orientation as this has the potential of destroying and causing gender identity confusion in human. Gender identity is the perception of an individual about his/her sense of masculinity or femininity. Gender identity occurs as a result of bond between a child and his or her parents and peer group at teen age. A child would determine his/her sex identity based on the affection he/she receives from one of the parents and friends. In order words, the relationships that teen forms with other boys or girls foster his/her sense of masculinity and femininity, thus, making him/her to discover more about other boys or girls and himself/herself as a boy or a girl. In the end, many years of bond with people of the same or different sex would help a teen age person to be able to identify his/her gender and to differentiate which gender is the same or different from his/her own. Sexual abuse, therefore, especially if it is same sex, can potentially lead to gender confusion and wrong desire in teens (Frank W. Putnam, 1990: p. 117 - 121).

Furthermore, the respondent was asked of the approach he uses to transform LGBT practitioners; his answers were as follows:

“In my organization, the approach that is being used to transform the life of LGBT practitioner is “Counseling Technique”. The counseling technique entails some steps that need to be fulfilled in order to achieve complete transformation of LGBT practitioner. There must be faith which needs to be built by the LGBT practitioner that God can change his or her status for better one. Besides, honesty should also be built by the LGBT people in telling the counselor the truth whatever the questions that they asked from them, so as to know their gravity of practicing the LGBT orientation. Moreover, the LGBT practitioner sometimes does not expect total trust in counselor since they think that their secrets will be disclosed to others. But this is not the case and it is important that the people that are involved should disclose all their affairs past and present to the person that is expected to transform their life, while the counselor too should know that the process would be continued if their secrets are guaranteed. This is what we practice in our organization and this is the reason why we have been successful so far.”

“Conclusively, we do ensure that religious oriented advises are given to the people we want to transform their lives for better. We make use of the team of experts in dawah (sermon) that are good at using Al-Quran and Islamic literatures to ensure that LGBT practitioners are improved spiritually. This is because the intrinsic nature that is embedded in them could be addressed spiritually together with physical treatment. Pursuing this further, our organization does ensure that LGBT practitioners are well enlightened about the associated problems with LGBT orientation and practices. Thus, we also engaged in monitoring and follow-up of the people we have transformed from LGBT practices to normal and meaningful life.”

Lastly, our study found that the combination of intrinsic or temperament and environmental factors are the major causes of LGBT orientation in the society as postulated by “Born That Way” theory, while counseling which is faith based is ascertained as the best approach to transform the life of an LGBT practitioner.

5 CONCLUSION

In this research, we learn that both environmental and intrinsic factors are found to be the causes of LGBT orientation and practice in the individual and society, thus, there is a serious need to focus on them if the menace is to be curbed in the society.

Indeed, religion is a vital mechanism for controlling this sexual orientation. Since religion is plainly against this sexual orientation, it could be used as a form of therapy for the prevention of the practices and help the person to become more spiritual and move closer to God.

Therefore, counselling which is faith based (that is, which utilizes the teachings of religion) is recommended as the best approach to transform the life of LGBT practitioners since it is tested and trusted as seen in the experience of the expert respondent who has been in the field for more than thirty years.

REFERENCES

- [1] Faulkner, W. (2002), "The power and the pleasure? A research agenda for 'making gender stick'" in *Science, Technology and Human Values*, Vol. 25 No. 1, pp. 87-119.
- [2] Ben, L., Gordon, F. & Alison, A. (2008). "Gay men, Gaydar and the commodification of difference" in *Information Technology & People*, Vol. 21, No. 3, pp. 300-314.
- [3] Charlotte, J. P. (2009). Lesbian and Gay Parents and Their Children: A Social Science Perspective. Contemporary Perspectives on Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Identities. DOI: 10.1007/978-0-387-09556-1.
- [4] APA Online. (2003). Answers to Your Questions About Sexual Orientation and Homosexuality. Retrieved from www.apa.org/pubinfo/answers.html, July 1st, 2013.
- [5] Owoyemi, M. Y. & Ahmad Sabri, A. Z. S. (2013) LGBT: Nature or Ideology: The View of a Former LGBT Practitioner in Malaysia. (Accepted in Research Journal of Biological Sciences). Pakistan: Medwell Journals Scientific Research Publishing Company.
- [6] Fujita, F. (2003). The Nature-Nurture Controversy. Retrieved from <http://www.iusb.edu/~ffujita/Documents/nn.html>, July 17th, 2013.
- [7] Le Vay, S. (1996). *Queer Science*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- [8] Julie, H. (2007). Homosexuality 101: what every therapist, parent and homosexual should know. Retrieved from www.narth.com/docs/hom101.html, on July 1st, 2013.
- [9] Sherri, L. J. (2011). *Research method and statistics: a critical thinking approach*. 4th edition, wadsworth cengage learning, Belmont CA., USA.
- [10] Creswell, C. W. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiring And Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. California USA.: Sage Publications Inc.
- [11] Sharlene, N. H. & Patricia, L. (2010). Practice of Qualitative Research. 2nd Edition, Sage Publication Incorporation, London United Kingdom.
- [12] Creswell, C. W. (2003). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method Approaches: Second Edition*. California USA.: Sage Publications Inc.
- [13] Xu, J. (2003), A Study of the Factors Influencing Knowledge Management Systems Diffusion in Australia, *PhD Thesis*, Curtin University of Technology.
- [14] Huang, L. S. (2007) Factors Affecting the Adoption and Practice of Knowledge Management in the Life Insurance Industry in Taiwan. *PhD Thesis*, Graduate School of Business, Curtin University of Technology, Australia.
- [15] Frank W. Putnam, M. D. (1990). "Disturbances of "Self" in Victims of Childhood Sexual Abuse" in *Incest-Related Syndromes of Adult Psychopathology* edited by Richard P. Kluff. U.S.A.: American Psychiatric Publisher.