

PRESERVING AFRICAN FAMILY VALUES IN A DIGITALIZED AND SECULAR SOCIETY: THE EXPERIENCE OF DIASPORA PARENTS

ILO MAUREEN NONYELUM, Ph.D

1. Introduction

Most Africans worldwide believe that African culture must always be preserved and treasured. Although mindful of the fact that every culture has a common tendency towards stability or change since no society exists in a vacuum, it is apparent that global influences seem to have disrupted and broadly introduced diverse forms of cultural alienation all over the world, Africa inclusive. Consequently, much of African culture's contents have been distorted, and some lost completely in different spheres of life, particularly the dominant cultural traits distinguishing Africa from the rest of the world¹. While African cultures are so diverse that it varies from one culture to another, specific values are deeply ingrained into the whole African culture. Conversely, challenges are identified as hindrances to the practical preservation of these cultural values in a digitalized and secular society, predominantly for migrant parents raising their children in foreign lands. For them and others concerned, it seems necessary to consciously reawaken the African values and have them live out wherever ensuring sustainability.

Following the reality that most people migrate hoping to make a fresh start in new lands, virtually all migrants leave their homes searching for better opportunities such as jobs, education, medical care, safety, new relationship, and a new environment. The forces that pushed them out of their homes have combined with a series of global factors, creating more mixed experiences abroad. Europe now hosts over twenty million immigrants; the United States is home to more than twenty-six million foreign-born inhabitants. The African diaspora has a population of 140m of 1.2b total African population². Often, these immi-

¹ Cf. IDANG, G. 2015. *African Culture and values, Phronimon* .16.

² The African diaspora is the worldwide collection of communities descended from native Africans or people from Africa, predominantly in the Americas.

grant families struggle to adjust to the new cultures they have found themselves. Raising children born or raised in these foreign countries is undeniably challenging. Children raised in such circumstances are caught up in different cultures, therefore experiencing a cultural conflict between those of their parents and the conventional host countries. They form a third culture and are often called “Third Culture Kids”³. While they understand many cultures and customs, they do not seem to belong to any rightly.

The familiar feeling is described as being “different” and sometimes even “isolated” wherever they go, including their parents’ cultures. They will likely lack a deep understanding of their home country’s history and culture. While they often show a deep understanding of foreign cultures and customs compared to their peers at home, they often lack depth in understanding their own. It appears difficult, if not impossible, for them to acquire an excellent western education with a blend of African cultural and traditional values abroad, often because the system lacks the tools to teach African culture, tradition and virtues.

Above all, one could imagine these children face crises of personal identity. This disadvantage of raising children abroad thus appears to be the dilemma of personal identity, given that people sometimes are so draped up in the sense of who they are that when they are identified with so many different cultures, it becomes a little blurred, leading to confusion about conflicting values from the parents’ home countries and the host country. Times Magazine opines that these individuals, despite their migrant status, if “Taken one at a time, each one of them is an individual, a mixture of strength and weakness, hope and despair. But collectively, they represent something greater than the sum of their parts”. This work shall consider in brief some of the African contents.

2. African Traditional Values

Africa covers twenty-three per cent of the world’s landmass and also comprises about fourteen per cent of the world’s population, making it the second-largest continent worldwide. Currently, one could count about fifty-three countries containing 47 on the mainland and six island inhabitants directly bounding parts

³ Third Culture Kid is a term that refers to a child who is brought up in one or more culture(s) other than his or her own, thus integrating elements of those cultures and that of his own birth culture into a third culture.

of the continent.⁴ Therefore, understanding African cultural values is essential because they are elements of the society that are central to decision-making and strategies in many practical aspects of their life. African people have multiple moral and societal values meant to regulate interpersonal relationships and to perpetuate the entire community. In addition, they have specific standards or norms to be observed. These standards or norms are meant for social structure and efficient administration of the community⁵.

In African society, there are sets of values and practices that cut across the society and also guide the conduct of every member. Particular references could be made to values such as humanity, marriage institutions, collectivism and solidarity, African religion, moral conduct, the justice system and the different ways of resolving conflicts in African systems, strict observance of norms, and practices such as patriarchy and polygyny. African traditional culture and beliefs also represent a fundamental component of natural resource management⁶. Ajayi observed that cultural education is such in which children and young individuals are educated according to the native custom, practices, beliefs and general life patterns of the society. Its main concerns are character, morals, physical and vocational development of the individual, as well as the inculcation in the children of the society right type of values as they learn to identify, understand and appreciate the cultures, norms and values of the society⁷.

2.1 Humanity

“I am because God is, and I am because you are” recapitulates the African understanding of the existence of a human person concerning other beings, both human and divine. Africans acknowledge their source of being as creations from God through their ancestors through human procreation. Through this conception, all traditions, norms, values, rites, and relationships are regarded as coming from God and mediated through the ancestors or other intermediaries. There-

⁴ Cf. OGUNGBEMI S. (2007). *Philosophy and Development*, Ibadan: Hope Publications, Volume 28.

⁵ Cf. GYEKYE, K. (2003). *Person and Community in African Thought*. In P. H. COETZEE & A. J. P. (Eds.), *The African Philosophy Reader* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

⁶ Cf. AJAYI A. & FABAREBO S.I. (Eds.) (2009). *Orals Traditions in Black and African Culture*. Lagos: Concept Publications Limited (Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC)).

⁷ Cf. Idem

fore individuals need other people for their existence. Each person lives interdependently with other people in order to live a whole life; each helps, supports, encourages, shares with and protects other people; they combat together that which dehumanizes people and cherish the things that humanize people; their common brotherhood is intrinsically linked with one common humanity.

Traditional African cultures recognize the dignity and integrity of the human being as a creature of God. There is only one universal family to which all human beings belong. This family is fragmented, however, into a multiplicity of peoples and cultures. The recognition of all human beings as brothers in the light of our standard membership in one human species is of great worth and great importance to the African people. The dignity and integrity of every person are seen as intrinsic values worthy of respect and vital interest in traditional African society. African traditional culture is embedded in solid moral considerations. It has various beliefs and customs that every individual ought to keep to live long and avoid curses on themselves and others. Adultery, stealing and other forms of immoral behaviour are strongly discouraged. In expressing the idea of humanity further, there is a moral code that forbids harming a relative, a kinsman, an in-law, a foreigner and a stranger, except when such a person is involved in an immoral act; and in such cases, the person became ostracized and even at death, their corpses would not be given a dignified, noble burial in a coffin and grave. Therefore morality espoused in both traditional cultures and societies of Africa is a social, non-individualistic morality. The African moral system puts the ethic of responsibility above the ethic of individual rights; even though the latter are also given due recognition, the importance of good character in enhancing moral conduct cannot be overemphasized.

The value traditional African societies place on communalism is expressed in sharing everyday social life, commitment to the social or common good of the community, appreciation of mutual obligations, caring for others, interdependence, and solidarity. African ethics urges the avoidance of extreme individualism, which is seen as potentially destructive of human values and society's whole meaning and essence. Attempts are therefore made to balance communalism and individualism to co-exist. Therefore, the right to and the importance of private property are recognized in the traditional African economic system, where private ownership exists alongside public ownership. Families (i.e. lineage, clans) operate independently of the chiefs, who, thus, do not control all the dynamics of the traditional economy. Other rights that are acknowledged and protected include

- the right to the use of lineage land,
- the right to food and protection from hunger,
- the right to a fair trial and the right to own private property.

These rights are fundamental to traditional African society's social structure, customs and ethics.

The traditional African society is a welfare state, functioning on the ethic of fair distribution. Everyone has access to the resources and goods of the community or state. In traditional African society's political thoughts and practice, consultation and consensus are highly valued, for they are outstanding features of political decision-making. This practice allows for the involvement of all the people in the political process. The Chief, who is the highest political authority, rules with the consent of and by the will of the people. In the actual exercise of power, the people, in effect, are the sources of authority, directly or indirectly, through their representatives on the Chief's council. The political authority of the Chief is based on a trusteeship principle that ensures his accountability to the people. Freedom of expression of political opinion is appreciated and practised. Misrule by a chief is unacceptable.

2.2 Marriage Institution

A marriage institution where the family is founded is considered a precious institution because that is the basic unit of social life in African society. Without the family, there would be no kinship ties essential to a comprehensive social life with an intricate network of social relationships⁸. African society is based on the patrilineal system. This means that the individual is considered to belong to the descent group of his father and that he has access to secular power, economic rights and religious affiliation in his patriline via male links only. Therefore, the importance of one's name was paramount in traditional African society; consequently, there was a strong desire for male children. In the same way, every woman is assumed to gain social membership and belonging through the patriline.

Polygyny was also widely practised in traditional African society and often formed the backbone of the traditional African family pattern. According to Mair, the polygynous joint family consisting of a man, his wives, and their children is

⁸ Cf. LUCY P. MAIR (1953), *African Marriage and Social Change*, in *Survey of African Marriage and Family Life*. Edited by Arthur Phillips, (London: Oxford University Press, p.1

ideal for most Africans. Studies conducted from the 1930s to 1950s indicate that polygyny was common in all regions of Africa and that the polygynous family consists of “several nuclear units held in association by a common father”⁹. Furthermore, because the African people are patrilineal, the household family also includes other relatives of the father, such as younger unmarried or widowed sisters, aged parents, and children of the father’s clan sent to be brought up by him. This bigger household will include servants, enslaved women, and their children.

Nevertheless, the father remains the head of the nuclear family units. Thus, it could be added that values associated with the family include recognizing the responsibility of mutual care and respect for all. Everyone in the immediate and extended family recognizes the need to care for children, parents, and the elderly.

2.3 Knowledge and Wisdom

Knowledge and wisdom are highly valued in African society. The wisdom or philosophies indigenous to Africa can be found primary in oral traditions conveyed through “language, folktales, proverbs, songs, ceremonies, cultural artefacts, performing arts, myths, customary law”¹⁰. The storytelling approach helped to foster a type of systems thinking. Virtues are not taught in isolation but embedded in stories illustrating how virtue should be practised. Thus, intellectual wisdom and practical wisdom are often merged in the telling. African indigenous wisdom embeds the acquisition of practical wisdom and can therefore be displayed even by a child who learns from the community’s experience rather than relying on personal experience. Several wisdom stories around the same virtue show how people in different societal functions practise it emphasizing the virtue’s universality while indicating its forms and implications for the person and the community. The narrative approaches of oral tradition led to whole moral stories being condensed into sayings, forming the informal codes of ethics and conduct¹¹.

⁹ Cf. STUART Q. – ROBERT W. H. – ADAMS J.B. (1961), *The Polygynous Baganda Family*, in “The Family in Various Cultures”, New York: J.B. Lippincott Company, p.68.

¹⁰ ILMI, A. A. 2015. *Somali Dhaqan philosophies and the power of African ancestral wisdom*, *African Identities* 13(2), 97–110.

¹¹ Cf. MOYO, O. N., 2016. *Navigating my journey towards learning Ubuntu – A way of decolonizing myself*, *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping* 22(3), 74–81.

2.4 Natural Resource Management

Cultural beliefs play an essential role in the conservation of natural resources. Local communities understand that survival depends on living harmoniously with their natural resources and environment¹². In order to maintain that harmony, the communities develop locally based knowledge systems which incorporate family histories, taboos, symbols, myths or legends, rituals, sounds or dances, festivals, proverbs, poetry or literature¹³, as well as drama and folklore. All these conservation ethics are passed by word of mouth. These cultural values have accumulated for years and become encoded in everyday human practices. Correspondingly, sustainable natural resource management is essential in the fight against poverty.

Various natural resources have specific cultural values and beliefs that are attached to them. For instance, sacred forests were typical in traditional African societies. These forests contain a great diversity of indigenous trees named accordingly by each country or tribe where rituals such as rain-making ceremonies are conducted. The community immensely values these species of trees as they believe that their god (the rain giver or other gods as the case might be) and ancestors reside in those trees. According to local inhabitants destroying these trees means destroying the habitat of their ancestors, who protect, and supply for their needs. Therefore, this fosters the protection and conservation of the trees.

Furthermore, traditional ceremonies are frequently held under these trees where their ancestors are believed to reside¹⁴. Where such beliefs are valued, deforestation is non-existent. Therefore, as local people aspire to respect their ancestors, the communities unconsciously promote conservation.

3. Contemporary African Values

The cultural values and practices of traditional African society discussed above can be assimilated into the present African values with some degree of

¹² Cf. KARADZANDIMA, M. M. (2002) *The Survival of Socio-Cultural Beliefs and Local Knowledge about Management of Natural Resources in an AIDS Affected Community in Zimbabwe*. MSc thesis. Centre for International Environment and Development Studies. Agricultural University of Norway.

¹³ Cf. KANOWSKI, P. J. – WILLIAMS, K. J. H. (2009). *The Reality of Imagination: Integrating the Material and Cultural Values of old Forests*. *Forest Ecology and Management*, 258 (4): 341–346.

¹⁴ Cf. TANYANYIWA, V. I. – MERCY, C. (2011). *The Role of Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the Management of Forest Resources*. *Sustainable Development in Africa*, 13(3), 132–149.

modification and refinement. In humanity and brotherhood, both past and traditional African cultures recognize the dignity and integrity of the human being as a creature of God though the concept of God in traditional and present Africa differs in extraordinary measures. While the concept of God lies in the spirit of the ancestors in the early African culture, Christianity in most African cultures seems to be overcome. Individualism also seems to replace the concept of communalism in significant measures and subjectivity for objectivity.

The value that traditional African societies placed on communalism were expressed in the sharing of everyday social life, commitment to the social or common good of the community, appreciation of mutual obligations, caring for others, interdependence, and solidarity all seem in great decadence. However, morality was not also left out. The traditional African moral system puts the ethic of responsibility above the ethic of individual rights, and the importance of good moral conduct was stressed while the present urbanization and globalization re-defined good conduct to self-consideration.

The Family and Marriage is the institution most revolutionized in the present African society. In most African societies, monogamy has replaced polygyny, and extended kinship ties are in significant decay. Nuclear families consisting of a father, mother and siblings are rising. Economically, high value was placed on wealth, both private and family. The right to and the importance of private property was recognized in traditional and present African society. However, the economic system, based on agriculture and antigens, is considerably replaced with white-collar jobs and businesses. The traditional African society, which was a welfare state functioning on the ethic of fair distribution, was replaced with individual ownership. Chieftaincy, political thoughts and practice of the traditional African society, consultation and consensus are still highly valued for decision-making though through a democratic established government institution. Human Rights, the essential values in which a person's dignity is rooted, are trampled. Practical and empirical wisdom is highly appreciated.

In summation, the growth of human culture, its capacity to avoid decadence and dysfunction and to adapt itself to new situations and demands, and its capacity to constitute itself into a credible and visible framework for human fulfilment are due to the reinterpretation and critical re-evaluation of a cultural tradition as it moves through history. The critical re-evaluation of a received cultural tradition will not only suggest refinement or appropriate amendment that ought to be made to it but also direct attention to the aspects of it that ought to be engaged from the cultural life and thoughts of a people.

4. Secular Society

The separation of religion and state is the basis of secularism. It aims to create a society in which people of all religions or none can live together equally and compliantly. In traditional African society, various Empires and Chiefdoms existed in the regions and governance was administered based on indigenous models. Different relationships existed between the religious order and the governmental body, referred to as the sacred and the secular. There was an informal secular approach to governance. In the contemporary, however, Africa's 28 of the 54 nations possess constitutions whose edicts may denote the rapport between the two-state officially recognized religions (Christianity and Islam) as secular.

Nonetheless, African Religious organizations and leaders often receive moral and financial support from wealthy and influential evangelical and Islamic groups and institutions around the globe. Therefore, secularism in Africa remains indistinct, especially in matters relating to sexuality, women's reproductive rights, and politics. The African religious and Islamic institutions oppose sex education, abortion and same-sex marriage.

Similarly, in politics, contrary to secularism government sometimes openly embrace religious symbols and meddle in the religious affair. Most often, religious groups routinely mobilize for politics, often with great success. Due to this complex interplay between secularism culture and religion, one could argue that secularization is a product of modernization typically characterized by technology. If we look into the process of modernization and secularisation, they are closely linked as both are part of a set of modern ideas. Modernization refers in social sciences to the process of evolution from the traditional to modern society formed due to the adoption and integration of Information and Communication Technologies at home, work, education and recreation, and supported by advanced telecommunications and wireless connectivity systems and solutions.

5. Digitalized Society

Max Weber coined the term, 'disenchantment' to describe the shift from a religious understanding of the world to a scientific understanding. He argued that in modern experience, science and technology had expelled the religious experience of mystery and magic. Only room is left for clarity, calculation, ra-

tionalization, and control¹⁵. This assertion, in my opinion, clearly describes the digitalized society seen as the articulation of the dominance of technology in modern-day society. Digital technologies have greatly changed the world. The internet and the means to access it, such as tablets and smartphones, along with social media platforms and messaging apps, have become integral to the lives of modern society.

With the distinct features of a digitalized society, such as reduced manual labour, improved life of citizens, increased communication speed, increased learning opportunities, changed education system, and changes on a global level, increased communication speed seems to be the hybrid of modern technological innovation. Quick and easy access to information through the internet and greater possibilities of verifying it is the most definitive feature of a digitalized society.

Wajcman and Dodd, in *The Sociology of Speed*, analyzed one of the most distinctive features of contemporary life by detailing how acceleration has always been at the heart of modernity. He also highlighted how money circulation rapidly widened communities by connecting people to broader networks of goods and services, increasing the speed of economic life and consequently transforming how time was experienced in emerging urban centres. However, he further expressed that while this greatly benefited the growth of commerce, language, law, and science, it did so at the expense of ‘subjective culture’, the ‘spiritual and ideal life of the individual’.

Moreover, a UNICEF report reveals that one in three internet users is youthful and seventy-one per cent of fifteen to twenty-four-year-olds are online, making them the most connected age group worldwide¹⁶. Conversely, there is a substantial gap in the digital divide because three hundred and forty-six million youth are not online, with African youths the most affected. Approximately sixty per cent of the African youth, mostly in the rural areas, have no access to the internet compared to four per cent of the European youth. These youths who lack digital skills are left behind in harnessing the opportunities that digital technologies can provide, which include access to education, training, and jobs, which

¹⁵ Cf. WEBER, MAX (1919/1946) *Science as Vocation*. In “Max Weber Essays in Sociology”. (ed. and trans. by H. H. Gerth – Wright Mills C.). New York, pp. 129–56.

¹⁶ Cf. UNICEF (2017), *The State of the World's Children: Children in a Digital World*, Retrieved on 14/1/2023 from <https://www.unicef.org/reports/state-worlds-children-2017>

can also help break intergenerational cycles of poverty, and access to news and information sources that can help protect their health, safety, and rights.

However, it is evident that the individual is at the centre of the secular, the religious or sacred, and the digitalized society. Therefore, even in contemporary society, these institutions seem interwoven and cannot be specifically separated. If we look into the process of modernization and secularisation together, undoubtedly, they are closely linked as both are part of a set of modern ideas. Also, contemporary technology is understood to belong to secular modernity. In addition, religious' ways of thinking are still shaping our modern technological culture. This reveals modernity not as the end of or emancipation from religion but as its continuation in a different form.

6. Common Nature of African Families in the Diaspora

When the term “African Diaspora” is used in the twenty-first century, it has a common understanding of “scattering” and refers to the movement of peoples of African descent and their settlement in various European societies. Many experiences, including alienation, isolation, parental role reversals and new economic, ethnic and community formations, generally characterize these settlements. These adjustment processes may devastate the immigrants and their families psychologically and socially. The most common outcome is acculturation or assimilation, which modifies or sometimes replaces certain societal or cultural elements of the immigrants.

The segmented assimilation theories may be relevant here. Straight-line assimilation and segmented assimilation point to different processes underlying outcomes. These theories argue that assimilation processes will enable each succeeding generation to show upward social mobility in education and occupation, be more integrated into any mainstream host country and show less ethnic distinctiveness in language use, residential concentration, and intermarriage patterns. This approach argues that starkly different outcomes are possible for immigrants. Its members can end up “ascending into the ranks of a prosperous middle class or join in large numbers the ranks of a radicalized, permanently impoverished population at the bottom of society”¹⁷.

¹⁷ PORTES A. – FERNANDEZ-KELLY P. – HALLER W. (2005), *Segmented assimilation on the Ground: the New Second Generation in Early Adulthood*. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 28(6):1000–40.

Segmented assimilation theory posits three possible outcomes for these groups: upward assimilation, downward assimilation, and upward mobility combined with persistent biculturalism. These paths correspond to three processes that summarize the relations between immigrant children, their parents, and the wider ethnic community: consonant, dissonant, and selective acculturation. Consonant acculturation occurs when the children and parents learn the host culture and gradually abandon their home language and “old country” ways simultaneously. As these children enter the American mainstream, they achieve upward mobility with the support of their parents. Dissonant acculturation occurs when children learn English and adopt American ways far faster than their immigrant parents. Portes and Rumbaut argue that this process can lead to downward assimilation when young people confront racial discrimination and bifurcated labour markets, on their own, without strong parental authority or community support.¹⁸ The third process, selective acculturation, leads to upward assimilation and biculturalism. This occurs when parents and children both gradually learn American ways while remaining embedded, at least in part, in the ethnic community. It is characterized by “preservation of parental authority, little or no intergenerational conflict, and fluent bilingualism among children”¹⁹. Portes and his collaborators argue that selective acculturation is especially important for groups facing discrimination.

6.1 Alienation

Alienation is a social or psychological estrangement of individuals from their environment and, ultimately, from themselves. This estrangement can manifest in various ways: feelings of powerlessness, lack of purpose in life, social exclusion, isolation or rebellion against established social norms. The construction of this identity is often due to structural inequality relating to race, gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, class, language and dominant hegemonic ideologies.

In sociological and psychological studies, adolescent alienation has been correlated with outward conduct such as drug use, truancy, delinquency, suicide, violence, vandalism, absenteeism, deviance and alcoholism. However, all these

¹⁸ Cf. PORTES, R. RUMBAUT 2001, *Legacies*, the University of California Press.

¹⁹ *Idem*

could be attributed to many migrants with a greater degree to people of African or black descent. This, to a large extent, seems to make most African families in the diaspora, especially the children, seem to be in a transitional state, not fully belonging, and this constrains their ability for self-definition and identity.

6.2 Economic Burden

Financial constraint is a common challenge for most African families in the diaspora. Given the heavy economic burden on parents living abroad, many of them have multiple jobs that allow them little or no time for good parental care-discipline, controlling whom their children associate with, doing homework, cleaning the house, cooking and other house chores. On the other hand, the children's needs are not always met, resulting in low self-esteem among their peers; even in some countries in the diaspora where social assistance is provided, it is still minimal. Moreover, contrary to a more relaxed and "less materialistic/competitive" and community-oriented traditional African society, the wife is often more present in raising the children.

In 1996 Hilary Clinton made famous the ancient African Proverb "It takes a village to raise a child." The proverb is from the Igbo and Yoruba regions of Nigeria, and the primary meaning is that raising a child is a communal effort. It signifies that the responsibility lies not only with the parents but also with the extended family and, in some cases, the community.

Moreover, it is also apt to mention that many "clandestine" or illegal families in the diaspora do not have stay permits and, as such, have no access to social, economic, health or educational stability. The majority in this sector often resort to illegal businesses, resulting in prosecutions and imprisonment displacing their offspring to some extremes. This does not in any way, however, justify their actions or the actions of those African Diasporas who choose to be outlaws by their own choice. The management and outcome of these challenges determine the general status of the overall well-being of the African Diasporas families.

6.3 Marriages

Marriages in ancient traditional Africa survived and lasted the couples' lifetime, mainly due to the moral criticism and stigmatization attached to a woman that left her matrimonial home; contemporary African marriage seems to have

entirely overcome this stigmatization. Although failing marriages among young Africans are multiplying, it has, however, blown up into complete disarray among Africans living in the diaspora. Although the percentage of marital failures cannot be quantified due to a lack of empirical data, it is evident that most marriages have collapsed or are on the verge of collapsing. Two factors seem indispensable for this trajectory.

6.4 Homogeneity

Blended families (marriages between white and black) are not homogenous. On the contrary, there is often a wide gap between their cultural backgrounds in values and virtues that grows thinner in the course of most blended marriages until it reaches the breaking point. However, this is not to state that there have not been many successful blended families. The point here is that it may not be as successful as when it is between Africans themselves.

6.5 Liberalism

From the African point of view, the concept of liberalism has impacted African families. Their women in the diaspora are hit by the sudden realization of the sense of liberalism, which is seemingly rights and privileges enjoyed by the women of western societies, and they are tempted to explore it as in the western style. The distinctions between the freedom of their host culture and the closed atmosphere of the African gender divide apprise their decision to rise and assert themselves in their new homes. The management and outcome of these challenges determine the general status of the overall integration and the well-being of the African Diaspora families.

7. Recommendations

7.1 Leadership

Effective leadership in African countries will do a lot of good to resolve many glaring issues facing the continent. Posterity is not only expedient but necessary to avoid cultural extinction. Preserving African culture should be taken precedence by Africans themselves, mostly in their own countries. Given the

scale of adversity and hopelessness, most African countries witnessed the greatest human migration in the last two decades, consequently resulting in acculturation. Devoid of effective leadership, Africans may be unable to overcome human exploitation. Developing African families to remain home is essential since the saying states, "There is no place like home." As much as many Africans have immigrated and are still doing so, it does not suggest that they are happier abroad than home. Sometimes, it is just that they have come out and lack the courage to return home in the face of unforeseen challenges they face abroad.

7.2 Language

Language is indispensable in communicating values, beliefs and customs. It nurtures feelings of group identity and solidarity. It is the means by which culture, traditions and shared values may be conveyed and preserved. Therefore when a language is lost, part of that culture is lost. By the same measure, when language is preserved, the traditions and customs continue living in the hearts and minds of the porters. Therefore, imparting children with their ancestral language by speaking it with them in the diaspora will foster and improve their sense of national identity and help preserve their cultural heritage. For older children learning through digitalization aids extensively, as google can translate almost all languages. African Diasporas can also organize African language competitions and try or institute other means through which their children can express the learning of their languages.

7.3 Cultural Foods

Traditional dishes' roles in preserving cultural heritage cannot be over-emphasized because the senses of smell and taste have potent connections to memory. This is because people from different cultural backgrounds eat different foods. Consequently, there is a relationship between culture and food. Food negotiates our identities, cultures and environments. Hence making native dishes in our families and educating our children to learn them is inevitable in preserving our culture and making those in the diaspora feel at home.

7.4 Cultural Functions in Diaspora

The need for every family member to attend some cultural activities in the diaspora has always been medicine to the feeling of nostalgia. Moreover, several

cultural activities (such as etiquette, music, body language, humour and other forms of entertainment) are hard to learn in books and museums and can only be imparted through cultural functions. Therefore, the best way to preserve culture is to experience it. Therefore, organizing and attending local functions will enhance cultural values and sustain family ties.

8. Conclusion

In lieu of the above descriptions, preserving African culture in a digitalized and circular society is quite challenging. The whole worldview has changed with the advent of modernity and its new forms of social life. The contradictions and social inequality expressed in the diaspora grew while undermining the traditional value system of the Africans living in the diaspora. The dominant symbol of the African embedded in values and virtues has undergone a radical change, reflecting the whole of African tradition itself and the African diaspora in particular. The language, which is the critical tool in every culture, is jeopardized because, by the process of assimilation and integration, parents who should be the custodians of the native languages are constrained to learn host languages and are often absent due to work demands.

The secular and digitalized society characterized by communication through access to the internet is gradually turning the whole world into a third culture world. This exasperated and distorted 'new model' of culture demonstrates the profound contradiction between past and present, tradition and change, and the innovation and conservation of African culture dramatically. In other words, it highlights the universal contradiction of every culture, not just the African Diaspora, suspended between the changing world and cast societies in the present-future and a system of values, beliefs and practices rooted in the past and tradition, which seeks to resist and oppose swirling transformations, rather than elaborate answers reconciled with the change.

However, regardless of the challenges, it should also be acknowledged that raising children abroad is indisputably an enriching experience. They enjoy a lot of advantages, such as an expanded view of the world, a cross-cultural enrichment of their personality and many additional language learning opportunities. By meeting people and making friends from different cultures and countries, children are exposed to different ways of thinking, different attitudes, habits and views early on and learn that there is more than one way to everything. This

gives them a mature and balanced outlook on many topics and a tolerance and respect for different people from the early years onwards. They also gain new language skills, which enhance their cultural understanding further. As a consequence, they also act as and sometimes even take up the identity of “a culture bridge”. Whatever the situation has been, we have been able to see also that there are still great values or benefits obtainable in the diaspora experience. Thus, with the view recommendations and other possible inputs that could be advanced in the process, it is hopeful that whatever may be the state of society, African family values can still be preserved at a reasonable level.