

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ON MARRIAGE, INFIDELITY PRACTICE AND THE CHALLENGES ON AFRICAN WOMEN, CHILDREN, FAMILY AND SOCIETY

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Abstract

African women are on the crossroad. Starting from being denied right of inheritance to parent's property, rights to education, and heading of families, clans, religions and lucrative political positions, about 70% of them are denied also the right to economic acquaintance. African women, as girl children, even in this contemporary era that is endeavoring to inculcate civilization in women of diverse ages, are still experiencing dehumanization in all sectors of life activities. Majority of the African girls in this globalized world, do not have access to education which is the avenue to individual and social civilization and development, but are trained on how to live marriage life to please the husbands, hence the present day "wife material" mindset from the men counterparts. The wife material sentiment according to contemporary African men, promote more the male chauvinism/patriarchy syndrome that characterized African culture. Women in Africa are experiencing hell in marriage. Hence, this discourse critically questions African marriage pattern, and the problems encircling it, focused more on infidelity and the effects on women. African culture trades on injustice in everything concerning women. The imbalance treatment which African women as girl children experienced in their parents' homes becomes worst in marriage. African marriage is a sole actor activity where husbands are active agents in control of all happenings, while wives are only subordinates. African men, in the traditional and contemporary eras, conceived wives as properties. In Africa, wives are denied of the fundamental right to expression; hence their wishes are their husband's commands. African culture exempted men from doing wrong that is why, for example, in case of infidelity which involves the consents of the two genders, only woman suffers. Here, the judgment's, blames and punishments are heaped and meted only on them leaving the men partners. One man from my kindred rudely told his wife, "I paid your bride price, I do not owe your father, and therefore, your wish must be my command. I'm a man, polygamy is in my nature, you don't have the right to monitor my movements, and you can't stop me from eating varieties of soup (promiscuity). If you like, you stay, otherwise, leave, and let your father refund me the money I paid on your head, after all, another woman is at the door to step in." This therefore, provokes questions on the meaning and purpose of marriage, African marriage, the challenges and their effects on African women, family, children and humanity. African marriage practice is distinct from that of the Europeans. The system holds men to high esteem, and rellegates women to trash. Here in Africa, neither tradition, nor the law protects women's rights, especially in the cases of infidelity. This however, does not only cause havoc to women, but also to the family, children and society. This paper significantly wants to assess the challenges of marriage, particularly that of infidelity, and thus, proffer possible solutions to it.

Keywords: Marriage, Infidelity, African Women, Children, Family, Society

Introduction

Marriage generally is all about complementarily, where every variable is important. About 75% of African spouses' obviously swim in extramarital relationship base on the agreement between two diverse genders. Yet, when caught in such act, it's only women that bear the moral blames and punishments attached to it, hence they're domestically violence, treated inhumanly and oftentimes, chased out of marriage empty-handedly. Ask why the punishments on this act are meted only on women leaving men? About 68% of the people including women themselves will answer; men are polygamous in nature, hence they have the right to marry and sleep with many women as they could. By the way, are men truly polygamous by nature? Do they have right to polygamy? The truth is that God did neither build in polygamous trait in male, nor in female creatures including human beings, instead the diverse erotic features used in designing male and female beings are purposefully made to maintain the intimacy between them for the continuity in procreation/existence. Hence everything about human discrimination, is simply human articulates. African marriage is obsessed. Women are experiencing hell in marriage. African woman in Igbo people's description according to F. Ogbalu is like, "a chick which hawk carries while going and coming back (Nwanyiafrikadika nwaokuko, egbebu ka o naaga, nakwa ka o naalota)."¹ Elaborating more on this for the sake of clarity, the study shall analytically discuss the

framework of the topic, emphasizing mainly on; the meaning of marriage and African marriage, the reason for creating male and female genders that does not exist only in human beings, but also in lower animate beings; the place of female humans in African culture, and the challenges they encounter in marriage, detailing much on infidelity, its causes, and the effects on children, family, and the society. The discourse shall discuss the place of African women in situation of judgment on the cases of infidelity behavior. In conclusion, the paper shall speak in depth on the remedies to the challenges African women are experiencing in marriage, pointing to the principles of human rights, and the need for equity and fairness in the recognition and respect to the rights women should share with their partners as stated by the 2003 Moputu's policies as established in Mozambique to enable effective contributions of the two genders in the quest to reach efficiency in the development of children, family and humanity as a whole.

What is Marriage?

The answer to this will reflect the meaning, purpose and problems of marriage, with much focus on the challenges African women encounter in marriage. Marriage is the institution established by the consents of the male and female humans to procreate children from which nuclear and extended families, clans, which grows up to tribes ethnic groups and the entire humanity are established. The word marriage derived its root meaning from the Latin word 'maritere, or mariteria - meaning to provide with a man or woman to get married. Marriage assumes different definitions from different scholars. The concept of marriage according to Aquinas is, "a legally and socially recognized union of two individuals, typically forming a partnership with emotional, economic, and often spiritual dimensions. This is often marked by ceremony, may involve sharing some rights, responsibilities and benefits, such as joint ownership of property, inheritance, and decision-making from each other as back up in legality."² Marriage practices he stressed, "differ widely across cultures and religions, but it's generally perceived as commitments by man and woman to share life together."³ Marriage according to Westermarck is, "a more or less desirable connection between male and female lasting beyond the mere act of propagation till after the birth of offsprings."⁴ Robert Lowie defined marriage relatively as, "a permanent bond holding permissible mates called husband and wife with respect to each other."⁵ Marriage as an institution is built on social norms which control life activity. It's on this that Hobbes defined it as, 'the complexities of social norms that defined and control the relationship of a mated pair to each other, their kinsmen, their offspring and their society at large."⁶ All that exists in the world, exists for a purpose. The purpose could base on positivity or negativity. This therefore, will lead us to discuss on the purpose and problems of marriage as well as the challenges African women encounter in it.

Purpose of Marriage

Marriage serves a variety of purposes which may differ based on cultural, personal, religious, and legal perspectives. Some common purposes centered on the following:

(A) Emotional and Companionship Support; marriage provides emotional stability, companionship, and lifelong partner to share life's experiences with.

(B) Family and Procreation; marriage is seen as the institution through which families are established, and provides a stable environment for raising children.

(C) Social and Legal Benefits; marriage provides legal rights and benefits such as property rights, tax benefits, and inheritance. It also provides social recognition and status within the community.

(D) Economic Partnership; marriage promotes economic partnership where both spouses contribute to the financial stability of the household, and in some cultures, it consolidates and strengthens wealth or social alliances.

(E) Religious/Spiritual Fulfillment; In many religion and traditions, marriage practice is considered a sacred covenant that fulfills spiritual or religious obligations.

(F) Personal Growth; marriage for some, is a commitment that promotes personal development, trust, and mutual support in the pursuit of shared objectives.

Problems of Marriage

While marriage offers many benefits, it also poses a lot of problems to couples in their marital relationship. The problems, affect both family, environmental stability, children's and social well-being. The main problems experienced in marriage therefore include:

(1) Communication Issue; poor communication between husband and wife can lead to misunderstanding, frustration, and resentment. Spouses in this case, may find it difficult to express their needs or resolve conflicts constructively.

(2) Financial Stress; this is the common source of conflict in marriage. This normally erupts as a result of how to spend, save, pay debts or keep financial priorities.

(3) Loss of Intimacy; overtime, spouses experiences of a decline in the emotional, physical/sexual intimacy, creates distance between spouses and leads to feelings of loneliness.

(4) Different Priorities and values; spouses may grow apart if their goals, values, or priorities shift significantly overtime, leading to conflict and disconnection.

(5) Unresolved Conflict; unresolved issues erodes marriage relationship, especially where spouses are unable to address their disagreements properly, the issues may escalate and lead to emotional withdrawal or resentment.

(7) Lack of Support and Appreciation; when one or both partners feel undervalued, unsupported, or is/are taken for granted, it can lead to feelings of dissatisfaction and resentment in marriage.

(8) Parenting Differences; disagreements on the styles of parenting, discipline, and expectations for children can create tension between couples, especially when each partner has different view on how to raise their children.

External Pressures; family expectations, social norms, or interference from in-laws or friends can sometimes put pressure on marriage, creating stress and conflict amidst partners

(10) Infidelity Practice; betrayal of trust caused by emotional or physical extramarital relationship can severely destroy marriage, and thus leads to feelings of hurt, anger, and mistrust.

The Challenges African Women Encounter in Marriage

African women encounter unique challenges in marriage that can be influenced by cultural, social, economic and legal factors. Though the encounters vary across the ethnic groups that constituted the continent, some common challenges centered on the following:

(1) Patriarchy and Gender Roles: In many African societies, traditional gender roles placed women in subordinate positions where they are expected to prioritize their husbands' and families' needs over their own personal growths. This normally leads to limited decision-making power which causes expectations to fulfill specific duties such as house works, childcares and catering to extended families. It also leads to resistance when trying to assert independence or share responsibilities.

(2) Bride Price/Dowry Practice: The payment of dowry practice is still prevalent in many African societies. This sometimes leads to seeing women as property, or as been bought, which affects their autonomy and leads to mistreatment or reduced agency in marriage decisions. This also leads to act of pressuring women or wives to stay in an abusive and unhappy marriage.

(3) Polygamy: Many African societies practice polygamy which is an indirect way of promoting infidelity practice for husbands, and women (wives) customarily are forced to accept it. Polygamy poses competition for resources and affection in the family and thus leads to emotional distress and jealousy in the sharing spousal relationship and often increases financial strains on households, particularly when children from multiple wives are involved.

(4) Domestic Violence arising from Infidelity: This remains a major problem African women encounter in marriage. This exacerbated by social norms, discourage women from speaking out or seeking help. African women exercise the fear of being socially stigmatized if they report abuse they encounter in situations of infidelity; this is due to lack of legal shade or support systems to properly address the problems. African women in the cases of infidelity act, which breeds domestic violence and sometimes separation or divorce, are pressurized to keep silent and endure for the protection of family's and children's reputations.

(5) Economic Dependency: Majority of African wives economically depend on their husbands when it comes to solving the financial needs, reason is due to their limited access to education, employment and other necessary resources. This limitedness with regards to economic autonomy, therefore, puts them in the condition of lacking unequal control over family finances and economic decisions.

(6) Cultural Pressure to Bear Children: In majority of the African societies, having children, specifically the male heirs, is paramount in marriage. Women who bear no children, the male gender in quote, are in hell while alive; they are stigmatized or socially excluded from the family circle, all the blames for infertility are heaped only on them not minding that infertility can affect both men and women.

(7) Early and Forced Marriage: Child marriage is still practicing in some African countries.. Young girls are pressurized or forced into marriage at a very tender age. This however, leads them to lack of education and personal development, it causes health risk, psychological trauma, early conceptions and childbirth complications. All these are because they aren't emotionally and physically ready for such situations.

(8) Inheritance and Property Rights: Some African women face challenges in the inheritance of property and land due traditional or legal constraints, particularly if the husband dies. For

example, in some part of Igbo, and Akwa ibom/Cross (the Ibibio) tribes of Nigeria, when husbands died, in-laws or extended family members would rally round to dispossess and deny the widow the control of her husband's assets, particularly where the husband died without male heirs and sometimes when their children are very tender.

(9) **Balancing Modernity with Tradition:** As Africans modernizes; many women are caught between traditional expectations and modern aspiration. This creates tensions like; pressure on fulfilling traditional wife and mother roles while pursuing education careers. And conflict between older family member's expectations and a woman's desire for equality and independence within the marriage.

(10) **Lack of Serious Access to Legal and Social Support:** In many African countries, women are denied serious access to legal resources, counseling, and protection in case of marital dispute. This however, is compounded by; lack of awareness or education concerning their rights as well as the weak and unforced law protecting women's marriage rights. This causes stigmatization or cultural pressures against divorce, even in extreme circumstances such as abuse in cases of infidelity, etc.

Amongst the problems of marriage discussed above, infidelity is the most perturbing, because, the aftermaths, if proper care isn't taken, creates havocs, which sometimes could lead to collapsed marriage. This nevertheless, will take us to the discussion on infidelity, what constitutes infidelity, its causes, aftermaths, the challenges it poses to family, children and society as well as the status of women in the judgment on the act.

What is Infidelity?

Infidelity is a serious issue in marriage that makes people questions its causes and Challenges to families, children and humanity as a whole, and as well the position of African women in cases of judgment and punishment on it. The concept of infidelity, referring to as "cheating", "adultery", and "extra dyadic" involvements, is not the same as fornication. Fornication reflects the sexual relationship between unmarried people. Infidelity been defined in several ways by different scholars, depends on their diverse areas of studies like; psychology, sociology, relationship counseling etc. Philosophy in this context is much more interested in how such behavior affects the well-being of families, children and humanity in totality. The conceptual framework definitions of infidelity can emphasize on the types and various dimensions the act is carried out.

What Constitutes Infidelity?

Infidelity, often referred to as cheating, can manifest in various forms. While the specifics may vary between cultures and relationships. Here are the common types of infidelity:

1. **Physical Infidelity:** Engaging in physical intimacy (e.g., kissing, sexual activities) with someone other than a committed partner. This typically, is the most recognized form of cheating.
2. **Emotional Infidelity:** This is an attitude of developing a deep emotional bond with someone outside the relationship that rivals or surpasses the connection with a partner. It often involves sharing personal thoughts, feelings, or secrets with someone else.
3. **Cyber Infidelity (Online Cheating) :** This involves one partner engaging in romantic or sexual conversations, video calls, and sharing explicit contents via social media, dating apps, or other online platforms. Such behavior, may not involve physical contact, but breaches trust

4. Financial Infidelity: This is when one conceals financial decisions, debts, or spending from a partner. It could be in form of setting up a secret bank account, or financially contributing to another individual outside the main spouse
5. Opportunistic Infidelity: This is when one partner engages in cheating impulsively, often under circumstances like intoxication or during travel. Though, this sometimes may not involve emotional attachment.
6. Romantic Infidelity: This refers to a situation whereby a partner falls in love or pursues a relationship with someone else while still being in a committed relationship. This often involves a mix of emotional and physical betrayal.
7. Micro-Cheating: This is termed small act that toes the line of infidelity, such as flirting, maintaining secretive contact, or having a "crush" on someone outside the relationship. It is often seen as a gray area and subjective to individual boundaries.
8. Revenge Infidelity: This according to Blow and Hartnell "is adultery done as retaliation for a partner's perceived wrongs, such as their own infidelity or neglect. This is driven by anger or the desire to even the score."⁷
9. Sexting Infidelity: This points to one's attitude of sharing explicit texts, photos, or videos with someone other than his or her main partner. Sexting is synonymously related to cyber infidelity, though it may occur independently.
10. Object or Fantasy Infidelity: This is obsessively a fixating on someone (like a celebrity or colleague) or engaging in fantasies that exclude the partner. Object or fantasy infidelity involves the use of pornography or other outlets to arouse and satisfies one's sexual urge. This often creates disconnection in relationship.
11. Professional Infidelity: This an attitude of developing inappropriate relationships with coworkers, such as office romances or inappropriate emotional bonds formed at work.
12. Situational Infidelity: This is the type of cheating that occurs due to a specific situation or circumstance, like long-distance relationships or prolonged separations.

Each and every one of these types of infidelity acts can hurt a relationship differently, depending on the values, boundaries, and expectations of the individuals involve. Though, avoiding such issues and their causes should be the best attitude, because it will save the well-being of family children and humanity as a whole.

Definitional Dimensions of Infidelity

The concept infidelity is variously defined in the following dimensions viz:

(1) Emotional and Physical Dimensions

Glass and Wright defined infidelity as, 'a violation of relational expectations, either emotional or sexual particularly by one of partners. It includes both emotional intimacy with someone outside the relationship and physical/sexual acts. This distinguishes between emotional infidelity (forming a close emotional bond with someone outside the relationship) and sexual infidelity (engaging in physical intimacy or sexual activity).'⁸

(2) Breach of Relationship Boundaries

Drigotas et al, defined infidelity is an act that violates the boundaries of an agreed-upon romantic relationship, leading to emotional or sexual connections with a third party."⁹ This definition emphasizes mutual understanding of boundaries as critical for defining infidelity.

(3) Perceived Betrayal

Infidelity, Leeker and Carlozzi said, "is any act including physical, emotional, or online interactions, that are perceived to be a betrayal by one's partner."¹⁰ This approach underscores individual perceptions meaning that an action might be considered infidelity by one partner, but not by the other.

(4) Online and Digital Infidelity

Henline, Lamke, & Howard conceptualized infidelity as including, "behaviors in virtual and digital contexts, such as engaging in sexually explicit conversations or forming emotional connections online, without the partner's knowledge or consent."¹¹ This framework accounts for the growing role of technology in relationships.

(5) Psychological and Behavioral Definitions of Infidelity

Thompson refers infidelity as,"engaging in behaviors, whether physical or emotional that constitute a betrayal of trust in a committed relationship.,"¹² The focus here is

(6) Evolutionary Perspective

Buss and Shackelford, defining infidelity from an evolutionary standpoint, described the act as, "behaviors which increase reproductive opportunities outside the primary partnership, posing a threat to the partner's investment in the relationship."¹³ Sexual infidelity and emotional infidelity in this context however, are viewed differently, with men and women potentially responding differently due to evolutionary pressures, etc.

The Common Features of Infidelity

Infidelity act is featured with the following traits viz: (1) Intentionality, infidelity act can be deliberate (intentional) or unintentional. (2) Secrecy, concealment of actions is a norm in infidelity act. (3) Culture and Individual Norms, what constitutes infidelity varies across cultures and personal beliefs. While some individuals and cultures perceive it as morally wrong, others do not morally condemned it. (4) Breach of Trust; this is one of the common features of infidelity, because the behavior breaches trust and expectations in marital relationship.

Causes of Infidelity

Infidelity, or unfaithfulness in a romantic or marital relationship, stems from a variety of causes. While the reasons differ from person to person, the common causes therefore, include:

1. Emotional Factors: Lack of Emotional Fulfillments such as; feeling neglected or unappreciated in the relationship may lead individuals to seek emotional validation elsewhere. Loneliness; being emotionally disconnected or lack of companionship within the relationship can prompt someone to seek closeness outside it. Unresolved Conflicts: Persistence in arguments, lack of effective communication, or unresolved resentments may push a partner to look for solace with someone else.

2. Physical and Sexual Factors: Sexual Dissatisfaction: Disparity in sexual needs, lack of intimacy, or dissatisfaction with physical connection in the relationship can push a person to

practice infidelity. Curiosity or Novelty-Seeking, one's desire for new sexual experiences and styles, as well as being curious about other partners causes one to indulge in infidelity activity.

3. Relationship Dynamics: Loss of Connection: Over time, partners may drift apart due to busy schedules, lack of effort, or changing priorities. There is what we call unmet expectations, i.e when one partner feels their expectations for love, support, or partnership aren't being met, such person can look for where meet his or her expectations. Imbalance in efforts is also under relationship dynamics: This is when one partner feels he is investing more into the relationship than the other.

4. Individual Factors: Under this factor we found low self-esteem, this is about a person seeking validation from someone else to boost his/her self-worth. Impulsiveness or lacking self-control is found under this individual factors, some individuals sometimes, may act based on fleeting desires or temptations without considering the consequences. Addictions or abuse on varieties of substances, watching pornographic actions, etc, may lead to infidelity.

5. External Factors: Opportunity; Situations such as traveling frequently or interacting with new people makes cheating easier. Peer groups or social circles can encourage infidelity. Stress or crisis is also amongst the external factors prompting infidelity. Sometimes, life challenges, such as financial problems, can lead to escapism through infidelity.

6. Cultural and Societal Influences: Cultural Tolerance of Infidelity: Societies or communities that view infidelity as more acceptable can influence one's behavior. Media and Social influences like portrayals of infidelity in media as exciting or without consequences can impact perceptions.

7. Issues of Commitments: Problem of Commitments; some people struggle with one long-term commitment or another, or sometimes, the struggles for restrictions of a monogamous relationship enslaves one in infidelity act. Unrealistic expectations i.e idealizing relationships and becoming disillusioned when reality doesn't meet expectations can also push one into infidelity activity.

8. Past Experiences: Trauma from Past Infidelity: A history of being cheated on or a family history of people that indulge in infidelity may normalize the behavior. Unresolved Personal issues like emotional baggage or unhealed wounds from the past relationships can contribute to infidelity act.

Impacts of Infidelity on Families, Children, and Humanity

Infidelity can have far-reaching negative effects on families, children, and humanity as a whole It influences emotional, psychological, and social dynamics. Here are an in-depth ideas of its impacts:

Effects of Infidelity on Families

The practice of infidelity creates negative impacts on families, the impacts are viz; emotional turmoil. Infidelity act often causes intense emotional distress like, feelings of betrayal, anger, guilt, and shame. The emotional turmoil leads to breakdown of trust: Trust, which is the foundation of a family, is often severely damaged, leading to difficulty in rebuilding relationships. But in a situation where rebuilding relationship fails, the last resort is divorce and separation. Divorce or separation brings about financial strains. Divorce arising from counseling sessions related to infidelity can result in significant financial burdens.

Effects of Infidelity on Children

Infidelity does a lot of damage on children. It affects children's emotions by causing them confusion, anxiety, sadness, and feelings of abandonment. These of course, affect children's behavior. They might act out at school or home due to stress, anger, or the need for attention. Infidelity makes children develop distrust in relationships. Growing up in an environment affected with infidelity may cause children to have trust issues in future relationships. Infidelity affects children's academic performances due to the stress they experience from family disruptions. This however, hampers their concentration and academic success. Infidelity often creates bad influence on children. Thus, they may normalize unfaithful behaviors they witness in their families.

Effects of Infidelity on Humanity

That which affects the nose, definitely affects the eyes. The complexity of humanity lies on the two families that comprises of the nuclear families formed by the fathers, mothers and children, and thus, progresses further to the extended families formed by the grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews and in-laws. Thus, the problem of infidelity that negatively affects the good of the family, also affects the well-beings of the children and humanity in its entirety. The Christian Scripture said, "righteousness exalts nation, while sin is a reproach to nation."¹⁴ Thus the effects of infidelity to humanity are as follow: Erosion of Social Trust: When infidelity becomes widespread, it weakens societal norms encircling commitments in people's integrity: Impact on Mental Health: Societal acceptance of infidelity could contribute to health issues like, depression, anxiety and increase in the transmission of venereal diseases (STDs): Weakened Institutions: Infidelity act undermines the sanctity of marriage and sometimes leads to conflict between communities knits by means of the couples.

African Women in Situation of Judgement and Punishment on Infidelity

The treatment of African women regarding judgment and punishment for infidelity varies widely across the continent due to cultural, religious, and legal differences. While some regions maintain patriarchal norms that stigmatize women harshly than men, others are more equitable in their social and legal responses. Thus, this paper detailedly discusses the issues as follows viz:

(1) Cultural Norms

Many of the African societies encourage patriarchy syndrome. Here, cultural norms prioritize male dominance in every relationship. Infidelity by African women is judged harshly than their male counterparts, who oftentimes, are socially excused or even celebrated for extramarital affairs. African cultural norms placed women on a double standard role. Thus, women are frequently expected to uphold and keep the family's honour, that's why their infidelity may lead to severe social stigma or rejection, while men's actions are sometimes overlooked. Community responses are based on the cultural norms and tradition. In traditional African settings, community elders or local leadership judgment on issues of infidelity, often favoured men.

2. Religious Influences

Religions deeply influenced African women's fate in situations of judgement and punishment on infidelity. Using the Islamic and Christian communities as case study: In many of the Islamic communities in Africa where sharia law is densely observed, women accused of infidelity are giving severe punishments, such as public shaming, ostracism, sometimes in an

extreme cases, corporal punishment such as stoning is meted on them depending on the interpretation and enforcement of the law. African communities where Christians dominate, women accused of infidelity face judgment within the church or community, but less likely encounter formal legal consequences. In this scenario, religious leaders may impose moral penalties like public confession or counseling.

3. Legal Systems

Customary Law Governs African families and communities. Here, women caught on infidelity, face consequences such as loss of child custody, divorce without alimony, or fines. The same issue is applicable to Formal Legal Systems: In modern African states with codified laws, infidelity is typically not a criminal offense. However, legal systems may still be biased, as men might use accusations of infidelity as grounds for divorce or to deny women property rights.

4. Violence and Repercussions

In extreme cases, accusations of infidelity can lead to violence against women, such as physical abuse, forced evictions, or honor killings in some communities. Women are often blamed for marital problems, whereas men might escape scrutiny for their own infidelity.

5. Changing Trends

Urbanization and modernization are challenging traditional norms in some regions. Educated and economically empowered women in cities are increasingly pushing back against unequal treatment. Activists and legal reforms are promoting gender equality, advocating for laws that protect women's rights in cases of marital disputes. Upon all these, African women are still experiencing hell in marriage especially in situation of judgement and punishment on infidelity etc.

Conclusion

The discourse on marriage, infidelity, and its challenges highlights the complexity interplay on the cultural, social, and economic dynamics affecting African women, children, families, and humanity. Marriage, traditionally revered, is the foundation of existence. Anything that affects marriage, affects family which is constituted of the parents and children. Many societies, Africa as an example, faces evolving pressures provoked by modernization, shifting gender roles, and individual desires. Marriage as an avenue of stabilizing humanity by means of family, doesn't encourage superiority, inferiority complex that featured African culture, but is purposefully established for expunging loneliness which is the factor prompting the deterioration in the life of the two genders, as well as keeping humanity via procreation. Marriage according to the Christian Scripture (the Holy Bible), "is a big blessing, thus, he who found a wife, finds a good thing."¹⁵ Though, the way people understand the word marriage is distinct from the purpose of establishing it. African understanding of marriage is much more naive, and thus too far from its context. Marriage in Africa is characterized by male chauvinism syndrome, the system that dehumanized women a roundly. A lot of challenges normally erupt from marriage activity. The challenges sometimes can be fatal. Infidelity being characterized by power imbalances, societal expectations, and economic constraints, disrupts the stability of marriage which oftentimes has far-reaching consequences on women, family, children, and humanity.

Infidelity exacerbates vulnerabilities like economic dependency, social stigmatization, and emotional distress on African women. Children in the same way, suffer indirectly through experiencing instability, strained family dynamics, and psychological trauma. Family being the nucleus of African nation bears brunt of disruptions, which ripples out to affect the broader community by weakening social cohesion and perpetuating cycles of distrust and inequality.

- Addressing these challenges as stated by the Moputu's policies on women's rights, requires multidimensional approaches: Societal norms in this part of the world, must promote mutual respect, gender equality, and communication in marriage. Education and economic empowerments of women are crucial in reducing all the vulnerabilities to the adverse effects of infidelity. Counseling and mediation services must be set up to help families to navigate conflicts; legal frameworks in Africa must also be strengthened to protect the rights of women and children, etc.

Ultimately, fostering healthy marriages and relationships is essential for maintaining the stability of humanity. Achieving this, therefore, demands collective efforts from individuals, communities, and governments to uphold the values of respect, fidelity, and mutual support that underpin the strength of African families and humanity as a whole.

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