

The Challenges of Prostitution and Female Trafficking in Africa: An African Ethico-Feminist Perspective

by

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Abstract

The paper is an attempt to explore and defend African ethico-feminism as a viable complementary ideology for curbing the challenges of prostitution and female trafficking in 21st century Africa. It argues that African ethico-feminism is a new conception of feminism necessarily relevant to the African predicament on prostitution and female trafficking. This ideological perspective strongly condemns prostitution and female trafficking as ethically unjustified. The paper posits that the strength, resilience and resounding liberation of African women can be positively harnessed and enhanced in order to reduce the spate of prostitution and female trafficking in the continent. It identifies the roles of men and youth in Africa towards curbing prostitution and female trafficking. Finally, the paper harps on the urgent need for African states to augment the principles of ethico-feminism with other viable measures in an attempt to evolve a holistic panacea to the wave of prostitution and female trafficking in Africa.

Introduction

Prostitution and female trafficking have been difficult and challenging issue for social crusaders, scholars, feminists, government and non-governmental organizations both at national, regional and international levels. There have been legal, moral and medical concerns about these two distinct but related challenges in Africa. The concerns raised by prostitution and female trafficking have to do not only with the exploitation of feminine sexuality by profiteers, but also the objectification of women's dignity.

Exacerbating such concerns is the difficulty of getting reliable statistical data and information on the magnitude of the challenges in Africa. The clandestine nature of the crimes and the reluctance of victims to come forward, report and give necessary information, makes prostitution and trafficking somewhat challenging. The increasing awareness of the impotency of legal and criminal sanctions as effective tools in stemming down the tide of prostitutions and female trafficking in Africa, make the concerns on these challenges more worrisome.

In a recent statistical report by J. Davey (2005), “600, 000-800,000 human beings are trafficked internationally each year with 80% of these population as women and children. Human trafficking is the third top revenue earning for organized crime and a fast growing phenomenon in the world”. Given this trend, it is pathetic that classical and street prostitution of African women, which involves inter-states and intra-country female trafficking, have equally been on the increase. More African women are now migrating into the New World in search of the prostitution job. Many more are trafficked (both internally and externally) with consummated tales and promises of better fortunes in new places of abode.

While statistics are not accurately available to expose the wave in Africa, we are quite accustomed to seeing captions of ‘deported’ prostitutes from the New World as screaming headlines in the electronic and print media. We are equally quite familiar with series of tales reflecting the psychological trauma, ordeals and experiences of trafficked women and children. In view of the reoccurring manifestations, perversity and enormous nature of prostitution and female trafficking in contemporary Africa, it appears that these vices are vast becoming legitimate institutions.

But should we allow the scourge of prostitution and female trafficking overshadow our rationality, collective intelligence and human control? Is there any casual relationship between prostitution and female trafficking, especially as it affects the African experiences? Are legislation and criminalization of human trafficking by African states government sufficient and necessary conditions in ravaging these social menaces? Why have these challenges defied successful and meaningful solutions? The fundamentality of these questions calls for an urgent re-appraisal of the meaning, nature, scope and efforts made so far on the challenges. Thus, the need for a careful and critical analysis of the issues involved with a view to finding viable alternative approaches towards curbing the challenges of prostitution and female trafficking in 21st century Africa.

On this background, an attempt is made in the paper to conceptually expose the challenges of prostitution and female trafficking in Africa; the causes and implications; dimensions and manifestations. In addition, the paper explores the ideology of African ethico-feminism and its prospects in curbing the social challenges of prostitution and female trafficking in Africa.

The Concepts of Prostitution and Female Trafficking

Prostitution is the act of having sex for money. It is a practice commonly associated with the female folk. Prostitution occupies a dominant position in the discussion of commercial sex industry. Other activities of the commercial sex industry include massage brothels, strip clubs, phone sex, adult and child pornography, video and internet pornography, among others. Most African prostitutes, more often than not, drift among these various permutations of the commercial sex industry.

Prostitution markets the violence, the practices of subordination, and objectification of women, as sex machines that can be controlled and customized at will by the operator. Operator in this sense is understood as the client, while the machine is metaphorical of a prostitute. Women in prostitution are purchased and patronized for their outer appearance, including skin colour, body shape, and other characteristics based on the customer's preference and taste.

Prostitution in many instances is a brutal sexual desire by a person (usually male) and a reluctant and loathing submission, purchased by money on the other (usually female). This makes prostitution an unnatural act and a violation of our truer instincts. The prostitute uses her body as a means for monetary gain. Money is her primary objective. This factor becomes secondary only if the prostitutes determine it otherwise with some other benefiting returns. The client uses the prostitute's body as a means for sexual gratification. Sexual pleasure is usually his primary motivation. However, the primary motivation for engaging the service of a prostitute by clients may not necessarily be for sexual pleasure any longer as experiences are vast revealing in contemporary Nigeria. In its most recent dimension, the other motivation is for the purpose of using the body of the prostitute for money rituals.

Female trafficking on its part is a conscious act of moving or transporting women, ladies and girls from one geographical location to the other for the commercial purpose of engaging them in business and acts considered illegal by the law. Trafficking in African women and children is exacerbated by factors prominent among which are: war, poverty, and flawed or nonexistent birth registration systems, etc. According to Rossi, in a 2005 report by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), poverty aggravates already desperate conditions of female trafficking caused by conflict, discrimination, and repression.

Female trafficking is common in Africa because many children are not registered at birth and as such, never formally acquire a nationality. Thus, they are easily moved between countries. Fowler (2004: 4) found that Africa's 3.3 million refugees and its estimated 12.7 million internally displaced people are those most vulnerable to trafficking. More specifically, porous borders combined with recurrent civil and political unrest and lack of economic opportunities has ensured a consistent flow of both legal and illegal migration of Africans to different parts of the world. A significant proportion of this illegal immigrants and trafficked are females.

Traffickers capitalize on the vulnerabilities created by war, poverty, minimal education, unemployment, and a general lack of opportunity. Furthermore, the ongoing global crisis and its negative economic impact on Africa can also be said to have exacerbated already desperate conditions of human trafficking. Eighty-nine percent of African countries are affected by trafficking flows to and from other countries in Africa. In 34 percent of African countries, trafficking also takes place to Europe, and in 26 percent, trafficking flows to the Middle East (Rossi, 2005: 9). Half of Africa's 53 governments admit that trafficking is a serious concern (Fowler, 2004: 6).

Usually, the purpose of trafficking women is suspected and malicious. It may be for the reason of domestic servitude, organized begging, commercial labour, enslavement, rituals, pornography, prostitution and among other spurious ends. Irrespective of the purpose, one thing is clear and common – it is illegal, inhumane and immoral. Female trafficking involves unethical transactions of women, ladies and girls for illegal purposes. Given the perversity of female trafficking in recent times, Coonan and Thompson (2004: 63) regard it as 'modern enslavement' and a new way for slavery of the old era.

There is a relationship between prostitution and female trafficking. Trafficked female, more often than not, are usually for the commercial purpose of prostitution. Many prostitutes have pimps. These pimps are traffickers who protect and provide prostitutes with their clients. Prostitutes, in the hands of the pimps, who can either be male or female, are nothing but sexual slaves. As third parties in the sale of parts of female sexuality for money, pimps receive certain shares of any of the earnings of the prostitutes. Female trafficking is fostered for the major purpose of prostitution and forced labour. In either female trafficking or prostitution, there are varying degrees of elements of force, choice and consent. For a better understanding of the issues involved here, there is need to consider further the issue of consent and choice for prostitution and female trafficking.

Giving credence to the fact that women's trafficking is unlike children trafficking, whose fate and consent are decided by family, it usually involves adult females who are capable of making choices and giving consents. Women are neither directly forced to be trafficked nor do they choose to be sold as slaves. But they do often choose to become prostitutes. Nonetheless, the attitudes of all clients towards prostitutes resemble that of master towards slaves in many respects. Likewise, that of traffickers towards the trafficked is a master-slave relationship. Some of the reasons for consenting to and choosing to be trafficked and perhaps be a prostitute are meeting social needs, and family financial challenges, war refugees, defect in moral character, lack of education, and loose parental background.

The Idea of African Ethico-Feminism

Before this time, there have been many brands of feminism with diverse conceptions of the origin of unequal relations between men and women in society; what constitute discriminatory gender relations and how women's liberation can be achieved. This is as a result of different ideological proclivities, perspectives and goals that have influenced the study of feminism. Within Western feminist thought, we can identify various feminist schools of thought: liberal, radical, socialist, cultural feminism among others.

A fundamental presupposition underlying the above currents and which is usually held by Western feminists is that feminism is a universal agenda for action aimed at eliminating gender hierarchies in all societies of the world. Feminism in this sense is seen as a product of universal thought, which concerns all women irrespective of their race, social class and religion. However, in recent times, some scholars of African orientation began to challenge this supposedly held assumption as false and as a consequence, came up with the idea of African feminism. Blazing this trail of thought are: N.E Mba (1982), C. B. Davies (1998), C.S. Filomina (1987), M. Gwendolyn (1997), among others.

The central argument of these scholars is that feminism, as presently constituted, is a Western phenomenon, which is a reflection of Western cultural predilection as a people, and such is designed to meet the particular needs of the Western women. The conclusion is therefore drawn that such feminism is of no relevance to Africa. Thus, they championed the course of African feminism, which aims at struggling against African women oppression in all domains of life: economic, political, social, cultural, psychological, educational and sexual, taken into consideration the peculiar African experiences.

C. S. Filomina for instance, posits that "African feminism combines racial, sexual, class and cultural dimensions of oppression to produce a more inclusive brand of feminism through which women are viewed first and foremost as human, rather than sexual beings" (1981:5). C. B. Davies defends "African feminism as that ideological movement, which recognizes a common struggle with African men for the removal of the yokes of foreign domination and European/American exploitation" (1998: 13). For Filomina and Davies, African feminism examines African societies for institutions, which are of value to women and rejects those which work to their detriment; and does not simply import and imbibe Western women's agendas. Rather, it concentrates on certain specific needs and goals arising out of the concrete realities of women's lives in African societies.

While the pioneering efforts of the above scholars are commendable with respect to providing theoretical foundation for African orientation in feminist discourse, one however, observes that not enough analysis has been made on how African feminism can help confront the vastly different and enormous challenges facing the female gender in contemporary Africa. African feminism, as presented by these scholars, is incapable of effectively addressing the some of the troubling challenges of African women.

Molara Ogundipe-Leslie (2000: 112) discusses six-oppressive conditional mountains of women in Africa. These are: one, oppression from outside (foreign intrusion and colonialism); the second is heritage of tradition (cultural beliefs and practices such as genital mutilation, circumcision, etc); the third is her own backwardness, a product of colonization and neo-colonialism together with its concomitant, poverty), the fourth is men's domination; the fifth is her race, colour (because the international economic order is divided along race and class lines); and the sixth is herself.

Of all these six mountains on African women, (which a truly African feminist theory ought to challenge) the conception of African feminism by Filomina and Davies only addresses some aspects of the challenges. The most fundamental aspect, which is the self-perception, image and identity of African women, is least discussed in earlier conceptions of African feminism. The necessity of evolving paradigms that will effectively combat this challenge and as well provide solutions to the other mountains of African women is the impetus for a new theory of African feminism, which, henceforth, I refer to as 'African ethico-feminism'.

African ethico-feminism is a new brand of feminism, which this paper proposes. This theory sees the negative self-image of women by themselves as a product of confusion in knowing their inherent capacities and the morality of alternate actions open to them in their daily social interactions and living. Like other models of Western feminism (i.e. radical, existential or liberal feminism), it identifies gender specific issues, women's second-class status and seeks to redress them. Unlike Western feminism, it does not foster dichotomy, individualism and competition between the two sexes. It identifies with the broad goal of African feminism as conceived by earlier scholars- to construct the models and paradigm of actions of a realistic world where African women would be viewed and treated first and foremost as human rather than sexual beings. However, unlike earlier conceptions of African feminism, it does not emphasize uniqueness of African women in terms of racial and class (political and economical) prejudices. Rather, it essentially operates on the inclusive principles of African ethics, respected autonomy, communalism and cooperation, self-reliance and complementary gender relations and structures. It is a hybrid ideology, which seeks to combine African interests, experiences and peculiarities together with African ethics and feminist concerns at struggling against women oppressions and subjugations in all spheres of life: economic, political, social, cultural, language, psychological and sexual. This ideology hopes to signal the end of all vestiges of oppression and domination of the women folk. It is basically a moral and feminist concern for African women survival and well-being. And while emphasizing female autonomy, African ethico-feminism still seeks the complementarily ethic of female and male gender socialization. Where cultural practices and social roles/structures are chauvinistic and oppressive, African ethico-feminism put emphasis on dignity over human debasement, reason over emotions, changes over absolute traditional practices and virtues over vicious acts in masculine/feminine interrelationships.

African ethico-feminism, as a hybrid and inclusive ideology, encompasses freedom from oppression, based on both external and internal political, economic, social and class biases against African women. This ideology recognizes a common struggle with African men for the removal of the yokes and forces of alien domination in Africa. It is not antagonistic to African men, but it challenges them to be aware of certain salient aspects of women's subjugation, which differ from the generalized oppression of all African peoples.

While acknowledging its affinities with other models of feminism, Africa ethico-feminism delineates in contents and objectives with certain specific needs and goals arising out of the concrete realities of women's lives in African societies. This ideological movement recognizes the cultural relativity, both in kinds and degrees, of challenges facing the womenfolk. And as a matter of special concern to the African experience, this ideology posits that related challenges of exploitation and subjugation of women on the continent must be addressed historically. Solutions sought to the challenges must be immediately relevant to the African experience and dimensions of such recognized challenges.

On the above background, African-ethico feminism examines African societies for institutions, which are of value to women and rejects those which work to their detriment. It does not rely on Western women's agenda. Before subjecting any identified oppression against the womenfolk to legal appraisal, that is, whether the oppression or subjugation is legal or illegal, African ethico-feminism first considers the morality and ethical justification of such challenge. The paradigm for this ethical evaluation is sought within. Issues, challenges and challenges facing African womenfolk are examined in the light of the value and laden importance of African ethics, with a view to finding lasting solutions.

African ethics is an African understanding of how we ought to behave and act towards ourselves and to others. African ethics provides philosophical justification to what things, character traits, or types of persons are good, admirable and what kinds of actions are bad, reprehensive and worthy of being condemned (Balogun, 1998:288). Such an ethics is synthetically pragmatic, communalistic and de-ontologistic. It is pragmatic in the sense that if fear of God (and the deities) and punishment for wrong deeds will induce in man a sense of moral obligation, then, there is a pragmatic reason for certain moral principles, based on the will of God and other deities in African culture (Makinde, 2007: 309).

Its communalism derives from the fact that it encourages members of the society to always embrace good behaviour and nature admirable character. Actions that are morally praise worthy are defined in part on the basis of promoting the communal structural nature of the African society. Actions are regarded as morally good as far as they are capable of fostering an intimate sense of obligation, cooperation and belonging to quite large groups of people on the basis of kinship affiliations. Such actions, besides being a product of sense of obligation to the other members of the society, must truly and honestly promote their welfares.

Its deontologism is not a secular ethics without God as we have in Immanuel Kant's Ethics. Kant believes that we do not need God and religion in a moral law. However, religion is a fundamental basis of morality in African Ethics. The moral rightness or wrongness of an action is not determined simply by appeal to consequences. Like in Kantian ethics, appeal is given to other considerations such as the principles of justice, motive or intentionality and duty.

African ethico-feminism looks at traditional and contemporary avenues of choice for women liberation. Liberation understood here is with respect to all spheres of existence that make life meaningful and worth living. In the attempt to liberate women economically, politically, socially, culturally, psychologically and sexually, African ethico-feminism identifies beliefs and institutions that are supportive and promotive of women's oppression and attempt to deconstruct them. While this deconstructive exercise is not limited to internal (that is, African) institutions, it also extends to externally induced institutions and action programs indicative of Africa women oppression.

In this specific regard, African ethico-feminism condemns certain proclivities in Western feminist struggles that tend to denigrate, by way of non-mutual respect and ill-networking with African brands of feminism on the basis of either ethnocentric and racial biases, or other ideological complexes. For the most part, the struggle for equal gender relations and roles between the sexes in the society as championed by Western feminism, has failed to be recognized, reciprocated and applied in their relationships with African feminine and feminists. This, I believe, is self-defeating of Western feminists' struggle. Current tendencies and practices of Western feminism of passing universalistic judgments on issues that affect the female folk, which have sometimes become paradigmatic and action programs in Africa, are critically circumspect by African ethico-feminism. Such programs and judgments are seen as undue intrusion into the feminine values of African women and as another neo-colonialist garb of fostering the dependency state and culture of Africa on the Western world.

Prostitution, Female Trafficking and African Ethico-Feminism

Fundamentally, African ethico-feminism is an indispensable ideology contemporary Africa. However, our interest in the main is to explore its relevance to curbing the challenges of prostitution and female trafficking in Africa. African ethico-feminism offers a number of important ideas, which might help not only to find a way out of contemporary challenge of prostitution in 21st century Africa, but to solve the challenge of female trafficking as well. Though, a new brand of feminism, African ethico-feminism inherently possesses the needed viable insights necessary for curbing the challenges of prostitution and women trafficking in Africa.

These twin challenges have attracted the attention of Western feminists with divided positions. However, the truth remains that their solutions and conclusions are quite unacceptable and unworkable in the light of African experience. Liberal feminism for instance, theorizes prostitution and women trafficking as an act of sexual self-determination decry discrimination and demand de-stigmatization and decriminalization. The argument here is that women are supposed to be adults who can choose what they wish to do with their bodies and whether to consent to being trafficked or not.

The implication of this view is that the moral prohibition of prostitution and women trafficking is a reflection of patriarchal moralism, which traditionally views women as incapable of making decisions for themselves. It is in an attempt to guide against this traditional patriarchal dogma that Dworkin (1997) proposes the regularization of prostitution in particular as a profession under trade union and also trafficked women by extension, in order to protect them from the abuse of the clients and pimps.

Contrary to liberal feminists' views, which hold prostitution and women trafficking as acts that involve private contracts between consenting and freely chosen adults (prostitutes and clients, trafficked women and pimps), African-ethico feminism avers that prostitution is inherently morally objectionable. If prostitution and women trafficking are acts of free choice, why are the women with the fewest choices the ones most often found in the network?

Another model of Western feminism, which view can be applied on the issues of prostitution and women trafficking is radical feminism. Radical feminism opposes prostitution and women trafficking on the grounds that they degrade women and further the power politics of the male gender (Whelehan, 1995). Radical feminism believes that women have historically-and still are-victims of both direct and subtle forms of male oppression. The practices of prostitution and women trafficking in society are thought by radical feminists to reinforce and perpetuate this climate of oppression. Radical feminists seek to be supportive of sex workers and trafficked women while deploring the work and act itself as inherently wrong.

African ethico-feminism unlike radical feminism, condemns not only the acts of prostitution and female trafficking on both moral and legal grounds, but in addition, condemns prostitutes, their clients, pimps (traffickers) and the trafficked as immoral agents. Hence, supports their vigorous prosecution by the law. There is historical deficiency in the enforcement and administration of laws against prostitution and women trafficking in Africa. This made it possible for the selective harassment and oppression of prostitutes and pimps (women traffickers) as criminals, at the neglect of the clients and the trafficked as co-criminals. In view of this structural legal inadequacy in the approach to discouraging or curbing prostitution and female trafficking in Africa, African ethico-feminism holds it expedient to provide an ethical prohibition of the acts of prostitution and female trafficking including all the agents involved. It is only when this has been achieved that the quest for legal prohibition, liberation and women empowerment can be successfully realized in Africa.

In the perspective of African ethico-feminism, the experiences of prostitution and female trafficking are that of being hunted, being dominated, being sexually assaulted, and being physically and verbally battered. Intrinsic to prostitution and women trafficking are countless violations of human rights; sexual harassment, economic servitude, educational deprivation, job discrimination, domestic violence, racism, classism (tendency of being treated worthlessly because of one being poor), vulnerability to frequent physical and sexual assault, insults, and psychological distress. All these are human degrading and should be resisted morally and legally. Arguably, because of the capacity of prostitutes and trafficked women in giving consents and exercising their freedom of the will, they should be held morally responsible for being self-allowed to perpetuate and foster un-dignifying acts. The clients of prostitutes and the pimps in particular are equally immoral agents for being active parties to human degrading acts.

From an African ethico-feminist perspective, prostitution and female trafficking are ethically unjustified. This conclusion derives in part from the African communal social ethics which view certain behaviours as degenerative and others as generative. Within the African cultural set up, the practices of prostitution and women trafficking are reflective of degeneration of values and attitudes that can disintegrate the communal brotherhood bond. Prostitution and clients are looked down upon with cultural and moral repugnance.

Related to this, is the deontological ethical justification of the immorality of prostitution and women trafficking. According to this argument, it is required that people should always be treated as ends (intrinsically valuable and never as means to an end). Given this, prostitution and female trafficking reflect a disrespectful attitude, which is expressed in the non-chalant use of the human body as a means to achieve some goals either by the pimps, prostitutes, clients or the trafficked. Prostitution and female trafficking are ethically wrong because they defy respectful sexual and human relations by proffering a monetary substitute for mutual desire, interests and concerns.

Curbing Prostitution and Female Trafficking in 21st Century Africa

Many scholars have proposed that prostitution should be seen as a legitimate business and that what need to be done is to regularize it in order to curb its excesses. Regulating it, will according them, reduce some of the supposed pernicious effects. Related to this type of proposed solution is the echo of legalization. The proponents of this view assert that prostitution is a victimless crime and should be completely legal so that it is no longer an underground activity, allowing the normal checks and balances of society and existing laws to be applied.

While this paper distant itself from such proposed solutions of regulating, legalizing or decriminalizing prostitution, because of the inherent contradictions such views may inherently involve, our position is that a more viable solution needs to be sought. The question of regularizing, legalizing or decriminalizing does not arise at all because prostitution has been arguably established to be ethically unjustifiable. Since the ethical question necessarily presupposes (or ought to necessitate) the legal dimension, then it is our conviction that it is high time solutions were found to curbing the challenges of prostitution rather than suggesting conditions for its elongation in human social system. Making prostitution legal will allow the act to be managed rather than ignored. Condoning prostitution is the most demeaning and degrading thing around the state can do to women. Prostitution cannot be made safer or a little bit better by legalizing or decriminalizing it. It is a particularly vicious institution of inequality of the sexes.

It is on the above background that I think the time has come to face up to the challenges of the moral dimension of solving the challenge of prostitution through the insights of African feminism. As an ideology that is strongly concerned with the safety, dignity and liberation of African women, African ethico-feminism stands against the continued practice of prostitution and women trafficking in 21st century Africa. It believes that the strength, resilience and resounding liberation of African women can be positively harnessed and enhanced in order to reduce the spate of prostitution and women trafficking in the continent. One plausible way of achieving this is through a massive transformation of attitudes and beliefs of both women and men prostitution and trafficking business. As far as African societies are concerned, this liberation of women is not simply about sexual freedom for women as most men tend to think and fear. But rather, it is about the larger challenge of the redistribution of privilege, power and property between the rich and the poor, encompassing the smaller challenge of the redistribution of power, property and privilege between men and women (Filomina, 1987).

In order to achieve the above, it is clear that massive ethical re-orientation of the immorality of prostitution and human trafficking together with their hazardous effects are needed in order to educate women about their positions, the true causes of their plight, the potentialities of overcoming them and realistic modalities for effecting change. This is an area where African Gender Research groups both in the continent and Diaspora, Commissions for Women Development in African states, Gender research groups and bodies, feminists, non-governmental organizations and a host of other related bodies can be very useful by networking, providing and funding schemes to raise the moral consciousness of African women on these challenges.

The message has to be spread that prostitution and women trafficking are both immoral and illegal acts, which consequently make the culprits immoral and criminal agents. The roles of men and youth in Africa towards curbing the challenges of prostitution and female trafficking cannot be undermined. Full attention must be paid to men and youth who patronize prostitutes together with the agencies of promoting prostitution. Not only that, the clients of prostitutes and the pimps/traffickers should strictly be made to face the full wrath of the law. The existing statutes must be urgently reviewed to reflect this reality.

Another viable means of harnessing and enhancing the resilience and resounding liberation of African women is through intensive qualitative and basic education. There should be compulsory education of the girl child to at least 15 to 16 years. Educational policies in African states have to among other national objectives, be geared towards liberating and inculcating positive values in the pupils. This is because when the girl child is properly educated with the right African values, she will be exposed to informed rational decision and choice as regards why she ought not to opt for the alternative of prostitution. This step could serve as preventive measure against would-be prostitutes. However, for those already in it, I believe it is not enough to preach morals to them. Instead, we should be turning them around by helping them back into the society. In this regard, efforts should be made to create employment for them in order to morally and financially empower them to survive outside the prostitution world. If all these could be taken into consideration in the quest towards achieving prostitutes' free-world, it is my firm conviction that incidence of polluting the environment with prostitutes will be drastically reduced. This is also true of female trafficking.

The satisfaction of the basic needs such as food, habitat, health, education and security is a basic prerequisite for achieving women empowerment and liberation. The achievement of these objectives is dependent on basic structural transformations of societies. These transformations can only be achieved through good governance and sincere leadership in contemporary Africa. Thus the strong appeal to African states government to provide basic infrastructural facilities, institutions, programs and opportunities that will enhance the role and self-worth of not only women but also the lives of Africans at large.

It is a fact that much of the challenge of prostitution and female trafficking are caused by the shackled and negative self-image of women. The reactions of women to objective challenges are often self-defeating and self-crippling. Women react with fear, dependency complexes and attitudes, where more self-assertive and morally informed actions are needed. In order to overcome this negative self-image of women, African ethico-feminism enjoins men not to take advantage of such situation. But rather to nurture the communalistic culture of encouraging and supporting women overcome such psychological complexes through committed activism.

There is a need to address the negative social impact of the demand for human trafficking in general. On female trafficking, it is recommended that the current collaboration which exists between government agencies, NGOs, religious institutions, the police, and other networking bodies on human trafficking should be sustained and improved upon. The toughening of immigration laws, certainly worsens matters for trafficking, but will not solve the challenge. As regards assistance, there is a need for more community-housing facilities, better funding of the agencies working with victims and language training programs for victims of female trafficking. In the same vein, United Nations through its relevant Agencies should intensify more efforts than presently made towards curbing the rate of human trafficking in African states.

Following the above, we should not be lured into thinking that our recommended solutions are sufficiently exhaustive of bringing about a drastic end to the rage of prostitution and female trafficking in Africa. It is on this basis that I find it conclusive to make case for the urgent need of African states to complementarily augment the insights from African ethico-feminism, with other viable measures, in an attempt to evolve a holistic panacea to the current wave of prostitution and female trafficking in Africa.

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