



The Modernity and Tradition of Patriarchy and Religion in Intimate Relationships.

Chizaram Stella Eni Onwuzulike

Centre for Conflict, Gender and Development Studies/Social Sciences, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Email address:

*Corresponding author: zaraeni@gmail.com

To cite this article:

Onwuzulike, C. S. E. The Modernity and Tradition of Patriarchy and Religion in Intimate Relationships. *International Journal of Research and Technopreneurial Innovations* 2024; 1(2): 52-63.

Keywords:

Feminism
Patriarchy
Religion
Intimate Relationships
Globalization

ABSTRACT

This study examined the interplay between modernity and tradition in shaping the dynamics of patriarchy and religion within intimate relationships. It focuses on how these forces continue to influence gender roles and interpersonal power dynamics. Using the Radical Feminist as analytical frameworks, this research investigates the persistent impact of patriarchal and religious structures and practices in intimate partnerships. A qualitative research design was adopted, with data collected from participants through focus group discussions, observation, and in-depth interviews. This approach explores the lived experiences and perspectives of both men and women regarding gender roles, power structures, and religious expectations within intimate relationships. The analysis reveals that while modernity introduces shifts toward equality and autonomy, traditional patriarchal norms remain deeply embedded, particularly through religious doctrines that uphold male authority. Participants often reported that religious and cultural expectations perpetuate gender-based hierarchies in relationships, reinforcing male dominance and limiting female agency. Findings indicate that the coexistence of modern and traditional values creates a complex environment where individuals, especially women, navigate conflicting ideals. On one hand, modernity promotes egalitarian values; on the other, religious and cultural norms impose constraints, leading to a reinforcement of traditional gender roles. These dual pressures manifest in various forms, including expectations of women's subservience, control over decision-making in relationships, and the influence of religious leaders in prescribing roles within partnerships. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of how modernity and tradition interact and intersect to sustain patriarchal values within intimate relationships. This is done by challenging the entrenched religious and cultural norms that sustain patriarchal power structures.

1. INTRODUCTION

Intimate relationships form the cornerstone of human social experience, shaping our personal lives, family structures, and broader societal

norms. This is the 21st century and these relationships exist at a complex intersection of tradition and modernity, often influenced by

long-standing patriarchal structures and religious beliefs. This work is an examination of how these elements interact and evolve in contemporary intimate partnerships with religion as well as patriarchy..

Patriarchy, a social system in which men hold primary power and predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control of property, has been a dominant force in shaping human societies for millennia. Religion, similarly, has played a crucial role in establishing moral frameworks and social norms, particularly around marriage, family, and gender roles.

However, the forces of modernity from industrialization, urbanisation, globalisation, and the rise of individualism have gone ahead and challenged many traditional structures and beliefs. This has led to significant shifts in how people conceptualise and experience intimacy and the stereotypes associated with intimate relationships.

Intimate relationships are a pivotal foundation of relationships in our society, often influenced by deeply ingrained norms and beliefs. This work explores the multifaceted impact of patriarchy and religious beliefs on women's perceived value in intimate relationships as it delves into historical perspectives, power dynamics, and the role of religion in shaping women's worth within intimate and marital relationships. Additionally, it also examines potential pathways toward greater gender equality and empowerment within the institution of marriage and other intimate relationships, (Kabeer, 2016)

Marriage, as a social institution, has evolved from intimate relationships and has long been influenced by prevailing cultural norms, which are often deeply rooted in patriarchy and religious beliefs. These influences shape the perceived value and roles of women within marital relationships. To understand the impact of patriarchy and religious beliefs on women's value in intimate relationships and marriages, it is essential to examine the historical context, power dynamics, and the influence of religious teachings. It explores these aspects and offers insights into fostering greater gender equality and empowerment within marital unions.

Intimate partner relationships with marriage are fundamental aspects of human life, shaping individuals' well-being and overall quality of life, (Dildar, 2015).

However, these relationships, especially marriage can also be influenced by deeply ingrained societal norms, such as patriarchy and religious beliefs, which have significant implications for the treatment of women within these partnerships. This proposal explores the multifaceted impact of patriarchy and religious beliefs on how women are treated in intimate relationships.

Marriage, as a fundamental social institution, is significantly influenced by complex interactions of societal norms, cultural traditions, and religious beliefs. Within this intricate tapestry, two prevailing forces stand out: patriarchy and religious doctrines. This comprehensive research proposal endeavours to delve into the multifaceted dynamics between these forces and their collective impact on women's roles in intimate relationships.

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Why Intimate Relationships?

Intimate relationships are a pivotal foundation of relationships in our society which is often influenced by deeply ingrained norms and beliefs. Intimate relationships because of the multifaceted impact of patriarchy and religious beliefs on women's perceived value in all human relationships as it delves into historical perspectives, power dynamics, and the role of religion in shaping women's worth within intimate and marital relationships. Additionally, this also examines potential pathways toward greater gender equality and empowerment within marriage as an institution and other intimate relationships, (Cornwall & Rivas 2015).

Marriage, as a social institution, is an intimate relationship that has evolved from intimate relationships and has long been influenced by prevailing cultural norms, which are often deeply rooted in patriarchy and religious beliefs. These influences shape the perceived value and roles of women within marital relationships.

To understand the impact of patriarchy and religious beliefs on women's value in intimate

relationships and marriages, it is essential to examine the historical context, power dynamics, and the influence of religious teachings, (Htun & Weldon, 2015).

It explores these aspects and offers insights into fostering greater gender equality and empowerment within marital unions. Intimate partner relationships as well as marriage are fundamental aspects of human life, shaping individuals' well-being and overall quality of life, (Kansky, 2018).

However, these relationships, especially marriage can also be influenced by deeply ingrained societal norms, such as patriarchy and religious beliefs, which have significant implications for the treatment of women within these partnerships. The oppression and abuse of women in intimate relationships is a result of the multifaceted intersection of patriarchy, culture and religion. This also explores the intricate relationship between modernity and tradition in shaping intimate relationships and alliances in ancient marriages. (Giddens, 2013).

The relationship between men and women has always been unequal and repressive, and all social structures, particularly marriage, are marked by male domination, which began with making the male the family's defender and only provider from the beginning (Westermarck, 1926).

The exploitation and oppression of women in Africa is due to the legacy of Western imperialism and colonisation which culminated and trajected into economic dependency and crisis in the African nation. The economic and political structural changes introduced by colonial power which was later imposed by international lending and development agencies, further widened the gender gap in the continent. Women are unrecognised as full partners in both the family and the society; they have been denied equal access to education, skill acquisition/training, employment, health care, ownership of property and as well as participation in decision making in politics. Gender inequality in Africa takes a familiar shape that reflects indigenous, pre-colonial, and European influences. Marriage, as a fundamental social institution, is significantly influenced by complex interactions of societal norms, cultural traditions, and religious

beliefs. Within this environment, there are two prevailing forces that stand out which are the major influences of patriarchy and religious doctrines.

Modern lines of Patriarchy, Religion and Intimate Relationships.

To ground our analysis, it is important to first consider the theoretical perspectives that inform our understanding of patriarchy, religion, and intimacy in our modern society.

Sociological Perspectives on Patriarchy and Intimacy have long studied the impact of patriarchal structures on intimate relationships for decades. Pierre Bourdieu's concept of "symbolic violence" has proven useful and provides a useful framework for understanding how patriarchal norms are internalized and reproduced, even by those they oppress, which is usually the female gender. (Mackenzie & Louth, 2024).

This manifests in intimate relationships through unequal division of domestic labor, decision-making power, dominance, oppression and emotional labor.

Anthony Giddens' theory of the "pure relationship" offers a contrasting view of modern intimacy and argues that in present modernity, relationships are increasingly based on mutual satisfaction rather than external social or economic necessities. This hereby challenges traditional patriarchal structures, potentially leading to more egalitarian partnerships void of dominance and oppression, (Popovic, et al 2024).

According to the Feminist Perspectives and scholars have made significant contributions to the understanding of patriarchy in intimate relationships. For instance, bell hooks' work on love and patriarchy highlights how dominant cultural narratives about romance often reinforce patriarchal power structures.

Conversely, Adrienne Rich's concept of "compulsory heterosexuality" illuminates how patriarchal norms shape the dynamics within relationships as well as societal expectations about what forms of intimacy are acceptable or not, (Cooper, 2021)

The sociology of religion goes on to offer valuable insights on how religious beliefs shape intimate

relationships. Emile Durkheim's functionalist approach suggests that religion serves to reinforce social norms and cohesion, which can include patriarchal structures, (Riesebrodt & Konieczny, 2009)

However, scholars like Meredith McGuire highlights the importance of individuals in interpreting and practising religion by suggesting that religious beliefs can be reinterpreted to support more egalitarian relationships instead of the usual one full of male dominance, (McGuire, 2016).

Greer (2000), states that there is a strong ideology suggesting that being a wife is the most important female role. The wives of presidents and prime ministers get considerable publicity, but often have to be subservient to their husbands. Greer applauds this as a good thing because the illusion of women suffering and smiling in the traditional family life was built on the silence of suffering and enduring unhappy women. African society makes it almost impossible for the women to participate in decision making processes despite being an active indispensable part of the society. Women are not represented adequately at the national levels neither are they allowed to actively take part in the politics of their local level and more than half the time marriage and the bride price which serves as a proof of ownership of a woman to the man is said to be one of the chief contributing factors. Patriarchy like a disease infects all social institutions and this male supremacy lifestyle and gender inequality is the root cause of oppression of women as well as gender-based violence in marriages. The radical feminists believe that destroying patriarchy in all social institutions will bring about change and a total overhaul in the society hereby ushering in equality and equity.

The Persistence of Patriarchy in Intimate Relationships

Despite significant social progress towards gender equality, patriarchal structures continue to influence intimate relationships in both very obvious and subtle ways.

Gender roles and gender expectations such as the Traditional gender roles are rooted in patriarchal ideologies, and this continues to shape

expectations within many heterosexual partnerships. Research consistently shows that women, even in dual-career couples, tend to perform a disproportionate share of household labor and childcare. This "second shift," as termed by sociologist Arlie Hochschild, reflects the persistence of gendered expectations about domestic responsibilities, (Hochschild, et al 2015). Most importantly, cultural narratives about masculinity and femininity continue to influence how individuals approach intimacy. Men may feel pressure to be emotionally stoic or to take on the role of primary provider, while women may be expected to prioritize their partner's needs over their own. These gendered expectations can create tension and inequality within relationships.

The Political power dynamics associated with decision-making are the patriarchal norms that often manifest in the form of power dynamics in intimate relationships. This can be seen in decision-making processes, where men may have disproportionate influence over major life choices such as where to live or how to manage finances and even have the exclusive power to decide when they are to get married. Even in relationships where partners strive for equality, internalised, gender norms can lead to subtle imbalances where opinions or needs take precedence.

The concept of "benevolent sexism," developed by psychologists Peter Glick and Susan Fiske, is particularly relevant here. This form of sexism casts women as needing male protection and guidance and can lead to power imbalances in relationships that are framed as care or chivalry rather than domination, (Swim & Campbell, 2003).

Sexual and Reproductive Control is another major area where patriarchal norms persist in matters of sexuality and reproduction. Despite advances in women's reproductive rights, many women still face pressure from partners or families regarding decisions about contraception, pregnancy, and childbearing. Women are expected to be primarily responsible for contraception and the stigma which is often associated with women's sexual agency are further manifestations of patriarchal control in intimate relationships, (Izugbara, 2004).

Women are traditionally and religiously groomed to be controlled by men, to care for the home, to

raise children and care for the elderly, to be seen but not heard (Anunobi, 2002). In some cultures, and religions like Islam, women are neither seen nor heard. This has contributed to the backward culture and all forms of abuse of human rights in such countries like Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan and some states in Northern Nigeria, (Falola, 1998). These countries account for the highest number human rights issues ranging from child marriage, human trafficking, sex slavery, child labor and other vices that are harmful to the fundamental rights of women and children.

Women are religiously socialized from childhood to work essentially to survive with little or no money changing hands and that is why such transactions are considered a merger and are not counted as economically productive, (Bardhan, 1985). In most communities female children are of less value and possess fewer rights unlike the male child. The females are inevitably more vulnerable to violence and death in the end because the violence against the females is found within patriarchal economic systems of power. However, gender specific violence against men is found typically embedded in masculine issues usually connected to ego, race and ethnicity (Connell, 2020).

The understanding that patriarchy and religion have a great impact in the role that women play in intimate relationships and marriages in developing countries means that technically and traditionally a woman has sold her freedom. This is not limited to her freedom but opinion and other fundamental human rights to the man and hereby has little or nothing to say or contribute to the outer society. This also helps the understanding as to why the Radical feminists insist that patriarchy is the main cause of inequality and how religion encourages the abuse of women and impacts the role women play in intimate relationships.

Feminism and Modernity

Feminism is a philosophy that examines gender differences in order to better explain social cohabitation in terms of gender and sexuality. The fundamental notions of gender and sexuality are viewed as social constructs that are used to

describe the many social and gender roles that men and women perform within society. Gender differs from biological sex in that it is a social construct that is ingrained in each of our psyches from the time we are born, (Bonvillain, 2020). A lot of people in our present day society believe that gender is determined by biological factors. Feminism takes a different approach from another angle by arguing that it is entirely a social construct that is influenced by society. Gender and “sexuality arrange society into two sexes, women and men, which division underpins the whole of social relations,” according to feminist theory (MacKinnon, 1989).

The Feminist movement is split into three waves by both feminists and academics. While the first wave mostly relates to women's suffrage campaigns from the nineteenth and early twentieth century, which started with focusing on the right to vote for women, the second wave referred to the beliefs and actions connected with the 1960s women's liberation movement, which advocated for women's legal and social rights. Beginning in the 1990s, the third wave was born as a continuation of, as well as a reaction to, second-wave feminism's perceived failings, (Evans, 2014).

The failure of liberal feminists to confront many facets of women's oppression led to the rise of radical feminism in the late 1960s. Feminism is already a reduction as a theory. However, ‘Feminism’ has been divided into three different categories in terms of theory: essentialist theories, such as psychoanalytic and French feminism; theories which is aimed to define or establish a feminist literary canon; and theories attempts to interpret and invision literature, culture, history, and so on from a less patriarchal perspective, such as gynocritics and liberalism (Butler, 2020).

Liberalism and orthodox Marxism's theoretical frameworks and political practice are both rejected by radical feminism. Alternatively, radical feminists argue against liberalism, claiming that women's emancipation cannot be accomplished via a philosophy and practice that protects the rights of abstract people regardless of socioeconomic class or gender connections. Radical feminism also

claims that women's oppression is not reducible to class oppression and the economic and social institutions of capitalism, (McIntosh, 2013).

In contrast to Marxism, radical feminism considers women's oppression to be the most fundamental and essential type of oppression. Gender is viewed as a complex structure of male dominance that underpins all social order. Patriarchy is the term used to describe this global pattern of male dominance. While both radical and socialist feminisms use the word, radical feminism uses it to describe a system of dominance that penetrates all elements of culture, education, and social life and can be found in all cultures and times throughout history. In radical feminist rhetoric, patriarchy emphasises women's subjugation regardless of historical, cultural, socioeconomic, or racial distinctions (Kruks, 2014).

Marriage, Modernity and Feminism.

Marriage, according to Radical Feminists, is at the basis of women's subjugation to men since it allows males to control both her fertility and her person. With marriage, pregnancy, and the birth of a child or children, with psychological visible and hidden aspects of a woman's essence, it gives the male power over her body and over her, (Chambers, 2017)

Traditionally, women have been marginalised in families, literature, culture, religion, and other social organisations. In contemporary times, all social institutions oppress and suppress women in various ways, allowing women to aggressively seek power for themselves. Gradually and over the years, women began to steal places for themselves as a result of the recent trend of globalisation and modern improved technologies. With the battle against colonialism, gender injustice, and other customary detrimental behaviours as a result of culture in Nigeria, another quiet movement is gaining traction. Today, women have declared total dissatisfaction with patriarchy and their desire to achieve equality and equity with men in the fourth wave of feminism, (Makama, 2013).

Furthermore, feminism has always been concerned with issues of power, power balance and the gender power hierarchy. Power is central to many sociological theories because it determines which groups in society gain the most and have the most control over others.

Why Patriarchy...

The public and private realms acknowledge patriarchy as male dominance. Feminists refer to the power connection between both men and women as patriarchy. Patriarchy is therefore more than a name; it is a feminist idea, and just like all concepts ever put in use by academics and the outside world, it is a tool. It is used to assist ourselves and others to comprehend the realities of women; the stories, and experiences as women in the world with men. Different philosophers define patriarchy in different ways; for example, a feminist psychologist uses the term patriarchy to refer to a kinship network in which the males trade women, (Mathews & Manago, 2019).

A patriarch is the leader of the household, and who wields control of productive resources, labour force, and reproductive capacity within the family based on concepts of superiority and inferiority, which are legitimised by gender and generational disparities. Patriarchy is believed to be the foundation of all subsequent inequalities, oppressions, and injustices since it is a male-dominated system in which women are the subjugated category or the other sex, (Nwokefor, 2020).

Sylvia Walby distinguishes between two types of patriarchy, which she refers to as "private patriarchy" and "public patriarchy." Private patriarchy can be said to be the oppression of women that confines them to unpaid domestic and production labour, thereby keeping them hidden from public view. In private patriarchy, males who serve as husbands and dads gain directly from women's oppression and subordination. Males are identified as heads of houses under private patriarchy, despite the fact they are not completely involved in the day-to-day management of households (Kaspar, 2005).

Public patriarchy is based on public structures other than the domestic and family circle, public patriarchy differs from private patriarchy in that it allows women to access both the private and public spheres, but their access to both is limited and collectively this is subordinated by societal constructions and structures (Walby, 1990). African married women are collectively subjected to private patriarchy, which stems from the fact that they bear sole responsibility for safeguarding and sustaining marriage. Almost every African marriage demands a lady to submit to both public and private patriarchal teachings of her culture and religion, as well as to socialise her daughters to do the same when they get married, (Iyanuolu, 2014). Patriarchy is a system of social structures and behaviours in which males oppress and exploit women, (Walby, 2010). Patriarchy is a framework that helps people resist biological determinism, which holds the theory that both men and women are biologically determined.

In its broadest sense, patriarchy refers to the manifestation and institution of male control over women and children in the home, as well as the expansion of male domination of women in society at large. It indicates that "men wield authority in all of society's key social and religious institutions" but "women are denied access to such power." It does not, however, mean that "women are either completely weak or completely stripped off their rights, influence, and resources" (Lerner, 1993).

Power, domination, hierarchy, and rivalry are all hallmarks of the patriarchal society as Patriarchy is a set of societal institutions and behaviours in which males see women as the other sex or the lesser sex, oppressing, subduing, and exploiting them. In Nigeria, patriarchy is perpetuated through socialisation, which educates young males to comprehend and display their dominance over women, while women are educated to submit to men's authority. Men are also trained and expected to establish dominance through the use of force, abuse, and violence, which is typically considered normal behaviour for them, but women are taught and expected to stay calm and submissive even when abused or mistreated (Adichie, 2012).

Traditionalists think that males are born to rule and women are meant to be submissive when it comes to the presence and origins of patriarchy. Unfortunately, religion shares the same opinion too and both traditionalists and religion stated that this hierarchy has always existed and will continue to exist, and that, like other natural laws, it cannot be altered. Feminists question these ideas, claiming that patriarchy is not natural, but rather man-made, and hence flexible, not rigid, and changeable, (Bahlieda, 2015).

Aristotle proposed similar theories in this regard, referring to males as active and females as passive. Female to him was a "mutilated man," and without a soul. According to Aristotle, a woman's inherent inferiority causes her to be inferior in her capabilities, her capacity to reason, and therefore her ability to make judgments. Men are born to dominate while the women are born to be ruled by men and dominated since the men are superior and women are inferior. "A man's courage is exhibited in demanding a woman to obey," (Lerner, 1993).

Women's biology, according to modern psychology, influences their psyche, and hence their talents and gender roles in society. Sigmund Freud claimed that a woman's anatomy is destiny determined and that a typical person is male (Roudinesco, 2016). However, the notion on male superiority has been debunked, and it has been established that such explanations are not supported by historical or scientific data. There are known biological differences between the men and the women, but these differences do not have to be the basis of a male-dominated sexual hierarchy.

Religion; Enforcer of Patriarchy.

Religion is the consciousness of human beings which states the cognitive, affective and cognitive level of the human mind spiritually. The whole idea of mankind is man and the study of man can never be complete, (Iqbal, 2013) without religion.. Religion is the oldest human pursuit. The social form of religion involves several people from different religious groups and each group binding together in matters of spiritual beliefs and religious practices, A good example would be Hinduism,

Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam etc. where each religion has some particular faith in regard to the world and life situation as a whole. In the light of such faith, each religion gives directions for a specific way of life for its followers and it is from this point of view every religion of the world and its specific way of life has passed on certain specific beliefs to its members. A very good example is Buddhism; Buddhism does not believe in God but it has a spiritualistic outlook and from this point of view it depicts a specific way of life.

Christianity believes in a spiritual reality i.e., God and from this spiritualistic belief it also depicts a specific way of life. This is similar in the case of all other prevailing religions of the world and for this reason all of them are called "religion". The living religions of the world are Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Sikhism etc.

However, a traditional view is that women's expressive roles which are nurturing and caring is a good match with religious faith. Raising children in their religion and taking them to church was seen as part of that role. Also women's proximity to childbirth, child rearing, caring for the sick and caring for the elderly all, it is suggested, gives them reason to pray and seek spiritual support and guidance. Furthermore, women traditionally having been marginalised in domestic roles gave them more time to devote to religion whereas men had little time away from work and therefore were more likely to spend it on leisure pursuits.

Religion is the knowledge known by the finite mind of its nature as absolute mind and it is a man's faith in a supernatural power that aims to satisfy this power to establish a relationship with this power. A religious person identifies the power of 'God', believes in the existence of God and the vanity of this world.

Religion is a medium through which humanity seeks to know God, himself and the environment. All different religions believe in the existence of a Supreme Being that is called different names based on the environment and/or religion, (Gladys, 2012)

Presently, some people have established different views and share the opinion that God of religion does not create mankind but mankind creates the God or the theory of God is created by human imagination. They argue that God is just a belief originated from human imagination and has no real existence. This human imagination is not eternal and did not exist before the existence of human beings which means that God can actually persist even as an imagined entity but only as long as human beings exist. They insist that God is not a creator and neither is he the ultimate ruler of the world but that God is a fleeting ripple of the imagination of man and Religious consciousness is conferred in human nature which is why the root of religion exists in human nature and not in the external source.

It is well known that when man feels helpless and totally distressed, when he feels that it is impossible to lead his life by his own power, only then in that weak moment of his life he naturally expects the help of some external power. The primitive people at the time of destruction and devastation in their lives seek the help of some supernatural power to protect him and religion was born, (Rossano, 2010). Psychologists and anthropologists conclude that religion originated from the basic need of human life which is the struggle for human existence and the life of the primitive man which was disrupted by various ways such as by hostile nature, natural disaster, war, involvement in danger, and the need for man to have a supernatural protector stronger than him. The primitive man felt that this limits his small power; it was impossible to win over the calamities of the negative power to promote and protect his life.

This helpless moment in early days was what man expected and called divine help from the spirituality and had faith that a super human power exists beyond the strong natural mediums and facts. It started by worshipping the power, and praying for help from the imagined power. This continued practice gave birth to the different doctrines that have been born or originated.

Karl Jaspers called this period the 'Axial Period' because at that period, different saints appeared to different people in different countries of the world. This created a connection of morality with the traditional religion and simplified the righteous religious duties and doctrines and preached these messages to the common people.

3. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

The exploration of patriarchy, religion, and modernity in intimate relationships reveals a complex tapestry of evolving norms around persistent traditions, and individual negotiations. Throughout this work how these forces interact to shape contemporary experiences of intimacy in intimate relationships are examined.

Analysis has shown that while significant progress has been made towards gender equality, patriarchal structures continue to exert influence on intimate relationships and these manifest in various ways, from the unequal distribution of domestic labour to subtle power imbalances in decision-making processes. All these have been endorsed and controlled by religion and patriarchy. However, there is an observation that individuals and couples are increasingly challenging these norms, seeking more egalitarian partnerships that align with modern ideals of mutual respect and shared responsibility among partners.

Religion remains a powerful force in shaping intimate relationships by often reinforcing traditional gender roles and family structures. But then again, we have seen that in recent times religious teachings and practices are not static or statutory. Many individuals reinterpret their faith in light of modern values, finding ways to reconcile sacrosanct religious beliefs with evolving notions of gender equality and personal autonomy.

The tension between tradition and modernity is particularly evident in the experiences of younger generations and in cross-cultural contexts. Globalisation and the increased access to diverse relationship models have led to a hybridization of intimate practices, where individuals blend

traditional expectations with modern ideals of love and intimate partnership.

Our examination of gendered experiences of intimacy highlights the ongoing challenges faced by women in navigating patriarchal structures, as well as the evolving conceptions of masculinity that impact men's approach to intimate relationships.

In conclusion, this work demonstrates that while patriarchy and religion continue to influence intimate relationships, their impact is neither uniform nor unchanging. Individuals and couples actively negotiate between traditional norms and modern ideals, creating diverse and dynamic forms of intimacy. As societies continue to evolve and more technology takes over globally, so too will the nature of intimate relationships, reflecting broader shifts in gender norms, religious interpretations, and as well as cultural values.

This work has explored the intricate interplay between modernity, tradition, patriarchy, and religion and various ways they are shaping contemporary intimate relationships. Key findings show that there is a persistence of patriarchal structures: Despite progress towards gender equality, patriarchal norms continue to influence relationship dynamics, often in subtle ways. The religious influences and beliefs play a significant role in shaping intimate relationships, but are increasingly reinterpreted through a modern lens. Negotiation of tradition and modernity as well as gendered experiences of both men and women as both experience and navigate intimacy differently and this reflects broader societal gender norms and expectations.

Individuals and couples actively navigate between traditional expectations and modern ideals of love and partnership with the LGBTQ+ perspectives, non-heteronormative relationships that provide important insights into alternative models of intimacy beyond traditional patriarchal structures crawling into existence and taking over the world of all institutions. There is a major generational shift as younger generations often challenge traditional norms, seeking more egalitarian

relationships and cultural hybridization as a result of globalisation has led to a blending of relationship models across cultures, creating new forms of intimacy.

This research contributes to our understanding of how intimacy is constructed and experienced in contemporary society, highlighting the ongoing relevance of patriarchy and religion while also recognizing the transformative potential of modern values and individual choices. Future research could further explore how these dynamics evolve in response to changing social, technological, and economic conditions.

References

- [1] Adichie, C. N. (2014). *We should all be feminists*. Vintage.
- [2] Anunobi, F. (2002). Women and development in Africa: From marginalisation to gender inequality. *African Social Science Review*, 2(2), 3. <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/assr/vol2/iss2/3/>
- [3] Bahlieda, R. (2015). Chapter 1: The legacy of patriarchy. *Counterpoints*, 488, 15-67.
- [4] Bardhan, K. (1985). Women's work, welfare and status: Forces of tradition and change in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2207-2220.
- [5] Blair-Loy, M., Hochschild, A., Pugh, A. J., Williams, J. C., & Hartmann, H. (2015). Stability and transformation in gender, work, and family: Insights from the second shift for the next quarter century. *Community, Work & Family*, 18(4), 435-454.
- [6] Bonvillain, N. (2020). *Women and men: Cultural constructs of gender*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- [7] Butler, J. (2020). Performative acts and gender constitution: An essay in phenomenology and feminist theory. In *Feminist theory reader* (pp. 353-361). Routledge.
- [8] Chambers, C. (2017). *Against marriage: An egalitarian defence of the marriage-free state*. Oxford University Press.
- [9] Connell, R. W. (2020). *Masculinities*. Routledge.
- [10] Cooper, C. E. (2021). Caught between desire and danger: power, agency and emotion work in American college women's heterosexual lives.
- [11] Cornwall, A., & Rivas, A. M. (2015). From 'gender equality and 'women's empowerment to global justice: reclaiming a transformative agenda for gender and development. *Third world quarterly*, 36(2), 396-415
- [12] Evans, E. (2014). *The politics of third wave feminisms*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- [13] Falola, T. (1998). *Violence in Nigeria: The crisis of religious politics and secular ideologies*. University Rochester Press.
- [14] Giddens, A. (2013). *The transformation of intimacy: Sexuality, love and eroticism in modern societies*. John Wiley & Sons.
- [15] Gladys, N. W. H. (2012). RELIGION AND NORMLESSNESS. *Academic Research International*, 2(2), 606.

- [16] Htun, M., & Weldon, S. L. (2015). Religious power, the state, women's rights, and family law. *Politics & Gender*, 11(3), 451-477.
- [17] Iqbal, M. (2013). The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam. Stanford University Press
- [18] Iyanuolu, A. (2014). The challenge of culture for the rights of women in Africa: a critical analysis of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.
- [19] Izugbara, C. O. (2004, December). Patriarchal ideology and discourses of sexuality in Nigeria. In Understanding human sexuality seminar series (Vol. 2, No. 21, pp. 1-35). University of Uyo, Lagos, Nigeria: The Department of Sociology and Anthropology.
- [20] Kansky, J. (2018). What's love got to do with it? Romantic relationships and well-being.
- [21] Kaspar, H. (2005). I am the Household Head now!. Gender Aspects of Out-Migration for Labour in Nepal, 149.
- [22] Kruks, S. (2014). Women's 'lived experience': feminism and phenomenology from Simone de Beauvoir to the present. The SAGE handbook of feminist theory, 75-92.
- [23] Lerner, G. (1993). The creation of feminist consciousness: From the middle ages to eighteen-seventy (Vol. 2). Oxford University Press, USA.
- [24] MacKinnon, C. A. (1989). Toward a feminist theory of the state. Harvard University Press.
- [25] Maddox, M. (2013). "Rise Up Warrior Princess Daughters": Is Evangelical Women's Submission a Mere Fairy Tale?. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 29(1), 9-26.
- [26] Makama, G. A. (2013). Patriarchy and gender inequality in Nigeria: The way forward. *European scientific journal*, 9(17).
- [27] Mackenzie, C., & Louth, J. (2024). Disrupting patriarchal illusion to reduce violence against women and girls. *Violence against women*, 30(10), 2632-2654.
- [28] Mathews, H. F., & Manago, A. M. (Eds.). (2019). The psychology of women under patriarchy. University of New Mexico Press.
- [29] McGuire, M. B. (2016). Individual sensory experiences, socialised senses, and everyday lived religion in practice. *Social Compass*, 63(2), 152-162.
- [30] Nwokefor, C. (2020). Examining the Impact of Patriarchy on the Development and Advancement of Yoruba Women in Southwest Nigeria (Doctoral dissertation, Bowie State University).
- [31] Riesebrodt, M., & Konieczny, M. E. (2009). Sociology of religion. In *The routledge companion to the study of religion* (pp. 159-178). Routledge.
- [32] Rossano, M. (2010). *Supernatural selection: How religion evolved*. Oxford University Press.
- [33] Roudinesco, É. (2016). Sigmund freud. L'invention de la psychanalyse [Documental], trad. Felipe Aguero y Patricia Castillo. Recuperado de <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...>

com/watch.

[34]Swim, J. K., & Campbell, B. (2003). Sexism: Attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours. Blackwell Handbook of social psychology: Intergroup processes, 218-237.

[35]Walby, S. (1990). '*Theorizing Patriarchy*'. Blackwell Publishers Ltd.: Oxford, UK and Cambridge USA.

[36]Walby, S. (2010). *Structuring patriarchal societies*. Sociology: Introductory readings, 30-35.