




African Initiated Churches and Gender Equality: Interpreting the concept of wife submission in the context of marital equality in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Marital equality has been a challenge among all religious faiths worldwide from time immemorial. Without a doubt, gender inequality is a pervasive issue that exists in most of the world's religions. The subjugation of women to men is an unfortunate reality that cannot be ignored or overlooked. It is a critical issue that needs to be addressed and resolved to bring about equality and justice for all. This research focused specifically on the marital inequalities that African Initiated Churches in Zimbabwe present through their perceptions, interpretations, and beliefs of the doctrine of wife submission. The insights of social conflict theory are utilized to interrogate the marital inequalities that are found in the African Initiated Churches in Zimbabwe. This discussion is based on the research that was carried out through interviews, with semi-structured questions, of a sample of twenty members (ten males and ten females) of eleven different African Initiated Churches in Zimbabwe. The main findings of this research are that the doctrine of wife submission is being interpreted in a way that contradicts marital equality by African Initiated Churches in Zimbabwe. This interpretation renders wives subordinate to their husbands, which creates a social conflict when their needs are not adequately represented by their husbands. This article ultimately recommends that the doctrine of wife submission be reinterpreted to fit into the contemporary marital equality discourse through Bible annotations that are marital equality compliant on the Biblical passages that are perpetuating a wife's submission.

Keywords: African Initiated Churches, Marital equality, Wife, submission, social conflict theory.

Introduction

In Africa, as in the rest of the world, women's rights are a paramount concern. Currently, there is a persistent discussion regarding women's rights, globally as well as in Zimbabwe. This places Zimbabwe among African countries that are grappling with this issue. Such debate is dominated by the perspective that Zimbabwe constitutes a society that extols patriarchal hegemony and chauvinism (Machingura, 2013; 233). Although these chauvinistic views are founded on African customs and traditions they are also validated by Christian doctrines and beliefs. While contemporary researchers have consistently found that many marriages are unequal, this research focuses on marital inequalities from African Initiated Churches' perspective (Rosenbluth, Steil & Whitcomb, 1998:228). Motsepe (2019:7) defined 'church' as "any assembly of a local body of believers or the universal body of believers". Church was also defined by Scott (2017:33) to mean 'the visible community in which Christians come together for worship, prayer, communal sharing, instruction, reflection, and mission'. For a church to identify as African Initiated, its formation and growth must be 'initiated' by Africans



in Africa (Pobee & Ositulu 1998:55). Accordingly African Initiated Churches “did not directly emerge from the European and North American mission initiatives of the nineteenth century and twentieth centuries” (Ohlmann, Grab & Frost, 2020:4).

In 2013, thirty-three years after its independence, Zimbabwe eventually embraced a very progressive Constitution (Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013) as far as women’s rights are concerned. The 2013 Constitution specifically denounces any form of discrimination against women (Constitution of Zimbabwe: 2013 sec 80 and 56). Despite this effort, women’s subjugation and subordination persist in the country. One of the driving factors behind this trend is some religious and cultural norms. According to Baloyi (2008:2), there are still men who believe that they have a right to use violence to cow women into submission.

This research uses social conflict theory to explore and frame perspectives and the effects of the doctrine of wife submission on marital equality. It also examines the extent to which African Initiated Churches interpret the doctrine of wife submission. In the penultimate section, the research proposes some ways of interpreting the doctrine of wife submission. It is important to note that this doctrine should not be used to oppress women. Instead, it should be approached with a balance between the need for submission by both parties. The balance contemplated in marital submission is clearly stated in Ephesians 5:21 which says ‘submit to one another out of reverence to Christ, wives, to your husbands as to the Lord.’ The duty to submit must not be placed on wives only but it must be reciprocal. These ideas can be shared with the members of African Initiated Churches through advocacy in churches and biblical annotations.

Social Conflict Theory

Social conflict refers to conflict within a group, organizations, communities, and crowds (Oberschall, 1978:291). Generally, the basis of conflict theories is the assumption that the “existing order is not a product of consensus and mutual benefit but rather a function of power differentials in society.” (Mosler & Akins, 2012). Many of the laws and values in society tend to reflect the interests of those in power to the detriment of the powerless (Hamm 2010:10). Social conflict plays out in a broad range of social phenomena such as class, race, religion, and culture, riots, rebellions, revolutions, strikes and anarchy, marches, demonstrations, and protest gatherings (Oberschall, 1978:291).

This theory marries the agenda of marital equality with that of social justice. While the marital equality discourse seeks to find women and men equally placed in marriage settings from a legal perspective, social justice seeks to achieve the same agenda from a sociological perspective. The doctrine of wife submission is a form of marital inequality that leads to disharmony and conflict in society. In this context, conflict theory is most relevant in understanding the role of wife submission and its contribution to marital inequality. This doctrine facilitates the proliferation of a skewed social order in which one group (men/ husbands) has a greater say in marital decisions while wives are supposed to be subordinate, leaving women vulnerable to marginalisation. That is, although women ought to be regarded as equal members of society and legally of the family too, the doctrine of wife submission enables a husband to be above the wife and the wife becomes powerless when it comes to decision-making within marriages.

Methods

The research was carried out through desktop research and interviews. Twenty respondents from eleven different African Initiated Churches in Zimbabwe participated in the research. Of the twenty, four respondents (two female and two males) were pastors or held an equivalent position in the church. The remaining sixteen were selected randomly from church members, with eight participants being females and the remainder being males. The selected sample helped gather opinions from both church leadership and congregants, providing a gender-inclusive perspective. The inclusion criteria required that respondents be above the age of



thirty years and be currently or previously married for at least five years. Respondents had to be Christians who had been attending an African-initiated church for more than five years. These criteria were set to ensure that respondents had a rich experience with church beliefs on the doctrine of wife submission and marital equality.

Procedure

Snowball and random recruiting procedures were used. Potential respondents were informed via telephone of the study's purposes and inclusion criteria. Five of the twenty-five people initially contacted for interviews were ineligible because one did not belong to African Initiated Churches, two declined to participate and the other two were not yet married. All respondents received semi-structured questionnaires through their emails, and they found time to respond to the questions and email their responses back. All interviewees responded within the stipulated fourteen days. None were in a way rewarded for participation with any kind of incentive, and all volunteered and were also free to opt-out at any stage of the proceedings for whatever reason/s.

Instruments

All questions were semi-structured. The set of questions was divided into three sections: the introductory, substantive, and conclusion sections. The introductory questions were more demographic questions meant to get information such as age, marital status, name of church, and gender. The demographic information assisted in ensuring the inclusivity and reliability of information. There was also space provided for the respondents to include their names and to indicate if they were willing for their names to be used in the research or not. The use of real names contributes to the credibility of the study, however, those who would prefer confidentiality were given that option. The inclusion of both females and males in data collection contributed to the gendered nature of the findings since the research is about gender inequalities. Substantive questions were at the core of this research. These questions were aimed at discovering respondents' understanding of the doctrine of wife submission, respondents' perspectives on marital equality, and the stances of African Initiated Churches on marital equality. The last part of the questions was merely concluding remarks, probing for respondents' opinions of approaches to interpreting the doctrine of wife submission that embraces marital equality. This section also allowed the respondents to add any other information which they deemed useful in the research.

Results

Respondents' Attitude and Reaction

The inclusion criteria required that respondents be above the age of thirty 30 years and be currently or previously married for at least five years. All the respondents met this criterion. Two of the participants, which is 10% of the respondents, were no longer in marriages. Eighteen respondents, 90%, were still in the marriage. Five respondents, 25%, were between the ages of 30-35; the 36-40 years age group constituted another 25%, and those who were above 40 years made up the majority, standing at 50% (ten respondents). The age groups of the respondents are reflected in the following Chart:

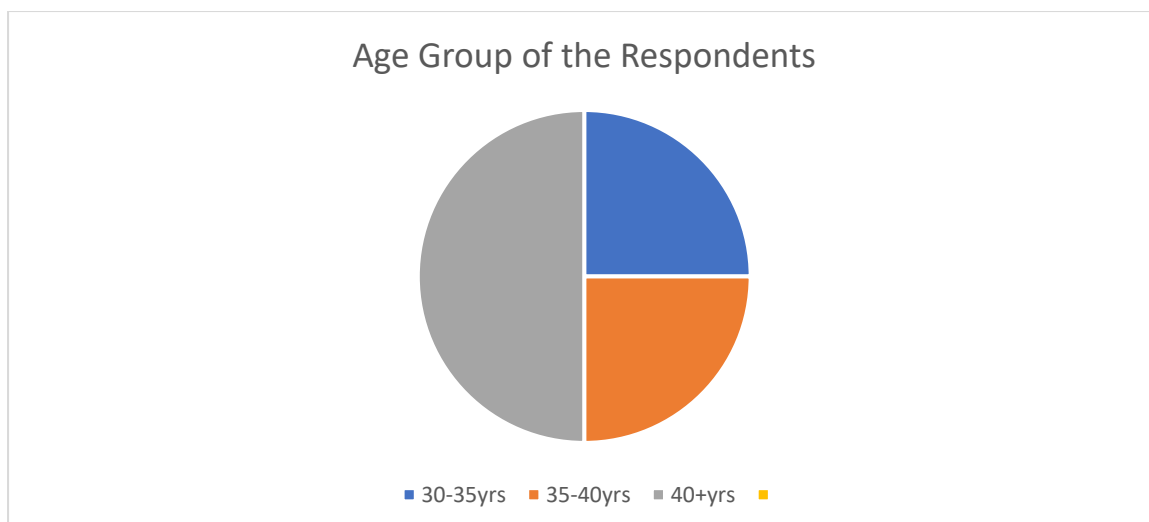


Figure 1: Age group of the respondents

Out of the twenty respondents, four had leadership positions, and six held several administrative positions in their respective churches ranging from women ministry leadership (two), children ministry (two), treasury (one), and usher(one). Ten respondents were ordinary church members.

The Respondents belonged to different African Initiated Churches as shown below.

Members of African Initiated Churches that participated.

	Name of the African Initiated Church	Respondents with Leadership Positions	Respondents with Administrative positions	Respondents who are ordinary church members	Total number of participants
1	Apostolic faith mission	1	2	2	5
2	Johani Masowe yeChishanu			3	3
3	Harvest House International	1		1	2
4	Celebration Ministries		1		1
5	Courageous Ester in Zimbabwe		1		1
6	Community Christian Church		1		1
7	Sheepgate Church			1	1
8	Zimbabwe Assemblies of God		1	1	2
9	Heartfelt International Ministries	1		1	2
10	African Apostolic Church	1			1
11	Evangelical Anglican Church			1	1
	Total	4	6	10	20

Table 1: List of African-initiated churches and number of respondents



Equality and Marital Equality in African-Initiated Churches

All the respondents indicated that they had heard about equality. While fifteen participants responded with a simple yes to the question one female respondent of Courageous Esters in Zimbabwe Ministries, was outstanding because she provided a detailed explanation of what she understood to be equality. She said equality, “is to provide equal opportunities to everyone and protect people from being discriminated against.... in church and society.”

This shows that respondents comprehended the concept of equality. While all the twenty respondents indicated that they have heard about equality only two respondents indicated that they heard it from their churches. One respondent indicated that equality is a subject talked about in his church and the other female respondent highlighted that they have a ladies’ ministry through which they learn about equality. It is apparent, based on these responses, that African Initiated churches do not often talk about equality. The respondents acknowledged that they learned about equality from other sources, other than the churches they attended, such as Government outreach programmes and literature such as the Constitution of Zimbabwe and other equality legislation. Four respondents indicated that they got to know about equality from their workplace and two indicated that they knew about it from learning institutions and one from the media. One male respondent, an Elder of the Apostolic Faith Mission, indicated that while he got to know about equality from the Constitution of Zimbabwe, he also got to know about it from the Bible. He said that God created men and women equal and referred to Genesis 1:27 which provides that ‘so God created humans in his image. In the image of God, he created them. He created them male and female.’

Although the respondents knew equality, they expressed a different view about practicing marital equality in the African Initiated churches. Some 14 out of 20 (70%) indicated that from their church’s point of view, there is no equality in marriages because wives must be subordinate to their husbands. A female respondent, from Apostolic Faith Mission, said, “...about marital equality, they said women should be submissive to her husband as the husband is the head of the family”. A member, of the Community Christian Church, corroborated the above sentiments. She said, ‘We are all equal before the Lord although women have to submit to their husbands.’ This may mean that God views all humans as equal yet humans themselves, in marriage settings, do not perceive each other or ought not to perceive each other as equal.

A member of the Apostolic Faith Mission summed up the reasons for not having marital equality in Zimbabwe in her own words, she said:

Equality in marriages seems to be a foreign concept in the African culture and Christian values that most Zimbabweans embrace. Culture has always viewed women as subordinate to men. Christian principles provide that women should submit to the head of the house i.e. the man. So equality is difficult to achieve.

Another view that emerged from the research on why there cannot be marital equality is the fact that women and men are different and hence cannot be equal. A member of the Celebration Ministries said that,

For me equality in the spiritual sense is possible. Since we are all spirit men. But we have a different physical structure, which we must use to fulfill our God-given roles and purposes here on earth.... It is impossible to have equality, as God created us for different purposes. A woman has a womb, and a man does not have a womb.

This research also found out that some African Initiated Churches leave it to the discretion of spouses to decide whether to embrace marital equality in their homes or not. For instance, a pastor from Heartfelt International Ministries indicated that inasmuch as there must be equality in the marriage the acceptance of this view will largely depend on the spiritual maturity of



individuals in a marriage. Another respondent indicated that marital equality is a good approach to managing a marriage as it is supported by both the Constitution and the Bible.

The respondents were asked about the extent to which their respective churches supported marital equality. In their responses, all the respondents indicated that their churches do not believe in marital equality. It was also found out that African Initiated Churches believe that a wife must be submissive to the husband. Ten of the respondents supported the doctrine of wife submission with the biblical verses which included 1 Peter 3:1, Ephesians 5:21-30, 1 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Timothy 2:11-15, and Galatians 3:26-28. Two respondents, who are members of the Johane Masowe Yechishanu indicated that although their church dogma is not informed by the Christian Bible, they adhere to a long-standing doctrine that men should play a dominant role in marriages.

The research showed that there were more (five) positive effects than (one) negative effects for upholding marital equality. The most common negative effect cited by the respondents was that marital equality can create disharmony and misunderstandings, especially when it conflicts with religious or cultural beliefs. This can ultimately lead to divorce. Some indicated that some men may resort to violence to impose their authority. Among some of the positive effects of marital equality, respondents indicated that it removes oppression within the marriage, allowing women to own properties, take leadership roles, freely express themselves in marriages, and make important family and other life decisions.

Interpretation of the doctrine of wife submission by the African Initiated churches

All the respondents indicated that their churches do believe in the doctrine of wife submission. They also proffered a similar meaning to the doctrine of wife submission. A member of the Sheepgate church clarified how the doctrine of wife submission is understood in his church and said that 'the wife has to respect and submit to the husband and the husband is expected to love the wife unconditionally'. One respondent, a preacher in the African Apostolic Church, gave a slightly different interpretation of the doctrine of wife submission. He said,

It is interpreted that a submissive wife is a supportive wife. The wife works together with her spouse and respects and supports him in their marriage. A wife is at liberty to freely express her thoughts, trusting her husband that he will lovingly support her and look out for her best interests.

From this response, it is clear that, although the wife is expected to work together with the husband, they are not at par since the husband ultimately makes the final decision in everything. This position was corroborated by the other eighteen respondents who also indicated that a wife must always be under the headship and authority of the husband. Based on the above interpretations, it was discovered that the teachings of wife submission and gender equality are in direct opposition.

Discussion of Findings

Marital Equality

While equality might be easier to define in other contexts, such as the workplace where there are organizational guidelines, defining it in the context of marriage has been said to be extremely difficult because there are no guidelines to highlight what constitutes marital equality (Rosenbluth et al., 1998:227). However, gender plays a very significant role in defining marital equality, hence marital equality is gender equality being practiced in the marriage setup. Gender discrimination is defined by Silvana (2014) as 'any situation where a person is denied an opportunity or misjudged solely based on their sex.' While gender represents roles qualities and activities assigned to men and women through particular social practices and structures, sex represents biological differences between men and women (Parsons, 2002: 20; Inglehart and Norris, 2005:8; Ayanga, 2012:85). Gender equality and inequality have been extensively studied from various perspectives. One of these perspectives is religion, which has been



shown to have a profound impact on the status of women in society. Klingorova and Harlicek (2015) have documented this impact through statistical analysis and confirmed that religion plays a significant role in shaping women's roles and opportunities in society. In support of such conclusions, this research established that most respondents believe that marital equality means sharing responsibilities equally within the family and allowing both spouses to access opportunities and make decisions. Marital equality can be measured by various factors, including responsibilities, opportunities, and decision-making power of both spouses (Rosenbluth et al., 1998; 228).

Gender equality is captured in the Constitution of Zimbabwe (2013). Gender equality is among the founding values of the Constitution, which are outlined in Section 3 of the document. The 2023 Constitution further prohibits gender discrimination in Section 56(3). These Constitutional provisions show the country's commitment to upholding gender equality in all areas of life. Furthermore, Zimbabwe has also ratified key global and regional instruments that speak on women's rights and uphold equality in marriages. A case in point is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1977). CEDAW prohibits discrimination against women in both the private and public spheres. Of interest is Article 16 (c) which states that:

State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women.

This article is further elaborated by General comment (no. 29) in Article 16 of CEDAW (2023), which provides that:

State parties should provide both spouses equal access to the marital property and equal legal capacity to manage it. They should ensure that the right of women to own, acquire, manage, administer, and enjoy separable or non-marital property is equal to that of men.

The same General comment, in paragraph 7, provides that it is now universally accepted that that women must be treated equally within the family. The same position is upheld by the Human Rights Committee General Comment 28 on the equality of rights between men and the family. Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (Par. 12) also regard equality in the family as one of its fundamental principles.

Marital equality is also part and parcel of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003). According to Article VI (j) of the Protocol, 'During her marriage, a woman shall have the right to acquire her property and to administer and manage it freely.' Although the Southern Africa Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development (2008) does not explicitly provide for marital rights in the same manner as the other Conventions described above, it refers to it in Article 8, which provides that 'State parties shall enact legislative measures to ensure that there is equality in various aspects of marriage.

Although findings in this research show that members of African Initiated churches are familiar with the concept of marital equality, putting it into practice may still be a challenge. Past studies suggest that there is often a discrepancy between the ideals of equality and the reality of how partners treat each other in marriage (Blaisure & Allen, 1995; 16).

Current interpretation of the doctrine of wife submission

Several biblical texts uphold the doctrine of women's submission in marital settings. One such text is 1Peter 3:1 which says:

Wives in the same way, be submissive to your husbands, so that if any of them do not believe in the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives.



The literal interpretation of the above biblical verses, according to Machingura (2013; 234), can support patriarchal agendas that are retrogressive to efforts to attain marital equality in contemporary Zimbabwe. The doctrine of wife submission gives women an inferior status (Machingura, 2013; 234). The first scriptural passage above alludes to the story of Biblical creation as contained in the Old Testament. The woman is portrayed as the harbinger of sin and death among humankind through such stories. Women are therefore perceived as flawed and unworthy to lead, even at the family level. Subordination to the man's control is seen as their women's natural state (Machingura, 2023:234). African Initiated Churches are accomplices in perpetuating marital inequality by reinforcing gendered roles that subordinate women to men in line with African culture (Machingura, 2013:234). This is even though women played a critical role in the life of Jesus Christ, from His birth to death. In Matthew 1:23, the virgin Mary bore Jesus and in Matthew 28: 1-10 three women were the first to witness the resurrection of Christ. This teaches us that Christ's life was a pacesetter for the position of women as leaders who can bring new dimensions of change to society. Furthermore, 1 Corinthians 11:4-5 which has been identified as perpetuating women's subordination, was regarded by Bennet (1971:82) to be of no place today. Baloyi (2008:4) and De Haan (1970:121) support this view. Mahlobogane (2013: 56) regards male leadership as 'an ancient supposition of family life'.

The problem with the doctrine of wife submission is with the hierarchy it sets in the family. This hierarchy is very clear because the Holy Bible mentions that the husband is the head of the family. The positions of the couple are spelt out with the husband being the head of the family and the wife having to submit to the husband. Linking this hierarchy to equality norms is where social conflict becomes apparent. There is no equality between two people one is the head, and the other one is to submit. The positions of the couple are different because the husband is regarded as the head to the wife who has equal rights with him, hence discriminatory (Bekker & Buchner-Eveleigh, 2017:95). That differentiation which is based on gender and sex is what constitutes marital inequality. This differentiation, whereby wives are to submit, and husbands are to love and sacrifice for their wives constitutes a social conflict and divides the society with one gender being given power and the other being rendered docile. Women are thus not the primary decision-makers of their needs, a scenario that depicts a social conflict within the family set-up.

Hinga (2000:124) has this to say about how women are being affected by the church:

Some women have identified the church as one of the key factors in promoting violence against women. The Biblical teaching asks women to be submissive to their husbands. This biblical teaching has been misused to the disadvantage of women.

As stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the family is the basic unit of society [1948: Resolution 217 A (iii), article 16(3)]. Therefore, whatever happens in the family is a microcosm of the wider society.

Re-interpreting the doctrine of wife submission

To uphold marital equality in African Initiated churches there is a need to reinterpret the doctrine of wife submission. Respondents made the following recommendations that could be useful in reinterpreting the doctrine of wife submission.

Adopting Dynamism and Relativism

The doctrine of wife submission must change with the times to be more tolerant. It must be interpreted to fit in the changing society.

Submission must not be used as an oppression tool but as a management tool



The doctrine of wife submission must be treated as a formality required to maintain social order and not as a tool of oppression. The submission anticipated in the doctrine of submission must be voluntary. When correctly reading the entire scriptures in Ephesians 5:22-6:1-9, it becomes obvious that the scripture advocates for voluntary submission. For example, the standard of submission to the husband must be equal in how they submit to the Lord and the church submit to Christ. Which standard of submission in both scenarios is not by coercion but should be voluntary (Merkle, 2019). Therefore, wives are to submit to their husbands voluntarily. Since submission is voluntary, it should not be a matter of compulsion but a matter of choice. Women should be free to choose which aspect of their marriages to submit to. For example, the wife should not submit to their husband in matters that are sinful, harmful, or contrary to God's commands (Acts 5: 29). Furthermore, females and males were equally created in the image of God. Genesis 1:27 states clearly, "So God created man in his image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them". They were given equal tasks of ruling and subduing all creatures in unison (Genesis 1:28).

Balancing the scale- Love and submission

It is important to note that the commandment for wives to submit to their husbands should not overshadow the commandment for husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church. According to Merkle (2019), husbands are not instructed to rule over their wives, but rather to love them in the same way that Christ loves the church. This love is exemplified through Christ's ultimate sacrifice for the church. In Romans 12:9 it is provided that "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good". Colossians 3:14 "And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity". Ephesians 4:2 couples are advised to: "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love".

Making a choice: Submission/ordination or marital equality

There is no way wife submission can go hand in hand with equality, therefore if the society wants to embrace equality fully, they must do away with the doctrine of wife submission.

Biblical annotations

While major marital equality evolutions happened, through equality instruments and movements, it is important to note that the Holy Bible has been left behind in capturing the importance of marital equality as reflected by the identified passages in this research. It is therefore suggested that there be some annotations in the Holy Bible on passages such as those mentioned above, that give the meaning far more clearly that marital equality is compliant with Biblical teachings and those that perpetuate the doctrine of wife submission need to be further interrogated in context.

Marital Equality Advocacy

African Initiated Churches hold much influence in society such that if they embrace marital equality advocacy it would be a significant stride towards achieving marital equality both in the church and in the society at large. If African Initiated Churches teach and take a lead in marital equality awareness the congregants would be more receptive than when the initiative is from other sectors. Furthermore, the influence the African Initiated Churches have on society is very critical and its impact will be rewarding in achieving marital equality.

The mainline church Point of view

There is of course always another perspective, namely that the idea of submission precedes the fall of Adam and Eve. Orthodoxy speaks to this notion, and it illustrates that the headship of the husband is not grounded in punishment, and perhaps even an unfair punishment where a woman was given the stricter penalty of having to submit, but it is according to mainline churches rooted in the very purpose and creation of mankind. This demonstrates that the church has basically done a bad job in teaching this critical subject and also shows that



husbands do very little to make wives feel that submission is a good thing. The most perfect relationship ever, the one between God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, displays a flawless example of submission (Nicolaides & Archbishop Damaskinos, 2018). The Son acquiesces Himself to God the Father and this Trinitarian relationship offers us hints as to the nature of the relationship between a husband and his wife (Nicolaides, 2015). This of course does not mean that the woman is subservient to the man but has an equal but different role. She is not a man's slave. It is an epistemological basis of the New Testament that: "He who loves God knows God" (1 John 4: 7-8). The true devotee knows God with a knowledge far superior to any intellectual knowledge. Orthodoxy supports the stance taken in this study since it argues that marriage is a Mystery that transforms everyone, both body and soul-so that after marriage the couple is spiritually invigorated and should embrace a new life fully together as equal partners and true servants of God (Nicolaides, 2018).

Conclusion

This research has shown that interpreting and practicing the doctrine of women's submission is in opposition to the global effort to achieve marital equality. The study found that African Initiated Churches uphold the doctrine of women's submission, which means women cannot hold leadership positions in the family and must be subservient to their husbands. This dynamic creates an imbalance within the family that spills over into society, communities, organizations, and politics. It is difficult to detect these social conflicts as they occur within the family and are reinforced by the church's teachings. Women who are faithful to Christianity may feel conflicted about contradicting this doctrine, but they are the very people who should be leading organizations and politics. The doctrine of women's submission not only denies women the right to be treated equally with men, but it also deprives the country of potential leaders. The only way to address this issue is to reinterpret the doctrine of wife submission and align it with the principles of marital equality. This could be achieved by reinterpreting some passages in the Bible through annotations. While the Bible is sacred, it does not work in favour of repealing non-gender equality passages. Further research is recommended to investigate the possibility of creating a contemporary Holy Bible that is compliant with women's rights instruments.

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