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 FEMALE INSECURITY IN THE SOCIETY

Insecurity drills a hole into a person’s heart, minimizes their integrity, and accumulates as plaque buildup, hindering any kind of future growth. Just as any human being growth is stifled by the insecurity within them, insecurity is a route to destruction.

 The dictionary’s definition of insecurity is: “uncertainty or anxiety about oneself; lack of confidence” (“Insecurity, “Oxford English defines it as a state of being open to danger or threat; lack of protection). Now considering this aspect, one realizes how a person cannot function with insecurity, the feeling of insecurity do not stem from crime and violence alone. These are related to a mix of social, economic, cultural and domestic issues, here are factors that causes insecurity for women and girls: Violence, Rape, Female Genital Mutilation(FGM), Child marriage, Lack of access to education, Gender inequality, Unemployment.

1. Violence: 35 percent of women experience violence in the hands of their friend, partners and strangers in their lifetime, up to 70 percent according to national studies. Many perpetrators believe that violence towards women and girls is normal or an appropriate behavior supported by the society, they feel they commit violence without disapproval.

It has long term devastating effects on the lives of women and it affects their short term and long term health and wellbeing, along the immediate physical and emotional impacts of violence, the female overall quality of life can be adversely affected over an entire lifetime, which can impact their participation and engagement in various aspect of life and society. The effects of violence crime on women in general can be far-reaching, indirect exposure to violence can remind others in the community of their potential risk of victimization, which in turn, increases overall level of fear.

Women are less likely to feel safe in a variety of situations other violence offences include: abduction, kidnapping, hostage- taking and other violence violations. It also has a range of negative impacts that extends beyond the victim, family and friends can be directly or indirectly affected by the violence. They are more likely to experience elevated level of stress and to use medication for depression and anxiety.

1. Female Genital Mutilation: FGM is known to be practiced in at least 30 countries in Africa, more than 200 million girls have been cut in these countries, the middle east and Asia where female genital mutilation is concentrated. Female genital mutilation(FGM) involves the partial or total removal of external female genital organs for non- medical reasons, this practice has no health benefit for the female child, it is mostly carried out on young girls between infancy and age 15. This practice is a violation of the human right of the girls. There are various types of FGM that is carried out on the female child, they are circumcision, excision, Infibulation and type 4.

Circumcision or Sunna: This is the partial removal of the clitoris (the exterior and visible part of the clitoris which is the most sensitive part of female genitals), clitoral hood (the fold of skin surrounding the clitoral gland.

Excision: This is the total removal of the clitoral gland and the labia minora (the inner folds of the vulvu), with or without removal of the labia majora (the outer folds of the skin of the vulva).

Infibulation: This is the narrowing of the vaginal opening through the creation of a covering seal. The seal is formed by cutting and repositioning the labia minora or labia majora, sometimes through stitches with or without removal of the clitoral hood and glans.

Type 4: This includes all other harmful procedures to the female genital for non-medical reasons examples; prickling, piercing, incising, scraping and cauterizing the genital area. All forms are associated with increased health risk

Immediate complications can include: severe pain, excessive bleeding, genital tissue swelling, fever, infections such as: tetanus, urinary problems, wound healing problems, injury to surrounding genital tissue, shock and death. Long term complications include: vaginal problems(itching), scar tissue and keloid, sexual problems, increased risk of child birth complications, need for later surgeries, psychological problems(depression), low self-esteem.

It reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes and constitutes an extreme form of discrimination against women. It is nearly always carried out on minors and is a violation of the rights of children, the practice violates a person’s right to health, security and physical integrity, the right to be free from torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, and the right to life when the procedure results to death.

1. Rape: The term rape is sometimes used interchangeably with the term sexual assault. It is a type of sexual assault involving sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual penetration carried out against a person without the person’s consent. The act maybe carried out by physical force, coercion, abuse of authority, or against a person who is incapable of giving valid consent, such as one who is unconscious, incapacitated, has an intellectual disability or is below the legal age of consent. The female may face violence or threats from the rapists and in some culture, from the victim’s family, most women and girls live in fear of rape, which has many effects on the victim.

The consequences of rape to the woman can be classified either as physically, mentally or emotional traumatic, among the physical effects include unwanted pregnancies, diseases or health problems and certain disruptions on the woman’s natural body function, psychological effects range from self-pity to more striking suicidal tendencies.

Unwanted pregnancies have an immediate physical effect dependent on the age of the victim she may conceive a child, in most cases, rape victims who do become pregnant opt to abort the child. The situation is further complicated due to abortions not being a legal option for the victim

Exposure or transmission of certain diseases: Without their knowledge, the rape victims are also at risk of acquiring sexual transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS that could affect their health in the short and long term leading to death

Damage or disruption of body organs: Since rape is a form of forced intercourse, the victim’s body usually suffers physical injury particularly the reproductive system, the risk are greater if the victim is a child or a teen

Trauma and paranoia: They may develop fear in mingling and socializing with strangers and other people especially men, these effects can last for the duration of the victim’s lifetime.

Suicidal tendencies: The most striking effect that rape can produce in a victim is the thought of committing suicide because of trauma, self-pity, rape victims often feel that there is no longer hope.

1. Early marriage: It is defined as a marriage of a girl before the age of 18, child marriage robs a girl of her childhood time to develop physically, emotionally and psychologically. In fact, early marriage inflects great emotional stress.

According to UNICEF, child marriage is most common in the North, West and North east of Nigeria, where 57% of women are married before the age of 18, it is common among Nigeria most rural, poorest, rural households and Hausa ethnic group. These can lead to pregnancy which has harmful consequences for the young mothers and the babies, an addition health risk to the young mothers is obstructed labour, which occur when the baby head is too big for the mother. This provokes Vesico-Vaginal Fistulas (VVF), especially when untrained traditional health attendant forces the baby’s head unduly. It affects the girl’s mental health she may commit suicide which will lead to death, and under nutrition.

Child marriage traps the girl and her family in a cycle of poverty.

1. Gender inequality: Gender inequality acknowledges that men and women are not equal and gender affects an individual’s living experience. These differences arise from distinctions in biology, psychology and cultural norms. Some of these types of distinctions are empirically grounded while others appear to be socially constructed, studies show the different lived experience of genders across many domains including education, life expectancy, personality, interests, family life, careers and political affiliations. The concept has been widely known in human history, it is a threatening problem that causes unfair treatment in society between the different genders. Gender inequality has effects on a scale of population because of the discrimination of genders, the number of new born boys and girls are unequal. Unfortunately, this situation has occurred for such a long time, even in the 21st century across the globe men and women do not enjoy equal priviledges.
2. Lack of access to education: Education is one of the most critical areas of empowerment for women, it is an area that offers some of the clearest examples of discrimination women suffer. Millions of girls aren’t at school today, they are shut out of education because of discrimination, poverty, emergencies and culture. These girls have the same hopes and dreams as boys but they are often treated as second-class, they are exploited, abused and simply disregarded in many countries. Lack of funding, girls are perceived to be less valuable once educated, and less likely to abide by the will of the father, brother, or husband. They believe educating a boy is considered a sound investment, it is sometimes considered to be a waste of time for girls, there are more than 168 million child labourers who are working instead of learning.
3. Unemployment: Unemployment rates among persons with disabilities are high, with women being at greater risk due to the interaction of gender. Female unemployment rates are higher than men.