Lobola (bride price) as a factor in negative psychological outcomes for reproductive health and woman abuse in South Africa

Many women experience psychological and/or physical abuse on a daily basis. It is part of everyday life for many women in traditional societies where it is accepted as the norm. Woman abuse can impact on the reproductive health of women (through rape and non-use of condoms which results in woman catching Sexually Transmitted Infections STIs). Patriarchy, which endorses the man as head of the family, is the predominant paradigm in South Africa contributes to the incidence of violence against women as they are viewed as the property of their male spouses. South Africa a conservative, traditional society which has high levels of violence against women in Gauteng Province alone, one in every six women is killed by an intimate partner. Furthermore, one in every five women is physically abused by her intimate partner and one in every four is battered. The country is ranked amongst the highest countries for gender-based violence worldwide. The investigation was a qualitative, phenomenological one in which women narrated their stories which were put in themes. The counseling therapy used in the process was Narrative Therapy, which was used as both a methodology and an intervention. Lobola or bride price was found to keep women in relationships where men were unfaithful and considered sex a right. It was also found a factor in keeping women in abusive relationships as they could not go home (as they had been paid for). The impact on their psychological and reproductive health was found to be negative in the sample of women who told their stories.

Biography

Nel K has obtained her BA in Psychology at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa. She has completed her Honors in Psychology and Masters in Counseling Psychology at the University of Zululand and worked as HOD of Industrial Psychology. She later moved to the Medical University of South Africa as an Associate Professor and then joined the University of Limpopo in Polokwane in South Africa where she is currently a Full Professor of Psychology. She was awarded the Best Woman Researcher in the Humanities in 2014 and in 2016 she was awarded a National Research Foundation of South Africa research rating. She was Consultant Editor for the Journal of Psychology in Africa in 2016 and also reviews articles for peer-reviewed journals. She is currently working on a textbook for applied psychology in the medical and health sciences as well as working on community research based projects.

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