



MARRIAGE AND FAMILY WELLNESS

NEWSLETTER

THEME: WHY DO NIGERIAN WOMEN STAY IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGE?

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VOL. 1

WHEN LEAVING ISN'T EASY



Our research revealed a combination of factors on the reason for this malaise: faith, culture, emotional attachment, and societal expectations. Many Nigerian women seem caught up in troubled marriages.

Marriage should be a place of love, companionship, and security; a partnership where two people grow together, support one another, and build a life rooted in mutual respect.

Yet, for some women, marriage becomes far more complicated than the picture society often paints. When stories of abuse in marriage emerge, one question frequently follows: Why didn't she just leave?

From the outside, leaving may appear to be the obvious solution. But for many women, the reality is layered with difficult choices and deeply rooted influences. Faith, cultural

expectations, emotional attachment, family pressure, financial dependence, and even legal uncertainty can all shape the decision to stay. What may seem like a simple choice is often a complex and painful journey.

In this edition, RIML explore the question: Why do some Nigerian women remain in abusive marriages? Through reflections and conversations with couples, we hope to shed light on a sensitive issue that affects many homes but is rarely discussed openly.

Our goal is not to judge, but to explore how meaningful exchange can happen in marriages embodying empathy, and genuine commitment. Every authentic relationship is built on love, dignity, and safety.

FROM THE OUTSIDE, IT MAY LOOK SIMPLE.



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LEAVING A HUSBAND MAY SEEM STRAIGHTFORWARD OUTWARDLY, BUT INTERNALLY IT'S LIKE ONE'S WORLD FALLING APART. WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS OPINIONS ON THIS TOPIC?

Couples Speak

Question: Why do you think some Nigerian women remain in abusive marriages?

COUPLE 1

Mr. Eigege:

From my experience, one major reason is family and societal influence. Many women are advised to stay, especially because of their children, with the belief that leaving may negatively affect them. Cultural expectations also play a role, as women are often encouraged to endure challenges in marriage rather than walk away.

Another key factor is fear. Fear of the unknown, fear of starting over, and concerns about financial survival, especially if the woman is not financially independent. All these pressures can make it difficult for women to leave, even when the situation is unhealthy.

COUPLE 2

Mr. Bassey:

In my view, fear and low self-esteem are major factors. Many women worry about what life will look like outside the marriage and may doubt their ability to cope on their own.

Stigmatization is another issue. Concern about what society will say often keeps people in unhealthy relationships.

Financial dependence also plays a significant role, as some may feel they lack the resources to start afresh.

It is also important to note that abuse can affect both partners, and in some cases, individuals remain because of what they stand to lose or face outside the marriage.

Faith plays a powerful role in many Nigerian homes. Marriage is often viewed as sacred, and many women are taught that the union should be preserved through patience, prayer, and endurance.

While faith can be a source of strength, it can sometimes be misunderstood. Some women may feel that leaving an abusive marriage means failing spiritually or disappointing their faith community.

Yet faith, at its core, should uplift dignity, safety, and compassion within a marriage.

Abusive Marriage and Faith



QUESTION: DO YOU BELIEVE FAITH SOMETIMES INFLUENCES WOMEN TO REMAIN IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGES? HOW SHOULD FAITH GUIDE COUPLES IN SUCH SITUATIONS?

Couple 1

Mr. Eigege:

Yes, to a large extent, faith can influence women to remain in abusive marriages. Many women of faith hold on to the belief expressed in 1 Corinthians 13 that “love never fails,” trusting that genuine love will eventually overcome their challenges and transform their situation.

Many also believe that God hates divorce and trust that, with time, prayer, and patience, things will improve. Faith

often gives hope that God can transform the situation and even change a partner’s behavior. This belief encourages endurance and commitment to making the marriage work.

However, it is also important to know when to draw the line. While faith encourages perseverance, situations that threaten life and safety should not be ignored. Wisdom and discernment are necessary in such cases.

Couple 2

Mr. Bassey:

Yes, faith can influence women to remain, but it is sometimes misunderstood. True faith brings hope, strength, and resilience it should not justify harm or abuse.

Faith should promote love,



justice, and accountability within marriage. When it is misinterpreted, it can lead individuals to endure unhealthy situations unnecessarily.

While prayer and faith are important, there is also a need to speak up and seek help when situations become harmful. Faith should never compromise one’s dignity, safety, or well-being.

“Faith should strengthen dignity and safety, not silence someone’s suffering.”

Abusive Marriage and Love.

Love is important in marriage but on its own, it’s enough to sustain a marriage

QUESTION: LETS TALK ABOUT LOVE. DO YOU THINK LOVE ALONE CAN SUSTAIN A MARRIAGE?

Couple 1

Mr. Nick:

Love alone is not enough to sustain a marriage. While love is essential, a successful marriage also requires mutual respect, financial stability, and shared responsibility. Without respect and the ability to meet basic needs, challenges will arise. Love must be supported by respect, provision, and practical commitment for a marriage to thrive.

Couple 2

Mrs. Bassey:

Love is more than a feeling—it is an embodiment of mutual respect, understanding, and communication. When love is properly understood and expressed, it creates a positive environment that strengthens the marriage. However, if love is misinterpreted or lacks these essential elements, it cannot sustain the relationship. True love encompasses all aspects of mutuality in marriage, and when rightly practiced, it can support and sustain a healthy union.

Abusive Marriage and Masculine Authority

In many societies, including Nigeria, men are often seen as the head of the home. Leadership within marriage can be a positive force when it is expressed through love, responsibility, and care.



However, when authority is misunderstood as domination or control, it can create an unhealthy power imbalance. In such environments, abuse may grow quietly behind closed doors. Healthy leadership in marriage should never rely on fear or intimidation. True strength in marriage is expressed through respect, protection, and partnership.

QUESTION: WHAT DOES HEALTHY LEADERSHIP OR MASCULINE AUTHORITY IN MARRIAGE LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

Couple 1

Nick emphasizes mutual respect and shared submission as the foundation of leadership in marriage. Referencing Ephesians 5:21, he highlights that before instructions about submission and leadership, there must be mutual honor between partners.

He acknowledges the man as the head, but emphasizes that respect is key to maintaining a man's confidence and sense of leadership. According to him, when a wife respects her husband, it strengthens his role and encourages love in return.

However, without respect, the emotional and relational balance is disrupted. Nick ultimately underscores that leadership is sustained through respect, affirmation, and honoring each other's roles.

Couple 2

Mr. Bassey emphasizes that healthy leadership in marriage is rooted in mutual understanding and balance, not cultural dominance or superiority.

While acknowledging the man as the "head," he stresses that this role cannot function without the "neck," highlighting the importance of the wife in maintaining balance.

He draws from biblical teaching that a husband should love his wife as Christ loves the church demonstrating sacrificial love, protection, and constant communication.

He warns against arrogance or superiority, noting that leadership becomes unhealthy when a man devalues his wife. For him, true leadership is expressed through selflessness, sacrifice, and Christ-like love.

MARRIAGE SHOULD BE A PLACE OF SAFETY, NOT A PLACE WHERE SOMEONE LIVES IN FEAR.

Abusive Marriage and Culture

Cultural expectations around marriage can place heavy pressure on women to remain married regardless of their circumstances.

In some communities, divorce is viewed as a personal failure or a family disgrace. A woman who leaves her marriage may face criticism, judgment, or rejection from relatives and society.



These pressures can make it extremely difficult for someone to walk away from an unhealthy relationship, even when staying comes at great emotional cost.

QUESTION:

Do you think society truly understands the struggles of women in these situations, or is there a gap in understanding?

Couple 1

Mr. Nick:

To a large extent, society does not fully understand what many women go through in their marriages. Much of what people see is based on perception, not the reality of what happens behind closed doors.



Because of societal labels and fear of judgment, many women choose to remain silent rather than speak out about their struggles.

However, when women do speak up, there are systems in place such as counselors, churches, and support groups that can offer guidance and support. Awareness begins when individuals are willing to share their experiences.

Couple 2

Mr. Bassey:

In my opinion, there is a gap in understanding. Society often does not grasp the emotional complexity of what happens in troubled marriages.

Sometimes, people are quick to judge or assign blame without fully understanding the reality of the situation. This lack of awareness can make it harder for those affected to seek help.

To a large extent, society needs deeper understanding and sensitivity when addressing issues within marriages.

Sometimes, women stay not because the pain is small, but because the pressures around them are overwhelming.

ABUSIVE MARRIAGE AND EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT.

Marriage involves deep emotional investment. Couples share memories, dreams, children, and years of their lives together.

Even when relationships become harmful, emotional attachment can make it difficult to leave. Many women hope the person they once loved will change or that things will improve over time.

These emotional ties can keep people holding on long after the relationship has stopped being healthy.

LOVE CANNOT THRIVE WHERE RESPECT, KINDNESS, AND EMOTIONAL SAFETY ARE ABSENT.

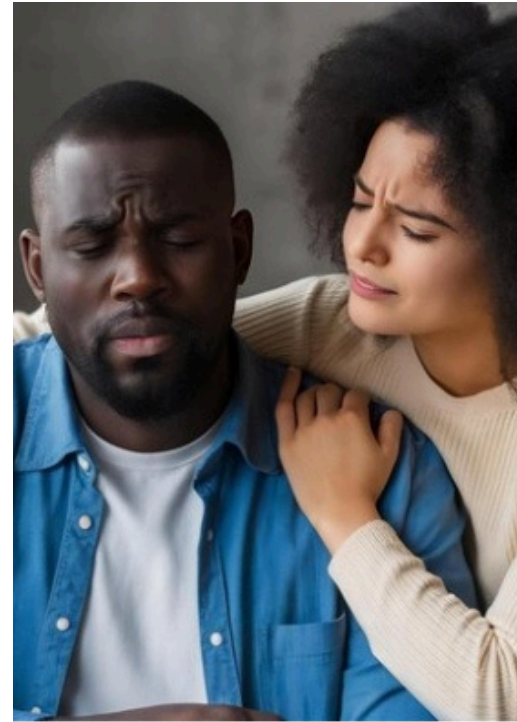
ABUSIVE MARRIAGE AND DEPRESSION.

Long-term emotional harm can deeply affect a person's mental well-being. Over time, someone experiencing abuse may begin to lose confidence in themselves and their ability to change their circumstances.

Feelings of sadness, hopelessness, or fear can make decision-making extremely difficult.

This emotional burden can make leaving feel impossible, even when the situation is painful.

ABUSIVE MARRIAGE AND THE LAW.



Legal protections against domestic abuse exist, but many people are unaware of their rights or unsure how to access help.

Some women fear that reporting abuse may bring further complications, including financial hardship or family conflict. Strengthening awareness and support systems is important in helping individuals feel protected and empowered.



REFLECTION FOR COUPLES

Take a moment to reflect together:

- Do we communicate with respect even when we disagree?
- Do we create a safe emotional environment in our marriage?
- What patterns in our relationship need healing?

HEALTHY MARRIAGES ARE BUILT INTENTIONALLY ON RESPECT, EMPATHY, AND MUTUAL CARE.



Don't stop at reflection, take action.

Start the conversation today. Seek guidance where needed, and take intentional steps toward building a healthier, safer, and more fulfilling marriage.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What do you think is the biggest reason many women remain in abusive marriages?

Share your thoughts, we'd love to hear from you.



Coming Up in April (Vol. 2)

In our next edition, we will explore:

“Breaking the Silence: Practical Steps to Address and Heal from Abusive Marriage”

We'll be focusing on:

- How to recognize early warning signs
- When to seek help and where to find support
- Practical steps toward healing and restoration
- Building safe and healthy relationship boundaries

STAY CONNECTED—YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS IT.

REMAIN IN MY LOVE INC. PRESENTS
LAGOS MARRIAGE CONFERENCE 2026
 April 22 - 24, 2026
 Theme: From Surviving to Thriving in Marriage

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Mrs. Bridget Itsueli
HEALING THE WOUNDS OF LOVE

Venue: Eucharistic Heart Sisters Lodge,
 7 Amore Street, Off Toyin Street, Ikeja, Lagos
 Providing: 2 Days Accommodation | Feeding | Training

REGISTRATION ONLY ₦100,000

FEATURED SPEAKERS



Dr. Kenneth Uwajeh
 Depression in Marriage



Fr. Dr. Vincent Arisukwu
 Faith and Sex in Marriage



Prof. Chioma Asuzu
 Keys to Overcoming In-Law Syndrome



Dr. Benjamin Dadzie
 Conflict and Financial Management



Chef Tobias Igwe
 The Power of Food for Men in Marriage

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REMAIN IN MY LOVE INC. PRESENTS
OWERRI MARRIAGE CONFERENCE 2026
 APRIL 25TH 2026
 THEME: FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING IN MARRIAGE

**VENUE: ROCKVIEW HOTEL OWERRI OPPOSITE
 GOVERNMENT HOUSE**

REGISTRATION FEE:
 25,000 (Singles) | 40,000 (Couples)

SPEAKERS:



DR. KENNETH UWAJEH
 DEPRESSION IN MARRIAGE



FR. DR. VINCENT ARISUKWU
 HEALING THE WOUNDS OF LOVE



PROF. CHIOMA ASUZU
 KEYS TO OVERCOMING IN-LAW SYNDROME



MRS. ANASTASIA CHINEMEREM IGWE
 THE POWER OF FOOD FOR MEN



SR. DR. MARY ROSANA EMENUSIOBI
 ABUSIVE PARTNER IN MARRIAGE

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UPCOMING MARRIAGE CONFERENCE

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"FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING IN MARRIAGE"

WE WILL OFFER COUPLES THE TOOLS TO GROW AND STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP THROUGH PRACTICAL LESSONS, GUIDED SESSIONS, AND MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS

LAGOS EDITION

DATE: 22ND – 24TH APRIL

VENUE: EUCHARISTIC HEART SISTERS LODGE,
7 AMORE STREET, OFF TOYIN STREET, IKEJA, LAGOS

PACKAGE INCLUDES:

2 DAYS ACCOMMODATION • FEEDING • TRAINING

REGISTRATION FEE: ₦100,000

OWERRI EDITION

DATE: 25TH APRIL

VENUE: ROCKVIEW HOTEL, OWERRI
(OPPOSITE GOVERNMENT HOUSE)

REGISTRATION FEE:

SINGLES – ₦25,000

COUPLES – ₦40,000

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