The predominately family structure in Africa runs the risk of overemphasizing the importance of fathers to the healthy development of children. This type of structure castigates families headed by single mothers-the predominant family structure in South Africa and the West. Using the images and structures of fatherhood in traditional South African culture to restore and redefine understandings of what it means to be father, understanding that was damaged by colonization, migrant labor, apartheid and employment comes to mind. In African context, the notion of fatherhood has been undergoing fundamental transformation after the influence of apartheid experience. Findings from Brown & Barker (2004) and other family scholars reveal that there is a worldwide change occurring in the way men's roles in the family and the care of children are conceived which partly emanates from the politics and scholarship of identity. The emanation is partly, promoted by the changing nature of employment associated with post-industrial economics and globalization, as well as changes in the nature and composition of families and finally changes in people's value for life. The people's way of life is the same as African way of life. The way of life of African family have received considerable respect beyond African frontiers.

In West African culture, fathers are considered the head of the family. They are considered provider and protector of the family. Even within lower primates, the male species are considered the provider and protector of the territory. Studies indicate that 60% of African men perform the role of providing for the family. While this percentage is too small, more than 75% of African men would rather work extra hard to provide for infants and their moms. Most African men who changed their career attributed this fact to their desire to provide for a better life and guidance for their children. In many African societies, elderly fathers are seen as village judge. The power of the father to adjudicate within the confines of the family and the village level empowers them to settle disputes of any kind. Also, the power to make decision and prosecute crimes makes African men the first and final arbiter of justice in their communities. And when a dispute is difficult to settle, men usually send the matter to the village head of the clan or the linage chiefs. In Mbaise community of Imo State, the verdict of any family matter takes place at the community square called the "aladima." Again, Fathers in African culture represent strength, energy, hardness and toughness. Women send the 'black sheep' of the family to them for disciplinary measures. On one hand, mothers in African culture represent softness, caring and gentleness. Studies have shown that the two parents balance children developmental equation (Franklin, 2003). The balance of nurturing (softness) from the mom and the balance of

hardness (toughness) from the dad compliments in proper upbring. Without this balance, children in African culture will grow to their ultimate dysfunction. Children without developmental balance from parents turn out to stubborn, truant and society outlaws.

Men in African culture choose fatherhood at mid-age of their lives. At age 30-35, or 40 when they are behind schedule. At these period, majority of them are considered very matured to establish their own families despite all odds. Despite family establishment, African culture is considered a hierarchical and patriarchal society. Because it is hierarchical, men usually sat at the pinnacle in the pecking order followed by the eldest son, other male relatives, with women and children coming last. African Family hierarchy is a contradiction to the In Western feminist ideologies. In essence, the father was the patriarch, the symbol and custodian of the ultimate power and responsibility in the family and the community at large (Lenah et al, 2005). The concept of a father as one with ultimate authority and responsibility was central to the determination of the role of men in African family and society. This concept sees the father as a patriarch, ruler of the family, founder of a colony, religion, business or tribe like the founders of the ancient Hebrew families. Like in ancient Hebrew, Fatherhood in African society honors the father or the eldest male as the head of the family or tribe, descent and kinship. They are heir to the throne and they possess inheritance rites. This is why African tribe and kinship are traced through male metamorphosis.

Men in African culture are called the patron of the family and community. Men as patron reflects protector and defender of their families, clients (via of individuals, of cities, clans, villages or provinces). Men as patron means master of freedmen or freedwomen; an advocate or defenders before a court of justice, or generally, of any person or cause. As society defender, it is the duty of men/patrons to give influential support to family members and the community at large. It is within the province of patrons to favor encouragement, or countenance, to a person, institution, work; art etc. African men love to see that their sons perpetuate their legacies or follow to their foot steps. The reason is because sons are the ones who will perpetuate their extinction. On one hand, sons are expected to inherit physical characteristics of their fathers since African males are considered descent through the male line. Thus, inheritance of the chromosome is exclusively patrilineal. In addition to the above, many patrilineal and pronatalist African societies considers children to be source of both labor and family power (Inhorn, 1995). Thus childbearing in Africa is culturally mandated while infertility is critically despised.

In traditional African, the model of masculinity which stresses responsibility, protection, provision, wisdom and communal loyalty may well be better suited to

sustain life and generate family harmony. Havocs wrought by African economy are responsible while unemployment levels are very high while subsistence agriculture remains largely the preserve of women. African men who fail to respond to these challenges take refuge in alcohol and women. In the process, relationship with spouses and children suffers.
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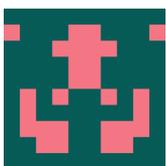Inhorn, M (1995) Infertitlity and patriachy, University of pennsylvania Press
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