

Biting the forbidden apple: Unmasking the strategies that married women employ when conducting their extra marital affairs in Shamva's Wadzanai Township Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The present paper is a follow up to the article "Wives in watercolours': Infidelity among married women in Shamva, Zimbabwe (RJFS-2015-0140) that has been submitted to the Journal of Family Studies by Chadambuka, Pelser and Muzvidziwa. Whilst the first article thrusts its main focus on causes and consequences, this particular paper is committed to documenting the strategies that married women in a multi ethnic African community employ as they conduct their secret love affairs. The study was carried out in Shamva District's Wadzanai Township in Mashonaland Central Province, Zimbabwe. This qualitative study shows that extra marital affairs of married women thrive in secrecy. Networks with friends as well as secret rendezvous and character staging were some of the strategies used by the women. In-depth interviews were carried out with six married women who were involved in extra marital affairs with other men and these took place on a face to face basis. Goffman's dramaturgical theory and Michel Foucault's concept of the gaze and the African concept of Ubuntu are the sociological lenses which were used to analyse these dynamics.

Key terms

Extra marital affairs, infidelity, married women, Ubuntu, culture

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