**BEYOND MY CULTURAL STEREOTYPES**

Exploring The beauty of Digo Culture and Addressing the Oversimplified Beliefs

Beyond my Cultural Stereotypes is a feature magazine about what people think about my culture and what its actually or what actually happens in Digo culture and homesteads. There are many things that many people think my culture practices in their daily life while it’s not what exactly happens in real life, only a small number maybe practicing or doesn’t exist at all.

Stereotypes are oversimplified and generalized beliefs or assumptions about a particular group of people, often based on limited information or misconception. Recognizing and challenging these biases, fosters a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of different cultures and individuals will help overcome these cultural stereotypes.

As a Journalist and a Communication personnel, my magazine will act as an ambassador for my culture to address all these beliefs people have had for so long and bring out the facts about it.

My magazine will feature topics that will be promoting the value, traditions and heritage of the cultural background in a positive way and in respectful manner. It’ll be like appreciating where I belong as well as willingness to indirectly engage with others in a way that fosters cross culture, understanding and mutual respect.

**Now let’s delve into the most oversimplified beliefs about my culture**

1. **The wedding and Art of the Digo woman.**

According to how the Digo Woman is usually raised well and equipped with proper training on how to handle a household people usually confuse this with witchcraft. The fact that men stick around them when they come to Coast is what people think that they are bewitched. What people don’t know is that the woman alone is an art due to how she gets trained before and after puberty ready to be a responsible woman in life. This normally happens to make the lady prepared for what to expect when married to avoid instances of separation after getting married after situation she didn’t expect like being submissive to your husband which not being a slave according to how people might view it and its something that keeps our marriages.

Wedding starts with a marriage proposal. The man sends the proposal to the lady’s family through some representatives who are his relatives and this doesn’t happen as a surprise but a letter is usually sent prior to the proposal day for a small welcoming ceremony to receive the marriage proposal. When the proposal is received at the lady’s homestead, the lady is involved to confirm if she recognizes the guy but rarely happens in instances where the lady denies knowing the man. If the lady accepts, the wedding preparations starts. A list of normally varieties of food stuffs is prepared to be handed over to the groom’s family to later bring to the parents as a thanksgiving for bringing up the lady of their son’s choice. This is not and never the dowry. As Digo culture goes hand in hand with Islam, dowry here is only an agreement between the bride and the groom.

The bride tells her to be husband what she needs for her dowry and the man fulfills the obligation and this normally stays between the two.

Some days to the wedding, is when the bride undergoes training and adds what she already she already learnt while at home. Tying the knots normally doesn’t take time to happen to prevent the lady and the lady from meeting and getting into temptations of committing sins as the culture goes hand in hand with Religion.

1. **Inheritance**

The right to inherit from the family wealth especially acquired by the father applies to both the men and women. When a woman marries and leaves her father’s house she has the right to inherit both from her husband and back at home. Religion and culture protects the woman from injustices and gives her equal opportunities opposite from how people view it as oppression only on how a woman in Islam doesn’t have some rights like leading the prayer. There are things we can’t change the way we found them in the holy scriptures, its like questioning God while we can’t against God.

1. Dressing.

Many view the Islamic dressing especially in ladies as oppression, they keep talking about it and go ahead questioning directly about why hijab. Muslim ladies are okay and very much comfortable with their dressing because this is how they were brought up, its religion and our religion and modest and safe. Walking as a fully covered lady protects one from various incidents like rape, physical abuse and body shaming especially online which is termed as cyberbullying.

1. Education

Education is also mentioned in the Holy Book, Quran, to be obligatory to both men and women. Women are only told to maintain modesty but not hide away from getting education and getting liberated. Women are advised to get liberated in order to face their fears, be independent and stand on their feet in the absence of a man. While education and work remain constant, a woman is still obligated to perform wifely duties while the man’s main role is to provide. If an educated Muslim women feels entitled to a man, its embracing culture’s and not being a slave of culture and religion as people view it.

1. Traditional healing.

Cherishing traditions through Seeking medical advice from traditional healers Is what many people mistakens it for witchcraft. For so many years, Digo culture has been stereotyped with deep rooted witchcraft activities to mean that the entire community entirely practice and believe in such activities. The truth is since the coming of Arabs

and the introduction of Islam the rate of such activities has really gone down leaving a very small number of people still practicing them.

1. Cultural items.

Are some of the symbols of the culture and what makes a complete homestead. These are mainly items used in the kitchen and general home use items. They normally vary from one homestead to the other depending on how wealthy the homestead is. However some most cherished cultural items have disappeared with the advancement of technology and literacy.

1. Circumcision in Girls.

Only practiced among the male gender but a long gone practice among the female teenagers. It stopped due to the introduction of Islam, people converted and left the evil practice which mainly tortured the female teenagers which mainly brought more harm than good. However it is still rumored to be practiced in some parts but with a lot of secrecy and under hidden roofs for fear of human rights groups.