

Rethinking the Place of African Kitchen Hut as a Hub for Business Management, Marketing, Education, Health and Strategies in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract

Every African woman particularly a married woman in the African context with special reference to Zimbabwe is expected to own a kitchen hut. There is an adage which says that the place of a woman is a kitchen. Given the African kitchen hut, it shows women empowering context therefore viewing a kitchen hut as a hub for business management, marketing, strategies and education through lifelong learning and health care. The kitchen hut embodies women's power rather than belittling them as some feminists portray it as a place for women to cook food for the family. Families sit in the kitchen planning all their business ventures and marketing strategies to expand their businesses. Women give birth and nurse the sick in the kitchen making it a referral hospital and labour ward and a constitutive space where herbalists and traditional diviners operate to remedy different illnesses. The African Kitchen Hut is an institute of business prosperity, lower and higher education. It provides practical and theoretical business tactics and education through observation, imitation, lecturing, folk tales, riddles, songs and dances to young boys and girls at a prescribed time and giving it the face of a learning institute. Hotel and catering business tactics are also passed on to young girls and young women and today the knowledge is passed on also to boys and men. The African hut is a hub for all activities giving it one of its many faces as a business centre, learning centre, referral hospital and hotel where nutritious food is cooked and dished. A kitchen hut is where a family convenes to strategize about events befalling the family, consults on the bridal prize and lobola payment, rituals to appease ancestors and the spirits of the wronged persons, giving it a double cap of being a temple and a court. It is the family's front office, business center where marketing strategies and public relations strategies are practiced and visitors are also received and are seen off from the same kitchen hut. It is here where family and sometimes a whole community fellowship especially at night sitting around the fireplace passing critical business knowledge and education to the younger generation. The kitchen is also a mortuary where the dead lie in state before being buried. It is where memorial ceremonies are held and the life of the deceased is celebrated. Most of these roles are entrusted to women and its use for any reason is first asked for permission from women to access it. The kitchen became a space for women emancipation where their power and significance to the business world, family and society are

realised. This promotes the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Goal 5: Gender equality, Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure and Goal 4: Quality education. The paper employs a qualitative research approach through the use of secondary data and observation. The emergency of artificial intelligence poses a threat to these many faces of the African round kitchen hut to the preservation of Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)' centre of strategic planning, education and health, in the Indigenous kitchen hut. This study focuses on how Artificial intelligence (AI) can pose a potential risk to the preservation of the role of the African kitchen hut and how Artificial intelligence could uphold the role of the African kitchen hut in its many facets which include women empowerment.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, African women, Business Management, Marketing, Education, kitchen hut, health, strategies, Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS)