



Research Article

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Conjugal Irresponsibility in David Lodge's *Changing Places*Dr. (MC) Hergie Alexis SEGUEDEME*¹, Dr. Koumabe BOSSOUN¹, & Dr. Orierien Olivier ABODOHOU¹¹Enseignant-Chercheur à l'Université d'Abomey-Calavi, Bénin

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Abstract: Lack of responsibility in the relationship is obviously the cause of marital problem such as infidelity, lack of financial resources and loss of employment, poor communication and divorce. That is the reason why the problem that this research work raises is conjugal irresponsibility. This work is focused on David Lodge's *Changing Places: A Tale of Two Campus*. The family system theory is used to better explore the marital irresponsibility in the two professors family after the exchange program in the novel. The present work explores the subject of conjugal irresponsibility, states its impact, cause and its consequence, and gives some suggestions that may help to succeed in our marital life. Finally, the more strategies being adopted in this research work so that we can be able to stand in relationship due to the social revolution.

Keywords: Teacher, Financial Resources and Life.

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INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the beautiful and one of the important stages of everyone's life. It is a life changing decision of two people from different sex who agree to share their life with each other. But no one can predict the future. Sometimes the two people who agreed to share their life might face problems in it. Unfortunately an uncaring attitude with regard to one's spouse or mate brings a lot of issues in marriage. For instance lack of communication, financial problems, irresponsibility of both husband and wife or the state of work which not allowing us to be always in one place with our pattern like army department ; police offices ; lectures department that does not make some marriages do not stand firmly.

In fact, marriage is an institution in every society, it may be described as one of the important and fundamental human relationship; it is a culturally, religiously and socially recognized union, normally between a man and a woman, who are referred to as husband and wife. This union establishes rights and obligations between spouses, their children and even between them and their in law. However, little things can slip into the relationship, when these little things are not properly handled, they can cause friction and eventual separation between the partners. But the crucial reason why I still focus on marriage is the fact that conjugal is related to marriage as we can define according to the free dictionary "relating to marriage or to the relationship between a wife and husband".

Furthermore a conjugal relationship is on of some permanence, when individuals are interdependent

financially, socially, emotionally and physically, when they share household and related responsibilities and when they have made a serious commitment to one another. By this ideas conjugal does not mean sexual relations alone. It indicates that there is a significant degree of attachment between two partners. Does anyone want to be so irresponsible in his or her marriage that they have to pay for it? Does anyone really want to live like this?

To be able to jeopardize to this behaviour of irresponsibility after social revolution, David Lodge used his skills as a literature by written *Changing Places* published in 1975. It narrates the story of two literature professors from different university who exchange their post. This research work is to reveal the incapacity of the two professors family of novel to assume their conjugal irresponsibility while coping with academic challenges. Because of the important of our topic this research is organised in to three sections. Section one focuses on the introduction of our study. As far as the second section is concerned it focuses on the background of the novel and it impact. Section three deals with the critical analysis of the causes and consequences and dealing with the conjugal irresponsibility.

Introduction to the Study

This very first section deals with the introduction to our study. It focuses on the problem statement, the significance, the limitation of the study, research methodology, conceptual clarification and literature review.

Problem Statement

As the world is moving and things have been changing beyond human imagination, many problems generate in the societies. As the case of marriage. In the novel, David Lodge exposes the influence professional life on couple.

Today, the concept of marriage has undergone drastic changes. Girls or boys are the ones who choose their own spouses regarding their feelings and personal reasons. Indeed what is crucial in the matter of marriage many of couples due to their irresponsibility face a lot of divorces. What do they lose? They lose their values, money they used to celebrate their marriage and their precious time. The worse is about their children. In order to draw people's attention on the issues of irresponsibility in marriage, there is then an urgent need to analyse the parameters in which the marriage occurs. And to achieve that goal, the topic 'Conjugal Irresponsibility in David Lodge Changing Place' is the light to hold.

Significance of the Study

In fact, the theme of this work is Conjugal Irresponsibility as in David Lodge's *Changing Places*. The reason why we have chosen this topic is that we have been touched and shocked by the novel and felt the need to study it deeply by focusing on the characters who have experienced to exchange their wives, children their positions as lecturers in fact everything. This research work allows reader to know the reason why people can exchange their wife and children due to marital irresponsibility in westerners' culture.

Purpose of the Study

The topic of this scientific research, 'Conjugal Irresponsibility in David Lodge's *Changing Places*' has brought deep discussion about its scopes. In order to stay faithful to the boundaries settled for the topic, the content of the novel is at the core. The content is then related to the story of two professors who could not assume their marital responsibility while deal with academic challenges and has finally exchanged their wives.

Limitation of the Study

In analysing *Changing Places*, we basically focus on irresponsibility in marriage and it was conducted only in England and America campus life that occupy the content of the novel itself. Obtaining access to information about conjugal irresponsibility and those experiencing it in 1960s era. They concern with the social fact presented in the novel and the realities of the author that he has experienced as a lecturer at that time regarding his position in 1960s era towards civil right movement, student movement and women movement. The research does, therefore, through academy exchange program how can marital irresponsibility could be defined and to what extent it

makes us to exchange our spouses. Furthermore, this dissertation is limited concerning its approach.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The topic of this research work cannot be well decrypted if the methodology is not well established. For that reason, we have first of all conducted a documentary research at different places. We have chosen to focus our data collection on novels, articles and dissertations that deal with the theme or any other aspects contributing to its building. Therefore, the family system theory is used as a theory. The choice of that particular theory is justified by the fact that the novel *Changing Places* as something to do with two professors families life issues at the University. Family systems theory is an approach to understand human functioning that focuses on interactions between people in a family and between the family and the context in which that family is embedded.

Conceptual Clarification

The topic of this essay cannot be well understood if the key words like 'Conjugal' and 'irresponsibility' are not clarified.

First of all, the term « conjugal » is defined by the Cambridge Dictionary as "something connected with marriage or the relationship between two married people, especially their sexual relationship". As far as the word "irresponsibility" is concerned, it is "the fact of not thinking enough about the effect of what you do, the quality of not showing a feeling of responsibility." In others words it is the quality of not worrying enough about the possible results of what you do. So the phrase «conjugal irresponsibility» simply means the fact of ignoring one's duty towards one's spouse or children.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conjugal irresponsibility is one of the modern issues that has been existing in the marriage so far. In many marriages people face a lot problems in that marriage even since the beginning of world after God has created Adam and Eve. For that reason, it is unfair to talk about conjugal irresponsibility without exploring the meaning of the concept in whole.

A lot of humanist researchers like Dakin & Wampler (2008); & Gudmunson *et al.* (2007) have directed their works about the concept of conjugal irresponsibility which has become a tough question in marriage. According to them financial strain is a leading cause of marital trouble. Couple interaction can be positively or negatively influenced by financial strain. Negative interaction between the spouses may result in increased emotional trouble leading to marital distress. Relieving marital irresponsibility may have an effect on depression such as reducing the symptoms and increasing the psychological health of the individual suffering depressive issues (Heene, *et al.*, 2005; & Christensen & Heavey, 1999).

However the lack of responsibility in marriage is due to lack of marital education as The National Healthy Marriage Resource Center (2014) defines marital education as system of training for the couple in problem solving, conflict resolution, anger management, forgiveness, communications and commitment.

In all it is common belief that stress and fighting over money constitute the major problems that couples face. In tough economic times, for instance financial strain can actually cause misunderstanding and fights and more conflict over things unrelated to money and poor communication even our work issues constitute our irresponsibility regarding certain problems in our marriage.

THE NOVEL, BACKGROUND OF NOVEL AND THE CONJUGAL IRRESPONSIBILITY

The Novel

Published in 1975, *Changing Places: A Tale of Two Campuses* is a satirical and comic work by David Lodge. It tells the story of two professors of literature who exchange their places for one semester. Englishman Phillip Swallow from the University of Rummidge in the West Midlands travels to Euphoria; and Morris Zapp from the State University of Euphoria to England. After the exchange, the two professors have swapped the post, children and even their wives due to their marital irresponsibility. Their purpose is to be happy and be secured in the hosting university.

The novel finally ends on a note of reconciliation with the two couples by taking planes to meet in New York and their planes nearly collide above the airport. Half-seriously, half-mockingly, they try to find a solution for their situation and to decide which of the husbands will be distributed to which of the wives. They cannot agree who should share the hotel room with whom, so finally the two men are put together in one room and two women in the other. In the middle of the night they however move so that each ends up with his or her respective spouse.

Background of the Novel

Changing Places (1975) by David Lodge belongs to the genre of 'campus novels' this campus novel and satire shows two professors from England and America, who are opposites in almost every respect, assuming each other's faculty positions in an exchange program and then acquiring loving roles in each other's family and marriage. This dynamic works well when the funny David Lodge is exploring the politics and pressures of academic life or boredom of marriage. This dynamic also enables Lodge to present both a cynchronic and innocent's reaction to 1960's-style political agitation. David reveals the incapacity of

the main characters of novel to assume their conjugal irresponsibility while coping with academic challenges.

THE MAIN CHARACTERS AND THE QUESTION OF CONJUGAL IRRESPONSIBILITY

Philip Swallow

Philip Swallow is a British university teacher, aged 40. He is a kind of comic figure; very skinny, not particularly self-confident, his hair is receding at his temples and he smokes pipe quite often. Philip has a family, wife Hilary and three children Amanda, Robert, and Matthew. Philip believes and claims his marriage is successful and happy although it is obvious that their relationship is rather stereotypical without any affairs or breakdowns. He assumes that moving Swallow to America will alleviate promoting Robin for him in the beginning it might seem that nothing very exceptional happens, only after few years he is offered a position of the Head of the English Department.

Morris Zapp

Morris also works at the university and except for his age that he shares with Philip he presents a totally opposite personality to Swallow. His main qualities are shown in situations like the one in a plane when he discovers that the young girl next to him is heading for an abortion or when he is kidnapped. Morris has a family, a daughter from his first marriage who uses the name of her mother, Melanie Byrd, she does not want to be associated with Morris Zapp as she studies at the same university that he works. He has been married to Désirée for a long time. A woman who has a very bitter and open mind, ideas and tongue too. Together they raise two children, twins – Elizabeth and Darcy. Morris like women but after the exchange happen he abandons his previous life-time interests.

Desiree Zapp

Desirée Zapp, his wife. At the start of the novel, she feels overwhelmed by Morris' strong personality and wants a divorce but agrees to defer action if he moves out of the house. Freed of his presence when he accepts the faculty exchange, she becomes involved in the early women's liberation movement. She eventually invites Philip Swallow to live with her when the home he is renting is damaged by a hill slide. She and Philip have an affair. Désirée acquires confidence and self-esteem by the conclusion of the novel.

Hilary Broome Swallow

Hilary Broome Swallow, Philip's wife. The two met when Hilary was an English student and Philip was doing postdoctoral work. They married and went to Euphoria on his fellowship. Returning to England, Hilary became a devoted wife and mother to their three children (Amanda, Robert, and Matthew). Their relationship has become very predictable and dull, though Hilary does not realize this. Stock by Philip's

infidelities in *Euphoria*, she becomes more assertive in her own household and enters into an affair with Zapp.

Exploring the Conjugal Irresponsibility in Novel

For a better understanding of conjugal irresponsibility we need research explores it through the novel. David Lodge, one of the most popular British authors of our day is well known for his intelligent entertainment, his thought provoking and at the same time sarcastic way of writing. Thus, the characterisation in his novels is mainly to reveal the problems of society like conjugal irresponsibility it is the readers task to elaborate on these problems. Sexual insatisfaction is the problem of conjugal irresponsibility. For instance, Mrs Hilary could not satisfy her husband on bed despite the fact that sexual activeness is regarded as one of the main responsibilities in couple. As Philip Swallow said after a kiss of melanie i have felt a physical sensation that i had not felt for more than twenty years” (38). So, it is clear that for twenty good years, Swallow couldn’t feel a real sensation from his wife. And we can see how stimulated he felt just after a kiss. This is a reality today even in the African context. Some women are so passive on bed that their husband would only refer to them for procreation, never for pleasure. This passiveness of women pushes their men to go out and search for a woman ready and active enough to give them pleasure. It was clear in the novel that Hilary takes good care of the children but this is one responsibility among others including sex.

Swallow by his side made proof of irresponsibility as he could not provide the need for his family, and the support of the family was left to Hilary alone. Communication became a problem. It was not mature of Swallow to careless about his family.

Morris Zapp is described as a wominiser because he could be banging the entire women’s field hockey team every night. He divorced with his first wife, the mother of Mélanie Byrd. Moreover, Désirée Zapp, his second wife is putting him pressure to divorce too. Had Zapp been a good man, he wouldn’t be spending his lifetime coping with divorces. Desirée declared “being married to you is like being slowly swallowed by a pyton. I want to be free, i want to be a person again “ (David 40) these words are proof that Désirée is tired of being victim of Morris’s carelessness. And it was clear in the novel that the ultimate concern of Morris is his profession, not his family.

Through the novel, sexual insatisfaction, financial issues even lack of communication are part of conjugal irresponsibility.

MAIN THEMES

Marriage

The marriage of Morris and Desiree Zapp is beset with problems. Morris is routinely unfaithful, inattentive, and inconsiderate, and Desiree’s awakening

sense of self-worth leads her to loathe her life with him. Philip and Hilary Swallow marriage is highly conventional.

Relationship

When talking about relationships in these campus novels, we would like to concentrate on the relationships that develop on the university ground or are connected with the setting. Those relationships can be either between colleagues or lovers. At any rate, the relationships dealt with in the campus trilogy are mostly of sexual nature.

Thus in *Changing Places* the sexual relationships taking place in Rummidge are rather hidden from the public – nobody knows for sure that Morris Zapp has an affair with Hillary Swallow; there are only the rumors. On the other hand the relationships in *Euphoria* are not hidden at all. Phillip even states in *Changing Places* that “telling the truth with a jesting air was, he [Phillip] had discovered, the safest way of protecting your secrets in *Euphoria*” (*Changing Places* 187).

The Impacts of Conjugal Irresponsibility in the Novel

It is common today to experience traveling and or academic exchange program within the countries sharing the same educational system. But this exchange generally make the actors involved to feel strange in their new land. So, in order to feel the gap of loneliness, actors are sometimes in search for opportunities that can make them feel at home. Moreover, the distance also is another factor that makes it difficult for them to play their role vis-a-vis their families. This is what is portrayed in this novel by David Lodge.

Without any further insight to what happens in changing places, the first negative effect of conjugal irresponsibility is the fact the professor Philip find himself in America. Philip Swallow in the host country in changing places wants to become like American. He starts to envy young people their age, clothes, life style, freedom, casualness and the way they behave .Furthermore Philip finds accommodation with Désirée Zapp with whom he develops an affair. He voluntarily takes care for the household and the twins. Therefore, Philip could not assume his responsibility on his own marital relationship.

Critical Analysis of the Causes and Consequences of Conjugal Irresponsibility

At this level we going to develop the critical analysis of the causes and consequences of the conjugal irresponsibility

Critical Analysis of the Causes and Consequences of Conjugal Irresponsibility

Here is the critical analysis of the causes

Critical Analysis of the Causes

One of the causes of conjugal irresponsibility is loneliness, we learned that Philip think his marriage was successful when they were together with his wife but as soon as the separation has come their marriage has become some way, Halary find herself alone with the burden of children. When we feel lonely within our marriage, you do not feel like we are part of anything bigger than ourselves. You feel alone, and there is no we, only you and your spouse, completely separate entities. You may or may not seem to be a happy couple to others, and you may or may not be able to keep a united front for the kids. Either way, when it is just you and your spouse talking to each other, you don't feel close, connected, secure or safe. You realize that you and your spouse are worlds apart on some basic values, which frightens you and makes you wonder why you married him or her at all. Your spouse seems to say the wrong thing at the wrong time all the time, and you wonder if this was always the case and you were too young, stupid or infatuated to notice you feel like your spouse doesn't pay attention to you. Compliments are few and far between, and not about things that you yourself are proud of. You feel that your spouse wouldn't be able to answer basic questions about what is important to you or what you feel or think on a daily basis.

Critical Analysis of the Consequences

Before analysing the different consequences about conjugal irresponsibility, we have to remind you first of all the burden of being in the relationship. We all read and hear from older generations that being in love or getting married is a huge responsibility, considering that everyone sees life differently. Let is not forget that when we live with someone, we also have to take care of the other. The simplest example can be our own family. We look out for each other in every possible situation. We hold each other accountable and stick to it. These responsibilities remain self evident. However, if we are not responsible, this can be a big problem. Now, the responsibilities can be as small as taking care of yourself and not bothering your parents or spouse with trifles, or as big as going out and making a living for your family or spouse. However, we humans have a tendency to avoid responsibility. We want to be a free bird in the sky without worrying about anyone or anything. There is nothing wrong with asking for freedom now, but with freedom comes responsibility. When you are free, you must be responsible for the interests, likes and dislikes of others. For example, your family might accept your actions and get you away, but it is not necessarily the same for society.

In our generation, the biggest challenge human being face in marriage is a lack of responsibility in the relationship. We don't want to be responsible for anything. It can be about our partner, our children, our friends or family. Apart from the impact of conjugal

irresponsibility in the novel, there are still some that the author has not developed and it is worthwhile mentioning these most common and disastrous consequences. Furthermore, conjugal irresponsibility can lead to divorce and adultery. Adultery destroys marriages. It is one of the worst things that can happen to a relationship. The betrayal of one partner in a marriage is one of the most devastating events that can occur in life. It violates everything you have built with your partner in such a personal way. Love is shattered, trust is destroyed, families are torn apart, and spouses and children bear the pain.

Dealing with the Conjugal Irresponsibility in the Novel

It is important to find ways and means to cope with the different obstacles the couples face during the marital life

Approaches

The most direct route to maintain the marital issues is through responsibility. Giving attention to your spouse, your children, make time with your family, listen to your spouse, and acknowledge their feeling. Through these act of attention, we will empower others in our relationship in our environment even in our society. As I said it at the beginning of this research work, the reason why I chose to work on this topic "conjugal irresponsibility in David Lodge's *Changing Places*" is to talk about so that candidates to marriage know what happens if they lack of irresponsibility in their marriage could find solutions which can help to reduce these situations they have been facing. Then lecturers who has always around with the ladies are most tempted so they should know in advance who they are, I mean if they will really be able to stand in temptation if not in this case their lose their marital responsibility.

Furthermore, No one enters into a marriage expecting it to fail, but unfortunately, many do. Or do people choose to be irresponsible? If you are experiencing marital irresponsibility, do not give up hope. There are ways to resolve these issues and save your marriage. First of all communication is the key. Successful couples know how to communicate. They not only understand why communication is important, but they have also learned skills that help them navigate difficult issues. Talk to your spouse about what is bothering you and try to come to a resolution. Conjugal irresponsibility can be resolved through effective communication. This means that both spouses need to be able to openly express their thoughts and feelings, listen to each other, and be willing to compromise. If one spouse is not able to communicate effectively, then the marital irresponsibility will likely continue to escalate. One problem that can often arise in marriage is that spouses may not feel heard or understood as in the novel Philip Swallow did not react about the washing machine that his wife was complain

it. This can lead to resentment and frustration for that matter. Effective communication can help to resolve these issues by providing a forum for both spouses to share their thoughts and feelings.

Do not keep your feelings bottled up. If something is wrong, talk about it. Emotions are a natural part of life, and it is important to express them in a healthy way. Bottling them up can lead to all sorts of problems, so it is important to talk about them openly and honestly. If not it can lead to all sorts of problems, such as depression, anxiety, and even physical health problems. If something is wrong, talk about it with someone you trust. Talking openly and honestly about your feelings can help you feel better and can help you resolve any problems you may be having. Talking about our feelings can also help us to better understand them. When we talk about our feelings, we can start to see patterns in the way we react to certain situations. This can help us to better manage our emotions in the future. Try to understand your spouse's point of view, even if you do not agree with it.

When your spouse has a different opinion than you do, it is important to try to understand where they're coming from. Even if you do not agree with their point of view, it is helpful to have an understanding of why they think the way they do. This can help to avoid problem and promote better communication. This is why empathy is so important. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. When you empathise with your spouse, you are showing them that you care about their feelings and that you are willing to try to see things from their point of view. It is not always easy to do, but it can help to strengthen your relationship. Agreement on big issues is necessary for a marriage to work. But it is okay to disagree on smaller issues. In fact, it is healthy for couples to have different interests and to see the world in different ways. It is important to remember that you are not always going to agree with your spouse, and that is okay. As long as you are able to respect their opinions and communicate effectively, you will be able to handle any disagreement that comes your way.

There are ways to resolve these issues and save your marriage. First of all communication is the key. Successful couples know how to communicate. It is also important for spouses to be able to listen to each other. Do not keep your feelings bottled up. If something is wrong, talk about it. Make time for each other. Dedicate time each day to spend with your spouse. It can help strengthen your relationship. This time can be used for talking, spending time together, or just being in the same room. It is important to make time for each other to connect and strengthen your relationship.

Finally do not criticize. If you do not like something your spouse does, try to talk to them about it in a constructive way. When you are married, you are

not just living with your spouse; you are living with their quirks too. And, sometimes, those quirks can drive you crazy. Maybe your spouse leaves their clothes all over the place, or maybe they are always forgetting to do the dishes. Whatever it is, if you do not like something your spouse does, it can be tough to keep quiet about it. But, before you start airing your grievances, it is important to try to talk to your spouse about it in a constructive way. That means avoiding name calling, insults, and other forms of negativity. Instead, try to talk to them about how their behavior makes you feel, and see if you can come up with a solution together. Of course, this can be easier said than done. If you have been having the same argument over and over again, it is likely that there is some underlying issue that needs to be addressed. In that case, it might be helpful to use a program like Mend the Marriage which can help you and your spouse communicate better and work through your issues. No matter what, it is important to remember that, as frustrating as your spouse's quirks can be, they are still a part of who they are. And, ultimately, you love them for who they are, quirks and all.

Ways and Means

Here comes ways and means

Since solutions cannot only be sufficient in helping people not lose their marital responsibility anymore, this research strongly put emphasis on the following recommendation:

- Make time to focus on yourself
- How we feel about ourselves is how we will act in a relationship
- Accept the fact that you are no longer single.

No, you may not come and go as you want please, no matter how much that may rankle. You have a responsibility to your spouse or partner now, and the sooner you accept it, the fewer fights and arguments you will have. Acting as if you are free and accountable to no one will pretty much ensure that you will be single again soon. Avoid even the appearance of wrongdoing.

If you meet with someone who tries to come on to you and maybe even who is attractive to you, do not panic. Simply show no interest and say it clearly to that person. Explain that you are very happy in your marriage and have no intention of straying. Say exactly those words.

Tell any person who tries to lure you into an entanglement with them that you're not interested, period.

Do not give a half hearted I am really attracted to you, but I am married response. This sends a wrong message - it says, "If only my stupid spouse weren't in the way, then you and I could hook up." Anyone who knows you're married and persists in coming on to you

will not hesitate to run over your spouse if she/he thinks you're at all interested. What matters is that you are married, and your commitment is to your partner or spouse.

Make Plans for your Future Together and Revise These Plans Regularly

Be sure to not only plan, but to also do the exciting and amazing things you have planned together. Shake things up now and then and do things neither of you have done before. Go to places together that thrill and excite you, do things together that scare and awaken you and throw in unexpected treats, outings and surprises for one another here, there and everywhere.

CONCLUSION

This research work sets out to explore the irresponsibility in relationship especially in marriage of nineteenth centuries. It intends to decode the link between the two literature professors, both part of a mindless faculty exchange, which brings the tumult and craziness of the college in the 1960's era to life. Changing places evolves from university angle and the relationship, and then studying it solely out of this could betrays the context. To the effect, the conceptualisation of irresponsibility has a major rank in the daily life of nineteenth centrie people.

The social revolution cause the exanchge of wives of the two professors due to their marital irresponsibility. But nevertheless, throughout our essay we explored and overviewed about what happen in Changing Places before being able to suggest some solutions to solve the issues of conjugal irresponsibility; for that, we used the qualitive method basing on the collection and analysis of availed data mostly internet sources.

The different causes of the conjugal irresponsibility have been focussed on than their negative impacts and we do believe that even if they are not broadly developed, they are of great importance and necessary. People who have the characters of irresponsible in marriage can push to their children of being negatively affected psychologically and socially even their relationship and their education. That is very crucial since they are the hopes and keepers of the family. If we take back the impacts of the conjugal irresponsibility either on the relationship or marriage, some solutions have been suggested in this work. In order to help people in the marital issues not lose their responsibility once on marriage, the solutions suggested are not only for them, it can also help every single man in him or her daily life because he or she will have at certain part of his life to get married and take care of families.

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