

Since her eventful and dramatic relationship with Justice Momojah Stevens became public, Edwina Jamiru has dominated social media discussions. Everyone seems to have an opinion about her. People who do not know her, have never met her, and have no understanding of her personal circumstances have found it necessary to share uninformed and unsolicited views, often harshly.

This is not surprising. We live in an age where anyone with a phone is entitled to express strong opinions about matters they sometimes barely understand. It is all emotions, clicks, and likes. Let's step away from the noise and ask a few questions that might actually be helpful, given that this saga has now become a national discussion.

Edwina's situation with her former lover, The Honourable Justice Momojah Stevens, has unfolded entirely in the public eye. After she first came out with allegations of ill-treatment and abuse, things escalated. She went on to have a baby fathered by the Honourable Justice. That poor child also got caught in the rift, to the point where a DNA test was ordered to confirm paternity. The results clearly indicated that Justice Stevens is the father. Since then, Edwina has used social media to chastise him and has been critical of the justice system, religious leaders, the government, and essentially anyone she distrusts.

This week, the police did what many feared but expected. They invited the young woman for questioning and detained her for what they described as cyber-related offences: stalking and harassment. While she remains in custody, the police have refused to provide further information. In his usual evasive and unhelpful manner, police spokesman Brima Kamara appeared on a TV programme where he declined to answer simple questions that would help the public understand the case. He could not say who lodged the complaint or who was allegedly stalked or harassed. The only person we know anything about is Edwina, leaving the public to fill the gaps with rumours and speculation. Police communication officers need to do better. Appearing on TV or radio is not the same as providing clarity.

Returning to the issue at hand, now that the Police are involved, it is important that the State approaches this matter with empathy and caution. It is understandable that some people may feel offended by Edwina's outbursts on social media. While insulting everyone is certainly inappropriate, the man at the centre of this, Justice Stevens, is not collateral damage. He got involved with a very young woman, a student. They had a baby. Now the entire situation has become an unpleasant public spectacle. This is Justice Stevens' creation, and he must take responsibility

rather than resorting to the kind of defensive tactics we have seen: a DNA test and previous arrests. We don't know whether he is involved in the recent arrest because the police have failed to name the complainant.

Some have suggested that Edwina might be experiencing mental health challenges. This is an important consideration, and it is entirely possible she could benefit from support. However, help without empathy, delivered through police detention, trolling or court trials, is not helpful at all. If anything, it appears to be an attempt to silence her rather than address the broader issues. And to be clear, mental health support is not the only thing she may need. She needs 360 degrees of care. There are still several questions that deserve honest answers.

Was Edwina a victim of any form of abuse? Did the Honourable Justice abuse his position by engaging in a relationship with a student? Is there any evidence of abuse during the course of their relationship? Has Edwina been acknowledged or compensated for the ridicule and trolling she endured during the court case and DNA test? Is she receiving support? Have state institutions fulfilled their obligations to her as a citizen and as a woman who may have a legitimate claim of abuse of office by a powerful man?

Until these questions are answered fairly and transparently, Edwina and women like her will continue to suffer and remain subjects of public ridicule. The only reason she has become the centre of social media attention is because she spoke out, and in ways many consider unconventional and angry. She could easily have remained silent and endured her pain privately, because in the eyes of society, she is nobody.

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