



THE WOMAN AS A VICTIM OF VIOLENCE/RAPE

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Abstract

The rising cases of violence against women world wide is not only becoming very worrisome but such that is getting out of hand and this must be urgently addressed. The aim of this paper is to bring to the knowledge of all the various forms of violences against the woman which includes physical, sexual psychological, i.e. wife battering that inflict words on the body, sexual molestations of female children and adults, within communities homes, during communal clashes, inter tribal wars, Boko Haram attacks, riots, and many more and the need for government to take very urgent and drastic measures to put an end to this very wicked and ungodly act against the woman and also to strengthen existing laws. So that perpetrators will be dealt with accordingly. As a position paper, it draw basically from libraries, prints

from the internets relevant texts. It concludes that if government can wake up from its slumbers, and become alive to her

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responsibilities added to the efforts that will be made by civil societies and religious bodies to deal with the situation it will certainly reduce the acts of violence against women and this will bring a lot of peace and sanity to women and man kind.

INTRODUCTION

The reported cases of violence against women and children the world over is certainly now a source of very serious concern not only to Government bodies alone but also to civil societies, religious bodies, well meaning individuals and also to sane minds. It is no

more news again to hear that a girl/woman was raped either in the neighbor hood, or in the bush, in schools, Nursery/primary/school, tertiary institutions. In those days the cases of rape involved adults alone, but nowadays, both female children, adolescence and even old women are involved.

The Punch News papers published on the 4th June, 2020 how Barakat Bello, an 18 years old girl and student of Federal College of Animal Health Production in Ibadan was gang raped by some hoodlums at Akinyel Kara Market along old Oyo road; while The Guidian News paper of June 2, 2020 reported the rape case of Vera Uwaila Omozuwa, a year one student of University of Benin, Benin city. While Premium times posted Jennifer's rape story on 14th May, 2020.

The cases of rape have become so rampant, which makes it very evident that our strong walls of morals as Africans have broken down and fallen like the walls of Jericho.

Dobie 2016:54 opined that one of the main reasons for violence against women is because a lot of men (husbands, boyfriends, sees women as their properties and therefore can be messed up and treated anyhow, no wonder we hear of cases of rape involving 3 years old female children by adults men, some 30 years and even older, this kind of immoral madness shows the extent to which our society has fallen morally.

The platform for Action adopted at the fourth world conference on women and Development, in Beijing in 1995 defined violence against women as “any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.

It was defined to encompass but not limited to physical, sexual, and psychological violence, occurring in the family and in the community, including battering, sexual abuse of female children, bride price related violence, rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, sexual harassment of women at work places and in educational institutions, trafficking of women, forced prostitutions, or violence perpetuated or condoned by the state.

African culture according to Oger Kabore (1987) does not favour the women at all, while the man is free to do anything he likes and most of the time gets away with it, for example the man marries so many wives and decides to send any of them away at any time in the name of divorce, with the any arranged means of taking care of the children, drinks and gets drunk to the point where he beats

his wife at the slights provocation, makes all the decisions at home even if they are against the well being of the woman and children, uses all manner of violent ultresces that can be very dangerous psychologically to the woman Calixthe Beyala, a renowned feminist writer from Cameroon and a very strong voice in the literaire cycle has voiced her pains in several of her work, Tu t'appelleras Tanga 1987, Seul la Diable la Savait, 1990 Assez l' Africaine, 1996, La Petite fille de Reverbere and many more the terrible forms of violence the woman passes through both physically, emotionally and psychologically at home, on the streets in her husband house and also in the offices, where they work at motor parks, in the neighbourhood, and has strongly condemned all such barbaric acts and calls for urgent steps to arrest such uncivilized acts.

FORMS OF VIOLENCE

There are various forms of violence against women, some of them. According to Oluremi F.D. (2015) in her article titled "DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN" include:

- a. Physical Abuse
- b. Sexual abuse
- c. Neglect
- d. Economic Abuse
- e. Spiritual Abuse
- f. Emotional

There are also other forms of violence against women which may include

- a. Using traditional laws/cultures to put the woman under pressure e.g. the man believes he is the head of the home and so can do anything he likes and go away with it like going out anytime and returning anytime even at very odd hours even if the act is causing the woman a lot of emotional pain.

According to National Bureau of statistics 2019, the data received from the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) and the Ministry of justice, rape cases have been on the rise. The percentage of rape incidence for girls was 63.04 percent in 2015 which increased to 72.13 percent in 2016 but decreased to 69.33 percent in 2017. Over 90 percent of suspects arrested for drug related offences in 2015 2016, and 2017 (92.7, 93.5 and 93.8 percent) respectively were men. While women made up 7.3, 6.5 and 6.2 percent and the arrests for the same years respectively.

Women aged 45 – 49 had the highest percentage (27.6) percent of female Genital mutilation cutting (FGMC) compared to other age groups. While

women aged (15 – 19) had the lowest at 12.3 percent (MICSS). The available data from Nigeria prison service (NPS) indicated that about 2 percent of prison inmate between 2012 and 2016 were female. During the same period, admission for stealing was 95 percent male and 5 percent female, while the percentage of women admitted into prison because of trafficking was 1.46 and 14.5 percent (for 2015 and 2016 respectively) compared to 4.5 percent and 2.9 percent in 2013 and 2014. In addition, the offences of trafficking in persons occurred mostly in the 16 – 25 age group where women constituted about 76.63 percent of convicted persons for that crime for the years between 2013 – 2015 (NAPTIP).

Causes of Violence

Certainly, violence don't just occur like that, there are things or actions that leads to violence or violent actions. Some of the causes of violence are:

1. Abuse of drugs, a lot of men and youths take or abuse drugs, which makes them to be unable to be in firm control of themselves, and they get very easily provoked when under the influence of such drings, and this can make them to pick on their wives or ladies around at the slightest provocation.
2. Frustration: with the pressure of life upon the shoulder of many men and youths, and as the economy gets more biting, and survival becomes tougher, so many men transfer their frustration and anger on their wives and women. When their wives ask for money for food or for house keeps, instead of giving it to them or explaining politely that they don't have, because of their pride, they turn it into quarrel and before you know, it takes another violent turn. According to this day 2011, newspaper, about 5% of women have been battered by their husbands.
3. Inability to give birth to children: a lot of men are very impatient in this regards. In so many places in Nigeria, and indeed in Africa, the moment a man and woman get married, is no time, they begin to mount pressure on the woman to start producing children and when the babies are not forth coming, all the blames are shifted to the woman. This is a very common and regular source of violence against women. No body thinks of the man as the person that may be the problem. In so many cases, family members particularly from the man's side join the man to mount pressures on the woman, this can lead to physical emotional or even psychological violence which can put the woman under very serious depression.

4. Total dependence on the man: In so many parts of Nigeria, particularly in the rural areas, where the woman depends completely on the man, this often leads to constant quarrel and misunderstandings, particularly in the Northern part of Nigeria where the men are expected to provide everything for the women, in cases where the man has more than one wife, this often can make the man get impatient, feel over bored and turns any demand from the wife into quarrel or argument that will finally lead to problems between them.
5. Infidelity: infidelity is another very strong and regular source of violence in families. When the woman is trying to give all the support to the man, both financially and morally, to see that things work out for them, and later discovers that the man is using all the resources to pursue another woman, this can be very annoying.
6. Jealousy: This is also one of the regular causes of violence against women. In a situation where a man is married to 2 or 3 wives, which is very common in the Northern part of the country, this automatically put the women on their toes and makes all of them to struggle for themselves, but there are cases where one of them may work harder than others or being more prudent than others in handing money, this can bring about jealousy from the other wives thinking that their husband is giving her more attention financially.
7. Social stress: some many things and situations can cause stress as a result of increased pressure of life. Violence may not be caused by stress but can be a way of responding to stress, (Seltzer and Kalmuss 1988).
8. Poverty: poverty is a situation where there is a very low economic power in the family and the means to get the basics things like food, clothing, shelter, is very scarce, and this can lead to domestic violence due to increased pressures about finances, and other aspects (Jewkes 2002).
9. Emotional Abuse: This form of abuse can be in the form of threat, intimidation or using very rough words at someone that is capable of distabilising the person psychologically and emotionally. Even shouting at a person which was found to be a very common form of abuse by Obi and Ozumba (2007).

Theoretical Framework

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines feminism as the belief and aim that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men; the struggle to achieve this aim" (Homy 560) whereas a New Approach

Dictionary of Living English defines. “Feminism as a belief or movement advocating the cause of women’s rights, and opportunities. Particularly equal rights with men by challenging inequalities between the sexes in the society (Sohon 200). Feminism actually came into existence due to the several struggle for the right of women against all forms of injustice in the society. According to Deborah Madson” Feminism deals with women and their status in the society and asks questions about oppression, consciousness and gender” madson further states that the concerns of feminist theory are “the unique experience of women in history: the notion of female consciousness. The definition of gender that limits and oppress; and the cause of women’s liberation from these rest; ctnons (200).

As we have seen, from the various definitions, feminisms main objective is to fight every form of injustice that tends to limit, oppress, intimidate, deprive or make life uncomfortable and unbearable for women using all available means possible.

Effects of violence against women:

- (a) Physical Effects: these normally includes bruises on the faces and other parts of the body, at times even bones may be broken and some internal injuries that can not be seen. Pregnant women can suffer miscarriage pre-term labour and other forms of injustice or even death of the foetus (Jones 1997).
- (b) Physchological effects: After the occurances of such violence, victims can become withdrawn and isolated and begins to live in fear, there is also the problem of depression which if not properly managed can lead to a general body breakdown.

Recommendations

1. Since poverty is one of the causes of violence, particularly domestic violence, the eradication of poverty will go a long way in eradicating domestic violence or reducing it very drastically. This is where government NGOs and religious bodies will play a very great role.
2. Government agencies, non-governmental organization and religious bodies should embark on massive awareness campaigns on the dangers involved in the abuse of drugs and therefore discourage youths and all those involved in the abuse of drugs from doing so.
3. Seminars and conferences should be organized on anger management, frustration and self control. Trained counselors and psychologists should be brought to give professional talks on the dangers of violence against women. These will go a long way in solving the problem.

4. Government should strengthen all legal and policy frameworks and build very strong institutional capacities for very effective and workable enforcement of law to deal with all matters of domestic violence against women and children.
5. There should be employment creations, sustainable economic growth for women and the provisions of Micro-credit to empower the woman for the development of agriculture and small business. This will make them to be less dependent on their husbands which will help them and thereby reduce cases of violence against women.
6. Religious bodies should focus on teachings, concerning, jealousy, issue of child bearing and infidelity. First, they should teach their followers to know that jealousy is a very dangerous path to follow, instead they should learn to be satisfied with what they have. They should also let their followers to know that it is the almighty God that gives children. If couples suspect any problem, they should be advised to go for proper medical check-ups and be sure of their health conditions. If that is done, then other things should be left for God to handle while they learn to be patient. And finally, People (both men/women) should be taught to learn to be faithful to their partners as this has both spiritual and health benefits.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper focuses mainly on violence against women. It equally looked at the alarming increase on violence acts against women, the causes effects and recommended ways the menace can be handled.

The author believes that if these measures are followed, there would be a great decline of cases of violence against women.

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