

Sexuality in Africa Magazine & Monographs



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on African
Women in Peace
and Wartimes.**

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**Addressing the
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Conflict In Sexuality, Sexuality In Conflict

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CONFLICT IN SEXUALITY, SEXUALITY IN CONFLICT

Taiwo Oloruntoba-Oju

The expression of sexuality in conflict situations is typically appraised from the perspective of victimology or victimcy, that is, in terms of who the victims are, the nature and degree of the violence inflicted, as well as the effects on the victims. For example, the United Nations declared 1975 as the International Women's Year, and followed this up with a declaration in 1993 of a programme of Elimination of Violence against Women. In both instances, the international body has focussed on women and children as victims of violence, including sexuality related violence, and also focussed on the untoward effects such as HIV Aids, homelessness and insecurity.

On the other hand, sexuality in conflict situations can be appraised in relation to patterns of conflict. This approach also takes into account associated variables such as the psychology and motivation of the sexual offenders, the dynamics of gender and society, as well as the role of socialization, history, culture and ethnicity. This edition of the Sexuality in Africa Magazine and Monographs examines such sexuality related variables in relation to patterns of conflict as applicable to specific conflict situations in representative parts of Africa.

Sexuality and Patterns of Conflict

In broad typology, conflict can be internal (within self) or external (related to others). Conflict is also typed according to the number, spread, affiliation, ethnicity or affinity of the participants involved (hence, personal, interpersonal, institutional, community, social or racial conflict), the locale of the conflict (hence, domestic, national or international conflict), degree, intensity, scope or duration (hence, mild, medium level, aggravated, violent, short term or long term conflict), according to the related thematic or philosophical orientation (e.g. moral or ideological conflict), and according to the modality of onset (e.g. spontaneous or programmatic conflict), etc.

Related to sexuality, conflict may arise internally from the pangs of sexual self awareness and production of desire. Such



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occurrence is squarely within the realm of Freudian Psychology. On the other hand, conflict frequently arises externally from the articulation or expression of sexual desire and subsequent negotiation of sexual interaction. This is usually triggered when such desire, or the mode of such negotiation, is incompatible with the interest or need of the object of the desire, resulting in interpersonal conflict. Sexuality-related conflict between person and society occurs when personal sexual orientation (e.g. being lesbian, bisexual or gay, or even being heterosexual) clashes with the dominant sexual ideology of a given society or culture. This class of conflict also frequently involves group or race dynamics, when different groups or races are ideologically or otherwise opposed on the issue of sexuality (hence, social or racial conflict).

Differentiating the dynamics of sexuality from that of conflict or violence can be complex, as specific acts of violence involving sex may arise as part of the dynamics of sexuality, personality or the specific conflict situation. For example, Alder (1984) opines that sexual violence may be more a reflection of a violent disposition than a manifestation of the offender's sexuality, while some other researchers positively connect violence involving sex to the sexuality of the offenders.

Clearly, the imposition or attempted imposition of one's sexual desire on other persons or groups of persons is an

ingredient of interpersonal/social conflict and violence. Such imposition usually manifests as cases of sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape. On the other hand, the conflict inherent in sexuality becomes aggravated when the expression of desire or negotiation of sexual interaction takes place against the background of racial, ethnic or social/ideological conflict, or within the context of war and sundry violent conditions. War, as aggravated conflict, brings out sexual aggression and predation in their worst forms.

Sexuality, Power, Gender and Conflict

The relationship between sex and power is axiomatic or self evident. Since power is the ability of influence and control, or simply the ability to get what one wants, it is not surprising that sex is also seen as an exercise of power. The sexual experience has often been described as analogous to the experience of power, and vice-versa. Henry Kissinger was to describe power as 'the best aphrodisiac.' The ancient Romans, as shown in the Pompei Wall Mural, had depicted military conquest as an extension or a manifestation of sexual prowess. Researchers have long noted that power is an important variable in romantic and social relationships, and therefore a 'potentially important predictor of sexual behaviour' (Browning et al, 1999). The resort to violence in sexual relations, especially in conflict situations, may well be an extension of the general will to power.

Gender is, however, a necessary corollary to this general association of sex and power. Since sex typically occurs between different

The relationship between sex and power is axiomatic or self evident. Since power is the ability of influence and control, sex is also seen as an exercise of power.

sexes (or genders), gender becomes an important factor in any exercise of power in sexual relations. Gender is therefore a factor in sexuality related aggression, just as power is a factor in gender-based violence.

Male Nature Hypothesis

Part of the explanation for, and sometimes rationalization of, sexual violence is what may be described as the male nature hypothesis. Research suggests that violence is testosterone-driven. Males are thus believed to be the more violent gender, testosterone being a sex hormone that is predominant in males (Coié and Dodge, 1997). Socialization processes generally nurture and promote this image of violence as phallic. In the media, films, advertisements and various outlets for cultural expression, violence is all too easily presented as a model of masculinity.

However, a large body of researches has suggested that women and females can be equally aggressive and violent. The only caveat seems to be that, when a particular conflict involves female and male, female violence is usually subtle or indirect (Compare Frieze, 2000; Kimmel, 2002). As demonstrated in this edition in the article by Yakubu Moses on 'Sexuality, Violence and the African Amazon,' the involvement of women in wars, in Africa as elsewhere, has shown that violence is not the exclusive preserve of men. The stereotype classification of the male as sexual harasser is also challenged in the article by Chinyere C.P. Nnorom titled "Sexual Violence in the Ivory Tower."

Male vs Female Exercise of Sexual Power

Still, differences in male and female sexuality have been cited to predict the different modes of exercise of power by males and females (Browning et al, 2006). Males and females tend to exhibit different wooing and seduction patterns based on different levels of sexual drive. Where male sexuality is considered active and compulsive, female sexuality is considered latent, passive and receptive. Male exercise of power in the department of sex therefore manifests in what may be called an engagement mode (where power means obtaining, or engaging in, sex). On the other hand, female exercise of power in sexual relations tends to manifest in the disengagement mode (where power means abstaining from, or withholding of, sex). The deliberate denial of sex to spouses is a frequent manifestation of the concept of sex as weapon on the domestic front. This is

also sometimes organized at group level, for example when women organizations for a sex strike as a form of political pressure. Recent examples include the threatened Kenyan women sex strike in 2008 and that of the Nigerian chapter of the Africa Women in Diaspora (OAWDN) in August 2010.

In view of the relative amount of drive associated with male sexual desire, violence or aggression in furtherance of sexual desire is considered a predominant male activity. However, personal psychology and socialization factors stand to moderate the concept of violence and conquest as phallic or as testosterone driven. An ideology of sex-gender domination and other related patriarchal values may well accentuate or promote male aggression and inclination towards sexual violence.

Sex as Weapon of War: Sexuality and Institutionalized Sexual Violence in Conflict Situations

The worst situation of sexual violence and use of sex as weapon occurs in aggravated conflict situations such as in wars. On the one hand, sexual deprivation and an ideology of sex-gender domination may aggravate a personal inclination to sexual assault in war times. On the other hand, sexual violence may also be organized at institutional or group levels in war situations. For example, the capture of women as 'spoils of victory' was always a prime objective in traditional (tribal) warfare. A programmed sexual assault in the context of war may include organized mass rapes to demoralize the enemy and function as symbolic conquest. Again the phallus becomes an icon of conquest.

Institutionalized sexual assault may also take the form of raids on women population to provide sexual 'comfort' for the sexually deprived army. The case of the 'comfort women' forced into sex slavery by the Japanese during World War II is the most notorious of such cases in history. Institutionalized sexual assault also occurred in African wars, as demonstrated in the article by Oluwatoyin Oluwaniyi titled "Sexual Violence on African Women in Peace and War-times" in this edition. Such programmed sexual assault has resulted in some of the worst forms of inhumanity ever experienced by humankind.

Sexuality, Language, Culture and Violence

Culture and the associated beliefs are also important variables in the use of violence in furtherance of sexuality. In many African

cultures, male sexual dominance and corresponding female submission is taken for granted. In some Islamic cultures, violence as a tool of correction or control of the female population, including wives, seems to be acceptable. The article by Kabiru Elayo on domestic violence and the law, in this edition, reports that the Northern Nigeria Penal Code sanctions such use of violence on wives, while the law offers very little protection for women from various forms of sexual assault.

At the level of language, male sexual agency is usually loaded with insinuations of dominance, aggression or violence. The current President of South Africa, Jacob Zuma, famously referred to the female intimate anatomy as the hut in and out of which Africa men go to play at will. Expressions in English that are usually taken for granted, such as penetrate, thrust, disvirgin, deflower (and especially slang versions or metaphors such as screw, bang, jack, or hunt (for 'woo')) all imply dominance, with some level of push and a hint of aggression. Both perpetratorship and victimcy are also distinguished in a language that assumes a clinical gender separation. For example, terms such as rape, rapist, mass rape, sexual assault, paedophile, harasser, wife-battering, etc all tend to collocate with male terms and carry the assumption of male sexual violence, while the terms showing the state and effects of victimcy, such as harassed, forced, defiled, stigmatized, sex slave, etc are associated with the female. The language reflects the conflict in sexuality and the tension of sexuality in conflict situations.

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" The worst situation of sexual violence and use of sex as weapon occurs in aggravated conflict situations such as in wars."

Sexual Violence

on African Women in Peace & Wartimes



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Oluwaniyi Oluwatoyin, O. PhD

Women are often victims of sexual violence in both peace and wartimes. While sexual violence in wars is not restricted to the female gender (for example males victims account for 20% of rapes in the Democratic Republic of Congo conflicts (D'Odorico and Holvoet, 2009: 53; Sivakumaran, 2008); however, the rate is higher for women. In most of Africa's wars, women's bodies are turned into instruments of war. Girls are routinely raped, exploited and turned into sex slaves in combat camps, used as shields for men in wars, and as 'charm neutralizers.' Such sexual violence against women (as well as girls) is not limited to their manipulation by warlords and other male combatants; it also includes institutionalized exploitation by state armed forces, international peacekeepers and other mission bodies, for selfish interests such as 'sex for food' or 'sex for shelter' campaign.

The phenomenon of sexual violence against women and girls in wars is a global scourge and is not necessarily unique to Africa, as demonstrated by the case of 'comfort women' in Japanese army camps during World War II military operations, and in the Iraqi, Kuwaiti, Peruvian, East Timorese and even Bosnian wars, (Parker, 1995; Askin, 2001). However, the occurrence of sexual

violence against the female gender in Africa's wars today provokes deep concern due to its frequency and gruesome manner of prosecution, as well as its overall consequences on both victims and survivors.

The lived experiences of sexual violence against women in wars have turned them into what Utas (2005: 404-406) perceives as 'agency of victimcy.' The effects of such sexual violence against women and girls are not always realized until after the war, when the physical, mental and psychological impact on them becomes compounded by health problems, rejection by families, friends, communities, and potential suitors. Unfortunately, the female gender is always underrepresented (if represented at all) in communities' reconstruction and reintegration programmes.

The response of the international community to this phenomenon through the United Nations is complicated by problems ranging from inadequate understanding of the relevant conceptual paradigms to issues of implementation capacity. These problems invariably result in the escalation of the perpetration of sexual violence in wars. Either as perpetrators or victims in Africa's wars, women's bodies are violated in a gendered manner. Violence against women, therefore, raises questions about power relations.

A major international response to this calamity has been the adoption and implementation of legal frameworks. However, in spite of these legal frameworks, the phenomenon has persisted unabated, partly because several dynamics engendering sexual violence against women and girls in Africa are ignored, and partly, due to inadequacies in the modus operandi for the implementation of such frameworks. It is against this backdrop that it has become urgent to investigate the factors that have impeded effective policy formulation and implementation framework, and to suggest ways of combating the phenomenon.

The questions that we ask in this paper include: What are the factors that have precipitated and triggered sexual violence against African women and girls in peacetimes and during wars, and what steps can be applied to prevent future occurrences and stem the current tide?

Sexual Violence against Women in Africa's Wars: Causal Factors

The use of sexual violence often has several motivations mutually reinforcing each other (Solhjell, 2009: 123). These motivations are central to the dehumanization of the female gender. AI (2007), Solhjell (2009), Baaz and Stern (2010) and Lewis (2009) link sexual violence against women in wars to the extremist propaganda carried out by particular groups, which is aimed at destroying other ethnic groups, engaging in ethnic cleansing or diluting the group as a biological nation, thus generating an identity crisis. Within this context, the public and mass rape of women during armed conflicts produces the double effect of, first, maximizing the humiliation of the society and second, spreading fear among the population (sending out unpleasant danger signals to the enemy group and, sometimes, to weaken their men's sexuality or sense of manliness). To other scholars (Goldstein, 2008; Oluwaniyi, 2005), the use and intake of alcohol and drugs, such as cocaine, heroine, Indian hemp (opium in Liberia), cannabis (jamba in Sierra Leone), and gun powder reduce inhibition and impair judgment or reason in wars. This in turn engenders sexual and other forms of violence, including, beating, disemboweling, decimation, slicing of breasts and killing, against women and girls.

Another school of thought is that, due to their sex, women and girls are perceived as

booties of war and therefore as legitimate targets of sexual violence during conflicts. Lack of or inadequate economic motivations for armed groups generate hunger, and subsequently, frustration, which they tend to take out on women and girls by sexually humiliating them in such wars (Baaz and Stern, 2008). This factor constitutes a major reason for the increase in the phenomenon, for example in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Liberia. Imagined or real marginalization tends to exacerbate abnormal sexual behaviour against the more vulnerable female gender, partly as a way of drawing attention to the demands of the perpetrators.

Beyond these factors that have been documented by scholars and corroborated by the international community as being responsible for sexual violence in wars, there are other structural factors which are ignored in policy formulation. Treating sexual violence as isolated creates the danger of coming up with counter strategies that are inherently flawed.

Masculinities and Sexual Violence in Peacetimes

There is a strong link between peacetime masculine attitude towards women and sexual violence in armed conflict. Masculinity as a concept feeds on notions of virility and sexual potency, and women and girls are abnormally seen as objects for the display of masculinity. The tendency is often to show off male sexuality in terms of physical prowess or potency. This is often by having many partners, demonstrating sustained penile erections and fathering many children. The corresponding desire to avoid the 'stigma' of a 'discredited' masculinity is sometimes an important motive for sexual violence in peace time (see also Connell, 2007: 4-6).

Related to this is the general perception that male sexuality is inherently aggressive and that male sexual needs cannot be denied for a long time. The belief is that male sexual urge has to be relieved, hence a man who is denied of sex for a long period may eventually take a woman or a very young girl, possibly by force! Children are rendered more vulnerable by a series of such ideas associated with the patriarchal ideology that is dominant in most African society (Ratele, 2008: 2).

The 'male nature' belief noted above, coupled with the 'macho' consciousness promoted within patriarchies, has resulted in a lot of men's multiple sex relationships

and unwanted pregnancies in peacetime. In war time, the situation is aggravated. Ownership of guns becomes an additional

beat up his wife. This abnormal belief is sometimes embedded in their customary laws. In Gulu district, there is a belief that to



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source of power and social standing, to complement physical masculinity. It is therefore, not surprising that in war zones such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC, women and girls were abducted and kept as sex slaves to perpetuate sexual slavery as long as 'they were still loved by the men'. This factor is responsible for much of the sexual exploitation perpetrated by international peacekeepers in war zones. The female body becomes an instrument to satisfy men's libido and appetite for power.

In most countries in Africa, especially Nigeria, reports about incidences of sexual violence such as rape of young children and women have increased in a disheartening manner. It is now common for daily newspapers to document stories of rape particularly of minors by older men. Unfortunately, this impunity has thrived in much of Africa due to lack of punitive measures against culprits. It therefore becomes easier for this group of culprits to perpetrate such acts on a larger scale during a situation of total political, social and moral breakdown resulting in war.

Negative Role of African Culture and Beliefs

Cultural beliefs in parts of Africa tend to encourage sexual violence. Most of these cultures retain practices that deepen the sexual subservience of women; hence, violence against them is wished away or seen as normal. For example, combatants in certain groups in the DRC believe that the rape of a female virgin conveys magical powers and invincibility. In Mozambique, Renamo soldiers believed that they could prevent infection with HIV/ AIDs by raping a very young girl (AI, 2004: 55).

In the Karamoja region of Uganda, there is a marital custom that if a woman rejects a man, "when you find her you wrestle her and force her into sexual intercourse. This can be done anywhere, even in a public space" (IRIN, 2010). In some other African cultures such as in parts of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, the man has the right to

be a true wife "a woman should have lost a tooth as a result of being battered by her husband" (IRIN, 2010). Ironically, the same culture denies succor to raped women. For example, in Congo, the culture objects to a husband retaining his raped wife; rather, she must be sent away (Pisik, 2009), which perhaps renders her more vulnerable and exposed to more rapes.

The male socialization process, coupled with failure to reach social expectation, sometimes leads to personal insecurities and consequently, sexual violence against women. When feelings of economic repression, unemployment, and despondency about the current state and the future are coupled with failure to make the masculine grade, some men become easily susceptible to emotional tension, frustration, anger and internal conflict. This may become externalized through violent civil wars or/and sexual violence against innocent women and children. A lot of men who feel entitled to women's services or obedience but whose routes to economic security, community respect and social integration have been cut off often resort to sexual violence to prove their masculinity (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2005). The Sierra Leone (1991-2001) and Liberia (2001-2003) wars and the atrocities committed against women and girls by state armed and non-state groups are concrete examples of responding to pre-war socio-economic problems.

Conclusion

What should be Done

A critical understanding of male peacetime sexuality, its cultural underpinnings and its socio-economic aspects, is essential to the understanding of the phenomenon of sexual violence against women and girls during conflicts. Such an understanding will help in designing programmes that will combat this phenomenon.

With specific regard to Africa, there is the need for African states to first domesticate international laws relevant to addressing

sexual violence against women and girls. These are in most cases absent and should be enforced. The international community should see to this. In the same vein, statutory and customary laws that tend to perpetuate women's subservience to men must be jettisoned. Also, stringent measures must be developed for punishing sexual violations of women and girls rights in peacetime, to serve as deterrent for violations in wartime. An enabling economic, social and political environment that will curb men's frustration and forestall aggression against women and girls must equally be established. To this extent, every leader who fails to guarantee this enabling environment should be made responsible and prosecuted for stirring the waters of violence in such countries. The culture of sexual impunity in Africa must be questioned and abandoned.

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Violence, Sexuality and The Amazon: Women Warriors of Africa from Dahomey to Liberia

Yakubu Moses

Studies in armed conflict in Africa, and West Africa in particular, have constantly depicted women as victims and men as perpetrators of violence or protectors of women. Yet, women have been part and parcel of the warrior class in Africa over time. The restriction of female soldiers to prescribed roles and status during conflict and conflict resolution has been the function of the predominant system of gender and sexuality, gender being a set of arrangement by which a society transforms biological sexuality into products of human activity, and in which these transformed sexual needs are satisfied. While the predominant sex/gender system has restricted female soldiers to assigned gender roles as nurses, cooks, secretaries and officers in personnel units, the exploits of the few women at the battle front have not been given much attention (Abdullah, 2004; Sesay and Ismael, 2003).

In this article, we look at historical perspectives on female combatants, the experiences of female combatants in conflict situations, and the effects of being ex-combatants on women's social relationship. We also examine the effect of the sex/gender system on the roles, position and status of women during conflicts and in peace-building processes, using the role of women in the Nigeria Liberian civil war as an example.

Women in African Armed Conflicts: Historical Perspectives

Throughout history, women have fought and led troops into battle. History is rife with tales of fighting women who achieved great successes and victories at the battle front. Dating back to the Amazons of ancient Asia, myths of fierce, autonomous women of martial excellence abound. Only few of these women have been documented in world history.

In West Africa, and in Africa generally, the only thoroughly documented amazons are the women warriors of Dahomey, an eighteenth and nineteenth century West African kingdom. In Dahomey, female warriors known as the amazons formed part of the national defence. King Houegbadja (1645 – 1685), the third king of Dahomey, originally started the group as a corps of elephant hunters called the gbeto. In the eighteenth century, this group was trained

and transformed into royal body guards. King Agadja (1708 – 1732), the son of Houegbadja, transformed them into a militia and successfully used them to defeat the neighbouring kingdom of Savi in 1727. This group of female warriors was referred to by the male army of Dahomey as Mino (meaning "our mothers" in the Fon language). Under king Ghezo (1818 – 1858), Dahomey became increasingly militaristic. Ghezo placed great importance on the army and increased its budget and formalized its structures. The amazons were rigorously trained, given uniforms, and equipped with Danish guns obtained via the slave trade.

The pre-colonial African women warriors passed on the baton of bravery to liberation veterans, who defied patriarchal restriction and the predominant sex/gender structure. For example, Frantz Fanon documented the role of Algerian women in the national war of independence, even highlighting the revolutionary role of prostitutes as fighters. In the Horn of Africa, the Eritrean People's Liberation Army (ELPA) is said to have comprised about 40 percent women fighters. Kenya's Mau Mau Liberation Army also recruited literate women into the forest fighting force as generals, fighters and strategists.

In Nigeria, the Aba Riots or women's war of 1929, though not a military engagement, points to the fact that women in colonial period were no cowards, and they were good fighters. The Aba women's war was essentially anti-government, a rejection of the colonial order. It was a movement of women to protect their economic and political interests which were endangered by taxation, the economic crisis, and the actions of the 'warrant chiefs' used to enforce colonial policy. The women wore chalk markings and carried palm fronds on one hand and sticks on the other, symbolizing peace and war.



Credit: Courtesy of Getty Images

In the Nigerian civil war, women were not forced but rather volunteered to serve. Women's voluntary service was formed to assist in educating the women of Biafra on the causes of the crisis and in the setting up of nurseries (Onogwu, 2008). Biafran military officers formed a paramilitary group in Anioma which later became known as the Biafran militia. Women voluntarily joined the militia. The militia was established as part of the recruitment drive for the Biafran armed forces. The Biafran army depended on the militia to supplement its forces and as a source of reinforcements. The militia was responsible for internal security. Women were found in different commands, decked in combat uniforms, carried guns, and acted as officers or as other ranks just like men (Specht, 2006). Some volunteers, who were referred to as devoted civil defenders, however degenerated into mere prostitutes, in order not to die of starvation. In some cases, women were raped while trying to cross over from the Nigerian side to Biafra or vice versa in order to persuade the Biafran and Nigerian leaders to surrender and stop the further wastage of lives and also for trading purpose.

The Liberian Example

Women were conspicuously present in the Liberian civil wars which started in late 1989. We need not perturb ourselves with the causes of the Liberian civil wars. Suffice it to note that the harsh dictatorial atmosphere that gripped the country was due in part to Sergeant Samuel Doe's rule and the emergence of an American-Liberian named Charles Taylor with the backing of neighbouring countries such as Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire.

Women and girls were part of the fighting forces in both fighting and non-fighting roles. Some units among the forces were wholly composed of female fighters commonly known as Women's Artillery Command (WAC) (Specht, 2006). It is hard to estimate how many female fighters joined voluntarily and how many were forced to join the fighting forces; however, responses of female ex-fighters show that majority were forced to join the fighting forces. Women and girls were seized in their villages, homes, at military road blocks, or were discovered hiding in the bush. Among those who volunteered to fight did so to survive and to protect themselves, while some joined the fighting forces for reasons such as economic motives, poverty, and the wish for revenge or for equality with men (Specht, 2006). Some young women joined the fighting force as a result of the influence of their combatant boy friends, and many had no choice but to attach themselves to a fighter with enough power to protect them (Utas, 2005).

In the Liberian civil wars, some women were sent to the battle front to man AK 47 rifles, a few acted as spies, while others were restricted to prescribed gender roles as nurses, cooks, secretaries and officers in personnel units. It is disheartening to observers that the exploits of the few women at the battle front have not been given much attention.

Gender-based violence (GBV) in all of its forms is endemic in Liberia. During the 1989 – 1997 civil war, various estimates indicate that as many as 40 percent of the women were raped. High levels of sexual exploitation and abuse of female child soldiers continued, which later resulted in the prevalence of early teenage pregnancies. Girls faced the highest risk of sexual violence, especially during migration and in the camps. Government, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) forces committed rape and other acts of brutal sexual violence against women and girls during the 2003 war.

Getting the exact GBV, rate has been difficult; however, the Concerned Christian Community (CCC) reported counseling 1,000 victims of rape between 1994 and 2003, while it treated over 620 girls during several weeks in June and July 2003. Between October 2003 and April 2004, the International Red Cross received 991 reports of gender-based violence from women and girls in Montserrado County, with girls under 20 years of age making up more than a quarter of those reported. More than one-third of the reported cases were gang rapes perpetrated by armed members of the fighting forces.

In 2003, the IRC carried out gender-based violence research among Liberian refugee women and adolescents (ages 15 to 49), living in refugee camp in Sierra Leone. Seventy-seven percent of the women and adolescent girls experienced at least one incident of sexual violence before being displaced, and 66 percent experienced at least one incident of sexual violence during displacement. Young boys were routinely forced to rape women and girls as part of the initiation process of some fighting forces.

However, the Liberian civil wars also showed another part of women. Women, like men, meted out evil against other women. Women tortured pregnant women; women organized forced sex rings for their male counterparts and held down women to be raped while they looked on. These acts proved beyond doubt that women are also capable of the evil for which the women movement vilifies men (Thelma, 2005).

Post-war Effects on Women

The civil wars in Liberia affected the ex-female and ex-female child fighters. The traumatic experience of war lives with the ex-combatants. The killings, corpses, sound of gun shots, torture, and other evils of war are bad memories which can hardly be forgotten. The experience of rape during the civil wars has been a barrier between the ex-fighter and the society. Majority found it difficult to evolve a civil living or a vocation. Some have resorted to prostitution. HIV/AIDS prevalence had been the scourge of many who prefer to die in silence. In February 2004, WHO estimated a 10 to 12 percent adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, noting the role of rampant gender-based violence during the 2003 war in facilitating the spread of HIV/AIDS. To these millions of women, the wars are not over at all.

Conclusion

Gender and sexuality are major factors that affected the roles, positions or status of female combatants during the Liberian civil

wars and in the post-war period. Majority of the combatants were forcefully conscripted into the fighting forces where they were given gender-based roles and later experienced gender-based violence. The exploits of the few female fighters who manned AK 47 rifles in the battle front are not well documented or discussed in academic circles; rather, only the traditional gender stereotypes of women being referred to solely as 'victims' exist. When ex-female combatants are discussed and planned for, it is often implied that they are predominantly 'victims.' However, a close examination of the actual situation shows that the women combatants were also involved in the brutalization of war victims, hence traditional gender stereotypes are not always applicable in the investigation of conflict situations.

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE IVORY TOWER: The story so far in the University of Lagos, Nigeria

Chinyere C. P. Nnorom

Sexual harassment has been with us as long as the interaction between men and women, and when such interaction is not mutual, there is bound to be harassment (Kastl and Kleiner, 2001). Studies on the nature and practice of sexual harassment in higher institutions have shown that the phenomenon is rife in universities, including Nigerian universities (Nnorom, 2003; 2005; Olurode and Olufara, forthcoming). In many cases, women and girls are the target of such sexual harassment.

An earlier study by Paludi and Barickman (1991) proposed that, because of power structures and cultural biases in organizations (such as universities), "women are overwhelmingly the targets of sexual harassment and, although a profile has not been empirically established, nearly all harassers are male". Additional studies (e.g. Denga and Denga, 2004; Hurley and Fagenson-Eland, 1996) strengthen this contention by showing that men seldom suffer from sexual harassment. In Nigeria, Adedokun's (2005) study at the Lagos State University (LASU) recognized that male lecturers to female students was the most common form of sexual harassment. However, a few isolated cases of some female lecturers propositioning their male students have also been reported (Denga, 1986).

Some institutions have introduced measures to combat sexual harassment, notably the introduction of 'dress codes' and restriction on private interaction that may precipitate or promote sexual harassment. The objective of this article is to examine the effectiveness or otherwise of these measures, six years after their introduction in the University of Lagos. Does sexual harassment still persist in the institution? Have there been reported cases and what measures were taken to punish offenders? This study attempts to provide insights to these questions by interviewing staff, students and officials directly involved in managing harassment cases at the University of Lagos.

Meaning of Sexual Harassment

According to Barton and Eichelberger, 1994:24, "deciding where harassment begins and ends is an admittedly difficult



Credit: Courtesy of Getty Images

..." Grobler et al (2002: 56) also note that the concept of "sexual harassment has developed into one of the most controversial, complex and perhaps widespread HR[human resources] problems in the world". The South African Code of Good Practices (quoted in Grobler et al, 2002, p.57), declares that sexual attention becomes sexual harassment if:

the behaviour is persisted in, although a single incident of harassment can constitute sexual harassment; and/or

the recipient has made it clear that the behaviour is considered offensive; and/or

the perpetrator should have known that the behaviour is regarded as unacceptable.

However, Chuang and Kleiner (1999: 13) posit that, in an educational setting, "sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone from or in the education location". Sexual harassment, therefore, "is not sexual interaction, flirtation, attraction or friendship which is invited, mutual, consensual or reciprocated" (Nyamulani 2006:7).

In sum, sexual harassment in an institution of learning can be defined as any advances to a student (whether male or female) aimed at extortion or sexual requirements tied to the students' academic achievement.

Causes and Types of Sexual Harassment

As noted earlier, Adedokun's (2005) study at the Lagos State University (LASU), Nigeria recognized that male lecturers to

female students was the most common form of sexual harassment. He identified the following as the contributing factors:

Integrity, self-esteem and intellectualism were not properly cultivated by some lecturers;

The perception was that female dressing and attitudes increase their vulnerability to sexual harassment;

Lack of respect for the female gender was reported as a fundamental reason for sexual harassment.

However, sexual harassment in academic environments had been identified to be of two types. CSU (2003) gave a detailed explanation of the two types. The Quid Pro Quo type, according to this source, means 'this for that,' and consist of a lecturer providing some tangible academic related assistance in the form of test score, project grade, course grade, thesis approval, etc, in exchange for sexual gratification from a student. According to CSU (2003:1):

This type of harassment arises in the context of an authority relationship. The relationship may be direct as is the case of a supervisor and subordinate or teacher and student, or it may be indirect when the harasser has the power to influence others who have authority over the victim.

This type is considered to be the most unconcealed form of illegal sexual harassment, as well as an abuse of a lecturer's power. The second form, termed Hostile Environment, represents an environment that interferes with a students' academic performance or is recognized by

the student to be not only threatening but intimidating and offensive. For example, when a lecturer is fond of discussing sexual relations and degrades women during lecture, such a lecturer is guilty of the hostile environment form of sexual harassment. So also is the case when a conduct is directed at an individual because of his/her gender, is persistent and has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive academic or work environment.

Two theories which attempt to explain the phenomenon of sexual harassment are: the sexual autonomy theory and Dignity theory. Sexual autonomy theories view the idea of 'sexual harassment' as an enforcement of the sexist and homophobic norms of patriarchal society. Conformity to these norms implies the punishment of anyone who deviates from them, including masculine women, effeminate men, gays and lesbians, transsexuals, and anyone else who conveys an unconventional sexuality or sexual identity. These theories seek to protect individual freedom of sexual expression (Anderson, 2006); however, in the process, they appear to support sexual harassment by excusing the behavior under the guise of individual freedom of sexual expression.

Dignity theory, on the other hand, locates the core wrong of sexual harassment in the abusive means that the harassers use to advance their ends, rather than in the sexist or heterosexist intent or outlook of their conduct. What is wrong about sexual harassment, according to the dignity account, is that it coerces, threatens, torments, intimidates, insults, humiliates, and degrades its victims. These are considered as 'dignitary injuries' or as harms to an individual's standing as a person (Bernstein, 1997). Dignity theory offers a conservative account of the wrong of sexual harassment, as it does not challenge conventional norms of gender and sexuality the way sexual autonomy theories do. However, the dignity theory appears to better explain the discourse of sexual harassment because it provides a better understanding of what the victims endure.

University of Lagos Sexual Harassment Narratives

Interviews with female and male members of the University community show a variety of responses to the phenomenon of sexual harassment. An interview with a married female student produced the following narrative:

We took a course from another Department which is also compulsory for us. The result was

released and mine was missing. I went to the lecturer in question (a Professor for that matter) to ask for my result because I took the examination and completed the continuous assessment. On reaching the office, he confirmed that my result was ready but would only release it after I agree to go out with him. I could not believe this because even when I told him I was married with kids, it did not deter his desire. For him, it is better that I was married so that if the outing brings pregnancy, my husband can lay claim to it. It only took the timely and diplomatic intervention of a female lecturer for that course to be released. I was never dressed in skimpy wears. I go on wrappers every time I come to campus. So, what has dress code got to do with this case? Is the lecturer in question not part of the policy makers?

Some other students (both male and female) opined that cases such as the above are extreme and may not be considered universal, but that most sexual harassment is attributable to female students' sexual overtures which may or may not be intentional. A male student had this to say:

Imagine a male student or staff being confronted with ladies ever exposing their breasts in a blouse that has little or nothing to hide, with skirts as short as pants and still with a slit exposing her underwears. What is she asking for? Nothing short of a rape or harassment. Let the lecturers enforce dress code in their lecture rooms as directed by the institution and sexual harassment will die a natural death.

Both staff and students agree that there are also student harassers and they seem to be ignored when issues of sexual harassment are discussed. How, then, do we distinguish between students harassed and student harassers? A male lecturer distinguishes the two in these words:

A student being sexually harassed is in a precarious position and has no say in the matter. He/She may even wish to offer monetary gifts as a substitute. On the other hand, a student harasser makes herself available even when she is not asked and tries to lure her victim with both body overtures and indecent wears. The only difference between the two is that the lecturer can call her bluff. In the former, however, the student is in a fix.

A female lecturer, indirectly supporting the above assertion, added:

Student harassers succeed because most of our male counterparts are guilty as alleged. Otherwise lecturers who should serve as parents/guardians to students entrusted in their care cannot use the above reason to defile those left in their custody. It is nothing short of madness.

Some students also added that the

document on sexual harassment includes exchanging money / gift for grades and that both male and female lecturers are guilty of this but it is more pronounced with the male lecturers. According to one male student:

I know of a female lecturer who specifically asks students for gifts and even makes it a point of duty to make explicit demands. The only difference is that female lecturers are more considerate in their demands. The male lecturers may even want you to contribute money for buying or maintenance of their cars.

Many more students insist that there are student harassers but assert that they are mostly found among never do wells. These student harassers, according to the reports, would do anything to get a good grade; not just a pass mark. According to a male student:

What is annoying about this sort of students is that they go about boasting and betting about what they can achieve. Sometimes they even say in advance of an examination the grade they will get in a particular score and, surprisingly, it materializes afterwards.

Counter-Harassment Measures

In an attempt to curtail the ever increasing incidence of sexual harassment in Nigeria's higher institutions, some of the institutions have introduced a dress code aimed at reducing its incidence. In 2003, the University of Abuja, for instance, banned all forms of indecent dressing on campus. According to Olori (2003): "Any dress worn must cover intimate parts of the body, must not expose the breast, stomach, navel and bare chest." The previous year, according to the source, Ebonyi State University located in the Eastern part of the country also banned female students from wearing trousers, miniskirts and transparent dresses in lecture halls and departmental functions. Of greater relevance to this paper was the introduction on April 24, 2004, by the University of Lagos Senate, under the leadership of the then Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Ibidapo-Obe, a dress code aimed at curbing or reducing the incidence of sexual harassment in the institution. This action was preceded by the introduction of a dress code by the Faculty of Social Sciences. This was not unconnected with the findings of studies in the institution which had earlier identified mode of dressing of students as part of reasons for sexual harassment (Nnorom, 2002, 2005; Olurode and Oyefara, forthcoming). In the document released by the institution, some wears were spelt out as targets. These include, but are not limited to:

All tight-fitting clothes including skirts, trousers and blouses; all clothes which reveal sensitive parts of the body such as the bust, chest,

belly, upper arms and the buttocks. Examples.....spaghetti tops, wicked straps, mono straps, tubes and show me your belly....(UNILAG News:31)

In addition to this is a document was prepared by the Counseling Unit, and released around March 2010, on what constitutes Harassment. The document identified exchanging money or sex for grades; indecent/provocative dressing and visiting lecturers at odd hours (voluntary or on invitation) as constituting sexual harassment. This classification was borne out of a conference, according to an official source, organized by the National Universities Commission (NUC) of which members of the institution were participants. The conference, with the theme Youth Development and Leadership, held from 13th - 14th of January, 2009 and debated extensively the issue of sexual harassment. At the end of it, the NUC agreed to develop a sexual harassment policy for all Nigerian universities. The university had to keep the formulation of policy document on sexual harassment on hold because of this intervention of the NUC. At the time of writing this article, therefore, the University of Lagos does not have any policy document in place, apart from the dress code and the sexual harassment poster, which could be used to warn, indict or punish erring offenders.

Conclusion

The narratives provided above were compiled after the counter-harassment measures of the University of Lagos. What this means is that sexual harassment has remained rife in the institution despite the existence of the two documents analyzed above. This situation tends to corroborate Kastl and Kleiner's (2001) position that interaction between men and women would often produce sexual harassment especially when such interaction is not reciprocated.

The existence of sexual harassment brings with it other vices which do not augur well for education institutions and the nation at large. At the institutional level, students who are frustrated by such harassment may end up joining secret cults to vent their anger and by so doing end up hurting innocent ones. Some works had shown that both male and female cult groups exist in the institution (Nnorom, 2008 ; Oyefara, 2004). At the societal level, graduates produced in this scenario may not be a good representation of the academic endeavour.

This article recommends that the problem of sexual harassment in institutions of

learning can be surmounted or minimized by the following strategies, among others.

Installation of hidden cameras at all offices (both lecturers and administrative) in the institution to forestall cases of sexual harassment.

Provision of a forum where parents and university authorities can brainstorm on ways to tackle the incidence.

Preventing the concentration of power in a lecturer (as sole determinants of students' future) by pairing lecturers (male and female) in the teaching of courses, especially compulsory courses.

Official hours of consultation to be made public and approval given for them.

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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND THE LAW: Nigerian Women at Crossroads

Kabiru Elayo

The law has been of a limited usefulness as a strategy for liberating women precisely because it has ignored the material basis of women's socially constructed differences from men. The major site of women's unequal treatment is in the home, in the domains of housework and childcare and caring for others... (Fredman, 1998)

Several reasons have been adduced for the problem of domestic violence worldwide and in African homes. The theories used to explain the phenomenon have included: Rights theories, which look at the issue from the international human rights perspective; feminist theories, which address the issue from the perspective of gender inequality; cultural explanations, which conclude that the problems are rooted in African culture and tradition; the society in transition views, which explain the issue as a direct result of African society's transition to the modern and urbanised society, and the 'culture of violence' view which explains domestic violence as a way of resolving disputes and attributes this to the colonial legacy.

In this article, we look at the causes of domestic violence in Nigeria, the role of the judiciary, and why existing legislation in Nigerian (including international and regional human rights treaties) have not been able to definitively address or tackle the situation..

United Nations Declaration

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) defines domestic violence as:

Encompassing, in addition to violence perpetrated by the state, physical, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation, physical, sexual and the general community including rape and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and, trafficking in women and forced prostitutions.

The forms of violence against women described here usually occur between persons who are closely related in terms of family relationship (such as husband and



Credit: Courtesy of Getty Images

wife or couples with intimate relationships), hence the domesticity.

Scope of Domestic Violence in Nigeria

One of the challenges faced in the evaluation of domestic violence in Nigeria is the absence or inadequacy of official statistics. This problem may not be unconnected with the cultural tolerance of domestic violence, which means that a large percentage of the incidents go unreported. The few reported cases are treated as merely private matters by law enforcement officials. The tendency of the Police is to maintain a policy of non-interference so as not to be seen to be instrumental to marriage break-ups or family rifts.

However, it is estimated that an overwhelming majority of women and girls in Nigeria are subjected to violence by some members of their families and within their communities. In spite of a well-structured legal and judicial system, and the fact that Nigeria is a party to several international and regional human rights instruments, countless women and girls are still subjected to violence by some members of their families and within their communities, as it happens in many countries throughout the world.

According to Amnesty International, more than a third, and in some groups nearly two

thirds, of women in Nigeria are believed to have experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence in the family. This appalling situation is faced by women and girls irrespective of their social strata or age. Women are frequently beaten and "punished" for supposed transgression, raped and even murdered by members of their family (Menkiti, 2005). In some cases, vicious acid attacks leave them with horrific disfigurements. Many girls and young women are also forced into early marriage by parents and relatives. In many communities, some harmful traditional practices leave them traumatized with lifelong pains and damage to their health.

Causes of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence in Nigeria and indeed in the African context cannot be discussed meaningfully without referring first to the gender inequality that has been well entrenched in the African culture. Almost every traditional African society was patriarchal, and a woman's place within this scheme was decidedly subordinate. Institutionalization of this inequality remains common in many African customary laws (Bowman, p. 852). For example, under most African systems of customs, women have no right to inherit from their husbands or parents. Sometimes, women would be reminded that it is perfectly normal that a husband should beat his wife, hence the feminist view that sees the problem of domestic violence from the perspective of gender inequality. This is akin to the human rights theory which also sees the abuse of women as resulting from a failure to recognise the individual human rights of women.

On the other hand, the 'culture of violence' explanation referred to earlier attributes part of the blame for domestic violence against women in general to an alleged 'culture of violence' whereby modern Africa has come to accept violence as a way to resolve disputes. This quaint 'acceptance' is linked to the colonial heritage when Africans were treated coercively by their colonizers (Bowman, p. 852). This view is also related to the 'society in transition' explanation which sees domestic violence as emerging from the fact that African societies are in transition from traditional cultures to a modern, urbanised society.

Domestic violence has also been theorised from the perspective of power relations. Power has been described as;

The multiplicity of force relations imminent

“ Almost every traditional African society was patriarchal, and a woman's place within this scheme was decidedly subordinate. Institutionalization of this inequality remains common in African customary law.”

in the sphere in which they operate

and which constitute their own organisation; as the progress which through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens or reverses them, as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system ... as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general formation of the law in the various hegemonies.” (Mitchell Foucault, cited in Grosz 1990: 92).

Foucault believes that, to understand power fully, forms of resistance and attempts to dissociate from it should be investigated. Thus, in trying to understand power relations in the family and the community, for instance, one needs to investigate in what ways women and

partners. This physical abuse ranges from shoving or slapping to kicking and stabbing. It results in serious injuries, permanent disability, disfigurement and sometimes death. This situation, which is sometimes tolerated as a fact of married life, reflects a sort of a power relationship between the husband and wife similar to that which occurs between parent and a child.

In a study conducted by Amnesty International in a southern state of Nigeria on the justification of wife battery, it was rather surprising that a higher proportion of women than men actually justified wife beating. The report summarised below shows some of the reasons cited for wife battering and the relative percentage of women and men who opined that the

Psychological Violence

Psychological violence is as real as the physical, even though the effects may not always be visible. In most cases, physical abuse is preceded by psychological/emotional abuse of wives/partners, involving verbal aggression, rejection and sometimes neglect. The effects of verbal abuse may not be seen physically, but, psychologically, it shows in the form of loss of self-esteem, lack of confidence and depression, all of which pose serious health problems.

Sexual Violence

This form of domestic violence includes rape, marital rape, and incest, where an adult member of the family such as a father, cousin or uncle has unlawful carnal knowledge of the child.

Role of the Judiciary

Unfortunately, the criminal justice system as presently operated in Nigeria provides only a weak protection, or none at all, for women and girls from perpetrators of domestic violence. The police and judicial officers, for instance, often dismiss complaints, asserting that such issues are family matters, thus failing to press charges. The few victims who succeed in taking their cases to court are faced with humiliating rules of evidence and discriminatory attitudes from court officials. In 2005, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child observed the “generally high acceptance of domestic violence among law enforcement officials and court.” (Amnesty International).

For example, in *State v Akingbola Gabriel* (1971), where the accused was charged with raping a 20 year old virgin, the learned trial judge remarked:

I have no doubt that the accused took most improper liberties with the girl who was anxious to get a job. The accused committed the crime with which he is being charged but there is a practice in Nigerian courts, which have for all practical purposes ripened into a law, which is the requirement of corroboration before conviction of rape even though the act does not call for corroboration. Corroborative evidence which tends to show not merely that the crime has been committed but that it was committed by the accused...”



Credit: Courtesy of Getty Images

children are distanced from power, while men are closely associated with it.

Domestic violence in Nigeria corresponds to this model of power relations. An investigation into the role of the law and the judiciary also shows that both are skewed against women in the country.

Forms of Domestic Violence in Nigeria

Domestic violence on women in the Nigerian setting takes many forms, some which include: wife battery, psychological violence and sexual violence.

Wife Battery

The most common form of domestic violence is wife battering by their intimate

battery was justified:

Wife goes out without telling husband (women 39 percent, men 21.3 percent)

The woman neglects her children (women 39.3, men 25.4 percent)

Wife argues with her husband (women 33.3 percent, men 18.3 percent)

Wife refuses to have sex with her husband (women 34. 4 percent, men 19.1 percent) (Amnesty International ...)

What is more, there are some laws that unfortunately permit husbands to chastise their wives with a view to correcting them. For example Section 55 (1) (d) of the Penal code that is applicable in the Northern part of Nigeria, allows a man to beat his wife for the purpose of correction.

“ In a study conducted by Amnesty International in a southern state of Nigeria on the justification of wife battery, it was rather surprising that a higher proportion of women than men actually justified wife beating.”

(Annual Law Reports, 1971).

The trial judge did not consider the silence of the accused as corroborative evidence; thus, the accused was discharged and acquitted.

In *State v Samuel* (ANLR, 1971: 404) where the accused was charged with unlawful carnal knowledge and indecent assault of a 9 year old girl, the accused was discharged of the count of indecent assault. The court held inter alia:

“Although in cases of rape and sexual offences against women and girls a court may convict on the uncorroborated evidence of the prosecution, yet the court must warn itself of the dangers to do.”

Also, in *Upah v State* (NWLR, 2003: 816), the court held that medical evidence did not satisfy the requirement for corroboration.

From the above examples, the courts apparently sympathise more with the accused person than the victim. What is more, since sexual assault or rape is hardly done in the public glare, the requirement of corroboration by virtue of Section 221 of the Criminal Code before grounding conviction for defilement of a girl can hardly be fulfilled.

Consequently, most accused persons not only go free but Scot free, leaving victims with psychological pains and frustrations, and thus discouraging other victims from seeking redress through the instrumentality of the law.

Conclusion: What Remedies?

No law specifically criminalizes violence in the family; hence, prosecutions for violence in the family have to rely on 'common assault' and other criminal provisions. But these are often skewed. For instance, Section 352 of the Criminal Code states that:

Any person who unlawfully assaults

another and thereby does him harm is



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guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for three years.” (underlining added)

On the other hand, Section 360 of the same Criminal code states that:

Any person who unlawfully and indecently assaults a woman is guilty of a misdemeanour and liable to imprisonment for two years. (underlining added)

Here it would be seen that the punishment for assaulting a man is higher than for assaulting a woman!

However, the Nigerian Court of Appeal, in an epoch making judgment delivered by Niki Tobi JCA, as he then was, in *Mojekwu v Mojekwu* (NWLR, 1997: 512/283), gave a guide to the remedy to this appalling issue of discrimination between the sexes. The

law lord stated thus:

In my humble view, it is the monopoly of God to determine the sex of a baby and not the parents.... For a custom or customary law to discriminate against a particular sex is to say the least an affront to God himself.... On my part I have no difficulty in holding that the...custom ...is repugnant to natural justice, equity and good conscience.

In tandem with the above mentioned judicial authority, it becomes necessary that all laws that discriminate against women should be reviewed, and that campaign be intensified in the country to transform international conventions such as CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women) into local laws.

Also, since socialization is a key issue in the entrenchment of gender bias and the associated gender based violence, no effort should be spared in sensitizing law enforcement and judicial officials, and indeed the entire citizenry, on the need for a just outlook on gender.

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ADDRESSING THE SEXUAL VULNERABILITIES OF YOUNG WOMEN IN AFRICA



A cross-section of 2010 SLDF participants

The Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre (ARSRC) hosted thirteen participants from various African countries at the seventh edition of the annual Sexuality Leadership Development Fellowship (SLDF) which held from 19th – 30th July, 2010, at Action Health Incorporated training facility. The participants came from East Africa: (Kenya, Uganda, Zambia); Southern Africa: (South Africa); and West Africa (Ghana and Nigeria). Three additional persons from Nigeria representing the media and NGO also participated as observers. The theme for this year's SLDF was "Addressing the sexual vulnerabilities of young women in Africa".

During the two-week intensive programme, participants had the opportunity to learn and share experiences regarding effective strategies for policies and programming aimed at reducing sexual violence against girls and women. Specific issues covered were: Sex and Sexuality: Conceptual Issues, Status of Adolescent Girls and Young Women's Health/Rights, Sexuality and Development, Sexuality and Pleasure, Sexual Rights, Sexual Violence, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS, Strategies for Addressing Young Women's Sexual Vulnerabilities, Sexuality in Context: Sexual Scripts in Contemporary Africa, Gender and Sexuality, Female Sexuality in African Literature and Culture, and Sexual Identity and Orientation: Addressing Diversity in Africa. In addition, skills building sessions were incorporated which covered Advocacy Skills for SRH, Power Speaking Skills, Leadership for Sexual Reproductive Health and Reflection and Action Planning. These sessions presented an opportunity for participants to explore the concepts of sexuality through a critical analysis of gender, culture and rights, with specific

emphasis on young women's sexual experiences. Participants also had the opportunity to explore contemporary research and practice, develop networks in the field, and acquire new knowledge and skills which they could apply in their work.

This year's programme featured prominent sexuality research scholars and seasoned professionals in the field from Nigeria and abroad including: Prof. Peju Olukoya (World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva), Prof. Taiwo Olorunjoba-Oju (University of Ilorin), Ms. Nike Esiet (Action Health Incorporated (AHI)), Dr. Abiola Tilley-Gyado (The Rosebush Foundation), Prof. Ayo Atsenuwa (University of Lagos), Dr. Princess Olufemi Kayode (Media Concern Initiative for Women and Children), Dr. Uwem Esiet (AHI), Dr Oka Obono (University of Ibadan), Ms. Dorothy Aken-Ova (INCRESE), Ms. Amy Oyekunle (Kudirat Initiative for Democracy, (KIND)), Ms. Bunmi Olatunde (Cranfield Training Consult, (CTC) and Ms. Uche Ignatius (Positive Action for Treatment Access (PATA). The training sessions were interactive and involved power point presentations, group activities, case studies, film shows, discussions and talk show, field trip, games, stories, power walk, individual tasks and one-on-one mentoring.

The 2010 SLDF met participants' expectations. Thirteen participants rated the training workshop excellent and all said it was well organized. Eleven found the contents of the course excellent, and twelve participants considered the faculty and quality of training excellent. All participants believed they acquired new knowledge and skills to help them improve their work and career. Three topics found most useful were: Strategies for addressing young women's vulnerabilities, Power speaking skills and

Leadership for Sexual reproductive health. Three things they liked most was the expertise of the trainers, networking with people from other countries, and ability to express views freely. But some participants felt that they had to learn so much within a short period of time.

On the whole, the 2010 SLDF was rated excellent and successful. Some of the participants expressed their views this way:

"I am now a changed person. I will no longer allow my personal values to interfere with my work especially on issues relating to sexual minorities".

"The collective experiences from other countries will go a long way in influencing my programming activities on sexuality. I particularly liked South Africa's programme aimed at promoting girl-child education".

"Coming from a medical background, I did not have any formal training to equip or prepare me to address patients with different sexual orientations. Now I am prepared to treat them like others with respect".

"I have acquired new skills to motivate women to speak out and not die in silence".

"I will become more gender sensitive and specific in my programming activities". "I am already sharing knowledge with my friends on face book".

"I have realized the need to work with policy makers and engage men and women

The SLDF is an annual programme organized by Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre (ARSRC), a project of Action Health Incorporated with support from the Ford Foundation, aimed at strengthening the growing network of emerging leaders in the field of sexuality on the African continent. The objective is to develop a better understanding of the concepts and contexts of sexuality, sexual health and sexual rights; increase capacity to interrogate specific contemporary sexuality issues and challenges on the continent; and articulate strategies for promoting sexual health and rights in the various countries. According to Ms. Adenike Esiet, the Executive Director of AHI, "the focus of the SLDF is to facilitate the emergence of a younger generation of sexuality professionals who will contribute to advancing knowledge and action in favour of healthy, respectful responsible and pleasurable expression of sexuality in Africa".

5th NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HIV/AIDS, ABUJA NIGERIA

The ARSRC participated at the 5th National Conference on HIV/AIDS held from 2nd – 5th May 2010 in Abuja, Nigeria. The Conference with the theme: “The Nigeria HIV Response: Ownership and Sustainability” and sub-theme: “Closing the Programme Gaps” was organized to review stakeholders' response activities since the last conference in 2004. It also reviewed and assessed the progress, as well as achievements and challenges in the past years with a view to fostering the development of policies and strategies for progressive ownership of activities of the stakeholders' response which was a major priority area.

The conference which was preceded by a youth conference and award night had in attendance, over 4,000 participants from various countries including Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, USA and the host country Nigeria. Among the stakeholders in HIV programming at the conference were People Living with HIV/AIDS, youths, students, representatives of NGOs, FBOs, The Military, representatives of the private sector, political office holders, academicians, development partners, and donor agencies.

The African Regional Sexuality Resource Centre (ARSRC), a project of AHI, set up an exhibition booth through the period of the conference. The participation of ARSRC at the conference is in line with her aim of promoting a better understanding of human sexuality in Africa especially as the conference is related to one of ARSRC's thematic focal areas-Sexuality



Participants at the conference

The ARSRC was also involved in paper presentations during the conference having made an oral presentation via one of her staff members on “HIV Testing among Young People; Implications for Sexual and Reproductive Health”. The paper shared findings of young people who attended the AHI Youth Friendly Clinic for over a period of 5 years (1999-2003). According to the paper, factors influencing the uptake of HIV testing among young people include the experience of sexually transmitted infections, and previous sexual activity (ies). Recommendations included the involvement of young people as stakeholders in all HIV/AIDS programming and establishment of more youth-friendly clinics to enhance the national response to HIV/AIDS especially as

Also, a paper on 'Sexuality Education, A Must in the Control of HIV Pandemic' aimed at promoting support for school-based implementation of FLHE curriculum using 2 specific objectives: providing an update on young people's SRH behaviour including HIV prevalence in Nigeria, and sharing lessons learnt in the school-based FLHE curriculum implementation in Lagos State was presented by the Executive Director of Action Health Incorporated during the conference. Besides, other plenary sessions like skills building titled: Communicating with young people about Sexuality was organized by AHI. The session, which lasted for 1 hour 30 minutes was anchored by the Director, Dr. Esiet, aimed at improving adult-youth communication around issues of sexuality.

NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS (Guidelines for Submissions)

The editors welcome submissions on the thematic focus areas of the Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre. These include: Issues in Sexuality, Sexual Health (including issues relating to HIV and AIDS), and Sexual Rights.

Short length articles will be published in the Sexuality in Africa Magazine, while journal length and journal quality articles will be published in the Sexuality in Africa Journal, following adequate peer assessment. The objective of these publications is to foster the dissemination of gender and sexuality information, with particular focus on African society and culture, and to publish related research findings while contributing to the promotion of healthier and positive sexuality attitudes, practices and policies.

Articles are expected to be objective and analytical, and to mirror current/contemporary issues and debates in the area of Sexuality, Sexual Health and Sexual Rights in Africa. Articles should also reflect a holistic/comprehensive approach to sexuality, taking sexuality discourse beyond health to incorporate broader issues on the expression of sexuality without guilt, fear or ill-health.

Priority would be given to articles that have not been previously published; however, already published material may be considered for publication, depending on its relevance to ARSRC's focus. For

such already published articles, full details of previous publication and copyright obligations must be provided.

SEXUALITY IN AFRICA MAGAZINE AND MONOGRAPHS

Preferred themes and focus areas will be published from time to time. In addition, we welcome articles relating to the following sections of the magazine:

Region Watch: Topical issues relating to a specific country or sub-region.

Research Notes: Report of current research in Sexuality by the author or of other researchers that the writer may wish to report.

Viewpoint: Reactions to issues raised in previous editions of SIAM or elsewhere.

Programme Feature: Report of contemporary best practices by implementers of Sexuality programmes. Length: 1,000 – 1,500 words

Photo: We welcome relevant photos which may accompany articles or be submitted independently. Sources must be indicated and all published photos will be appropriately credited.

SEXUALITY IN AFRICA JOURNAL

Articles can be on a variety of themes or issues. They

may draw from but are not necessarily bound by the themes published for the Sexuality in Africa Magazine. Submissions should reflect a high standard of research comparable to such journals worldwide. Presentations must be focused and well referenced.

ABSTRACT

Contributors are requested to forward an abstract of not more than 250 words along with their papers to the email address indicated below. A short personal bio with the name, contact address, phone numbers and email addresses of the contributor should be submitted on a separate page.

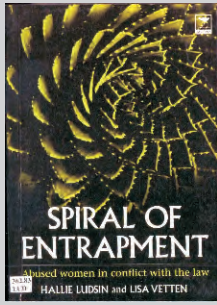
Length: 5,000 – 8,000 words

REFERENCING:

Either of APA or MLA format is acceptable. It will also be appreciated if current references could be included in your bibliography.

All correspondence should be addressed to:
The Editor,
Sexuality in Africa Magazine
Africa Regional Sexuality Resource Centre.
E-mail: info@arsrc.org

Sexuality Resources



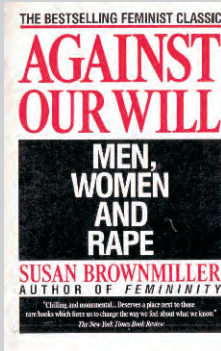
'SPIRAL OF ENTRAPMENT (Abused women in conflict with the law)'

Authors: Hallie Ludsin and Lisa Vetten

Publisher: Jacana Media (pty) Ltd

ISBN: 1770090541

The book tries to debunk the myths about domestic violence – in defence of battered women. It also delves into why men abuse women; why abused women don't leave; why women's options to stop the abuse are limited and sometimes non-existent; the psychological impact of abuse on battered women as well as why they qualify for legal defence.



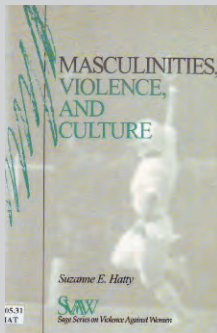
'AGAINST OUR WILL' (Men, Women and Rape)

Author: Susan Brown Miller

Publisher: Ballantine Books

ISBN: 0449908208

The book discusses the consequences of rape in biblical times, rape as an accepted spoil of war, as well as child molestation, marital rape, and date rape. . The author pulls back the centuries of damaging lies and misrepresentations to reveal how rape has been accepted in all societies and how it continues to profoundly affect women's lives today.



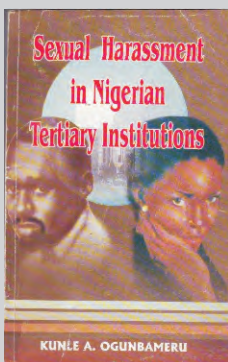
'MASCULINITIES, VIOLENCE, AND CULTURE'

Author: Suzanne E. Hatty

Publisher: Sage Publications Inc.

ISBN: 0-7619-0500-6 (Cloth: alk. Paper) 0-7619-0501-4 (pbk.: alk. Paper)

The book offers a postmodern analysis linking the contemporary social crisis of masculine subjectivity with the law- and- order crisis over escalating violence. In doing so, it examines the major biological, psychological, sociological, and anthropological theoretical models of masculinity and violence, and it formulates an integrated theoretical approach to the relationship between violence and masculinity. The book focuses on violence as a gendered activity- specifically, a masculine activity.



'SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS'

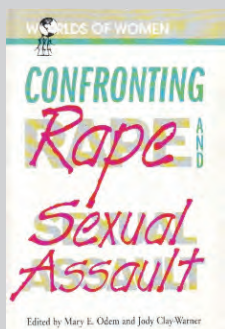
Author: Kunle A. Ogunbameru

Publisher: Spectrum Books Limited

ISBN: 978-029-670-0 (Limp), 978-029-685-9 (Cased)

The book addresses the what, why, where and when of sexual harassment; and how it permeates the campuses of Nigerian institutions of learning. It is a well-researched work which graphically illustrates the factors that make sexual harassment remain a critical and unwholesome component of our society.

The book also gives proper sex education which will both prepare the youth for self-disciplined adult life, and help reduce, if not prevent, deviant behavior that results from sexual maladjustment.



'CONFRONTING RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT'

Edited by Mary E. Odem and Jody Clay- Warner

Publisher: Scholarly Resources Inc.

ISBN: 0842025995

The book examines the complex and painful issue of sexual violence from various social science perspectives. The inclusion of personal accounts from women who have been raped or threatened by rape makes this collection particularly accessible, compelling, and powerful. An essay details one woman's long struggle as a rape survivor, a poem describes the fear of rape and society's treatment of the victim, and a sonnet traces the journey from victim to survivor. The book has appeal for professors, students, and scholars in the social sciences as well as for general readers concerned with this troubling issue.