

The Roles of Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) the Fight Against Violence against Women in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study aims to assess the effort of Non-Governmental Organizations in combating violence against women in Nigeria using an NGO known as Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA). The research was conducted using WRAPA officials at the head office in Abuja and those at the regional offices in Malumfashi and Katsina State as respondents. The method used in the study was the qualitative method with interview guide semi-structured interviews. A purposive sampling technique was used to identify and recruit participants. The participants were WRAPA's employees and the victims of violence against women. The age of participants ranged from 38-52 years. These participants were limited to WRAPA's employees working at the organization and the victims of violence. Theoretical frameworks applied in this study are social action theory and empowerment theory which will further explain the aspect of gender power relation and the empowerment concepts, as well as the elements of empowerment and the NGOs. The result showed that WRAPA has played a significant role as an NGO in addressing violence against women in Nigeria. Although, most of the violence against women in Nigeria is due to specific traditions and religious practices. Most women who are victims cannot report because they are economically dependent on their husbands. So, WRAPA is training most women with skills to be self-employed and educating the women on how to resist violence. On the other hand, WRAPA faces challenges in terms of culture, weak legal backing on violence against women in Nigeria, and lack of funds to build enough homes for women faced with violence. For

WRAPA to successfully carry out its roles as NGO in Nigeria, there should be enough funds to assist the victims of violence, and legislation on violence against women must be strengthened and enforced.

Keywords: gender, NGO, Nigeria, WRAPA violence, violence against women

1. Introduction

1.1 Violence and Violence Against

Violence is all over the world today, however, in a different form and from context to context; even though there has been tremendous change over time, violence against women still exists (Okolo, 2008). The various patriarchal theories argue that in the past and present, but less so today, the unequal distribution of power between the sexes has resulted in societies that have been dominated by men and that most women occupy subordinate positions of power, increasing their vulnerability to violence, especially within the family (Martin, 1976; Dobash and Dobash 1979). In most societies, this manner of women incorporated most men above women in the hierarchy, which restrains most women's attempts to realize their full potential in the past (Gonzalez, 1998). Therefore, the tradition and culture in most societies are assumed to have played significant roles in fostering violence against women for centuries.

1.1.1 Global Awareness and Recognition

According to United Nations (2010), violence against women constitutes a particular type of violence such as emotional abuse, sexual and physical by an intimate partner that includes physical or sexual abuse by family members or others, sexual harassment, and abuse by authority figures such as teachers, police officers or employers. Also, when women are trafficked for forced labor or sex. Furthermore, traditional practices include forced or child marriages and dowry-related violence. Honor killings are when women are murdered in the name of family honor. Systematic sexual abuse in conflict situations is another form of violence against women (WHO,2005).

Despite the global awareness of the need to eliminate Violence against women, many societies still have much practice, based on culture and tradition, that still does not allow the full attainment of this goal. It includes ranges from customs that devalue the social status of women and a range of violent, discriminating acts against women, commonly called, Violence against women. Some studies have asserted that in patriarchal societies, the authority of men over women is institutionalized through cultures, traditions, and religious beliefs that lead to Violence against women (Jewkes et al., 1999; Visaria, 1999; Rao, 1997).

Heise, Ellsberg, and Gottemoeller (1999) view violence against women as the most pervasive human rights abuse. The incidences can be understood by the UN (1993) conceptualization of violence against women as any act that can or is likely to cause physical or psychological harm or suffering to women, and this includes such actions that may even deprive the liberty of women. The negative impacts of violence against women extend beyond sexual and medical-related problems to touch the well-being of women, the welfare of their households and communities, and the economic and social aspects of society at large (PAHCO,2003;

Sundar, 2001).

Hence, violence against women negatively reduces women's confidence, affects their mental health, and hinders their productivity and participation in economic activities (Heise et al., 1999; Ganny, 1996; Nosike, 1996). According to Ellsberg et al. (2005), based on research, various forms of violence against women have been identified as harmful traditional practices directed at women and girls because of their genders, such as sexual assault, rape, forced prostitution, selective malnourishment of female children, genital mutilation, and sexual and physical abuse of female children (Coyle, Speckhard & Brightup, 2015).

1.1.2 The Role of Nongovernmental Organizations and Communities

Reichert (1991) indicated that the global recognition of the extent of violence against women has resulted in the United Nations' declaration to end all forms of violence against women, known as the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women CEDAW. To attain the objectives UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) set, the United Nations, through the Millennium summit, call on nongovernmental organizations and communities to join hands to achieve the millennium development goals (Sachs, 2005). The summit calls for affirmative action from all the stakeholders. NGOs working on gender-related issues worldwide are acting and pressing to eliminate all kinds of violence and discrimination against women. Because of this, Nigeria's NGOs and their counterparts worldwide have been trying to combat violence against women.

1.2 Research Problem and Research Question

In Nigeria, violence against women still occurs due to specific traditions and religious practices, for example, female genital mutilation, widowhood practices, and male-sex preference. In the most religious sphere, women are disallowed to be part of religious activities. Most women are taught from the cradle to be quiet and passive. Women are not allowed to talk when men are talking. Before leaving home, most women must be covered with veils and long gowns (Okolo, 2008). Most women are taught from the cradle to be quiet and passive. Women are not allowed to talk when men are talking.

Additionally, she states that until recently, most women are not expected to participate in many activities outside the home. However, it is the reason most men in Nigeria believe that a woman's education ends in the kitchen. Women in Nigeria are expected to cry and not speak out when faced with challenges. Due to these problems, various NGOs have emerged to combat violence against women in Nigeria. Hence this research chose to focus on an NGO called Women's Rights Advancement Protective Alternatives (WRAPA).

My specific research question is: What role does NGOs (WRAPA) play in fighting violence against women in Nigeria and what are their challenges?

1.3 The Purpose of the Study

Women's Right Advancement and Protection Agency (WRAPA) is located in Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria. The aim and impetus for this research are to examine the role of Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA), a nongovernmental

organization, in the fight against violence against women in Nigeria. WRAPA was chosen as my case study because, among all the NGOs in Nigeria, WRAPA is one of the NGOs working in the field of gender-related issues to fight violence against women, which is in the summit of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

2. Literature Review

2.1 *Practices of Violence Against Women in Nigeria*

According to Wacol (2008), in Nigerian most women face various forms of violence in both public and private places. These include physical violence, deadly tradition, cultural practices, political, legislation, and employment discrimination.

2.1.1 Physical Violence

Physical violence is the most common violence that most women in Nigeria encounter, and it appears that it has been institutionalized in the country (Aimakhu et al., 2004). For example, Section 55 (1d) of the Penal code, applicable in Northern Nigeria states, allows the 'correction' of children, pupils, and wives; as long as it does not amount to grievous hurt (WRAPA 2008, p.11). However, most victims do not want to report physical violence to the police because the victims are afraid of police officer mockery, which include nonchalant attitudes towards women regarding cases of battering. Nigerian most police do not take the victim's issues seriously. Furthermore, the same can be said of other professionals such as doctors, social workers, psychologists, attorneys, and judges. So, some police officers can only act against the accused man by taking a bribe from him except when the injuries sustained result in severe issues as established in the Nigerian constitution (WRAPA, 2008).

Previous studies assert that the battering of women is never taken seriously in any community across Nigeria (Aimakhu et al., 2004, p.58; WRAPA 2007; WACOL 2008, p.78). To prevent divorce that could lead to the loss of their rights to the custody of their children. Women often lose the legal battle to keep custody of their children to the men after divorce because they lack the economic power to take care of themselves and the children. Though some women desperate to free themselves from marriage bondage are not afraid of public mockery, corrupt Police officers take bribes from the accused and stall further investigations. If the woman can see the case to the court, prosecutors also request a bribe. If the woman cannot afford the money, the case file will get lost, which will be the case's end. Therefore, if a woman fears that the matter, if reported to the Police, would bring her much trouble, she will prefer to endure all manner of insult and maltreatment from the man (WRAPA, 2008).

2.1.2 Harmful Traditions and Cultural Practices

In Nigeria, most women face harmful traditions and cultural practices such as female genital mutilation, widowhood practices, early and forceful marriage, male-child preference, political discrimination, and discrimination legislation (Okolo, 2008).

2.1.3 Female Genital Mutilations (FGM)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is the traditional practice of circumcision on women by

traditional men or women to uphold their local customs called purifications (Okolo, 2008). Furthermore, the reasons for such practices are numerous and, at times, differ across communities and countries; the reasons might differ completely. Nigerian Population Commission (NPC) indicated that in their study, an estimated 33% of Nigerian households practice FGM (WRAPA, 2008).

2.1.4 Widowhood Practices

Widowhood is another cultural practice that most women encounter as part of violence. However, it differs from one community to another and is entirely different across African countries, India, and other places (Okolo, 2008). Nigerian women are obliged by tradition and culture to honor their dead husbands differently. According to Onyeme (2007), women in many communities in Nigeria honor their dead husbands in different ways. For example, there is a community in the Southern part of Nigeria called “Agenebode” Edo state; a woman is expected to wear a single white pant unchanged for twelve months. She will be isolated and wear black clothes for the same period. Also, the woman is not expected to go to any social gathering like church or market for the same length of time. She is expected to be inherited by a member of her late husband’s family. However, she has a choice to accept or reject to be inherited. However, in most cases, she is expected to perform some rituals to be ushered to the new husband or sent back to her parent’s house without inheritance.

Nevertheless, if she has a male child, the child is entitled to inherit the man’s properties. However, if the child is young, those properties would have been used up by his uncles before he grows up, and in the end, he will have nothing to inherit from his father. (Okolo, 2008). Traditional practices in Africa are so numerous and diverse that no theorist can claim to have a comprehensive list of all that takes place in every community. Additionally, most women wear black clothes and a black headscarf for twelve months when their husband dies. During this process, a woman is prohibited from having sex with any man. (Aluko et al, 2007& Okolo, 2003).

2.1.5 Early and Forceful Marriage

Early and forceful marriage is also a cultural practice that most women encounter as part of violence. In some parts of Nigeria, it is common for girls who are far below eighteen to be given out in marriage (Okolo, 2008). Most religious practices prefer their daughters to get married at a very early age. However, some would expect their daughter to marry in eighteen years. However, they become worried if their daughter stays unmarried for over twenty-five years. Furthermore, the preference for girls’ early marriages demonstrates that families and societies across Nigeria place women’s value on getting married and bearing children. Therefore, the failure of a girl to get married before the age of twenty-five makes many uneducated parents worry that something is wrong with their daughter. However, there is no time limit for a male child to get married. However, the female is expected to marry and start bearing children as early as 15 years or below (Wacol, 2008).

2.1.6 Male-child Preference

Male-child preference is another form of violence against most women in Nigeria encounter.

For example, in Nigeria, a woman who did not give birth to a male child is in trouble. The woman's position is like one in a relationship but without marriage. However, the husband may abuse her physically and verbally for not having a male. Furthermore, suppose the man dies before the woman. In that case, it is most likely that her husband's family will order her to pack her belongings and leave. Then, suppose she refuses to be inherited by a member of her husband's family because she had no male child, for example, in most parts of Nigeria, like the Southeastern. In that case, only a male child can guarantee women's rights (Okolo, 2008).

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frameworks employed in this study are the Social Action and Empowerment theories which provide important information about the role of WRAPA in addressing violence against women in Nigeria in the context of religion and culture. Social action and empowerment theory guide the result and discussion which provide different projects and programs carried out by WRAPA to provide help to victims of violence. Apart from social action theory and empowerment theory, the empowerment theory further explains the aspect of gender power relation and the empowerment concepts, as well as the elements of empowerment and the NGOs in order to support the theoretical framework on how the role of WRAPA helps women in Nigeria to overcome violence.

3.1 Social Action Theory

Social Action Theory “a community-oriented model that is used to increase the problem-solving ability of entire communities through achieving concrete changes towards social justice. That is, individuals within communities come together to redress the imbalance of powers or privileges between a disadvantaged group and society at large. The key concepts include empowerment, critical consciousness, community capacity, social capital, issue selection, and participation and relevance” (Minkler et.al, 2008, p.291). Empowerment is any act that gives an individual the right and control over their lives and the ability to influence their community. Critical consciousness is a mental state of awareness where the individual recognizes the need for a change and is willing to change and is achieved through forums and discussions. Community capacity is about identification and the ability of the community to resolve social issues, and this involves leadership, skills, participation, etc., achieved through workshops. Social capital deals with building relationships between members of a community through networking techniques and social support enhancement. Issue selection focuses on issues relevant to the individuals and community. Participation and relevance involve the community in implementing actions on relevant issues. (Minkler et.al, 2008).

According to Etuk and Etuk (2011), any social development issues, such as gender, are associated with a complex process. To attain long-term sustainability, a multi-lateral stakeholder solution is needed to deal with such problems. Furthermore, NGOs are non-profit, voluntary, independent, civil society or citizen organizations that function together with government and profit-based enterprises in the delivery of social services for the well-being of society. NGOs are also seen as the third sector (Ehigiamusoe,1998). NGOs could be international, national, regional, or community based on their financial resources,

networking capability, and the goals behind their formation.

NGOs evolve from experiences, interests, ideas, and innate zeal to respond to and treat the observed phenomena and the desire in society. They perform their roles through collaboration, partnership with donor organizations, and networking with other NGOs (Omofonmwan & Odi, 2009). NGOs have been described as one of the most significant forces in the field of development assistance (Todaro & Smith, 2009).

Wallenstein (1992) adds that social action-based approach to development intervention is empowerment. Minkler, Wallenstein and Wilson (2008) view empowerment as a process that encourages participation of people, organizations, or communities towards increased individual and collective control; this in effect should bring political efficacy, better quality of life, and addresses social injustices. The process aims at giving people control over their lives and their community and so aims at transforming power relations between the people, the social institutions, and the governmental agencies. Therefore, social action theory has implication for

3.1.1 Empowerment Theory

Empowerment has been described as “a construct that links individual strength and competencies, natural helping systems, and proactive behaviors to social policy and social change” (Perkins, D and Zimmerman 1995p, 569). The construct connects the well-being of the individuals with the larger socio-political environment; it also connects the socioeconomic status of a people to how they are able to come up with mutual assistance to create a responsive community. To fully comprehend the empowerment theory is to understand the concept of power and powerlessness (Lord and Hutchison, 1993; Moscovitch and Drover, 1981). Power is "capacity of some persons and organizations to produce intended, foreseen and unforeseen effects on others" (CEG1989, p. 2). The sources of power include Personality, property/wealth, and influential Organizations (Galbraith 1983). Powerlessness can be seen as the expectation of an individual that his own actions will not affect the outcome of events or circumstances of life (Lord and Hutchison, 1993; Keiffer, 1984).

Albee, Joffe and Dusenbury, (1988) argues that powerlessness is also perceived as a situation where individuals who have little, or no political and economic power cannot gain greater control over their lives and their resources. NGO's role in fighting against violence against women and the activities of

WRAPA as NGOs towards addressing violence against women are essential social intervention programs. Thus, any theory for a study of this nature must be such that addresses the intervention and the partnership programs aimed at achieving development which will lead to changes in social justices for women with violence in Nigeria. There is a growing appreciation within the development community of the merits of conducting the evaluation. A study such as this brings to light how committed an NGO is to its established objectives and what are the cost-benefits of continued giving of aid (Adebayo, 1997). Furthermore, to know what works, what does not, and why it does not work for proper accountability and knowledge sharing (Independent Evaluation Group 2006).

WRAPA is an acronym for Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative, a nongovernmental organization operating in Nigeria which came into existence in March 1999. WAPA's founder and owner, Fatima Abubakar, is the wife of Nigeria's former head of state, Gen. Abdusallami Abubakar, and also one of the Chief Judges in the Nigerian Federal High Court. WRAPA works on gender-related issues, and within eleven years, it has undoubtedly proved itself to be a leading NGO in the country. The concept of WAPA is to assist the women in Nigeria who are violated by their partners, the campaign against violence directed at women, and enlighten them to know their rights and demand their rights (WRAPA 2008).

The empowerment theory has implication for NGOs' role in the fight against violence against women. The theory suggests that empowerment includes a process and structure that enhance members' participations and improve goal achievement for the organization (in this case development NGO); to the community, it also refers to collective action to improve the quality of life (in this case, women who are victims of male violent acts) in a community and the connections between community organization. In other words, this model explains the participation of NGOs with others to achieve set goals, efforts made to gain more access to economic resources, and creating some pertinent understandings of the socio-political environment, which are all basic components of the empowerment construct.

Besides, empowerment is a process of change (CEG, 1989). Change is possible when people take overpower. For people to take power they will have to access information about themselves and their environment and exhibit willingness to identify and work with others to bring change (McClelland, 1975). A typical function of NGOs in community participation and this makes empowerment an interactive process whereby women can experience changes individual and socially such as will enable them to act in a manner to achieve influence over the organizations and institutions which affect their lives and the communities in which they live, (Whitmore, 1988). The empowerment theory explains the rationale for WRAPA's activities in fighting VAW. Based on the theory, WRAPA as an NGO exists as an intervention group working with both government and individuals to address violence against women via its various programs. The organization, based on the theory, is also involved in a kind of partnership program to raise awareness and to empower women to resist all forms of violence.

4. Methodology

4.1 Description of the Sample

The study was conducted in Abuja at the WRAPA head office, where the victims of violence and non-victims lived. The project site was also chosen because it was the pilot center for the Ten Centre Project of WRAPA.

4.1.1 Approval and Recruitment

Lund university approved the thesis proposal, allowing the researcher to send out the informed consent for the interview. A formal introduction letter was sent to the participants through e-mails to introduce the research and gather participant interest. Various means of communication, such as calls and e-mail, were used to contact participants.

4.1.2 Description of Protocol

In this study uses qualitative method was used. According to Conger (1999), the fundamental reason for this choice is the exploratory and descriptive nature of investigating organizational roles in cultural society. The qualitative research method can elucidate symbolic dimensions and social meanings capable of yielding empirically supported new ideas and theories provides; and will therefore provide for in-depth and longitudinal explorations of phenomena (Bryman, Bresnen, Beardsworth and Keil, 1988; Alvesson, 1996; Goethals, Sorenson, and MacGregor, 2004). Therefore, based on this fact, I found a suitable qualitative method, and it will give me more understanding of the role of WRAPA in combating violence against women in Nigeria, a social problem with a cultural dimension.

4.2 Research Design

In the study used semi-structured with open-ended questions to understand the role of WRAPA in combating violence against women in Nigeria. Interviews were conducted with ten participants, both men, and women, who are victims of violence and non-victims, volunteers, and WRAPA officials.

4.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The sampling technique used to select participants in this study was purposive sampling. Purposive is a type of sampling technique that a researcher uses to select participants necessary for research. (Mack et al. 2005, p.5). Furthermore, purposive enables the researcher to get a more in-depth understanding of the study (Neuman, 2006, p.222). A purposive sampling technique was adopted to select people to be interviewed at WRAPA's Head office. The ten center projects specifically because it gives a deeper understanding of WRAPA as an NGO with their work and in-depth understanding and the viewpoint of women victims of violence that have benefited from WRAPA programs and project. Prior to the interviews the researcher sent out the interview procedure to the participants for consent. The research explained the purpose of the study to participants and assured their identity and confidentiality. The participants include WRAPA officials and victims of violence, and non-victims who are volunteers working for WRAPA.

4.4 Documents

An extensive review of WRAPA's official documents and several visits to their website revealed great information. Data about the ten-center project was gathered from beneficiaries and focal group discussions. The documents related to the projects and other WRAPA programs, including project leaflets, correspondence, and Web sites, were scrutinized. The program documentation was then read to corroborate the information provided in the interviews, to fill in gaps, and to obtain further insight. In most instances, there was a high level of agreement among the different sources of information, both oral and written.

Field observation notes, audio recordings, and transcripts were generated from the field interviews and discussions. Each interview session was 60 minutes. All the interview tapes were transcribed verbatim, and field notes were in 30 days. Then a five-step qualitative

analysis was designed to ensure that the patterns and themes that might emerge from the data could

be carefully verified. Keith (2005) states that transcribing the notes from the interviews and coding the data with keywords is a way of identifying commonalities and variations and common and variable patterns within each group and across groups. A conscious effort was made to identify the roles of WRAPA as it affects women, and the result was categorized into themes. A sample of the transcripts was read closely, and multiple themes centering on the research objectives were identified.

4.5 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity draw an issue of discourse with different views about what is valid and reliable between quantitative and qualitative researchers (Matthew & Sutton, 2011). Quantitative researchers are more interested in establishing their research reliability and validity from a sample that can be generalized (inferential statistics) from which it is drawn. Qualitative research can only generalize findings to the studied context (ibid). Therefore, the study relied upon the interviews carried out in 2010 and 2011 with the officials of WRAPP and victims. The reliability of the data was checked after getting the recorded conversation written in text, the same as that which was given in words by the participants.

4.6 Ethical Consideration

Due to the ethical consideration in this research and confidentiality the key informants of WRAPA officials from the head office interviewed were designated as K1, K2, and K3 while victims and non-victims who are volunteers who were interviewed at the Malunfashi skill acquisition will be designated B1, B2, B3 and F1, F2, F3, and F4.

5. Results

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Female Participants

Participant	B1	B2	B3	F2	K1	K2
Age (years)	45	42	48	52	38	40
Religion	Muslim	Muslim	Christian	Christian	Christian	Muslim
Education	No education	No education	No education	No education	Master's degree	Master's degree

Note. All participants were female, married, spoke English, and had children.

Table 2. Demographic Characteristics of Male Participants.

Participant	F1	F3	F4	K3
Age (years)	Declined	52	47	Declined
Religion	Christian	Declined	Declined	Christian
Education	No education	Declined	With education	Lawyer

Note. All participants were male, married, spoke English, and had children.

The interviews with the three WRAPA officials reveal that the NGO deals with various forms of violence against women. including physical violence, harmful traditional cultural practices that include female genital mutilations, forced marriages, particularly teenage marriages, and male-child preference. And discrimination in politics, legislation, and employment.

5.1 Acts of Violence against Women

Four of the participants indicated the following:

WRAPA receives 45 cases of gender-based violence in the home, daily violence against women at workplace like employment discrimination, disinheritance for female, and discriminating laws and regulation and domestic violence like battering. Female genital mutilations, forced marriages, rapes (K1).

Women experience all types of violence in the home example, intimate partner's rape, beating, battering and WRAPA deals with almost all kinds of violence against women generally, so no specific violence that is beyond WRAPA (K2). Women that are battered by their partners at home, women that are raped, women that are discriminated against in the public places. There is rampant violence against

women (K3). It is a common thing for men to maltreat their wives. I have received beating several times even to the point of being hospitalized (B3).

5.1.1 Sensitizing and Awareness Campaign

Two of participants shared the following views:

WRAPA is using media to get the message of gender-based violence against women out there (K1). WRAPA's project focuses on enlightenment and the idea is to work with the community leaders and traditional leaders in capacity building. WRAPA invites professionals like medical doctors from time to time to talk to the women about HIV/AIDS program, psychologist to come and give women a talk and enlighten the women on what to do if they are abused (K2).

WRAPA sensitize and give counsel to women on their rights as well as the means to secure the rights and seek redress when those rights are denied or violated. Also interesting is the fact that the men also experience a great change in knowledge and attitude towards women. Some extracts to this are:

I realized that we men in the society are highly chauvinistic, but we welcome the shift in paradigm we learnt from WRAPA (F1). I wedded my wife in court to protect her, in case I die, from my tradition (F4). I have learnt my role as a woman in the society and the right I have both as a human and a citizen (B3). I know how better to deal with situations of violent acts or culture and how to find help (B1).

5.1.2 Socio-economic Enhancement

WRAPA officials: WRAPA is executing projects named 'Ten Centre Project' and then Legal aid clinics and legal aid committees. We train women in the communities to acquire new skills, adult and computer education in order to be economically independent (K1). WRAPA is really empowering the women in their ten-center project. The center assists women a lot in skill acquisition, counselling and empowering women into politics and government in Nigeria (K2).

If my wife makes money and my wife takes care of certain things at home, I will be relief and someone family stress is removed (F3). My life has changed (improved); thanks to this people (WRAPA representatives) (B2). My business is now better than before because of what I learn (B3).

5.1.3 Legal Aid, Counselling, Advocacy, and Other Institutional Support

Free services in terms of counselling and legal aid (K1). Improve access to justice for Nigerian women especially the weak and vulnerable ones such as women in distress, the poor, the marginalized, victims of trafficking, women with disability, elderly, etc. whose knowledge of their rights and or whose capacity to seek redress is limited (K2). The core value of WRAPA has to do with women's rights. Women enabled to have access to social justice and legal rights. Legal Aid Outreach project and strategic litigation (K3).

We can't take our men to court or police station, but we know what to do and how to get help. It is equally important that our men know the law now and are appreciating us women and the work of this good Samaritans drawing from Christian biblical story and in this case is referring to WRAPA volunteers. As a widow, my husband in-laws did not support in raising their brother's children. Rather they tried to take every land from me. These people talked to me about how to raise money and start my vegetable business and how to relate with my late husband's people (F2.)

5.1.4 Citizen Participation and Civil Society Organizations and Partnership.

WRAPA belongs to 55 member NGOs coalition working in the field of Gender related cases in Nigeria. An extensive national network of membership and volunteers spread in all the 36 states and some local governments with tested expertise in legal aid and counselling services. 16000 registered members support our operations through membership fees and dues. WRAPA also gets donations from individuals, corporate organizations, and international agencies (K1).

WRAPA's has camp co-coordinators in the 36 states, and they work through these coordinators as a link to address issues of women's rights. WRAPA has collaborated with other NGOs overtime on the issue of violence against women, inheritance for widows and women's participation (K3).

5.1.5 Direct Interventions and Perceived Impact and Successes of WRAPA

The WRAPA officials enumerated the areas that they think that WRAPA has recorded

successes as follows: *I can tell you that despite the challenges WRAPA is making progress. WRAPA has won several cases: 60 women were provided with legal representations leading to their freedom after spending various time spans in the prisons awaiting trials for trumped up charges.*

In another instance, 23 women were assisted to secure bail through the provision of linkage to their relations some of who were not aware of the plight of the women. WRAPA facilitated the legal processes for their release in collaboration with other NGOs and government (K3), 45 women serving various terms have been given economic empowerment training in Plateau state prison (K2).

5.1.6 Lack of Statistics and Women's Attitude Toward Violence

WRAPA faces challenges in the area of statistics because women that are violated in their home do not come to report (K2)

The victim's unwillingness to report partners to the Police or to WRAPA is a problem. Religious leaders, community leaders and household heads find it difficult to come out for public discourse on issues about violence against women (K1). Victims of domestic violence like battering, rape, etc. may not want to contact WRAPA but WRAPA's phone number is available with National hospitals in Nigeria. Nurses can inform WRAPA, but victims may not want to come out and this is a difficult situation (K2).

The Nigeria government considers some of the provisions of CEDAW as violence against women by Nigeria perception. In Nigeria, there are laws for criminal related offenses and law courts in the Southern and in the Northern part of the country that can take criminal proceeding and put offenders of VOW on trial. But until now there are no law or policies so to say specifically on women's rights in Nigeria (K3).

6. Discussion of the Findings

The purpose of the study was to explore the role of the Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) as a nongovernmental organization in the fight against violence against women in Nigeria.

The results reveal that in Nigeria, women face all manner of violence, including domestic violence. Violence against women is not only in marital relationships but practiced within the family and sanctioned by societies across Nigeria. Women are battered by their partners; female children are forced to do Female Genital mutilation. Forced marriages, particularly teenage marriages, are rampant, and rapes in the home by intimate partners are often.

The result reveals that WRAPA, an NGO in Nigeria, is working to help women, empowering women in terms of social, economic, and political aspects. This revelation supports the claim by Izugbara, Duru, and Dania (2008), who write that intimate male partner abuse is reportedly the most common form of violence against women. Women in most Nigerian cultures are regarded as passive objects. If the 40 women venture to challenge set society's gender roles, they risk being abused (Osha 2004; Pearce 2002; Izugbara et al. 2008).

WRAPA empowering women to know their right because WRAPA represents a voice for women in Nigeria and WRAPA seeks to put women at the center of its activities by empowering women to know their rights, and encourages them to seek economic and political powers like their male counterparts; the new skills women learn will assist the women to be financial independent so that the women will not live in fear of financial uncertainty should they take action to report their partners and it result to divorce or they victimized by their spouses. The result of interaction with women, who benefits from WRAPA projects and are sensitized, suggests that the women beneficiary could quit their marriage now that they are economically independent if they still experience some extreme abuses. This is in line with

Minkler et. al (2008) key concepts of social action theory such as critical consciousness whereby the women are mentally aware of the effect of violence on them and willing to change their situation.

WRAPA have been in the struggle for the domestication of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in Nigeria through advocacy and sensitization. For instance, the Gender and Affirmative Action Issue Based Project (GAA IBP) which is an initiative of coalitions for change (CFC) and funded by the Department for International Developments, UK (DFID) of which WRAPA is the administrative body for Nigeria working with other NGOs, WRAPA has successfully advocated and help to strengthen parliamentarian's capacity to engage in gender sensitive law making that address women priorities.

This culminated in the violence against persons (prohibition) bill passed in the House of Representatives. This is in accordance with Minklers et al (2008) key concepts of social action theory known as social capital which deals with building relationships between members of a community through networking techniques and social support enhancement. WRAPA has a sustained structure of members and volunteers to propagate the ideals of women's human rights at the Federal, State and Local Government levels with a mandate to network and render services that touches the lives of women individually or collectively while respecting the sensitivities of every society. The participant testimonies show that WRAPA's success story is because of dynamic work force and support of the membership of the organization, the volunteer workforce, members' contribution and donations from the Nigerian government and government of other.

6.1 Limitation and Future Research

The limitation of the study includes the roles of NGOs but focuses on WARPA and does not cover other NGOs located in other states in Nigeria. Future research should be done on other NGOs to see how they support women. Providing more education funds to support more female education. To see if the female is educated with adequate information and enlightenment, she will not accept violence. It might mitigate the violence against women. Most of these victims interviewed are illiterate, especially those in rural areas. Significant research can be conducted to determine if the men who abuse their wives come from homes where their fathers abused their mothers physically.

7. Conclusion

The study has investigated the role of WRAPA as an NGO in combating violence against women in Nigeria. Assessment of specific gender-based intervention programs of WRAPA has been carried out. The method used is a qualitative approach, drawing data from the victims of violence against women and beneficiaries of WRAPA's community support projects. Interviews with key personnel of WRAPA give insight into the organizational strength and challenges. Field findings through qualitative research helped immensely to bring out cultural issues impacting social intervention as carried out by WRAPA. This study has found that continued violence against women in Nigeria is due to society's construction of gender and the dominant nature of men in private and public places in Nigeria. Religious and cultural practices continue to support the factor that causes violence. This study shares the view of Minkler et al. (2008) on a social action theory, which is the pattern used in the community to solve problems that will bring social changes and justice.

In line with the role of WRAPA in fighting violence against women in Nigeria, the organization has programs and projects like legal aid, counseling, advocacy, and other institutional support that will bring social justice for women regarding gender equality and the empowerment of women in the community. The empowerment theory used in this study is all-encompassing and comprehensively aimed at encouraging women to exercise greater control over their competencies, endowments, and interests.

The theory of empowerment looked at the woman in society by trying to understand the lived experience of citizens concerning family, groups, and other aspects of community life. CWD (2007) states four aspects of empowerment: the power to, knowledge, know-how, will, and capacity. These four aspects of empowerment is in line with CWD, and I will say that WRAPA is helping women to resist violence by having greater economic power in terms of income, land technology as well as better health, access to loan, information, etc. It is also directed toward increasing access to natural, financial, economic, educational, and investment resources. It also involves moving into new roles and positions of women and taking decisions and leading in areas traditionally or habitually custodied and enjoyed by men.

WRAPA also helps victims of violence to participate in economic and social activities. Furthermore, WRAPA programs have allowed women to be part of decision-making; some women even demonstrate authority in their groups. Jewkes et al. (2001) state that the dependence of women on men for livelihood is documented as a significant issue in the economy of gender-based abuse. Ogundipe-Leslie (1985) adds that men are encouraged to abuse women, and women's economic dependency on men also limits women's ability to challenge men or society's actions. Nigerian men are often culturally socialized to be suspicious of activities encouraging their female partners to become more powerful. Jewkes, Penn-Kekana, and Rose-Junis (2005) state that the existence of solid patriarchal values encourages males to be abusive toward their female partners.

Okolo (2008) adds that in the Nigerian context, it can be argued that capitalism and patriarchy have also contributed to

women's subordination beneath men, which results in gender inequality and discrimination. WRAPA is fighting for equal rights in employment for men and women and equal participation in the political and decision-making sectors. In promoting gender equality in Nigeria, WRAPA carried out the project named the "Ten Centre Project." WRAPA employees train men and women in the communities to acquire new skills and computer education. Which will help women to be economically independent. It will lead to a change in society's values because it is necessary to gain human rights, eradicate violence, social domination, and discrimination for a better future, and develop equal rights in Nigeria.

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