

TRAUMA OF RAPE VICTIMS IN THREE NOLLYWOOD MOVIES: MOSES INWANG & ESTHER EYIBIO'S 'ALTER EGO' (2017), MERCY AIGBE-GENTRY'S 'VICTIMS' (2015) AND EMEM ISONG'S CODE OF SILENCE (2015)

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Abstract

The traumatic disorder associated with rape victims has attracted attention from some Nollywood producers and actors over the years. Therefore, this study examines how the movie industry portrays the persistence of trauma. Three selected films—'Alter Ego' (Moses Inwang & Esther Eyibio), 'Victim' (Mercy Aigbe), and 'Code of Silence' (Emem Isong)—were examined. The purposively selected movies portray rape as a heinous crime, typically perpetrated by men against women, and emphasise its traumatic impact on victims. The associated consequences depicted include depression, loss of self-esteem, unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), unsafe abortion, premature death, as well as severe sociological and psychological trauma, which may, in extreme cases, lead to suicidal tendencies or homicide. The selected movies depict a range of adverse effects experienced by victims, including psychological disorders, self-blame, substance abuse, generalised anxiety disorder, behavioural disturbances, aggression, major depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, eating disorders, and suicidal tendencies. The movies further emphasise the importance of appropriate treatment and support for victims to prevent more severe long-term consequences. Additionally, they advocate for periodic psychological evaluation to safeguard victims' mental well-being and mitigate the risk of severe psychological deterioration.

Keywords: *Trauma of rape victims, Nollywood movies, 'Alter Ego' 'Victim' and 'Code of Silence'*

Introduction

Trauma is a psychological response to a deeply distressing or disturbing event that overwhelms an individual's ability to cope with the feelings of helplessness. Trauma can be caused by an overwhelmingly negative event that causes a lasting impact on the victim's mental and emotional stability. A World Mental Health survey conducted by the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2018) found that at least a third of the more than 125,000 people surveyed in 26 different countries had experienced trauma. Many sources of trauma are physically violent in nature, and others are psychological. Some common sources include: rape, domestic violence, natural disasters, severe illness or injury, the death of a loved one, and witnessing an act of violence.

Rape, as one of the common causes of trauma, is derived from the Latin verb '*rapere*', which means to seize or take by force. It is a forced, unwanted sexual intercourse; it is sometimes called sexual assault, which can happen to both men and women of any age. Ashiru (2015) defines rape as an unlawful sexual act committed by a man with a woman who is not his wife, through force and against her will. This is an unlawful sexual activity (especially intercourse) with a person (usually a female) without consent and usually by force, threat, or injury. Although the definition and punishment of rape vary in different jurisdictions and cultures, as there is no universal legal definition, it is generally agreed upon that penile penetration by the perpetrator and absence of consent from the victim is rape and its unlawful making it a crime worldwide. It is evident from the definition of rape that it is a crime that involves violence, brutality, injury, and assault, that leaves the victims injured and traumatised for a long time or in some cases for life (Ashiru, 2015). However, many people believe that rape is a sexual act. But rape involves sexual acts; it is motivated by the desire for power and control over another person, rather than by sexual attraction or the desire for sexual gratification. In other words, rape is a crime of violence (Omoera, 2004).

Response to a traumatic event such as rape varies significantly among people, but there are some basic and common symptoms, and they come in three forms, namely: emotional signs, physical symptoms and psychological disorders. Emotional signs include sadness, anger, shame, denial, and fear; episodes of emotional

outburst, all these signs can lead to nightmares, insomnia, and difficulty with relationships. The victims of trauma may redirect the overwhelming emotions they feel towards friends or family members; hence, loved ones are equally affected by the traumatic reactions of victims, but understanding the emotional signs that come after a traumatic reaction can help ease the process of the victims' recovery. Physical symptoms include nausea, dizziness, altered sleep patterns, headaches, gastrointestinal problems, changes in appetite, lethargy and a racing heartbeat. The victims may also suffer anxiety or panic attacks and may be unable to cope in some circumstances. Physical symptoms of trauma can be as real and alarming as those of physical injury and illness, and care should be taken to manage stress levels after a traumatic event. Psychological disorders may include Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, dissociative disorders, and substance abuse problems. Although not every traumatised person develops PTSD, some victims develop symptoms like those mentioned above, and they go away after a few weeks; this is called Acute Stress Disorder (ASD). It is when this symptom lasts more than a month and seriously affects the person's ability to function that the person may be suffering from PTSD. Some victims with PTSD do not show signs and symptoms for months after the incident. PTSD can escalate to serious and frequent panic attacks, acute depression, suicidal thoughts and feelings of being isolated and not being able to complete daily tasks (Hoffman, Bose, Batts, Glasheen, Hirsch, Karg & Hedden, 2016; United States Department of Veterans Affairs, 2017)

The Nigerian movie industry continues to play a significant role in the dissemination of information, public enlightenment, and socialisation among Nigerian audiences. They play important roles in influencing audience perception of attitudes, actions or beliefs; therefore, their importance since inception in the 19th century cannot be overemphasised (Adesokan, 2012). According to the Film Makers Cooperative of Nigeria, every film in Nigeria had a potential audience of 15 million people in Nigeria and about 5 million outside Nigeria (Adegbola, 2011). This indicates that Nollywood films reach a broad audience, serving as a medium for disseminating basic information; consequently, campaigns against rape and the portrayal of post-traumatic behavioural changes among victims are frequently emphasised in its productions.

Nollywood is the brand name given to Nigeria's film industry. According to Oseni and Elegbe (2022), Nollywood "emerged in the early 1990s as a unique blend of cultural storytelling and technological innovation...Nollywood began with low-budget, straight-to-video productions, offering local narratives that resonated deeply with Nigerian audiences... the industry's rise, combining urban myths, traditional beliefs, and contemporary societal issues...over the decades, Nollywood has evolved into a global powerhouse, producing films that explore Nigeria's diverse cultures, traditions, and modern challenges ...themes such as corruption, religion, love, poverty, and spirituality often dominate its plotlines, showcasing a vivid reflection of Nigerian life".

The issue of PTSD affecting rape victims has been of great interest to a few Nollywood producers and actors over the years. Hence, this issue has continued to affect the people due to cultural beliefs and the culture of silence, where victims do not share their problems with other people who can help them. Badmus (2016) suggested that the avenue of film as a popular culture is able to frame the social reality of these issues for the audience. The film, therefore, has the power to influence and reconstruct social beliefs and dispositions. Movie producers such as Moses Inwang and Esther Eyibio (*Alter Ego*), Mercy Aigbe Gentry (*Victim*), and Emem Isong (*Code of Silence*) have sought to challenge and reconstruct these beliefs and dispositions.

These three movies have been able to portray rape as a heinous crime that affects the lives of the victims and society as a whole. They have also been able to highlight the problems and the consequences of a lack of medical or psychotherapy treatment for these victims.

The movie *Alter Ego* explores the psychological consequences of rape, illustrating its impact on the victim's health and personality. In an effort to cope with Hyperactive Sexual Desire Disorder (HSDD), the victim constructs an alter Ego, "Roxanne." The movie further examines how this coping mechanism strains her relationship with her sister and ultimately undermines her career. The victim in the movie evaluates the physical and psychological effects of rape victims. The movie shows how the victim developed a psychopathic tendency, which prompted her to kill without remorse because she had been raped by different men. The movie also

highlights the dangers of exposing the girl child to street life, as well as the exploitative practices of criminal organisations involved in human trafficking, such as so-called “baby factories”, and the lasting harm inflicted on young girls who fall victim to such systems.

The movie *Alter Ego* and *Code of Silence* showed that although the culture of silence in Nigeria has not allowed the victims of rape to get the needed justice, the constitution of Nigeria has zero tolerance for rape and its perpetrators. Also, movies like ‘*October 1*’ (2014) and ‘*Tango with me*’ (2010) have also portrayed the traumatic changes victims experience after the unfortunate incident. This study, therefore, examines the contexts that lead to the occurrence of rape incidents and how the victims respond to the trauma of rape in Moses Inwang’s and Esther Eyibio’s *Alter Ego*, Mercy Aigbe Gentry’s *Victim* and Emem Isong’s *Code of Silence*.

Methodology

The study adopted the narrative analysis method. The narrative analysis method was used to analyse the content of the selected three movies: *Alter Ego*, *Victim*, and *Code of Silence*.

Three Nollywood movies, “*Alter Ego*”, “*Victim*” and “*Code of Silence*” were selected as samples for the study of rape issues. The selected movies were chosen based on their theme and content, as they deal with the portrayal, analysis, and consequences of rape and some of the post-traumatic behaviours of rape victims. These movies also portray how society and law enforcement agencies deal with rape and its effects on the victims.

Data collected through the narrative analysis method were subjected to thematic mapping based on the issues revealed in the films. The findings were then presented in order of importance and organised under distinct thematic headings in the paper.

Synopsis of the Selected Movies

Movie: *Alter Ego* (2017), Producer: Esther Eyibio, Director: Moses Inwang

Alter Ego tells a story of a successful lawyer who has dedicated a great part of her professional life to prosecuting sex offenders. *Alter Ego* is the story of a woman who is struggling between being an activist against sexual abuse while also happening to be a nymphomaniac. Her contradicting beliefs and actions could pass for a societal camouflage and, well, moral irony. The story begins with

her attacks against sexual abuse, but then climaxes when her addiction is brought to light. Viewers are then taken on a journey through the contradiction that is her life and given glimpses into the internal pain she struggles with. The director's effort at "make-believe" is conveyed in several of the movie's intimate scenes. It is somewhat unusual that *Alter Ego* received a "15" rating from the National Film and Video Censors Board; this may be attributed to the film's alignment with advocacy efforts against child abuse.

She adopts any measure possible to see that sex offenders, especially those who molest children, are jailed. Ada Igwe (Omotola Jalade) not only rely on the law to exert punitive measures on offenders, but she also uses orthodox methods to make sure those she finds guilty of child molestation and sex offences pay for their crimes. Her quest for justice is influenced by her personal childhood experience, as she was raped by her teacher in school. However, her determination to punish sex offenders is hindered by an overwhelming sexual urge that is beyond her control. She engages her domestic as well as official workers in sex to quench her urge whenever she feels the cravings, irrespective of the time and place.

Cast: Elvina Ibru, Enem Inwang, Omotola Jalade-Ekeinde, Jide Kosoko, Tina Mba, Bobby Obodo, Gregory Ojefua, Wale Ojo, Victor Olaotan.

Movie: "Victim" (2015), Writer: Mercy Aigbe Gentry, Producer: Mercy Aigbe Gentry, Director: Lancelot OduwaImasuen

Deolu Johnson, a young, rich bachelor, decided to trick his parents by introducing a prostitute he was going to hire to pose as his girlfriend to them. Unfortunately for him, he hired the lady who committed the murders; she introduced herself as Yeni. She decided to leave Deolu's house since she had done her end of the deal, and Deolu had paid her. As she was leaving, Deolu stopped her and paid for another three days, since he enjoyed spending time with her, and she likewise. Deolu and Yeni had sex for the first time that night, after which Yeni confessed that that was the first time she would enjoy having sex in her life. Deolu also confessed to having sex for the first time that night. Yeni and Deolu fell in love, and Deolu married her, and they were happy. After many months, Deolu decided to surprise his wife

by opening a supermarket for her and hiring Ibilola as a maid to help her in the house.

Deolu returned home early from work, and Ibilola then went into Deolu and Yeni's room with nothing but a small towel to seduce him. Immediately he saw her, he told her to get out, but she was all over him, and he tried to push her away. That was when Yeni walked in and saw them in a compromising position that made her believe that Deolu was trying to rape Ibilola. It all happened so fast. Yeni stabbed Deolu with a knife, then she called the police to report what she had done.

At the court, Yeni said she had never had any good experiences with men. She said when she was younger he father used to beat her mother till he eventually killed her. Yeni ran away from home to escape her father's wrath. She started living on the streets and doing dirty jobs to survive, one day she met a woman who promised to help her, only for the woman to sell her to a man named Dr Koko, who runs a baby factory. Dr Koko started using two men on her at once since she did not get pregnant in the first six months.

Yeni gave birth to three children in Dr Koko's clinic and escaped from the camp when she saw that the car booth was open. Thinking that she was free, she met the truck driver who raped her, and then the policeman arrested her and raped her, which led and she killed both rapists before meeting Deolu.

After hearing this, the judge asked the police to raid Dr Koko's camp, where he was arrested, and the girls were discovered. One of the pregnant girls who testified said she was raped 73 times and that she was 15 years old. The judge sentenced Yeni to a psychiatric facility for treatment, as she was already psychologically battered. Dr Koko and his accomplice were found guilty of kidnapping, child abuse, impersonation, and false practice. He was then sentenced to 108 years' imprisonment.

Main cast: Mercy Aigbe Gentry (Yeni), Seun Akindele (Deolu), Olu Jacobs (Deolu's father), Olajumoke George (Deolu's mother), Juliet Ibrahim (Christine), Funsho Adeolu (Yeni's father), Faithia Balogun (Yeni's mother), Saidi Balogun (Dr Koko), Jumoke Odetola (Ibilola), Bose Akinola (Ibilola's mother), Gabby Shonowo (Inspector Kola), Aladesanmi Adeyemi (Truck driver), Shola Johnson (Inspector K), Adebayo Adedoyin, Kemi Jamiu, Shodade Damilola, Kayode Jadesola, Ishaq Kafayat, Blessing Olaseinde (Dr Koko's girls).

Movie: Code of Silence 2015, Producer: Royal Arts Academy In Collaboration With Nollywood Workshop, **Director:** Emem Isong Adanma, a young, intelligent medical student with promising career prospects, is gang-raped by a local politician and his aide on her way home from college. She confesses what happened to her family, but given their low position in society, they are afraid to alert the authorities. The rape damages Adanma psychologically and emotionally, and the traumatic experience begins to affect her entire life. As a result, Adanma's family, being of humble origins, is afraid to report the matter to the relevant authorities, citing the excuse that rape is considered a taboo in society and it will make her undesirable for marriage.

Cast: Makida Moka, Patience Ozokwor, Ini Edo, Omoni Oboli, Amechi Muonagor, Kofi Adjorlolo, Desmond Elliot, Shawn Faqua, Mena Sodje

Analysis and Discussion

Theme and Issues in the Movies

Context in which the Rape incidence occur in the movies

The contexts in which the rape occurs were identified and discussed through the adoption of the narrative analysis method. The contexts identified are discussed and analysed below:

Breach of Trust

The movies expose breach of trust as a common context for rape to occur. They expose how the victims always have trust in the rapist or what the rapist represents. In *'Alter Ego'*, the protagonist Ada Igwe was raped multiple times as a child by her primary school teacher, Mr Kolade, whom she and her mother had come to trust to watch over her whenever her mother failed to pick her up from school on time. One of Ada's clients was raped by her pastor, a man of God whom the people of the community trust as the voice of God in their midst. The fact that Timothy raped the girls at his foundation breached the trust that the girls had in him as a saviour and benefactor.

In the movie *'Victim'*, Yeni's first rape encounter happened as a breach of trust in the sense that the woman whom she thought was going to help her sold her to Dr Koko's baby factory, where she was raped many times by hefty men. Yeni was also raped by a police man, someone who swore to protect the citizens of his country and

represented an institution that society trusts to provide security and safety.

Abuse and Misuse of Power

Most of Ada's clients were victims of rape perpetrated by individuals in positions of authority or influence who exploited their power to manipulate and silence them. Notable cases include Mr Ajewole, a landlord who raped his tenant's daughter, and a pastor who abused female congregants by leveraging his religious authority.

Another instance in the movie *'Alter Ego'* where rape occurred under the context of misuse of power is the first court case that introduced us, the viewers, to Ada Igwe, the case against Chief Musibau Adebajo for raping one of the beneficiaries of his scholarship program. Another scenario where rape occurred as an act of abuse of power was when one of Ada's clients was raped by her teacher after she changed schools.

Timothy also abused his power as a benefactor and philanthropist when he started to sexually assault the girls in his camp. He was a figure of authority at the camp, and he also had the power to remove the girls from the camp if they refused his advances. This is evident in the scene where Aisha and her brother are with Ada:

Aisha: he (Timothy) will beat me and then threaten to stop paying my brother's school fees and also throw us out of the hostel anytime I try to refuse his sexual advances.....

In the movie *'Victim'*, Yeni was also raped by a police officer who represented the highest form of security in Nigeria; the rape is an act of misuse of power on the part of the officer, which he paid for with his life.

Although we do not know how true Timothy's story about being raped as a child by his nanny but if indeed he was raped, it would fall under this category. Mr Kolade also abused his power as Ada's teacher when he raped her as a child.

The Use of Threat and Violence

The context in which rape occurred in the movie *'Victim'* includes forced sexual slavery. Yeni's first rape encounter happened at Dr Koko's baby factory after she was sold by the woman who promised to help her. After which, she was forced into exploitative sexual

slavery by Dr Koko and the hefty men who worked with him every day. An example of this can be seen when Dr Koko told Yeni *'ti o ba loyun ni osu yii, okunrin meta lo ma gun ori e lekan na losu to mbo.....'*, which is roughly translated as 'if you don't get pregnant this month, I will make three men have sex with you at the same time.'

On the day she luckily escaped from the baby factory, she was raped at night by the truck driver who gave her a ride. The rape incident with the truck driver happened through armed violence when the driver threatened to stab Yeni with a screwdriver after she rejected his sexual advances. Violence and the use of threat, according to WHO (2019), are portrayed in *'Alter Ego'* through the rape case between Timothy and Aisha. Timothy beats up and physically assaults Aisha every time he rapes her and the other girls he claims to help. The violence is so obvious that Ada noticed the bruises on Aisha's face even after a week of the incident. Ada asked, *'... did Timothy do that to your face?'* and Aisha responded, saying, *'he did, when he came to the camp last week.'* Timothy also misused his power as the benefactor of the girls in his camp to rape them, and whenever they attempt to rebuff his sexual overtures, he threatens to send them out of the camp and withdraw them and their siblings from school. In *'Victim'*, the sexual violation of Yeni by the truck driver and the police officer shows that rape occurs in the context of violence and misuse of power, respectively.

The recurrence of similar contexts of rape in both films underscores the pervasive role of violence and the abuse of power in such acts. Rape is frequently perpetrated by individuals who hold positions of authority or possess some degree of control over their victims, and it is often accompanied by violence or physical abuse.

Trauma of Sexual Violence on Victims Physical/Emotional Imbalance and Sex Drive

The fear of Yeni in the rain at night after escaping from the baby factory led her to accept the truck driver's offer to give her a lift, which then led her to be raped by the truck driver. After the assault, Yeni's facial expression shifts to one of intense anger, prompting her to stab her assailant with the same screwdriver he had used to threaten her. This moment signals her breaking point—an eruption of bottled-up trauma and a desperate resolve to end the cycle of abuse—contrasting with the despondence that often characterises the responses of many

first-time rape victims. Yeni responded to the trauma with aggravated violence, and it came from a place of deep-seated resentment and a feeling of injustice she was nursing and the ill-perceived notion that she had no choice and no one to protect and fight for her that could only be understood through the flash back to her childhood with her abusive father and her time at Dr Koko's baby factory.

Alter Ego did not show the rape scene of Ada Igwe, but it was reflected in the story of her pain as she told Timothy about what transpired between her and her rapist as a child. We could feel and relate to her helplessness and fear as a child, as her words painted vivid pictures of how it could have happened. She said, *'he touched my privates, and he showed me his. I screamed and cried for help because, although I didn't understand, I knew it was not right...'* This is a very accurate response for a child who is being sexually molested. As she grew older, she sought help for all the pains she felt and bottled up in her from Dr Tochi, the therapist. Towards the end of the movie, Ada is fed up with the troubles her double lifestyle has caused her as she pays a visit to the now sick, destitute and almost dead Mr Kolade with a gun in her hands, trying to look for answers.

The other rape scene witnessed in *'Alter Ego'* was when Timothy raped Aisha at the camp. This scene was depicted as close to reality as possible. It showed the violence and physical assault victims suffer from their rapists. Aisha fought back, but her fights were met with brutal slaps and punches from her rapist, which made her surrender. After the rape, she became a shadow of herself and was terrified of talking about it and was reluctant to receive help and assistance from Ada.

Ada, also in the movie *Alter Ego*, became a "nympho"; she could not stop having sex. She had a very strong drive for sex and could literally have sex anywhere and with anyone. The severity of her urges is portrayed in the beginning of the movie, where she sleeps with her driver in the middle of traffic, her gardener, and even her friend's fiancé. Mena is also seen to have a strong drive for sex. She is mirrored as a young Ada. She was reported to have been caught with boys in the toilet. She was later taken to a therapist by Ada to help with the situation.

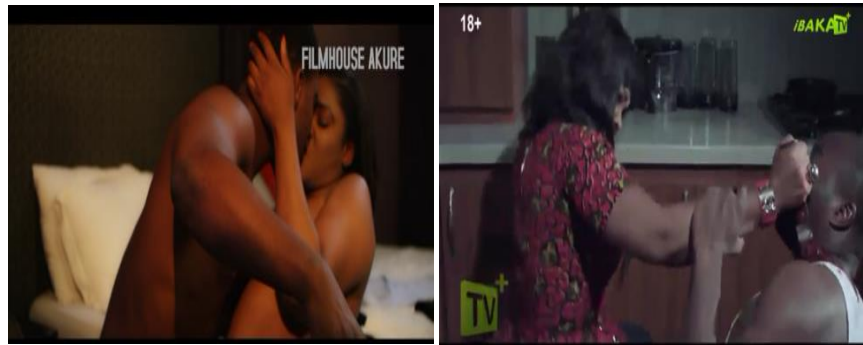


Plate 1: Ada having sex with Zika's Husband, Daniel, in 'Alter Ego' and Yeni stabbing her Husband in 'Victims'

Depression

In *Code of Silence*, the post-traumatic effects of rape are conveyed through the experiences of the protagonist, Adanma. She descends into depression, exhibits emotional instability, and at one point attempts suicide with a gun. Her condition is further aggravated by the stigmatisation and mistreatment she endures both at school and within her community.

Sexual violence has been associated with several mental health and behavioural problems in adolescence and adulthood. In one population-based study, the prevalence of symptoms or signs suggestive of a psychiatric disorder was 33% in women with a history of sexual abuse as adults, 15% in women with a history of physical violence by an intimate partner and 6% in non-abused women (Estlein, Dror and Winstok, 2024) Sexual violence by an intimate partner aggravates the effects of physical violence on mental health. Abused women reporting experiences of forced sex are at significantly greater risk of depression and post-traumatic stress disorder than non-abused women. Post-traumatic stress disorder after rape is more likely if there is injury during the rape or a history of depression or alcohol abuse. A study of adolescents in France also found a relationship between having been raped and current sleep difficulties, depressive symptoms, somatic complaints, tobacco consumption and behavioural problems (such as aggressive behaviour, theft and truancy. In the absence of trauma counselling, negative psychological effects have been known to persist for at least a year following a rape, while physical health problems and symptoms tend to decrease over such a period. Even with counselling,

up to 50% of women retain symptoms of stress (Daigre, Rodríguez-Cintas, Tarifa, Rodríguez-Martos, Grau-López, Berenguer, Casas, and Roncero, 2015) (Maltz, 2002).

Agony and Helplessness

Across the selected films, rape victims exhibit largely similar responses to the trauma of their experiences. The protagonists of both movies (*Victims* and *Code of Silence*) were sexually abused and molested as adolescents several times; Yeni at Dr Koko's baby factory and Ada by her primary school teacher, Mr Kolade. Although we did not see Yeni being raped by the men at the factory, we only saw them entering where Dr Koko kept her and we heard screams and crying which could only depict the helplessness and agony of someone in pains but could not do anything about the situation, while in Ada's case the writer's figurative use of imagery allowed the audience feel and relate to her helplessness and fear as a child experiencing something she did not understand but knew was wrong. Both women grew up and developed ways to cope with the trauma they have experienced; Ada by developing an alter personality to deal with her excessive sexual needs and her passion for revenge by prosecuting sexual offenders by hook or crook, while Yeni's need for vengeance was immediate death to her assaulter and those she felt were rapist in the case of her husband's murder.

Fear/Lack of trust

This is evident in both films; in *Alter Ego*, Ada struggles to trust others and finds it difficult to maintain committed relationships with men. For Aisha, the last victim in the movie, the post-traumatic effects included not trusting people, fear, a keen sense of awareness, and fear of the truth. In *Code of Silence*, Adanma starts to have nightmares and stays away from people. This affects her relationship as well as her life.

Suicidal Tendencies

In *Code of Silence*, the traumatic effect of suicide is portrayed. Due to the hurt and pain that Adanma was facing, as well as the betrayal of her uncles and discrimination from her classmates and the community, she attempted to kill herself with a gun. Research indicates that women who experience sexual assault in childhood or adulthood are at a risk of suicidal behaviour compared to others. This

association persists even after controlling for factors such as age, education, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as other psychiatric conditions. Indeed, the experience of rape or sexual assault can lead to suicidal tendencies as early as adolescence. (Daigre, Rodríguez-Cintas, Tarifa, Rodríguez-Martos, Grau-López, Berenguer, Casas, and Roncero, 2015).

Conclusion

The issue of post-traumatic effects of rape was resolved in both movies as Yeni was sentenced by the court to spend the rest of her life in a psychiatric facility for treatment due to her mental situation, while Ada was visiting a therapist for counselling. These movies shed light on the fact that there may not be a way to resolve the issue of the trauma of rape, but the healing process of victims does not start if the culture of silence is not addressed. Yeni never told anyone, even her husband, what she had passed through, maybe out of fear of rejection, or because she did not want to be rejected by her newfound lover, until Barrister Christine probed and prompted her to speak the truth. Also, Ada did not inform her parents what transpired between her and Mr Kolade; she simply hid it, till she met the therapist and told Timothy after he made her feel comfortable.

The persistence of post-traumatic effects among rape victims in Nigeria is exacerbated by a culture of silence and the stigma surrounding sexual violence. Many victims do not report their experiences, and even those who do often fail to seek appropriate medical and psychological care from qualified professionals. The consequences are profound and far-reaching, including the development of mental health disorders, increased rates of unwanted pregnancies, suicidal tendencies, and substance abuse; in extreme cases, these outcomes may culminate in death.

Notes on Contributor

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