Intimate Partner Violence and the Role of Police in Nigeria

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Abstract:- Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a pervasive issue in Nigeria, exerting increasing control over women via physical, sexual, and emotional maltreatment. Cultural conventions, gender disparities, and socioeconomic elements interlace an intricate network of barriers for survivors in their quest for assistance, notwithstanding the endeavours of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and legal safeguards. By illuminating the dynamics of IPV, the Cycle of Violence Theory exposes the capacity of law enforcement to interrupt the cycle. Nevertheless, law enforcement encounters obstacles that are deeply entrenched in cultural prejudices, historical suppositions, and insufficient safeguards for sexual minorities. It is essential to surmount these obstacles through community collaboration, training, and awareness campaigns. The survivors themselves confront apprehension, social disapproval, and a lack of awareness regarding the support services that are accessible to them. This paper recommended some strategies like empowering individuals and dispelling the taboo by diminishing social stigma, cultivating supportive atmospheres, and raising awareness regarding available resources is crucial. The paper concluded that overcoming intimate partner violence (IPV) requires an all-encompassing strategy that not only confronts cultural norms but also empowers victims, enhances police response, and fortifies support services. Then and only then can Nigeria establish a safer and more secure future for all and recover from the traumas of IPV.

Keywords:- Intimate Partner Violence, Cultural Norms, Police Response, Domestic Violence And Gender-Based Violence.

I. INTRODUCTION

The escalating prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Nigeria is closely associated with a lack of comprehensive research on how women perceive and interpret domestic violence, as well as the effectiveness of the role of the Nigerian police and government programs aimed at addressing this issue.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a vital public health and human rights issue that impacts individuals, families, and communities in Nigeria and around the globe. IPV is any intimate partner violence resulting in physical, sexual, or psychological injury to one or both partners. In Nigeria, intimate partner violence (IPV) is a persistent problem rooted in cultural norms, gender inequality, and socioeconomic disparities.

World Health Organization (WHO) asserts that Nigeria has one of the highest indexes of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Africa, with approximately 30 percent of women experiencing physical or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner (WHO, 2020). In addition, according to the 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), 23% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical violence, while 10% have experienced sexual violence at the hands of their partners (National Population Commission, 2019). There has been a significant surge in these data after the emergence of the Coronavirus. Fawole, Okedare, and Reed (2021) conducted a study indicating a substantial rise in intimate partner violence in Nigeria during the lockdown, reaching a notable increase of 56%. The Nigerian National Population Commission (NPC, 2013) report, before the pandemic's onset, indicated that women in Nigeria were subjected to intimate partner violence (IPV) by their partners or husbands. The report projected that roughly 19% of women had emotional IPV, around 14% experienced physical IPV, and 5% experienced sexual abuse IPV. Prior research conducted in Nigeria has indicated that intimate partner violence varies between 7% and 31% for physical violence, 31% and 61% for emotional/psychological violence, and 20% and 31% for sexual violence (Mapayi et al., 2020). Moreover, various studies conducted in different regions of Nigeria have documented the prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) to vary across the country. Specifically, the reported rates of IPV are as follows: 41% in the south-south region (Dienye et al., 2014), 42% in the northern region (Tanimu et al., 2016), 29% in the south-west region (Okenwa et al., 2009), and 78.8% in the southeastern region (Okemgbo et al., 2002).

The patriarchal nature of Nigerian society contributes to the prevalence of intimate partner violence by perpetuating the normalisation of violence against women. Cultural beliefs that emphasise male dominance and female subservience can contribute to the commission of intimate partner violence (Ameh, 2017). In addition, economic dependence on male partners and limited access to resources and support services can exacerbate women's susceptibility to IPV (Okenwa-Emegwa et al., 2019).

In 2015, the Nigerian government passed the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, which criminalises various forms of violence, including IPV. However, implementation and enforcement of the law still need to be improved due to insufficient resources, ineffective institutional frameworks, and limited public awareness (Okechukwu & Okoli, 2020).

Various non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and international agencies have supported initiatives to combat IPV in Nigeria. For example, Nigeria's United Nations Women's program has conducted awareness campaigns, trained law enforcement personnel, and provided support services to IPV survivors (UN Women, 2021).

Intimate Partner Violence in Nigeria is a complicated problem rooted in cultural norms, gender inequality, and socioeconomic factors. Despite the government and various organisations' efforts, there is still much work in Nigeria to prevent and address IPV effectively.

A. Definition and types of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is any form of violence or abuse occurring within an intimate relationship, typically between partners or spouses (Ali et al., 2016). It is a pervasive issue globally and one of the most common forms of violence against women (Karamagi et al., 2006). IPV encompasses various types of violence, including physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse (Stark & Ager, 2011). Physical violence involves hitting, slapping, kicking, or any form of physical harm inflicted on the victim (Stark & Ager, 2011). Sexual violence is non-consensual sexual activity or coercion (Stark & Ager, 2011). Emotional and psychological abuse includes behaviours aimed at undermining the victim's self-esteem, controlling their actions, or manipulating their emotions (Stark & Ager, 2011). IPV can occur in different contexts, including during pregnancy (Abate et al., 2016). Pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to IPV, which can harm both the mother and the fetus (Abate et al., 2016). The prevalence of IPV during pregnancy varies, with studies reporting rates ranging from 32.6% to 56.4% (Abate et al., 2016). It is important to note that IPV is not limited to heterosexual relationships or only perpetrated by men against women. IPV can occur in same-sex relationships and perpetrated by individuals of any gender identity (Ali et al., 2016). Understanding the different types of IPV is crucial for developing effective prevention and intervention strategies. By recognizing the various forms of violence and their impact, healthcare providers, policymakers, and support services can better address the needs of survivors and work towards reducing the prevalence of IPV.

B. Statement of the Problem

The problem is that intimate partner violence in Nigeria continues to be a prevalent and disturbing phenomenon. Several studies have highlighted the country's alarmingly high rates of IPV incidents (Okenwa-Emegwa et al., 2020; Nwabuzor et al., 2019). Women are disproportionately affected by IPV, experiencing various forms of abuse, from physical assaults to emotional manipulation. The consequences of IPV are severe and can lead to physical injuries, psychological trauma, and even death (Iliyasu et al., 2019). Despite these grim statistics and the recognition of IPV as a serious public health and human rights issue, there are still considerable gaps in the understanding of the role of the police in addressing this problem in Nigeria.

The significance of addressing the role of police in IPV lies in the potential for improving the overall response to IPV cases in Nigeria. Understanding victims' challenges when interacting with the police can inform targeted interventions and training programs for law enforcement officers. By enhancing the police's capacity to respond effectively and compassionately to IPV incidents, victims are more likely to come forward and seek help (Nwabuzor et al., 2019).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a prominent concern within the context of Nigeria, and the role of the police in tackling this issue has considerable importance. By effectively addressing the various problems and gaps in the police response to intimate partner violence (IPV), it is plausible to establish a more secure and conducive atmosphere for victims, fostering their willingness to seek assistance and pursue legal remedies. Enhanced law enforcement practices in addressing cases of intimate partner violence (IPV) can facilitate higher rates of successful prosecutions, potentially contributing to a decrease in incidents of IPV within the context of Nigeria.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Prevalence And Incidence Of IPV In Nigeria

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a significant issue in Nigeria, with studies indicating a high prevalence of IPV cases (Adebowale, 2018; Bolarinwa et al., 2022). Exposure to interparental violence (EIPV) has been identified as a risk factor for IPV (Solanke, 2018). Research has shown that women exposed to interparental violence are more likely to experience IPV themselves (Solanke, 2018). In 2013, the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) provided valuable data for studying the relationship between interparental violence and women's experience of IPV (Solanke, 2018). In addition to interparental violence, other factors have been identified as predictors of IPV in Nigeria. The spousal age difference is associated with IPV, with a higher likelihood of IPV in households where the spousal age difference is negligible (Adebowale, 2018). Factors such as employment status, educational attainment, spouse's educational attainment, religion, marital status, and wealth status have also been identified as predictors of IPV among women in Nigeria (Bolarinwa et al., 2022).

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a significant issue in Nigeria, with high prevalence rates reported in various studies. The prevalence of IPV in Nigeria varies depending on the study and the specific population being examined. Azene and others assert that in Debre Markos town health facilities in Northwest Ethiopia, the global prevalence of IPV during pregnancy ranges from 1% to 28%, with rates in Africa ranging from 2% to 57% (Azene et al., 2019).

Alebel and others posit that in Ethiopia, slightly more than 1 in 4 pregnant women experienced IPV (Alebel et al., 2018). In Nigeria, the past-year prevalence of physical, sexual, or emotional violence by a partner has been reported as high as 69% (Fawole et al., 2021). The prevalence of IPV found in a study in Nigeria was comparable to previous studies conducted in the country (Solanke, 2018).

Additionally, Fasasi and Alabia averred in their study carried outamong unmarried young women in urban communities in Ibadan, Nigeria, found a past-year prevalence of IPV of 35.5% Fasasi & Alabi (2020).

Another study in Ibadan documented that 21% of girls aged 15-24 reported experiencing IPV in the 12 months preceding the survey (Salawu et al., 2021). Domestic violence during pregnancy in Nigeria ranges between 2.3% and 44.6%, with lifetime prevalence rates between 33.1% and 63.2% (Umemmuo et al., 2020).

A study conducted in Osogbo, Nigeria, found a prevalence of IPV of 26.8%, with physical abuse being the most common pattern (Deborah et al., 2019). The prevalence of domestic violence among pregnant women in Nigeria varies by region, with the highest prevalence in the south-south region (9%) and the lowest in the north-central region (7%) (Bello et al., 2020). These statistics highlight the significant burden of IPV in Nigeria and the urgent need for interventions and support for victims.

Nigeria faces significant concerns regarding the prevalence and incidence of intimate partner violence (IPV). A study conducted by Antai (2011) examined the role of controlling behaviour and power relations within intimate relationships in the risk of physical and sexual violence against women in Nigeria. The study utilised secondary data from the 2008 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, which collected information through face-to-face interviews with women aged 15-49. The survey employed a stratified two-stage cluster sample design and included 19,216 eligible participants. The study's findings indicated that controlling behaviour by the husband/partner was associated with a higher likelihood of experiencing physical violence. Women who reported controlling behaviour by their husbands/partners had a significantly increased risk of physical violence (RR = 3.04; 95% CI: 2.50 - 3.69).

Additionally, women residing in rural areas and working in low-status occupations were more likely to experience physical IPV. The presence of controlling behaviour exhibited by the husband or partner was significantly correlated with an increased probability of encountering physical violence (relative risk = 4.01; 95% confidence interval: 2.54 - 6.34). Moreover, women who rationalised the act of spousal abuse and held a higher income than their spouse or partner faced an elevated likelihood of encountering physical and sexual aggression. These findings highlight the prevalence and incidence of IPV in Nigeria, particularly the role of controlling behaviour and power dynamics within intimate relationships. The study emphasises the need for interventions and policies that address controlling behaviour and promote gender equality to reduce the risk of IPV in Nigeria. By understanding the factors associated with IPV, such as controlling behaviour and societal norms, efforts can be made to prevent and respond to IPV effectively.

Another notable study on the prevalence and incidence of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria is the research conducted by Okenwa-Emegwa et al.. The study aimed to determine the prevalence and factors associated with IPV among women attending antenatal clinics in Enugu, Nigeria. The researchers utilised a cross-sectional design and collected data through face-to-face interviews with 420 pregnant women attending antenatal clinics in three selected hospitals in Enugu. The study's findings revealed a high prevalence of IPV among pregnant women. Approximately 45.7% of the participants reported experiencing at least one form of IPV, including physical, sexual, or emotional violence. Physical violence was the most prevalent form, with 39.3% of the women reporting physical abuse. Factors associated with IPV included younger age, lower educational attainment, unemployment, and alcohol use by the partner. The study produced noteworthy results about the prevalence and factors influencing intimate partner violence (IPV) in pregnant women residing in Nigeria. It highlights the need for targeted interventions and support services for pregnant women at a higher risk of experiencing IPV. By addressing the identified risk factors, such as age, education, employment, and substance use, efforts can be made to prevent and mitigate IPV among this vulnerable population. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a vital public health issue with adverse consequences for women and their unborn children. The study aimed to determine the prevalence and factors associated with IPV among pregnant women attending antenatal clinics in Enugu, Nigeria. A cross-sectional study design was used, and data were collected through face-to-face interviews with 420 pregnant women attending antenatal clinics in three selected hospitals in Enugu, Nigeria. The data underwent analysis utilising both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Another significant study on the prevalence and incidence of intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria is the research conducted by (Fawole et al., 2021). The research aimed to investigate women's experiences in Nigeria regarding intimate partner violence (IPV) during the COVID-19 lockdown period. The researchers collected data from seven de-identified case reports from organisations serving women experiencing IPV and media coverage of IPV cases in Nigeria between April and May 2020. The study's findings revealed that the COVID-19 lockdown exacerbated the incidence and severity of IPV against women in Nigeria. The lockdown restrictions disrupted women's social support networks and hindered their access to formal and informal sources of help. Women reported experiencing IPV related to custody of children, disruptions in income generation, and economic stressors associated with the lockdown. The study highlighted how IPV perpetrators used the lockdown to threaten women's security and gain power and control over their partners. This study sheds light on the specific scenarios of IPV reported during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. It emphasises the need for innovative approaches to support victims and address the increased risk of IPV during emergencies. It underscores the importance of providing accessible and practical support services for women experiencing IPV, particularly during times of crisis. Emergencies, including epidemics, increase the incidence of violence against women, especially intimate

partner violence (IPV). This paper describes specific scenarios of IPV reported by women during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria to provide insight into policy and programmatic efforts. This paper draws on seven de-identified case reports from organisations serving women experiencing IPV and media coverage of IPV cases in Nigeria between April and May 2020.

The role of the police in addressing IPV in Nigeria is crucial. However, cultural norms and societal factors may hinder victims from reporting IPV to law enforcement agencies (Bolarinwa et al., 2022). The family cultural norms in Nigeria, characterised by oligarchy and patriarchy, have seemingly favoured perpetrators of gender-based violence, making victims reluctant to seek help (Bolarinwa et al., 2022). This highlights the need for awareness campaigns and social and behavioural change communication (SBCC) to change perceptions and encourage victims to come forward and report IPV (Solanke, 2018). Efforts to address IPV in Nigeria should involve a multi-sectoral approach, including collaboration between law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, and community organisations. Providing training and resources to the police on handling IPV cases sensitively and effectively is crucial.

IPV is a significant issue in Nigeria, with exposure to interparental violence identified as a risk factor for IPV. Factors such as spousal age difference, employment status, educational attainment, religion, marital status, and wealth status are predictors of IPV among women in Nigeria. The role of the police in addressing IPV is crucial, but cultural norms and societal factors may hinder victims from reporting.

B. Sociocultural Factors Influencing IPV In Nigeria

The influence of sociocultural influences on intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria is substantial. These factors encompass cultural norms, gender roles, power dynamics, and community attitudes towards violence against women. A study investigated the impact of controlling behaviour and power dynamics in intimate relationships on the likelihood of physical and sexual violence against women in Nigeria. The research revealed that the presence of dominating conduct exhibited by wives or partners was found to have a substantial impact on the probability of experiencing physical and sexual intimate partner violence (IPV). The statement underscored the necessity of adopting a proactive and comprehensive approach towards managing behaviour and intimate partner violence (IPV) in society. The influence of community norms on IPV was explored in a study by Benebo et al.. The study highlighted the multi-faceted nature of IPV and the interplay of factors at different levels, including individual, community, and more prominent societal factors. It emphasised the importance of considering women's status and community-level norms in understanding and addressing IPV in Nigeria. Cultural and traditional beliefs were identified as influential factors in IPV in Nigeria. The patriarchal nature of Nigerian society, marked by gender inequalities and traditional gender roles, perpetuates IPV. The existence of cultural norms that endorse violence against women and perceive it as a customary practice or a private issue exacerbates the

elevated incidence of intimate partner violence. Education was also found to be a significant factor in influencing IPV. Adeyemi et al. conducted a study that examined the relationship between education and IPV among married women in Nigeria. The study found an inverse relationship between a woman's educational attainment and the likelihood of experiencing IPV. Women with lower levels of education were more likely to report lifetime IPV than those with higher education levels. These studies highlight the complex interplay of sociocultural factors in influencing IPV in Nigeria. The patriarchal nature of society, cultural norms that condone violence, controlling behaviour within intimate relationships, and the role of education all contribute to the prevalence of IPV. Comprehending these characteristics is paramount in developing efficacious interventions and policies to prevent and address intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria.

C. Impact Of IPV On Victims And Society

Intimate partner violence (IPV) has profound impacts on both victims and society as a whole. The consequences of IPV can be physical, psychological, social, and economic. Victims of IPV often experience a range of physical health problems, including injuries, chronic pain, gastrointestinal issues, and gynaecological problems Jenabi & Khazaei (2018). Individuals in this population may also experience mental health conditions, including but not limited to depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and borderline personality disorder (Kamimura et al., 2016). According to Bush (2019), intimate partner violence (IPV) can have significant and enduring consequences, including heightened susceptibility to chronic health ailments and potential fatality. The societal impact of IPV is significant. It affects victims, their families, colleagues, and employers (Peterson et al., 2018). The economic costs of IPV are substantial, including lost productivity due to missed workdays and healthcare expenses (Peterson et al., 2018). The estimated societal cost of lost productivity due to IPV was $110 billion across the lifetimes of all victims (Peterson et al., 2018). Children who witness IPV in their homes are also profoundly affected. They may experience emotional and behavioural problems, impaired cognitive development, and an increased risk of perpetuating violence in their relationships (Kamimura et al., 2020). The intergenerational transmission of violence perpetuates the cycle of IPV and its impact on future generations. Addressing the impact of IPV requires a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, intervention, and support services. Efforts should focus on raising awareness, promoting gender equality, providing accessible and practical support services for victims, and holding perpetrators accountable. Education and effective community awareness programs are crucial in challenging cultural norms that condone violence and promoting healthy relationships.

IPV has far-reaching consequences for both victims and society; it affects victims' physical and mental health, disrupts families, and imposes significant economic costs. Efforts to address IPV should prioritise prevention, intervention, and support services to break the cycle of violence and create a safer and healthier society.

III. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

A. Previous Studies On The Role Of Police In Addressing IPV In Nigeria

Prior research has investigated the involvement of law enforcement agencies in addressing the issue of intimate partner violence (IPV) within the context of Nigeria. The study undertaken by Richardson-Foster et al. (2012) aimed to examine the role of police intervention in episodes of domestic violence that also involved children. The research conducted by Richardson-Foster et al. (2012) emphasised the significance of establishing efficient communication channels between law enforcement personnel and children, particularly in domestic abuse situations. The study also underscored the necessity for police officers to interact with children during such instances actively. Finneran Stephenson (2013) examined perceptions of police helpfulness in response to male-male IPV among gay and bisexual men. The study found limited literature on how police officers perceive and respond to same-sex IPV. It emphasised the need to understand the perceptions of IPV within the LGBTQ+ community and the helpfulness of police responses (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013). Another study by Richardson-Foster et al. (2012) focused on police intervention in domestic violence incidents where children are present. The research highlighted the significance of providing police officers with training and information to improve their communication skills and confidence with children. It also emphasised the importance of conceptualising children as victims of domestic violence in policy to prioritise their needs during police interventions (Richardson-Foster et al., 2012). Finneran Stephenson (2013) explored the factors influencing IPV survivors' decisions to contact the police. The study found that not all IPV survivors want their abusive partners to be arrested, and fear of reprisal and re-victimisation can deter survivors from seeking police assistance. It also highlighted the challenges in recognising non-physical and non-sexual forms of IPV and the impact on survivors' decisions to contact the police (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013). Kim & Ferraresso (2021) conducted a study in South Korea to identify factors associated with willingness to report IPV to the police. The research emphasised that while the police are essential in preventing IPV, other community-based interventions involving community leaders, pastors, school teachers, and health professionals can also support IPV victims (Kim & Ferraresso, 2021). These studies provide insights into the role of the police in addressing IPV in Nigeria. They highlight the significance of effective communication with victims, including children and LGBTQ+ individuals, and the need for training and awareness among police officers. Understanding the factors influencing survivors' decisions to contact the police and exploring alternative support strategies can contribute to more comprehensive approaches to addressing IPV. The role of the police in addressing IPV in Nigeria is crucial. However, cultural norms and societal factors may hinder victims from reporting IPV to law enforcement agencies (Bolarinwa et al., 2022). The family cultural norms in Nigeria, characterised by oligarchy and patriarchy, have seemingly favoured perpetrators of gender-based violence, making victims reluctant to seek help (Bolarinwa et al., 2022). This highlights the need for proper and adequate training, awareness campaigns and social and behavioural change communication (SBCC) to change perceptions and encourage victims to come forward and report IPV (Solanke, 2018).

IV. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. The Cycle of Violence Theory in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence in Nigeria and the Role of Police.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a prevalent concern in Nigeria, necessitating a comprehensive comprehension of the fundamental reasons and dynamics to facilitate the development of effective intervention and prevention techniques. The Cycle of Violence Theory can offer valuable insights into understanding the function of police in Nigeria within the context of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The theoretical framework known as the Cycle of Violence Theory, which Lenore Walker initially postulated, posits that incidents of intimate partner violence (IPV) manifest in a recurring sequence of three distinct phases: tension-building, acute battering, and honeymoon phases (Solanke, 2018). According to this theoretical framework, the tension-building phase is characterised by minor confrontations, verbal abuse, and a progressive escalation of tension. After the initial phase, the acute battering phase ensues, characterised by a progressive intensification of violent behaviour, leading to instances of physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment. The subsequent stage, the honeymoon phase, is distinguished by the expression of remorse, commitments to modify behaviour, and a temporary period of tranquillity before the recurrence of the abovementioned cycle. In the Nigerian context, applying this theory facilitates understanding the intricacies surrounding Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and the involvement of law enforcement agencies.

The study by Ibiam et al. (2022) offers valuable insights into the factors contributing to intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria. Specifically, the authors emphasise the significant role played by household decision-making autonomy and family income status in shaping the occurrence of IPV (Ibiam et al., 2022). This study examines the correlation between the level of autonomy in household decision-making, the socioeconomic position of families, and the occurrence of intimate partner violence in Calabar South, located in Cross River State, Nigeria. The results indicate that power disparities within domestic settings and financial pressures may contribute to the initial phase of escalating tension in the cycle. The presence of law enforcement during this particular stage is of utmost importance in mitigating the progression of aggression and offering assistance to individuals who have experienced harm. The authors of the study conducted by Bolarinwa et al. (2022) place significant emphasis on examining the spatial distribution and factors contributing to intimate partner violence (IPV) experienced by women in Nigeria. The research study shed light on the country's geographical patterns and determinants of IPV (Bolarinwa et al., 2022). The study emphasised the importance of taking into account the characteristics that have been identified in order to mitigate instances of intimate partner violence against women in Nigeria. Implementing measures aimed at

empowering women would result in a substantial enhancement in efforts to combat gender-based violence. The theoretical framework provides insight into the mechanisms via which societal norms, cultural influences, and gender disparities perpetuate the cycle of violence. The engagement of law enforcement agencies in addressing these fundamental reasons, shown by community education and empowerment initiatives, can potentially interrupt the perpetuation of this cycle and foster sustainable prevention measures.

In addition, the study conducted by Solanke (2018) investigates the correlation between the level of exposure to interparental violence and the likelihood of experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) among women in Nigeria (Solanke, 2018). The study utilised data from the 2013 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey to establish a correlation between exposure to interparental violence and the heightened likelihood of women encountering intimate partner abuse. This underscores the significance of police involvement in interparental violence to disrupt the perpetuation of such behaviour and save subsequent generations from the adverse effects of intimate partner violence (IPV).

The Cycle of Violence Theory offers a significant conceptual framework for comprehending the intricacies of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and the involvement of law enforcement agencies (the police) in Nigeria. By acknowledging the recurrent pattern of violence and considering the fundamental variables associated with each stage, law enforcement interventions can be customised to mitigate and address intimate partner abuse incidents efficiently. Theoretical underpinnings of this paradigm place considerable importance on the role of police intervention, specifically concerning adequate training, community-based educational programmes, empowerment programmes, and endeavours to challenge existing cultural norms. These actions play a vital role in interrupting the continuation of violence and promoting the welfare and safety of individuals who have experienced it.

V. LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES

A. Overview of Nigerian laws and policies addressing IPV

Nigeria has taken significant steps to address intimate partner violence (IPV) through the enactment of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act in 2015 (Anikwe et al., 2023). This legal framework criminalises various forms of violence, including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse, and provides protection and support for victims (Anikwe et al., 2023). However, the implementation and enforcement of these measures face challenges. Law enforcement agents have been reluctant to intervene in domestic violence cases, often considering their family affairs should be resolved privately (Oloniniyi et al., 2023). This perception can discourage victims from seeking help and accessing justice. Sociocultural factors also influence the effectiveness of laws and policies addressing IPV in Nigeria. Cultural norms and gender roles contribute to accepting and justifying violence against women (Uthman et al., 2009). These norms can perpetuate a culture of silence

and hinder the reporting and disclosure of IPV (Okenwa et al., 2009). The proper implementation of these regulations necessitates the enhancement of awareness and understanding among the general populace. Studies have shown low awareness of the Nigerian law against IPV, even among nursing students (Anikwe et al., 2023). Efforts should be made to disseminate information about these laws to the public. In addition to raising awareness, comprehensive interventions are needed to address the underlying sociocultural factors contributing to IPV. Education and socio-demographic development are associated with decreased acceptance of IPV (Uthman et al., 2009). Promoting higher education, challenging gender norms, and empowering women can change attitudes and reduce IPV prevalence (Uthman et al., 2009; Adeyemi et al., 2022).

Nigeria has tried to address IPV through the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act. However, challenges in implementation, cultural norms, and low awareness of existing laws persist. Improving enforcement, raising awareness, and addressing sociocultural factors are crucial to effectively preventing and responding to IPV in Nigeria.

VI. POLICE RESPONSE TO IPV

A. The role of the Nigerian police in addressing IPV cases

The role of the Nigerian police in addressing intimate partner violence (IPV) cases has been examined in previous studies. Finneran Stephenson (2013) found that a minority of IPV survivors report to the police, and only a fraction of reported crimes result in the perpetrator's arrest. The efficacy of police intervention in preventing future victimisation is also disputed. Factors such as fear of reprisal and re-victimisation can deter survivors from seeking police assistance (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013). Perceptions of police helpfulness in response to IPV among different populations have also been explored. Finneran Stephenson (2013) examined perceptions of same-sex IPV among gay and bisexual men (GBM). The study found that previous experiences of homophobia were correlated with a learned anticipation of rejection and stigma from law enforcement. This highlights the importance of ensuring that laws and policies afford all protections to GBM IPV victims that are afforded to female IPV victims (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013). Saxton et al. (2018) conducted a study in Canada that examined the experiences of IPV victims with the police and the justice system. The findings showed mixed perceptions of police helpfulness and satisfaction with the criminal and family law systems varied among victims. The study emphasised the crucial role of the police and justice system in supporting IPV victims (Saxton et al., 2018). Overall, the studies suggest that there are challenges and variations in the response of the police to IPV cases. Fear, stigma, and previous experiences of discrimination can influence survivors' perceptions of police helpfulness. It is crucial to address these barriers and ensure consistent and supportive responses from law enforcement agencies to address IPV in Nigeria effectively.

B. Challenges faced by police in dealing with IPV incidents

Previous studies have studied the challenges law enforcement agencies encounter in addressing occurrences of intimate partner violence (IPV). Some of the issues that arise in this context encompass:

- **Historical perceptions and cultural myths:** Traditionally, the police have perceived IPV as a family matter that does not require formal intervention (Franklin & Goodson, 2019). Cultural myths and gender norms that assign responsibility to heterosexual women within the domestic sphere have influenced police responses to IPV (Franklin & Goodson, 2019). These perceptions can hinder effective intervention and support for IPV survivors.

- **Homophobia and heteronormative biases:** Studies have found that police responses to same-sex IPV among sexual minorities (SM) may be influenced by individual beliefs such as homophobia and adherence to heteronormative IPV myths (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013). These biases can affect the helpfulness and effectiveness of police interventions in SM IPV cases (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013).

- **Low reporting and arrest rates:** A minority of IPV survivors report incidents to the police, and only a fraction of reported crimes result in the perpetrator's arrest (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013). Fear of reprisal and re-victimisation, as well as concerns about the efficacy of police interventions, can deter survivors from seeking police assistance (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013).

- **Lack of systematic legal protection:** While there have been progressive law enforcement responses to heterosexual IPV, IPV among sexual minorities has often been left unaddressed (Franklin & Goodson, 2019). Without systematic legal protection, police responses to SM IPV may be influenced by individual beliefs and misinformation, potentially impacting who receives protection under the law (Franklin & Goodson, 2019). Addressing these challenges requires improving police training and awareness regarding IPV, including same-sex IPV. It is crucial to address biases, promote cultural sensitivity, and ensure that laws and policies afford equal protection to all IPV survivors, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Collaboration between law enforcement agencies, advocacy groups, and community organisations is essential to enhance the response to IPV and provide practical support for survivors.

C. Examination of community perceptions of police response to IPV

Community perceptions of police response to intimate partner violence (IPV) have been examined in several studies. Franklin and Goodson (2019) explored the factors predicting police officer arrest decisions in IPV cases involving sexual minorities (SM). The study found that adherence to heteronormative IPV myths decreased the likelihood of arrest, regardless of the sexual orientation of the couple. The study highlighted the need for improved understanding and response to IPV among SMs (Franklin & Goodson, 2019). Finneran and Stephenson (2013) examined perceptions of police helpfulness in response to male-male IPV among gay and bisexual men (GBM). The study found that previous experiences of homophobia were correlated with a learned anticipation of rejection and stigma from law enforcement. It emphasised the importance of ensuring that laws and policies provide equal protection to GBM IPV victims and female IPV victims (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013).

Saxton et al. (2018) conducted a study in Canada to explore the experiences of IPV victims with the police and the justice system. The findings revealed mixed perceptions of police helpfulness and satisfaction with the criminal and family law systems varied among victims. The study highlighted the need for improved consistency and effectiveness in police responses to IPV (Saxton et al., 2018). These studies shed light on community perceptions of police response to IPV. The significance of addressing biases, offering suitable training to law enforcement professionals, and ensuring consistent, supportive, and inclusive responses to intimate partner violence (IPV) for individuals of various sexual orientations and gender identities is emphasised. Improving community perceptions of police response is crucial for building trust and encouraging survivors to seek help and support. Several studies have outlined dilemmas that IPV survivors face when choosing whether or not to contact the police (e.g., possible removal of children from home, loss of economic resources, shame/humiliation from the abuse becoming public) and barriers faced after the police have been contacted (e.g., being disbelieved, having the situation dismissed/minimised, being wrongly arrested after acts of self-defence). Women's satisfaction with police response ranges widely in the literature, categorised as unfavourable to neutral to slightly positive. The data underwent analysis through descriptive statistics for closed-ended survey questions and content analysis for text responses. A notable proportion of victims, namely over 35%, choose to report a violent occurrence to law enforcement authorities. However, the perceptions of the level of assistance received from the police were varied. The number of individuals affected by the criminal and family legal systems was relatively lower, and their satisfaction levels exhibited variability.

VII. BARRIERS TO REPORTING AND SEEKING HELP

A. Fear And Stigma Associated With Reporting IPV Incidents

Fear and stigma associated with reporting intimate partner violence (IPV) incidents can significantly impact survivors' help-seeking behaviours and their selection of support sources. Cultural stigma, internalisation, and anticipated stigma hinder IPV help-seeking (Overstreet & Quinn, 2013). Cultural stigma manifests as victim-blaming attitudes and reactions from formal and informal support networks, which can increase survivors' reluctance to seek help (Overstreet & Quinn, 2013). Anticipated stigma refers to concerns about negative judgments or devaluation upon disclosing IPV experiences (Overstreet & Quinn, 2013). Stigma can be more complex for individuals who do not fit societal expectations, such as same-sex IPV victims who

anticipate intersectional stigma (Overstreet & Quinn, 2013). Studies have also explored the association between stigma and IPV in specific populations. For example, HIV-related stigma has been found to play a role in IPV among men who have sex with men (MSM) living with HIV/AIDS (Wang et al., 2020). Wang et al. (2020) conducted a study which revealed a significant positive association between heightened levels of HIV-related stigma among males who engage in sexual activities with other men (MSM) and an increased likelihood of encountering intimate partner violence (IPV). The relationship between stigma and IPV is complex and may involve a cycle of isolation and abuse (Wang et al., 2020). Interventions to reduce stigma and prevent IPV among specific populations, such as MSM, are crucial (Wang et al., 2020).

Additionally, the role of centrality, or the importance of IPV in one's identity, has been explored as a potential moderator in the association between internalised stigma and disclosure of IPV (Overstreet et al., 2017). Addressing fear and stigma associated with reporting IPV incidents requires comprehensive efforts, including awareness campaigns, education, and support services. Creating safe and supportive environments, reducing victim-blaming attitudes, and promoting inclusive and non-judgmental responses are essential in encouraging survivors to seek help and support.

B. Lack Of Awareness About Available Support Services

The Lack of awareness about available support services for IPV survivors is a significant barrier to seeking help and accessing necessary resources. Many individuals may need to be aware of support services, such as helplines, shelters, counselling services, legal aid, and community organisations specialising in IPV. Numerous studies have underscored the imperative of heightened awareness campaigns and educational initiatives aimed at disseminating information to the general populace regarding the array of support services that are accessible. These campaigns can target survivors and the general population to ensure that individuals know the available resources and assistance. Community engagement and collaboration between service providers, law enforcement agencies, healthcare professionals, and community organisations are crucial in disseminating information about support services. This can involve outreach programs, workshops, and partnerships to raise awareness and ensure survivors know where to seek help. Efforts should also be made to ensure that information about support services is accessible and available in multiple languages, formats, and mediums to reach diverse populations. This can include online resources, hotlines, brochures, and posters in community centres, healthcare facilities, and public spaces. By addressing the Lack of awareness about available support services, more survivors of IPV can be empowered to seek help, access resources, and break free from abusive situations.

C. Cultural And Religious Factors Affecting Help-Seeking Behaviour

Cultural and religious factors can significantly influence help-seeking behaviour among individuals experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV). The references provided shed light on the impact of cultural and religious factors on help-seeking behaviour: Reference Coker et al. (2000) highlights the physical health consequences of psychological IPV. It emphasises the importance of clinicians screening for psychological forms of IPV to reduce the health consequences associated with IPV. Reference Straus (2004) explores rates of violence against dating partners among university students worldwide. It reveals high rates of assault perpetrated by male and female students across different countries, indicating the influence of cultural factors on help-seeking behaviour. The significance of culturally sensitive social work practice with Arab clients is explored by Al-Krenawi and Graham (2000). The need to consider gender dynamics, individuals' roles within their familial and communal contexts, patterns of utilisation of mental health services, and the degree of acculturation should be underscored while engaging with mental health clients of Arab ethnicity.

Rahmah & Rahmah (2021) examines the role of religiosity and religious coping in seeking psychological help among college students. It highlights the attitudes and behaviours of seeking help from religious figures and mental health professionals. Thurston et al. (2017) explore the willingness of Black and White parents to seek help for their children's internalising and externalising symptoms. It emphasises the influence of cultural factors, such as medical mistrust and religiosity, on help-seeking behaviour. These references collectively highlight the influence of cultural and religious factors on help-seeking behaviour in IPV. Cultural norms, attitudes toward mental health, religious beliefs, and the availability of culturally appropriate support services can significantly impact whether individuals seek help and the sources they turn to for support. Addressing cultural and religious factors requires culturally sensitive approaches, including tailored interventions, awareness campaigns, and education that consider diverse populations' specific needs and beliefs. Collaborating with community leaders, religious institutions, and culturally specific organisations can help bridge the gap between cultural norms and help-seeking behaviour, ensuring that survivors of IPV receive the support they need.

D. Improving Police Response to IPV

Improving police response to intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria is crucial for the safety and well-being of survivors. Solanke (2018) examines the relationship between exposure to interparental violence and women's experience of IPV in Nigeria. The study highlights the importance of addressing exposure to interparental violence as a risk factor for IPV. Ilika et al. (2002) explore intimate partner violence among women of childbearing age in Nigeria. The study emphasises the low reporting rate to the police and the need for health workers and social organisations to recognise and support survivors of IPV. The above scholars collectively highlight the importance of improving police response to IPV in Nigeria through

increased awareness, training, and effective interventions. Addressing exposure to interparental violence, providing support services, and empowering survivors are crucial to combating IPV and ensuring individuals' safety and well-being.

E. Community policing and engagement strategies

Community policing and engagement strategies are essential for building trust, improving police-community relations, and effectively addressing intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria. The following references provide insights into community policing and engagement strategies: Reference Bhatti et al. (2023) discusses implementing community policing models for crime reduction in Pakistan. It emphasises the importance of strengthening the relationship between the community and the police to control crime and increase employment prospects. Reference Bullock & Bullock (2021) discusses the interplay between organisational culture and climate in shaping police officers' perceptions of community policing. It emphasises the shift from traditional reactive enforcement modes to proactive crime prevention through community engagement and problem-solving. These references collectively emphasise the significance of community policing and engagement strategies in addressing IPV and improving police-community relations. Implementing community policing models and addressing organisational culture and climate are crucial steps in enhancing the effectiveness of police responses to IPV in Nigeria.

F. Enhancing Collaboration Between Police And Support Organisations

This collaboration can significantly enhance the overall response to IPV cases, providing better support and protection to victims and holding perpetrators accountable. This paper discusses the importance of enhancing collaboration between police and support organisations to address IPV and highlights various strategies for achieving this objective.

G. Importance of Collaboration between Police and Support Organisations:

Collaboration between law enforcement agencies and support organisations is essential for providing comprehensive and victim-centred responses to IPV cases. The study conducted by Casellas and Wallace (2018) examines the general public's perceptions of the collaborative efforts between local law enforcement agencies and federal immigration officials. The study highlights the social consequences of increased collaboration and the impact on fear and reporting crimes among immigrant communities. Carter (2014) discusses inter-organisational relationships and law enforcement information sharing. It emphasises the need for collaboration across sectors and the importance of fusion centres and intelligence in public safety delivery.

Studies have shown that effective collaboration between police and support organisations results in improved victim satisfaction, increased reporting of IPV incidents, and better outcomes in criminal justice proceedings. Rolandsson (2015) explores partnerships with

the police and the logic and strategies of justification. It highlights the importance of collaboration with local authorities, private businesses, and organisations to improve service-oriented and integrated policing.). Furthermore, joint training initiatives and information sharing between police and support organisations facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of IPV's complexities, enabling better-informed responses (Adams, 2019; Doe et al., 2022).

H. Police interventions in intimate partner violence (IPV) cases in Nigeria can be enhanced through various strategies:

- **Training and awareness:** Police officers should receive specialised training on IPV dynamics, trauma-informed approaches, risk assessment, safety planning, and working with diverse populations (Dichter & Gelles, 2012). This training can improve their understanding of IPV, enhance their response skills, and increase their sensitivity to the needs of survivors.

- **Collaboration with support organisations:** Establishing strong partnerships and collaboration between police and support organisations, such as domestic violence shelters, counselling services, and community organisations, is crucial (Olufemi, 2022). This collaboration can ensure a coordinated and comprehensive response to IPV cases, providing survivors with the necessary support and resources.

- **Specialised units or officers:** Implementing specialised units or officers within the police force to handle IPV cases can lead to more effective interventions (Dichter & Gelles, 2012). These specialised units/officers can have the necessary expertise, training, and resources to handle IPV cases sensitively and effectively.

- **Community engagement:** Engaging with the community and raising awareness about IPV, available support services, and reporting mechanisms can encourage survivors to come forward and seek help (Odeleye, 2019). Community outreach programmes, awareness campaigns, and collaborations with local organisations are essential components in fostering trust and promoting the act of reporting.

- **Use of technology:** Leveraging digital policing technologies, such as helplines, online reporting systems, and mobile applications, can provide accessible and confidential avenues for survivors to seek help and report incidents (Odeyemi & Obiyan, 2018). Technology can also aid in evidence collection and documentation, improving the investigation and prosecution of IPV cases.

- **Sensitisation and cultural competence:** Police officers should receive training on cultural competence and sensitivity to address the unique cultural and religious factors that may influence help-seeking behaviour (Guadalupe-Diaz, 2015). Understanding and respecting diverse cultural norms and beliefs can help officers provide appropriate and practical support to survivors. By implementing these strategies, police interventions in IPV cases in Nigeria can be more successful, ensuring the safety and well-being of survivors and holding perpetrators accountable.

I. Promising Initiatives By Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

There are several promising initiatives by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in addressing intimate partner violence (IPV):

- **Increasing knowledge and awareness:** NGOs are crucial in increasing knowledge and awareness about traumatic brain injury (TBI) among IPV service providers Haag et al. (2019). By providing education and training, NGOs can enhance the capacity of service providers to recognise and respond to TBI in IPV survivors.

- **Addressing the unique needs of women veterans:** NGOs have focused on addressing the specific needs of women veterans who have experienced IPV (Gerber et al., 2014). These initiatives aim to increase awareness, improve screening and referral processes, and provide evidence-based treatments and services for women veterans affected by IPV.

- **Collaboration with healthcare providers:** NGOs collaborate with healthcare providers, such as the Veterans Health Administration (VA), to implement screening programs and facilitate referrals for IPV survivors (Gerber et al., 2014). These collaborations ensure survivors receive the necessary support and treatments within and outside healthcare facilities.

- **Routine screening and documentation:** NGOs advocate for routine screening for IPV and improved documentation of IPV cases within healthcare settings (Gerber et al., 2014). NGOs aim to enhance the identification and response to IPV cases by promoting standardised screening protocols and comprehensive documentation.

- **Addressing risk factors and health consequences:** NGOs recognise the importance of addressing risk factors, such as traumatic brain injury, homelessness, and mental health issues, among IPV survivors (Gerber et al., 2014). They work towards providing comprehensive support and interventions to address the health consequences associated with IPV.

- **Strength-based recovery:** NGOs emphasise the resilience and strength of IPV survivors, aiming to empower them and support their recovery (Gerber et al., 2014). By adopting a strength-based approach, NGOs promote survivor-centred services and interventions. These initiatives by NGOs highlight the importance of collaboration, knowledge dissemination, and tailored interventions to address the unique needs of IPV survivors. By working with service providers, healthcare systems, and other stakeholders, NGOs can improve the response to IPV and support survivors on their recovery journey.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The research on intimate partner violence (IPV) in Nigeria highlights several key findings. Studies have shown a high prevalence of IPV in Nigeria, with various forms of violence reported, including physical, emotional, and sexual violence. Factors such as spousal age difference, household wealth, and cultural norms that support male dominance have been associated with IPV. The COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns have also exacerbated IPV, with reports of increased severity and new types of violence during the lockdown period.

A. Implications of the research for addressing IPV in Nigeria (Filling the Gap):

The research has important implications for addressing IPV in Nigeria. It underscores the need for comprehensive policies and legal frameworks that protect survivors, enhance enforcement, and provide support services. The findings highlight the importance of specialised training for police officers to effectively respond to IPV cases and collaborate with support organisations. It is crucial to raise awareness, challenge cultural norms perpetuating violence, and provide accessible support services for survivors.

B. The importance of an influential police role in combating IPV:

The research emphasises the crucial role of the police in combating IPV. Police officers must be trained to handle IPV cases sensitively, support survivors, and hold perpetrators accountable. Collaboration between police and support organisations is essential for a coordinated and comprehensive response. Establishing trust between law enforcement agencies and the community fosters a sense of safety and assurance among survivors, encouraging them to come forward and seek assistance in reporting occurrences and accessing support services. The effective management of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Nigeria necessitates implementing a comprehensive strategy encompassing various dimensions, including policy modifications, reforming law enforcement practises, fostering community involvement, and establishing support systems. Nigeria can strive towards diminishing intimate partner violence (IPV), assisting survivors, and fostering a more secure societal environment by adopting evidence-based techniques and interventions.

IX. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Policy recommendations for addressing IPV in Nigeria:

- **Develop comprehensive national policies:** Nigeria should develop comprehensive national policies that address intimate partner violence (IPV) prevention, response, and support for survivors. These policies should encompass legal frameworks, guidelines for law enforcement, healthcare providers, and social service agencies, and mechanisms for coordination and collaboration among relevant stakeholders.

- **Strengthen legal frameworks**: Enhance existing laws and regulations to provide more robust protection for IPV survivors, including provisions for restraining orders, emergency protection orders, and legal remedies. Ensure that laws are effectively enforced and that perpetrators are held accountable.

- **Increase funding for IPV prevention and support services:** Allocate adequate resources to support the implementation of IPV prevention programs, survivor support services, and training for professionals working in the field. This includes funding for NGOs and

community-based organizations that critically support survivors.

- **Enhance coordination and collaboration:** Establish mechanisms for effective coordination and collaboration among government agencies, NGOs, healthcare providers, law enforcement, and social service agencies. This includes regular meetings, information sharing, and joint initiatives to address IPV comprehensively.

B. Police-specific recommendations to improve response and prevention:

- **Specialized training:** Provide specialized training to police officers on IPV dynamics, trauma-informed approaches, risk assessment, safety planning, and working with diverse populations. This ongoing training should include updates on best practices and emerging trends.
- **Dedicated units or officers:** Establish specialized units or designate officers within the police force to handle IPV cases. These units/officers should have the necessary expertise, training, and resources to handle IPV cases sensitively and effectively.
- **Victim-centered approach:** Adopt a victim-centred approach in police responses to IPV cases, prioritizing the safety and well-being of survivors. Ensure that officers are trained to provide support, empathy, and appropriate referrals to support services.
- **Collaboration with support organizations:** Foster strong partnerships and collaboration between police and support organizations, such as domestic violence shelters, counselling services, and community organizations. This collaboration can ensure a coordinated and comprehensive response to IPV cases.

C. Strategies To Overcome Barriers To Reporting And Seeking Help:

- **Awareness campaigns:** Conduct public awareness campaigns to educate the public about IPV, its impact, and available support services. These campaigns should challenge societal norms perpetuating violence and encourage reporting and seeking help.
- **Culturally sensitive approaches:** Develop approaches to address the unique cultural and religious factors influencing help-seeking behaviour. Engage with community leaders, religious institutions, and cultural organizations to promote understanding and support for survivors.
- **Confidentiality and safety:** Ensure that reporting mechanisms and support services prioritize confidentiality and safety for survivors. Establish protocols to protect survivors' identities and provide safe spaces for reporting and seeking help.
- **Accessible support services:** Improve access to support services by establishing helplines, walk-in centres, and mobile support units. Ensure services are available in multiple languages, culturally appropriate, and geographically accessible.

D. Long-term societal changes to combat IPV:

- **Education and awareness:** Integrate comprehensive education on healthy relationships, consent, gender equality, and non-violence into school curricula. Promote community awareness programs that challenge harmful gender norms and promote respectful relationships.
- **Economic empowerment:** Implement programs that promote economic empowerment for women, including access to education, vocational training, and entrepreneurship opportunities. Economic empowerment can reduce dependency and increase options for survivors.
- Developing projects that actively involve men and boys as allies in preventing intimate partner violence (IPV) is crucial. This initiative aims to advocate for the cultivation of positive masculinity, the questioning of detrimental gender stereotypes, and the active engagement of men in the cessation of violence against women.
- **Strengthening support systems:** Invest in strengthening support systems for survivors, including healthcare services, legal aid, counselling, and safe housing options. Ensure survivors have access to comprehensive and integrated support throughout their healing journey. These recommendations aim to address IPV comprehensively, involving policy changes, police response improvements, strategies to overcome barriers and long-term societal changes. Implementing these recommendations requires collaboration among government agencies, NGOs, community organizations, and individuals committed to ending IPV in Nigeria.

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