

## **Evaluation of NTA's Drama Programmes on child Abuse Among Residents of Abuja Municipal Area Council FCT Nigeria.**

Abstract: Emotional abuse is a behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-esteem. It may include threats, constant criticism as well as withholding love, support or guidance. Child prostitution is not only a cause of death and high morbidity of millions of children, but a gross violation of their rights. Prostitution negatively affects children's sexual health, causes psychological harm and puts them at risk for enduring increased violence. Child labour is a problem worldwide but it particularly affects children in developing countries. Child labour is characterized by full-time work at too early of an age, and too many hours spent working. The findings, therefore, point to the need for a multi-faceted approach to address the discrepancies identified. This may involve targeted promotional campaigns to enhance awareness, ensuring broader accessibility to the programs, and further evaluating ways to enhance their effectiveness in influencing behaviors regarding child abuse issues. Such an approach could help maximize the impact of NTA's drama programs and contribute to meaningful societal change in addressing child abuse concerns.

Keywords: NTA's drama programs, Emotional abuse, Development Communication, child abuse

### **Introduction**

Development Communication plays a major role in information distribution in developing countries and other parts of the world. Communication does not only inform but also influence the behaviour of the receiver of information. Effective development Communication should motivate people to participate in planned activities (Kheerajit and Flor 2014 p.88)

According to Omotosho et al (2015, P. 139)

Television is a means of instructions through various educational programmes that are aired. Children sit before Television to learn subject like Maths, English Language, Chemistry, etc.

Television in particular plays a great role both in the social media life and educational life of children. As noted by (Davies and Thomson 2007, P.6),

Television is more important than other media primarily of its universal accessibility to all classes, ages and types of children.

Therefore, this research effort is intended to discuss Nigerian Television Stations as regards their programmes on Child Abuse among Residents of Abuja Municipal Area Council FCT, Nigeria.

This is why Oyero (2010) states that:

Issues affecting children have greater implications than the present development issues call for more media involvement since issues affecting them are intergenerational which makes their rights crucial. Any development that is not sustainable is not development since children form the future of any society, their issues must be seen in that perspective.

Anaeto and Anaeto (2010) states that:

Drama is a traditional communication technique that can be used to communicate development-oriented messages. This is based on the fact that it is built on the people's cultural heritage using traditional channels and knowledge. (p. 136).

Children are supposed to be jealously protected by adults, parents and Law Enforcement Agents in Nigeria. Unfortunately, it is disheartening to note that, most of the shameful violations emanate from the very people who are supposed to protect them.

According to (Isangedighi 2004); the issue of child Abuse is an issue of serious concern globally. Explaining further (Olusegun and Idowu, 2016, p.1) says, section 277 of child's Right Act of 2003, defines a child as a person who has not attained the age of 18 years. Child Abuse is any act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death serious physical or emotional harm and sexual abuse or exploitation. In Nigeria abuse against children is rampant although it is largely under-reported. Under-reporting stems from cultural justification of certain forms of abuse associated with cultural practices and the reluctance of children to speak about prior abusive experiences. Fear of their assailant's threats of their Parents reaction may be the cause of their reluctance. Also some children may be either too young to understand their experience or unable to speak for themselves.

The African Charter of the Rights and welfare of the child of 1999 provides that children must be protected from all forms of treatments, physical, mental or sexual abuse and neglect or maltreatment (African Charter on Right and welfare of child Act 16, 1990). The Child Right Act of 2003 also provides that children must be protected from: child marriage, Child betrothal,

tattoos and skin marks, exposure and use of narcotic drugs, abduction, removal and transfer of the child from lawful custody, Child labour and unlawful sexual intercourse (Child Right Acts, 2003).

### **What is a child?**

A child according to (Ojiakor et al, 2020, pp.2-3) defines a child as a recently born human being or a young person of either sex between infancy and youth. (Oyero, 2009, p.13), made a clarification on different categories of a child. A very young child under the age of about 18 months is a baby or (more formally) an infant. A child who has just learned how to walk is a toddler. A child up to the age of 9 or 10 is sometimes a little girl or a boy can be anyone up to the age about 20. However, someone aged between 13 and 19 may prefer to be called a teenager or a young woman or young man.

### **Concept of Child Abuse**

In his own contribution (Ejiofor et al 2017) says, child Abuse is a form of Child abuse or molestation which includes any sexual activity between an adult and a minor. A Child due to his or her low maturity and sense of reasoning cannot wisely consent to any form of sexual activity. To this effect, when a perpetrator takes advantage of the low sense maturity of the child, and engages him or her into sex or related event, he is considered to have either deceived or forced the minor into having sexual activity with him. And the calamity associated with this abominable act may be lasting effects on the victims for years if proper care is not taken. Child

sexual abuse does not imply to only when the predator engages in a physical contact with the child, sometime it can be in words, signs or even by exposure.

### **Factors Affecting the Effectiveness of Laws on Child Abuse in Nigeria**

Despite all the national and international legal instruments put in place for the protection of children (Olusegun and Idowu, 2016) says many still suffer various forms of child abuse. This implies that the laws created to protect them are not effective. There are multiple factors responsible for the ineffectiveness of such laws and policies in Nigeria ranging from:

- i. Poor enforcement mechanism
- ii. Lack of awareness
- iii. Poverty
- iv. Non adoption of the Child Rights Act of 2003
- v. Inefficient judicial power.
- vi. Corruption
- vii. Negative attitude of parents.
- viii. Sex offender treatment programmes
- ix. Cultural and traditional influence.
- x. Lack of political will and
- xi. Domestic Violence against women

### **Categories of Child Abuse**

There are four (4) main categories of Child Abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect, Sexual abuse and child labour (Finkelhor and Korbin 1988).

#### **a. Physical Abuse**

Studies from countries around the world suggest that a large number of children suffer physical punishment in their homes (UN General Assembly, 2019) and it is estimated that up to 1 billion children aged between 2-17 years have experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence or neglect during the past years (WHO, 2019). Physical abuse can range from minor bruises to severe fractures or death as a result of punching, beating, hitting, shaking or otherwise (Mayo Clinic Child and Family advocacy Center, 2018).

### **b. Emotional Abuse and Neglect**

Emotional abuse is a behavior that impairs a child's emotional development or sense of self-esteem. It may include threats, constant criticism as well as withholding love, support or guidance. Neglect is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic physical and emotional needs. Neglect is a very common type of child abuse and according to child welfare information gateway, more children suffer from neglect than from physical and sexual abuse combined (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2019).

### **c. Sexual Abuse and Child Prostitution**

Sexual abuse of a child is any sexual act between an adult and a child which may include sexual intercourse, incest, rape, oral sex, sodomy, inappropriate touching or kissing. "An overview of studies in 21 countries (mostly developed) found that 7-31% of women and 3-29% of men reported sexual victimisation during childhood and majority of studies found girls to be abused at 1.5-3 times the rate of males. Most of the abuse occurred within the family circle (UN General Assembly, 2006) Child prostitution "involves offering the sexual services of a child or inducing a child to perform sexual acts for a form of compensation, financial or otherwise" (Willis and Levy, 2002). Worldwide, approximately 1 million children are forced into prostitution but the

adults who engaged in prostitution or offer a child's sexual services to others force them. It is estimated that at list One Million girls worldwide are lured or forced into this scandalous form of child exploitation. Child prostitution is more frequent in developing countries such as Brazil and Thailand where more than 200,000 children are exploited (Yadar and Sengupta 2009).

Child prostitution is not only a cause of death and high morbidity of millions of children, but a gross violation of their rights. Prostitution negatively affects children's sexual health, causes psychological harm and puts them at risk for enduring increased violence.

- i. **Sexual Health:** Child prostitutes are the risk of contracting HIV and other infections. HIV infection rates in prostituted children range from 5% in Vietnam to 17% in Thailand. Prostituted children are STDS (Willis and Levy, 2002).
- ii. **Psychological Harm:** Child prostitution also causes serious long-term psychological harm, including anxiety, depression and behavioural disorders. Prostituted children are at a high risk of suicide and posttraumatic stress disorder.
- iii. **Violence:** Prostituted children are of a very of high risk of enduring injuries and violence. The children may be physically and emotionally abused into submission, while girls may be beaten to induce miscarriages.

#### **d. Child Labour**

Child labour is a problem worldwide but it particularly affects children in developing countries. Child labour is characterized by full-time work at too early of an age, and too many hours spent working. The work often exerts undue physical, social or psychological stress, hampers access to education and may be detrimental to social and psychological development. The ILO's statistical information and monitoring programmes on child labour recently estimated that 211 million

children or 18% of children aged 5-14 are economically active worldwide, 60% of those working children live in Asia, and 23% live in Sub-Saharan Africa. Most economically active children are employed in agriculture. In Cambodia, the rate is 73% while in Morocco it is 84% (Edmonds and Pavcnik, 2005).

## **Empirical Review**

In the study carried out by Olusegun and Idowu (2016) on Child Abuse in Nigeria: Dimension Reason for its persistence and probable solutions was established that laws put in place to protect children in Nigeria are not effective because so many other factors exist which inhibit their effective implementation. The study recommended among other that there should be public awareness on the laws relating to child abuse.

In another study by (Orlu-Orlu, 2017) on “perception of Nigeria Television Authority and channels Television Reportage of the Chibok School Girls Abduction among Residents of South-East Nigeria” it was found that, the credibility of level of the Nigeria Television Authority’s reports on the abduction of the Chibok school girls was rated low while that of Channels Television was highly rated. It was recommended that the Federal Government (owner of the Nigerian Television Authority) must restrain itself from interfering with the activities of journalist in the stations.

Similarly, Adetokunbo, (2013) work on “Menace of Child Abuse: A Television Documentary Production “. In the same vein (Egbo, 2014), evaluated newspaper coverage of “Sexual Violence Against Women and Children in Selected Nigeria Newspapers”. The study aimed at ascertaining if Nigeria newspapers give prominence to sexual violence stories; determining how often Newspapers report sexual violence issues, ascertaining whether

newspapers report sexual violence more as features than as straight news editorial or letters to the editors. Through content analysis, the researcher found that Nigeria Newspaper do not give prominence to sexual violence stories. This they have done by not placing them on the front pages, newspapers do not frequently report sexual violence, the selected newspapers do not amply utilise features in presenting sexual violence stories. The researcher recommended that women organisations should set up newspapers which would be their mouth piece against sexual violence.

Furthermore, (Abubakar & Okloho, 2016) in Ojiakor et al, 2020, p.4), researched on the “Implication of Girl Child Abuse on Womanhood”. The study focused on the informal sector where most of the children are involved in housemaid, manufacturing and maintenance activities. Nigeria has a staggering millions of under aged girls who are daily abused in one form or the other both in cities and rural areas. Many of these girls are sexually abused by their employer and his household. These forms of abuse constitutes a threat to the girl child in the form of brain injury school dropout, teenage pregnancies among others. Recommendations were given, among which include that there should be awareness Campaign on the evils of girl child abuse in the country and government should make girl child abuse a criminal offence

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the joy associated with the birth of Children, many remain victims of Abuse, Violence and exploitation. They are easy victims of violence because they are weaker in size Stature and mental capabilities (Akwara et al, 2010 PP. 26-33). Drama can serve as both an educational tool and a learning process. As a learning process it can be used to identify, analyse and discuss community problem as well as seek solutions to them with the participation of community

member. As an educational tool, it can be used to communicate information on different issues to bring about attitudinal and behavioural change. (Anaeto and Anaeto, 2010).

Interestingly there have been several scholarly endeavours on the broadcast, media including the role television plays using drama in mitigating child abuse in Nigeria (Adetokumbo, 2013; Ekuri, 2013; Awosola and Omoera), none of these specifically investigated “Evaluation of NTA’s Drama Programmes in Curbing Child Abuse among residents of Abuja Municipal Area Council, FCT Abuja, Nigeria”. This is the gap which this study seeks to fill.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the extent of awareness of NTA’s Drama Programmes on Child Abuse among residents of Abuja Municipal Area Council?
2. What is the perception on NTA’s Drama Programmes on Child Abuse among residents of Abuja Municipal Area Council?
3. What is the level of exposure of NTA’S Drama Programmes on Child abuse Among Residents of Abuja Municipal Area Council
4. How effective are NTA’s Drama Programmes in influencing Abuja Municipal Area Council Residents behaviour on issues of Child Abuse.

### **Methodology**

The design for the study is quantitative using survey method. The study was carried out in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), FCT, Abuja. According to statistics obtained from worldmeter (2021), Abuja Municipal Area Council has a total of approximately 925, 936 people. A sample size of 385 under the confidence level of 95%, margin error of 4.89% which was determined

through the use of sample size calculator.net. The method of analysis adopted for this was descriptive statistical analysis using simple frequency distribution.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1: The extent of the participants awareness of NTA'S Drama programmes on abuse?**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
To a very little extent	89	23.1	23.1
To a little extent	113	29.4	52.5
To a great extent	100	26.0	78.4
To very great extent	38	9.9	88.3
Difficult to say	45	11.7	100.0
Total	385	100.0	

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table 1 outlined the participants' level of awareness of NTA's drama programmes concerning abuse. The data revealed that 23.1% of the participants displayed very limited awareness of NTA's drama programs on child abuse, 29.4% had a somewhat limited awareness, 26% exhibited a substantial extent of awareness, 9.9% demonstrated a very high level of awareness, whereas 11.7% expressed uncertainty. Consequently, the results indicate that most of the respondents possess a limited extent of awareness regarding NTA's drama programmes on child abuse

**Table 2: Which of the following is your perception of NTA'S Drama programmes on Child Abuse?**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Satisfactory	5	1.3	1.3
Very satisfactory	226	58.7	60.0
Unsure	2	.5	60.5
Very poor	1	.3	60.8
Weak	151	39.2	100.0
Total	385	100.0	

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table revealed the participants perception on NTA's drama programmes on child abuse. The table showed that most of the respondents, 58.7%, had a very satisfactory perception of the programmes, 1.3% was satisfactory, 0.5% were unsure, 0.3% perception was very poor, while the perception 39.2% was weak.

**Table 3: What is your level of exposure to NTA's Drama programmes on Child Abuse in your area?**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very Low	72	18.7	18.7
Low	127	33.0	51.7
High	97	25.2	76.9
Very High	23	6.0	82.9
Difficult to say	66	17.1	100.0
Total	385	100.0	

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table 3 showed the respondents level of exposure to NTA's drama programmes on child abuse. The table indicated that most of the respondents, 33%, level of exposure to the programme was

low, 18.7% had very low exposure, 25.2% exposure was high, while 6% was very high and 17.1% find it difficult to say their level of exposure.

**Table 4: How effective are NTA's Drama programmes in influencing your behaviour on issues of Child Abuse?**

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Ineffective	76	19.7	19.7
Effective	194	50.4	70.1
Very effective	91	23.6	93.8
Very ineffective	24	6.2	100.0
Total	385	100.0	

**Source: Field Survey, 2024**

Table 4 showed the respondents view on how effective are NTA's drama programmes in influencing behaviour on issues concerning child abuse. it was indicated that most of the respondents, 50.4%, believed the programmes effectively influence their behaviour to issues on child abuse, while 19.7% were of the opinion that it was ineffective, 23.6% were of the opinion that it is very effective and 6.2% said it is very ineffective.

### **Conclusion Recommendations**

The findings from this indicated the analytical view of the participants' perception, awareness, exposure, and effectiveness of NTA's drama programs on child abuse. hence, it was indicated that, a significant number of the participants displays limited awareness of NTA's drama programs concerning child abuse. Nearly half of the respondents showed either very limited or somewhat limited awareness. This highlights the potential need for increased outreach or promotional efforts to enhance awareness about these crucial programs. This finding corroborates with the finding of Nsude and Onu (2023) on coverage of child abuse in online

versions of Nigerian newspapers. Using content analysis to ascertain frequency of child abuse stories, their depths, frames, and tones as well as the prominence given to the stories, their findings indicated that child abuse stories were few with less-than-desired depths but having more of tones considered favourable to the interest of abuse victims and frames that tend towards advocacy. The findings gave an impression that more efforts need to be made by online newspapers to further ethically highlight the abuse of children by giving increased coverage to abuse stories, projecting them in the right frames and further improving on the existing advocacy skills of their reporters and online editors. However, Ojiakor, Anyanwu, Nkwam-Uwaoma, and Duru, (2020) findings revealed a moderate level of awareness of radio programme on the campaign against child abuse.

Despite the limited awareness, the participants largely expressed a highly satisfactory or satisfactory perception of the programs. This seemingly contradictory situation between awareness and perception suggests that those who are aware of the programs have a positive view of them. However, expanding the understanding and reach of these programs is essential to ensure their impact is maximized across a broader audience. Additionally, the level of exposure to the programs varied among the participants, with a significant percentage reporting low or very low exposure. This emphasizes the importance of increasing the accessibility and visibility of these programs to the target audience, potentially through enhanced broadcasting or promotional activities.

However, half of the respondents believed that NTA's drama programs effectively influence their behavior on issues concerning child abuse. This highlights the potential of these programs in fostering positive behavioral changes, indicating their importance as a tool for awareness and education.

The findings, therefore, point to the need for a multi-faceted approach to address the discrepancies identified. This may involve targeted promotional campaigns to enhance awareness, ensuring broader accessibility to the programs, and further evaluating ways to enhance their effectiveness in influencing behaviors regarding child abuse issues. Such an approach could help maximize the impact of NTA's drama programs and contribute to meaningful societal change in addressing child abuse concerns.

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