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Serigraphy Exploration Of Domestic Violence Against Women In Isiokpo Community, Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State

Orlu, Vivian &*Ugochukwu K. Nwombu

Department of Fine and Applied Arts
Faculty of Humanities
Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Email: ugochukwu.nwombu@iaue.edu.ng
***Corresponding author**

Abstract
Domestic violence refers to a pattern of abusive behaviors melted to any of the partners in an intimate relationship. Domestic violence cuts across every segment of the society and occurs in all age, racial, socio-economic status, gender and religious belief and has been framed and understood exclusively as women's issue. This study aimed at serigraphy exploration of domestic violence against women in Isiokpo community, Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State. Five objectives and corresponding research questions were formulated respectively. Qualitative data for the study was gotten from photographs, sketches, catalogues, and text books among others. The materials and tools used in carrying out the studio practical include mesh, sensitizer, kerosene, transfer emulsion, seritex printing ink, papers, squeegee, paper tape, water etc. Findings indicated that the practical work on screen printing is a versatile printing technique that can produce high-quality, vibrant prints on a wide range of material's durability with excellent color reproduction, adaptable to different substrates such as paper, textiles, plastics, metals etc. That exhibition of screen printed works of domestic violence against women could send signal to the viewers through the message it depicts, and could serve as media for campaign against the menace. It also provides cost-effectiveness when printing large quantity of a particular design. It is recommended amongst others that violence is a treat to life and general well-being of an individual, therefore, women who suffer or subjected to any form of violence by an intimate partner, perpetrator or other family member should be offered immediate possible intervention/support.
Keywords: Domestic Violence, Abusive Behavior, Serigraphy Exploration, Printing Technique

INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence also referred to as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence, and intimate partner violence (IPV), is broadly defined as a pattern of abusive behavior of one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family or cohabitation. Domestic violence, so defined has many forms, including physical aggression (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects or threats thereof. Others includes sexual abuse, emotional abuse, controlling or domineering, intimidation, stalking, passive/covert abuse (e.g. neglect) and economic deprivation (Kaur, 2011). Domestic violence is more dangerous than cancer, motor vehicle accident, war and malaria. It cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography, the author stressed. No country or community is untouched by violence. Each year, more than 1.6 million people worldwide lose their lives to violence. For every one who dies as a result of violence, many more are injured and suffer from a range of physical, sexual, reproductive and mental health problems (Linda & Etienne, 2002). According to Lowenstein (2005) the past patriarchal society has led to the inequality

of women's points of view about social problems such as domestic violence. Earlier, police department viewed these menace as family squabbles and not violence against an individual. Therefore, these disturbances were not treated with the same seriousness as an assault on a total stranger. Violence against women is one of the most frequent human rights violations. It is a threat to women's live that can puts their physical and psychological health at risk, also a threat to the well-being of their children. Violence against women in the rural area is a phenomenon which has prevailed in our society for long, but has never gotten into limelight. Violence is one of the elements generated as a result of gender discrimination. However, family is a group of individuals united by the tie of marriage, blood or adoption. A family consists of adults and their offspring, it is the primary unit of all human society and as an institution the family is older than any religion or state, at any giving time. A family is composed of adults at least two of whom lives in an intimate relationship which the society approved and with off springs or adopted children. A family is like a little umbrella of protection for its members from the happenings of the society (Grain, 2019). Family instability refers to changes in parents' residential and romantic partnerships, such as marriage, divorce, and romantic partners moving in or out of the home. As rates of cohabitation, non-marital births, and divorce have increased over the past six decades, more children have experienced some degree of family instability. Family instability is any factor that creates additional challenges within a family unit that ultimately affects a child/children's cognitive, behavioral and emotional development, and places their development at significant risk due to the parents' inability to effectively manage the home and the living environment. Family instability can come in many forms; economic, emotional, social, and physical. The challenges and struggles of family instability can be passed on from generation to generation if the instabilities are not corrected or the family and children do not receive appropriate physical and emotional assistance when needed (Coach, 2019). According to Dinma (2018) "what a child becomes is as a result of what he or she picks from their environment. Therefore, a family should be a safe place for any child/children to be developed and well nurtured while they are growing; as family instability can be promoted by domestic violence.

Statement of the Problem

Domestic violence deprives women and men of their right to fully take charge of social and economic life which has serious impacts on health and well-being (Idris et al., 2018). It is a complicated and difficult issue to study and the research findings are inconsistent (Khan, 2015; Shuib et al., 2013). Domestic violence is often described as a family-centered problem and generally understood as patterns of abusive and coercive behavior, which may cause physical injuries, psychological and emotional disturbances, sexual intimidation as well as financial oppression of the victim (Ghani, 2014). Over the years, issues of domestic violence have always been on urban discuss, while rural victims are relegated to the background and are allowed to suffer with the menace of domestic violence. Often times, professional bodies like The International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), Security Operatives and Social Workers basically fight against domestic violence in the urban setting while women in rural areas are not given sufficient attention.

Gender violence formed the base on which 13 Female Artists celebrated the International Women's Day in 2019, from Nigeria, Cameroun and Republic of Benin. These Artists used their works (Paintings and Sculptures) to draw attention to the increasing level of sexual violence against women and female children in Africa. The exhibition titled, Femme (Female) was organized by Alexis Galleries at Victoria Island Lagos, in partnership with Women at Risk International Foundation (WARIF) the exhibition raised issues on, preventive measures and managing trauma incurred by victims. Therefore, this study examined the rich, vibrant, unique texture, and color depth characteristics of screen-printing (serigraphy), as the media to visually raise campaign against the menace for the grass root. This is the gap the study aims to fill and in the light of the above, the following aim, objectives and research questions were formulated to aid the study.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The general aim of this study was to examine serigraphy exploration of domestic violence against women in Isiokpo community in Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State. While the specific objectives were to:

i. Sketch the images of domestic violence scenes against women in Isiokpo community Ikwerre Local Government Area, Rivers State.

ii. Process the images through roster image processor and print the images out to obtain lesser acetate.
iii. Transfer the images to mesh using sunlight to obtain image carrier.
iv. Print out the matrix with squeegee and screen printing ink (sere-tex))
v. Frame and exhibit the screen printed art work for public view.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

i. How can the images of domestic violence against women in Isiokpo community be sketched?
ii. To what extent can the images be processed through roster image processor?
iii. How can the images be transferred to the mesh using sunlight to obtain the image carrier?
iv. How can the matrix be printed out with squeegee and screen printing ink?
v. Can the screen printed artworks be framed and exhibited for public view?

Significance of the Study

This study would not only contribute to knowledge on domestic violence against women in Isiokpo community, but it would also trigger the need to pay crucial attention to victims of domestic violence in rural areas. The study would create more awareness on the operational existence of professional bodies like: The International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), Security Operatives, Social Workers, Marriage Counselors and Contemporary Artists, which would guide victims/publicans on where to seek/secure appropriate help/intervention as the need arises, the study would help couples who are going through domestic violence to be able to identify the cause of such case in their home and also provide the knowledge on precautionary measures to manage the situation if the need arises, it would also help couples to understand the need to provide each other emotional, mental and financial support. Furthermore, the study would help in exposing the rich, vibrant, unique texture and color depth characteristics of screen-printing (serigraphy) which is difficult to achieve with other printmaking media and also it would be significant to other researchers who would intend to carry out similar studies on serigraphic exploration.

An Overview of Domestic Violence

Historically, domestic violence has been framed and understood exclusively as women's issue. Domestic abuse affects women, but also has devastating consequences for other populations and societal institutions. Men also can be victims of abuse; children are affected by exposure to domestic violence, and formal institutions face enormous challenges responding to domestic violence in their communities. The effects of domestic violence on victims are more typically recognized, but perpetrators also are impacted by their abusive behavior as they stand to lose children, damage relationships, and face legal consequences (Maya, 2014). Domestic violence cuts across every segment of the society and occurs in all age, racial, ethnic, socio-economic, sexual orientation, and religious groups. It is a social, economic, and health concern that does not discriminate. As a result, communities across the country are developing strategies to stop the violence and provide safe solutions for victims. Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviors by one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family, friends or cohabitation (Miller, 2005). It includes hitting, pushing, throwing objects, striking a person with an object, or with a weapon. On the other hand, domestic abuse has a much wider scope which includes all types of sexual, emotional, financial, and psychological abuse through the use of aggression, intimidations, and non-consensual sexual attention as well as humiliation (Miller, 2005). However, this affects men and women quite differently. Domestic violence against men and women has certain similarities and differences. In most cases, men are more deeply hurt by emotional, rather than physical abuse. In many cases, humiliating a man emotionally in front of some other men can be much more devastating than physical abuse. Professionals have observed that mental and emotional abuse is an area where women tend to be more brutal than men (Miller, 2005). Men, on the other hand, tend to be physically abusive.

Domestic violence is the inflicting of physical injury by one family or household member on another; also a repeated/habitual pattern of such behavior. The term "intimate partner violence" (IPV) is often used synonymously with domestic abuse/domestic violence. Family violence is a broader definition, often used to include child abuse, elder's abuse and other violent acts between family members

(Markowitz, 2000). Wife abuse, wife beating, and battering are descriptive terms that have lost popularity recently for at least two reasons:

1 There is acknowledgment that many victims are not actually married to the abuser, but rather cohabiting or in other arrangements.

2 Abuse can take other forms than physical abuse. Other forms of abuse may be constantly occurring, while physical abuse happens occasionally.

Domestic violence is a "pattern of coercive and assaultive behaviors that include physical, sexual, verbal and psychological attacks, and economic coercion that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partner". Domestic Violence is not typically a singular event and is not limited to only physical aggression. Rather, it is the pervasive and methodical use of threats, intimidation, manipulation, and physical violence by someone who seeks power and control over their intimate partner. Abusers use a specific tactic or a combination of tactics to instill fear in and dominance over their partners. The strategies used by abusers are intended to establish a pattern of desired behaviors from their victims. Certain behaviors often are cited by the perpetrator as the reason or cause of the abusive behavior, therefore, abusive verbal and physical actions are often intended to alter or control that behavior (Waits, 2004).

The US Office on Violence Against Women, (2016) defines domestic violence as a "pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner". The definition adds that domestic violence "can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender", and can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional, economic, and psychological abuse.

The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service in the United Kingdom in its "Domestic Violence Policy" uses domestic violence to refer to a range of violent and abusive behaviors, defining it as: Patterns of behavior characterized by the misuse of power and control by one person over another who are or have been in an intimate relationship. It can occur in mixed gender relationships and same gender relationships and has profound consequences for the lives of children, individuals, families and communities. It may be physical, sexual, emotional and/or psychological. The latter may include intimidation, harassment, damage to property, threats and financial abuse (Domestic Violence Assessment Policy, 2007).

Types of Domestic Violence

Violent and abusive relationships often involve a constellation of different behaviors and experiences, with physical violence being the most commonly cited and recognized behavior. However, this is only one definition of domestic violence, and many abusive relationships may not include it at all. The ultimate goal of any type of domestic violence is for the perpetrator to gain power and control over their victim. This can be achieved through words as well as deeds, and it is important to recognize that these behaviors can still be incredibly damaging to the victim. The following list of different types of domestic violence illustrates just how varied and damaging abusive behaviors can be.

1. **Physical Abuse:** As mentioned, physical abuse is perhaps the most well-known type of domestic violence. Other types of domestic abuse may eventually escalate or evolve into physical abuse, and that is where the life of the victim can become at-risk. Physical types of domestic violence by (Rennison, 2003) which include:
   1) Pushing, shoving, grabbing
   2) Poking, slapping, hitting, punching, or kicking
   3) Hair pulling or scratching
   4) Using a knife or other weapon 5) Hurting children or pets.

2. **Intimidation:** Intimidation is a type of domestic violence which attempts to control the victim by forcing them to change any behavior that the perpetrator does not like. According to Bennett (2017) it can include:
   1) Yelling and screaming
   2) Looks, actions and gestures that are threatening
   3) Breaking or destroying furniture and property, punching walls, throwing things or pounding tables
   4) Displaying weapons

5) Driving recklessly while you are in the car 6) Stalking you or making unwanted contact.

3. **Coercion and Threats:** Similar to intimidation, coercion involves using a range of tactics which try and force the victim into bending to the perpetrator's will. It can involve:
   1) Threatening self-harm or suicide
   2) Threatening to make false reports about you to child protection authorities or the police
   3) Insisting on any legal charges against them being dropped
   4) Insisting you do illegal things, or implicating you in blame for illegal things they have done (Bennett, 2017).

4. **Sexual Abuse:** While this may surprise some, sexual abuse can and does happen within relationships and marriages. It can include the following behavior as asserted by Rennison (2003):
   1) Insisting on or threatening you into unwanted sexual contact
   2) Making you feel guilty about not wanting to participate in sexual activity
   3) Forcing or threatening you into particular sexual behaviors
   4) Forcing sex when you are unable to say yes, such as when you are asleep.

5. **Verbal Abuse:** Verbal abuse is another type of domestic violence that many are familiar with, and can include:
   1) Name calling, derogatory comments, insulting and contemptuous behavior, ridicule
   2) Being insulting about the victim's appearance, achievements, beliefs and preferences, spirituality, or friendships
   3) Cutting off into silence.

6. **Emotional Abuse:** Victims of emotional abuse often have their self-esteem and self-worth damaged. This can affect their lives in numerous ways, from having difficulties reaching out to friends, to engaging in study or work. According to Bauman (2019), emotional abusive behaviors can include:
   1) Giving you the silent treatment
   2) Making light of your upsets and concerns, denying and minimizing their impact and ridiculing you for naming the problem
   3) Calling you 'too sensitive', playing 'mind games', or making you feel 'crazy' (also known as gas-lighting)
   4) Humiliation and shaming, either publicly or privately
   5) Using jealousy to justify their actions 6) Trying to guilt you as a control mechanism 7) Using your love or goodwill against you.

7. **Isolation:** Isolating behaviors aim to intentionally separate the victim from their regular support networks, such as friends, family, jobs and hobbies. Isolating behaviors include:
   1) Controlling who you can see and where you can go
   2) Limiting spending money and tracking expenditure
   3) Controlling what you wear, watch or read
   4) Refusing access to a driver's license or car
   5) Insisting on when to be home and checking up on you while out (Bauman, 2019).

8. **Economic and Financial Abuse:** Tilbrook et al, (2010) opined that economic abuse is another way that perpetrators try to restrict the freedom and autonomy of their victim. Financially abusive behaviors include:
   1) Controlling access to family money
   2) Making all the decisions about finances and spending on behalf of you both
   3) Insisting on payment of bills for the family on an unreasonable 'allowance'
   4) Impacting ability of the victim to earn own money or maintain employment
   5) Taking the victim's money
   6) Incurring debts on behalf of you even without your consent.

Serigraphy (Screen Printing)

Screen printing (traditionally, called silkscreen printing; also known as serigraphy) is a technique where a mesh is used to transfer ink (or dye) onto a substrate, except in areas made impermeable to the ink by a blocking stencil. A blade or squeegee is moved across the screen to fill the open mesh apertures with ink, and a reverse stroke then causes the screen to touch the substrate momentarily along a line of contact. This causes the ink to wet the substrate and be pulled out of the mesh apertures as the screen

springs back after the blade has passed. One color is printed at a time, so several screens can be used to produce a multi-colored image or design.

Traditionally, silk was used in the process. Currently, synthetic threads are commonly used in the screen-printing process. The most popular mesh in general use is made of polyester. There are special-use mesh materials of nylon and stainless steel available to the screen-printer. There are also different types of mesh size which will determine the outcome and look of the finished design on the material.

The technique is used not only for garment printing but for printing on many other substances, including decals, clock and watch faces, balloons, and many other products. Advanced uses include laying down conductors and resistors in multi-layer circuits using thin ceramic layers as the substrate. Traditionally, silk was used in the process. Currently, synthetic threads are commonly used in the screen-printing process. The most popular mesh in general use is made of polyester. There are special-use mesh materials of nylon and stainless steel available to the screen-printer. There are also different types of mesh size which will determine the outcome and look of the finished design on the material.

Method of Screen Printing (serigraphy)

Screen printers use a silkscreen, a squeegee, and hinge clamps to screen print their designs. The ink is forced through the mesh using the rubber squeegee, the hinge clamps keep the screen in place for easy registration. A screen is made of a piece of mesh stretched over a frame. The mesh could be made of a synthetic polymer, such as nylon, and a finer and smaller aperture for the mesh wood be utilized for a design that requires a higher and more delicate degree of detail. For the mesh to be effective it must be mounted on a frame and it must be under tension. The frame which holds the mesh could be made of diverse materials, such as wood or aluminum, depending on the sophistication of the machine or the artisan procedure. The tension of the mesh may be checked by using a densitometer; a common unit for the measurement of the tension of the mesh is Newton per centimeter (n/cm). A stencil is formed by blocking off parts of the screen in the negative image of the design to be printed; that is, the open spaces are where the ink will appear on the substrate.

Before printing occurs, the frame and screen must undergo the pre-press process, in which an emulsion is 'scooped' across the mesh. Once this emulsion has dried, it is selectively exposed to ultra-violet light, through a film printed with the required design. This hardens the emulsion in the exposed areas but leaves the unexposed parts soft. They are then washed away using a water spray, leaving behind a clean area in the mesh with the identical shape as the desired image, which will allow passage of ink. It is a positive process.

The screen and frame are lined with a tape to prevent ink from reaching the edge of the screen and the frame. The type of tape used in for this purpose often depends upon the ink that is to be printed onto the substrate. More aggressive tapes are generally used for uv and water-based inks due to the inks' lower viscosities and greater tendency to creep underneath tape.

The last process in the 'pre-press' is blocking out any unwanted 'pin-holes' in the emulsion. If these holes are left in the emulsion, the ink will continue through and leave unwanted marks. To block out these holes, materials such as tapes, specialty emulsions and 'block-out pens' may be used effectively. The screen is placed atop a substrate. Ink is placed on top of the screen, and a flood bar is used to push the ink through the holes in the mesh. The operator begins with the fill bar at the rear of the screen and behind a reservoir of ink. The operator lifts the screen to prevent contact with the substrate and then using a slight amount of downward force pulls the fill bar to the front of the screen. This effectively fills the mesh openings with ink and moves the ink reservoir to the front of the screen. The operator then uses a squeegee (rubber blade) to move the mesh down to the substrate and pushes the squeegee to the rear of the screen. The ink that is in the mesh opening is pumped or squeezed by capillary action to the substrate in a controlled and prescribed amount, i.e. the wet ink deposit is proportional to the thickness of the mesh and or stencil. As the squeegee moves toward the rear of the screen the tension of the mesh pulls the mesh up away from the substrate (called snap-off) leaving the ink upon the substrate surface. There are three common types of screen-printing presses: flat-bed, cylinder, and rotary. A development of screen printing with flat screens from 1963 was to wrap the screen around to form a tube, with the ink supply and squeegee inside the tube. The resulting roller rotates at the same speed as the web in a roll-to-roll machine. The benefits are high output rates and long rolls of product. This is the only way to make high-build fully patterned printing/coating as a continuous process, and has been widely used for manufacturing textured wallpapers.

Research Design

This study adopted a studio practice design approach, the area of study was Isiokpo community in Ikwerre Local Government Area in Rivers State. Qualitative data for the study was gotten from photographs, sketches, catalogue, text books, library sources and interview.

Materials and Tools Used

The materials and tools in the practical aspect the study includes: Mesh, Kerosene, Sensitizer, Transfer emulsion, Seritex printing ink, Papers, Squeegee, Paper tape, Water, Images to be transferred and Glass or perplex sheet to roll ink onto etc.

Procedure for Studio Practical Work

(a) Degrease the screen mesh: firstly, the screen mesh is washed with water to remove any particle of dust on it.
(b) Dry the Mesh: after washing, the mesh is air dried or dried using electric hand dryer
(c) Coat with Transfer Emulsion: after the mesh is dried up, it is coated in a dark room with transfer emulsion mixed with sensitizer.
(d) Dry: after coating the mesh, it is kept in the dark room to air dry over-night or a hand dryer can be used to quickly dry the mesh. While drying, the mesh is not exposed to light so that the sensitizer doesn't harden.
(e) Paste the image (art work film): after drying the mesh, the image to be transferred is then placed on the mesh using turpentine (kerosene)
(f) Expose to Sunlight: when the image has been well placed, the mesh is exposed via sunlight for few seconds to aid proper transfer of the image which is called 'photo stenciling'.
(g) Wash off the Mesh: the mesh is quickly washed after the exposure, with clean water to reveal the image have been photo stenciled/ or transferred onto the mesh.
(h) Dry: the mesh is allowed to air dry or dried with a hand dryer again,

Screen Print: when the mesh is dried, seritex ink is scooped onto the mesh, using a squeegee to spread the ink over the screen to enable the image properly print onto the paper, or substrate beneath the screen.

It is a step-by-step illustration showing the researcher working in different stages in the studio, from commencement till the finishing stage and display of the finished works with brief analysis of each work.

Stage 1: Degreasing of the mesh

Fig. 1: Reveals the researcher washing the screen with water to remove any particle of dust on it. This step is known as "degreasing the mesh.

Stage 2: Transfer of image onto the coated screen

Fig. 2: Shows the researcher exposing the screen to ultra-violet ray to enable image properly transfer onto the screen.

Stage 3: Reveals the stenciled image

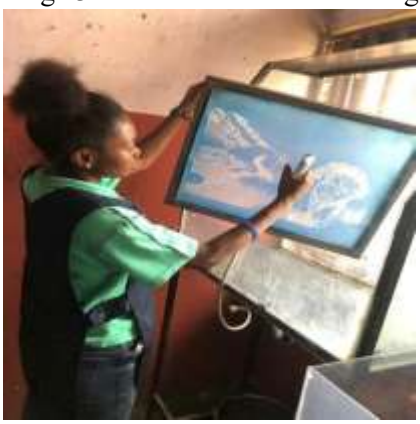

Fig. 3: Reveals the researcher washing off the coating on the area of the screen where the image was placed with clean water in order to reveal the stencils/image.

Stage 4: Spread the ink over the screen

Fig. 4: Depicts the researcher using a squeegee to spread the ink over the screen to enable the image properly print onto the paper, or substrate beneath the screen.

Stage 5: Pull out the subtract beneath the screen

Fig. 5: Reveals the researcher raising the screen mesh to pull out subtract beneath the screen.

Plate 1: Finished Work on Frame

Artist: Orlu Vivian
Tittle: Halt
Size: 20 x 24
Year: 2024

Halt: is one of the screen printed finished work on frame by the researcher. The print shows a lady trembling in fear of physical abuse and a hand eager to physically abuse a lady but stock in chain. The picture depicts the young lady holding her head in screams with her face roughly squeeze in agony which appears to be an expression of fear and thread. However, yellow is the dominant colour in the print, complimenting the white background with a touch of black at the right side of the print and a splash of red across the print.

Findings

This study had shown that "domestic violence" cuts across every segment of society and occurs in all age, racial, socio-economic status, gender and religious beliefs, although it has been framed and understood exclusively as women's issue. Domestic abuse affects women, but also has devastating consequences for other family members and the society at large. Men also can be victims of the abuse; children are negatively affected by exposure to domestic violence, and often times, victims in rural communities face enormous challenges reaching out to professional bodies like marriage counselors, Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), Security Operatives and Social Workers etc. thereby making them to live with the menace as a norm, rather than to speak up for possible intervention or rescue from the situation.

The study also positively sensitize readers and viewers on domestic violence against women, educating them on the effects of domestic violence on the victims, their family and the society, more importantly making known to them possible ways to handle and/or avoid violent situation through inter personal skills development such as: stress management skill, practicing resilience, nurture social and emotional growth (intelligence), practicing self-care, etc.

Secondly, the practical aspect of this study has revealed screen printing as a versatile printing technique that could produce high-quality, vibrant prints on a wide range of materials. The key findings are: durability, excellent color reproduction, adaptability to different substrates such as paper, textiles, plastics, metals etc. and also provides cost-effectiveness when printing large quantity of a particular design. However, limitations includes achieving precise registration and fine detailing depends on the screen mesh and printing process used. This study depicted the rich, vibrant, unique texture, and colour depth characteristics of screen-printing (serigraphy), as the media to visually raise campaign against the menace in the grass root especially in Isiokpo community in Ikwerre Local Government Area, River State.

Recommendations

The researchers recommend the following, that;

i. Violence is a treat to life and general well-being of an individual therefore, women who disclose any form of violence by an intimate partner, perpetrator or other family member; should not be judged but rather should be offered immediate possible intervention/support.
ii. Early observation and interaction with victims of domestic violence, would go a long way to safe guide the victims from emotional trauma.
iii. The three tiers of government i.e. (Federal, state and Local Government) should join the fight against domestic violence on women by passing a more severe bill (law) against perpetrators.

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