Group wants rape laws amended, increased reportage on violence against women

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The Executive/Project Director of Media and Gender Enlightenment Initiative (MEGEIN), Associate Prof. Nkem Fab-Ukozor, has called for amendment of rape laws to fine-tune the area that demands that a rape victim must produce witness, insisting that a rape victim should not be asked to produce a witness.  
  
Fab-Ukozor, accompanied by the group’s Project Manager, Dr. Alex Chima Onyebuchi, made the call, yesterday, while presenting a 15-point “Reporting Guidelines for Mainstreaming Violence Against Women (VAW), Practice Codes and Policy; and outcome of research/Content analysis conducted on 40 print media and 46 online/electronic stories and pictures” to journalists. She said as a result of the problem, four countries, including Nigeria, were chosen by the United Nations (UN), to find a lasting solution, including reporting VAW stories from the crime scene and hearing the voices of the women appropriately.  
  
According to her, the study’s outcome showed that violence against women was insignificantly highlighted in the publications, which also contribute to the increase in violence against women, urging that rape cases, which are increasing by the day, should be curtailed by enactment of laws that will expunge the area that requires a victim to produce a witness in court.  
  
She said after adopting all known Mass Communication ethics and laws, the global media monitoring project/study was conducted by MEGEIN, under the sponsorship of the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an affiliate of the United Nations, on 40 stories from The Guardian, Daily Sun, The Punch; and 46 stories from six Online media, including Premium Times, other electronic media, such as the Nigeria Television Authority NTA). “What we found out does not reconcile. There was an increase in violence and a decrease in reportage,” she said.