

Role of the Media in the Campaign against Domestic Violence among Women and Children in Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study examined the role of media in the campaign against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria. The survey research design was used in the study. A total number of 150 respondents were selected from Yewa South Local Government of Ogun state using Cluster sampling Technique. A structured questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection and data was analyzed using SPSS version 21.0. The result of the study showed a low level of media campaign against domestic violence among women and children with a mean score ($X = 2.37$, $SD = 1.03$), followed by failure of media to report majority of domestic violence cases against women and children ($X = 2.28$, $SD = 1.17$). Also, causes of domestic violence was a result of drug/substance abuse among couples ($X = 1.99$, $SD = 0.98$) and stress as a result of mounting pressure ($X = 1.87$, $SD = 0.96$). The result of hypothesis showed a significant relationship between role of media and campaign against domestic violence among women and children ($r = .188$, $p < .05$). The study recommend that more awareness on the campaign against domestic violence among women and children should be created in various media platforms.*

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Media, Women, Children

Introduction

Domestic abuse, interpersonal violence, beating, family violence, and intimate partner abuse are all terms for domestic violence. It is described as a pattern of abusive behavior by one partner against the other in an intimate relationship like marriage, dating, family, or cohabitation. Physical aggressive behavior or assault (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects), or threats thereof; sexual abuse; psychological abuse; controlling or domineering; intimidation; stalking; passive/covert abuse, also known as neglect; and economic deprivation are all examples of domestic violence (Seimeniuk, Krentz, Gish & Gill, 2010).

Domestic violence happens everywhere. Domestic violence affects family members from all social, ethnic, economic, educational, and religious backgrounds in diverse ways. In the United States of America, women are victims of approximately 4.8 million intimate partner-related physical attacks and sexual assaults every year, while men are targets of approximately 2.9 million intimate partner-related violent abuse. Domestic violence is common in parts of the third world, particularly West Africa, and is apparently acceptable and tolerated in certain cultures.

Domestic violence in Nigeria is propagated among other things, by harmful traditional beliefs. Domestic violence is prevalent in Nigeria and is showing no signs of abating. According to the CLEEN Foundation, one out of every three respondents has been a victim of domestic violence. According to the CLEEN Foundation's 2012 National Crime and Safety Survey, 31% of the national sample admitted to being victims of domestic abuse (CLEEN Foundation, 2013).

The media on its part, has evolved into a significant tool for campaigns, rallies, mobilization, and propagation against domestic violence among women and children. Various feminist-oriented groups, people, and human-rights activists have remained noticeable on different social media platforms, utilizing such platforms to communicate with their colleagues and counterparts. The use of the media has also inspired women to participate in a number of demonstrations and sensitizations (Patchin & Hinduja, 2010). This has boosted the women's campaign for equal rights, fair and equitable treatment of women. Individuals can now use social media to share photographs, videos, create group pages, and perhaps even links to other websites, enabling others to speak up and express their opinions on a specific phenomenon (Quinn & Oldmeadow, 2013). This has also contributed to the unity of the feminine gender, allowing them to hold collective discussions and meetings irrespective of their location, time, or circumstances. Thus many women can also talk about their experiences with their husbands, friends, and others via such social media platforms, and also enlighten others on how to manage such scenarios.

Statement of the Problem

The media informs, educates and entertains. Beyond these functions, it also persuades and mobilizes. It has the capacity to create awareness and knowledge about issues. The knowledge of this, will help in attitudinal change of the audience. It is evident, that a key issue in the campaign on domestic violence among women and children accurate is information. Hence, tackling violence against women and children requires effective communication strategies. It appears that the various types of media do not seem to have

reasonably ameliorated the high rate of domestic violence among women and children. Therefore this study examines the role of the media in the campaign against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To ascertain the level of awareness of the campaigns against violence among women and children in Nigeria based on their exposure to media.
- ii. To determine the role of media in the campaign against violence among women and children in Nigeria.
- iii. To determine the causes of violence among women and children in Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. What is the level of awareness of the campaigns against violence among women and children in Nigeria based on their exposure to media?
- ii. What is the role of media in the campaign against violence among women and children in Nigeria?
- iii. What are the causes of violence among women and children in Nigeria?

Statement of Hypothesis

H₀₁: Media does play a significant role in the campaign against violence among women and children in Nigeria

Theoretical Framework

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The study is based on the uses and gratifications theory (Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, 1974), which outlines the relationship between audience and how they use media. It provides an innovative theoretical approach in the early stages of each new mass communication platform, such as newspapers, radio, and television, as well as the Internet. The theory argues that the audience is efficient and that its media use is goal-oriented; instead of being passive, media users deliberately sought out media that met their expectations (Diddi and LaRose, 2006). Individuals are self-assured and logical beings who control the media's influence on them while also unintentionally making much sense of media content in their own viewpoint. The theory also contends that viewers have viable options for meeting their needs, and that their use or choice of a specific type of media (for example, newspaper, radio, television, or internet) or a specific program is to meet their needs, desires, or intentions (Katz et al, 1974; Peirce, 2007).

Review of Related Literature

Media

The media is commonly defined as a communication medium capable of simultaneously reaching large audience with consistent messages (Oyesomi, Oyero, and Okorie, 2014). The mass media has frequently played significant roles globally because the general public largely depends on it for information on political issues, social problems, entertainment, and pop culture news. As Esteve (2018) points out, mass media is now a significant factor in people's socialization because it affects behavior by presenting individuals with concepts that they can accept or reject. As a consequence, mental concepts can be presented with more force and persuasion.

The media also provides the general public with values and norms to assist them in achieving personal and interpersonal cohesion. Personal identity is established and preserved through media. Individuals who interact with the media may develop their own perceptions of who they are as individuals and social beings. Mass media is known as technology that is intended to reach a significant number of individuals. It is the primary means of communication for the vast majority of the population. The most widely used forms of mass media are newspapers, magazine articles, radio, television, and the Internet. The majority of people depend on the mass media for information on political matters, social issues, entertainment, and pop culture news (Awatade, 2014).

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is defined as any manner of conduct used to gain or keep control and influence over an intimate partner in any relationship. Abuse is defined as physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or risks to another person. This involves any actions that terrify, victimize, terrorize, exploit, injure, humiliate, blame, harm, or wound another person. Domestic violence can affect anyone, regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It can happen in a variety of relationships, including married, cohabiting, or dating partners (Woodlock, 2017).

Child Abuse

This pertains to the abuse or abandonment of a child or children, especially by a parent or other caregiver, whether it be physical, sexual, or psychological. Child abuse is any action or inaction by a parent or caregiver that results in actual or potential injury to a child. This can happen in the child's home as well as in organizations, schools, or societies that the child interacts with (Wise, 2011). Despite the fact that the terms "child abuse" and "child maltreatment" are regularly used interchangeably, some research makes a distinction between the two, viewing child abuse as an all-encompassing term that includes trafficking, slavery, and abandonment.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines child abuse as all types of physical or emotional maltreatment, sexual abuse, neglect or psychological trauma, as well as commercial or other types of subjugation that result in actual or potential danger to the child's wellbeing, survival, development, or decency in the context of a relationship of duty, trust, or power (WHO, 2016).

Types of Domestic Violence

There are various forms of abuse a woman or a child may be subjected to in the home which include:

1. Physical abuse

This is when physical violence is applied in a manner that results in harm or tends to put the victim in risk of being injured. Corporal punishment includes beating, kicking, knocking, punching, strangling, and confinement. Physical abuse is an illustration of female genital mutilation. One of the most prevalent forms of abuse is physical abuse. Obi and Ozumba (2007) revealed that physical abuse was reported by 83% of those polled in their study.

2. Sexual abuse

Sexual assault, abuse, or enslavement in any form is also included. It involves coercing an individual into sexual intercourse as well as seeking to exploit a child sexually, like child prostitution and pornography. This involves marital rape as well.

3. Economic abuse

This includes stealing or defrauding a loved one, refusing to give money for essentials such as food and hospital care, attempting to control or take advantage of a family member for financial gain, and stopping or trying to control a loved one's preferred occupation.

4. Spiritual Abusive Behavior

This entails meddling with someone's spiritual or religious pursuits or using one's religious convictions to manipulate, dominate, or subjugate them.

5. Emotional abuse

This entails putting a person in danger of experiencing severe behavioral, psychological, emotional, or mental disorders as well as endangering them or their assets or subverting their sense of self-worth.

Causes of Domestic Violence against Women and Children

- i. Psychological: Psychological theories are based on the character traits and mental capabilities of the offender. Rage outbursts, lack of self-control, and low self-esteem are all personal traits. According to a number of theories, psychopathology as well as other personality disorders are contributing factors that make some people more violent as adults.
- ii. Jealousy: When a spouse is suspected of lying or has plans to terminate the relationship, jealousy is a common driving force behind domestic violence against women. Thus according evolutionary psychology, male endeavors to prevent female reproduction and ensure sexual intimacy for themselves are represented by domestic violence against women (Goetz, 2010).
- iii. Social Stress: Stress levels may increase when a person lives in a setting where pressure is building. Violence is one way some people react to stress, though it is not a necessary cause of stress (Seltzer & Kalmuss, 1988). Poor couples may be more vulnerable to domestic violence due to high levels of anxiety and conflict over money and other issues (Jewkes, 2002).

- iv. Social Learning: One is more inclined to imitate violent behavior if they witness it. The behavior will almost certainly continue if there are no negative effects and the victim submits to the violence. Violence is regularly transmitted in a deliberate manner from one generation to the next (Crowell & Sugarman, 1996).
- v. Power and Control: Abusers make use of violence to gain and keep control of their victims. Control efforts by abusers have been connected to low self-esteem or a sense of inadequacy, related to childhood conflicts, poverty-related stress, hostility and dissatisfaction toward women (misogyny), psychosocial factors, genetic predispositions, and social socio-cultural indicators (Wikipedia, 2012). Numerous authorities appear to acknowledge that abusive personalities are, to a large extent, the result of a variety of factors.

Empirical Review

In a survey conducted in Abuja, Nigeria, a mother of one outlined her ordeal at the hands of her husband, who constantly hit and beat her when he is highly intoxicated, and she lost two pregnancies as a result of his violence behaviour, as indicated by Agbo and Choji (2014). Mrs Fatima Bankole, a 34-year-old housewife, had her face stitched 26 times after being abused by her husband, Alhaji Kamoru Bankole, for taking a portion of fish from the pot to break her fast in July 2014.

Agbo and Chukwuma (2015) investigated audience perceptions of the Nigeria Television Authority's major contribution to child trafficking abolition in Nigeria's South-East. The findings show that residents of South-East Nigeria have been exposed to NTA's programs and media stories on child trafficking to a large extent; NTA's media stories and programs on child trafficking have increased most respondents' consciousness to a small extent; and majority of the respondents believe that NTA's programs and news stories were not persuasive enough to discourage the incidence of child trafficking in South-East Nigeria. Similarly, Nwammuo (2015) explored women's views on press coverage of incidents of sexual assault in Nigeria: Was it a false or under-representation? Respondents interpret press coverage of instances of sexual assault as "under-representation" instead of "mis-representation," based on the findings. This is based on the referenced newspapers, which contain only just few sexual assault cases, the majority of which are hidden in the inside pages. Egbo (2014), who carried out a study on the evaluation of newspaper reports of sexual violence against women and children in selected Nigerian newspapers, supports this. It was revealed that sexual abuse stories in Nigerian newspapers are not explicitly acknowledged.

This has been achieved by not placing them on the front pages; newspapers do not routinely report sexual violence; and the selected newspaper does not amplify or use features when portraying sexual violence stories. This may entail reviewing the evidence of the stories and integrating emotion slant scent in order to create public outrage against the matter. Okoli and Arinze (2018) discovered that media also offers a platform for major influencers to publicly confront violence in their research into the role of media in domestic violence. The media has been a valuable tool in exposing abuse everywhere it occurs, and for women and men all over the world to come together and share information..

Methodology

The survey research design was used in the study. This was chosen since data was collected using a structured questionnaire, which did not require any variable modification in the study. The research was carried out in Yewa South local government in Ogun State. The main subject of the study are women and children. The study made use of cluster sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. Section A of the questionnaire consists of respondent demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, and tribe and religion affiliation. The second part of the questionnaire was on Domestic violence against women and children while the third section was on the role of the media on the campaign against domestic violence among women and children. Data collected was analyzed using SPSS version 21.0. The demographic characteristics of the respondents were analyzed using frequency table and percentages. Research questions were analyzed using frequency table, percentages, mean and standard deviation while hypothesis was analyzed using Pearson Correlation.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent
18-25 years	33	22.0
26-35 years	64	42.7
36-45 years	44	29.3
46-55 years	9	6.0
Educational Qualification		
Primary School Cert	6	4.0
O'Level/SSCE	24	16.0
ND/NCE	33	22.0
BSC/HND	87	58.0
Religion		
Christianity	75	50.0
Islam	66	44.0
Traditional	9	6.0
Total	150	100.0

Field Survey, 2022

From the demographic characteristics of respondents, 64 (42.7%) were within the age category of 26-35 years, 44 (29.3%) were within 36-45 years, 33 (22.0%) were within 18-25 years while 9 (6.0%) were within 46-55 years. Also, based on educational qualification, 58% were First degree holder (Bachelors degree and HND), 22.0% were ND/NCE holder, 16.0% had O'Level/SSCE certificate while 4.0% had Primary School certificate. Likewise, 50.0% of the respondents were Christians, 44.0% were Muslims while 6.0% practice Traditional religion.

Table 2: Level of awareness on the campaigns against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria based on their exposure to media

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Low	72	48.0
Minimal	53	35.3
High	15	10.0
Not at all	10	6.7
Total	150	100.0

Field Survey, 2022

The result of the research question one revealed that 48.0% of the respondents claimed that their level of awareness on the campaigns against violence among women and children in Nigeria based on their exposure to media was low, 35.3% claimed that their level of awareness was minimal, 10.0% claimed that their level of awareness was high while 6.7% claimed that they had no awareness on it. This implies that the level of awareness on the campaigns against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria based on their exposure to media was still low among the respondents.

Table 3: The role of media in the campaign against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria

Responses	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Stand Dev
Media campaign against violence among women and children is still very low	31 (20.7%)	63 (42.0%)	30 (20.0%)	26 (17.3%)	2.37	1.03
Majority of cases of sexual violence in Nigeria go unreported in the media	36 (24.0%)	56 (37.3%)	27 (18.0%)	31 (20.7%)	2.28	1.17
Media coverage of domestic violence is not accurate	48 (32.0%)	61 (40.7%)	38 (25.2%)	3 (2.0%)	1.97	0.81
Media can be an important platform to expose abuse	58 (38.7%)	88 (58.7%)	4 (2.7%)	-	1.64	0.53

Field Survey, 2022

From table 3, it was revealed that 63 (42.0%) of the respondents agree, 31 (20.7%) strongly agree, 30 (20.0%) disagree while 26 (17.3%) strongly disagree that Media campaign against domestic violence among women and children is still very low, 36 (24.0%) of the respondents strongly agree, 56 (37.3%) agree, 27 (18.0%) disagree while 31 (20.7%) strongly disagree that majority of cases of sexual violence in Nigeria go unreported in the media, 48 (32.0%) of the respondents strongly agree, 61 (40.7%) agree, 38 (25.2%) disagree while 3 (2.0%) strongly disagree that media coverage of domestic violence is not accurate. Furthermore, 58 (38.7%) strongly agree, 88 (58.7%) agree while 4 (2.7%) disagree that media can be an important platform to expose abuse. Low level of media campaign against domestic violence among women and children has the highest mean score ($X = 2.37$, $SD = 1.03$), followed by failure of media to report majority of domestic violence cases against women and children ($X = 2.28$, $SD = 1.17$).

Table 4: Reveals the causes of domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria

Responses	SA	A	D	SA	Mean	Stand Dev
Lower socio economic status	77 (51.3%)	69 (46.0%)	4 (2.7%)	-	1.51	0.55
Stress as a result of mounting pressure	80 (53.3%)	61 (40.7%)	9 (6.0%)	-	1.87	0.96
Drug/Substance abuse among couples	138 (92.0%)	12 (8.0%)	-	-	1.99	0.98
Unemployment	74 (49.3%)	73 (48.7%)	3 (2.0%)	-	1.32	1.08

Field Survey, 2022

From table 4, it showed that 77 (51.3%) of the respondents strongly agree, 69 (46.0%) agree while 4 (2.7%) disagree that lower socio economic status of spouses is one of the causes of domestic violence among women and children, 80 (53.3%) of the respondents strongly agree, 61 (40.7%) agree, while 9 (6.0%) disagree that stress as a result of mounting pressure is one of the causes of domestic violence among women and children, 138 (92.0%) of the respondents strongly agree while 12 (8.0%) agree that drug/substance abuse among couples is one of the causes of domestic violence among women and children. Furthermore, 74 (49.3%) of the respondents strongly agree, 73 (48.7%) agree while 3 (2.0%) disagree that unemployment is one of the causes of domestic violence among women and children. Drug/Substance abuse among couples has the highest mean score ($X = 1.99$, $SD = 0.98$) while Stress as a result of mounting pressure has a mean score ($X = 1.87$, $SD = 0.96$).

Hypothesis Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between role of media and campaign against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria

Table 5: Pearson Correlations of Significant relationship between role of media and Campaign against Domestic Violence

		Role of Media	Campaign against Domestic Violence
Role of Media	Pearson Correlation	1	.188*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.021
	N	150	150
Campaign against Domestic Violence	Pearson Correlation	.188*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	
	N	150	150

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The result of the hypothesis showed a significant relationship between role of media and campaign against domestic violence among women and children ($r = .188$, $p < .05$). This implies that effective media coverage will enhance campaign against domestic violence among women and children. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant relationship was rejected while the alternative hypothesis of a significant relationship between role of media and campaign against domestic violence among women and children was accepted at .05% level of significance.

Discussion of Findings

The study is focused on the role of the media in the campaign against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria. A total number of 150 respondents were selected from Yewa South Local Government of Ogun State using Cluster sampling.

According to the findings of research question one, respondents' awareness of domestic violence campaigns among women and children in Nigeria is still low, despite their exposure to the press. This finding confirms the result of Agbo and Chukwuma (2015), who found that media stories and programs on child abuse increased respondents' consciousness to a small extent, and that numerous respondents believe NTA's programs and news stories are not persuasive enough to discourage child abuse.

The result of the second research question showed that Low level of media campaign against domestic violence among women and children has the highest mean score ($X = 2.37$, $SD = 1.03$), followed by failure of media to report majority of domestic violence cases against women and children ($X = 2.28$, $SD = 1.17$) which implies that the role of the media in the campaign against domestic violence among women and children in Nigeria is not effective enough. This result is in line with the study of Nwammuo (2015) who revealed that respondents recognize press coverage of incidents of sexual assault as "under-representation which contain only a few rape cases, the majority of which are hidden in the inside pages.

The third research question indicated that one of the major reasons for domestic abuse among couples is drug/substance abuse, accompanied by stress as a result of increasing pressure and lower economic status of spouses.

This result backs up the findings of Agbo and Choji (2014), who revealed in their study that a mother of one explained her ordeal at the hands of her husband, who repeatedly hit and beat her when he is drunk.

Hypothesis:

The result of the hypothesis showed a significant relationship between role of media and campaign against domestic violence among women and children ($r = .188$, $p < .05$) which implies that effective media coverage will enhance campaign against domestic violence among women and children. This finding supports the study of Okoli and Arinze (2018) who reported that media could provide a platform for key influencers to publicly challenge violence.

Conclusion

Domestic violence against women and children in any of its forms, should never be tolerated under any circumstances. As a result, this paper believes the media have the power to help to campaign against such violence. However, from the findings of this study, it was discovered that the level of coverage of such violence is very low in the media and level of awareness on the role of media on campaign against domestic violence among women and children is quite low. It is the position of this research that by increasing access to confidential resources and information about domestic violence and stalking and by improving law enforcement communication between jurisdictions, media are critical to ending violence against women and children.

Recommendation

- i. The study recommend that more awareness on the campaign against domestic violence among women and children should be created in various media platforms.
- ii. Also, it is recommended that media should engage more in accurate report of domestic violence and the need to desist from it.

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