

## INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION BROADCASTS IN THE PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This study examined the influence of television broadcasts in the prevention of violence against women in Delta State. The study anchored on the **agenda setting** theory, was guided by two research objectives and one hypothesis. This study adopted the mixed method design comprising quantitative and qualitative methods. The population figure of the study was 2,043,136 women living in Delta State. From this population figure, a sample size of 384 was obtained using Krejcie and Morgan formula. Data were collected through questionnaire and FGD guide. Quantitative data were analysed using frequency tables and simple percentage while qualitative data were analysed using explanatory building technique. Findings of the study revealed that the level of awareness of women in Delta State of violence against women was high; the rate of violence against women in Delta State has reduced due to constant television messages. Consequently, the study recommended among others, continuous media broadcasts not only through television but also other mass media channels.*

**Keywords:** Women, Domestic Violence, Violence against Women, Television Programmes, Mass Media.

### Introduction

The purpose of every mass media message is to inform, educate, enlighten, advise, encourage and also discourage media audience from negative behaviours and practices in the society. It is based on these roles that the mass media have been on the frontline in recent times in the campaign against societal ills, especially violence against women in the society (Okoko, 2014).

Violence against women is any act or behaviour that abuses women and limits their human rights in the society. The United Nations (1993, p.1) defined violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in the public or in private life”. Violence against women, especially intimate violence and sexual violence are major public health problem and a violation of women's human right.

Intimate partner violence “is any behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion psychological abuse and controlling behaviours. Sexual violence include rape, which is the physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration of the vulva or anus with a penis, other body parts or object, attempted rape, unwanted sexual touching and other non-contact forms” (United Nations, 1993, p.1). The estimated report published by the World Health Organization (2021) showed that about 30% (1 in 3) of women globally have been subjected to either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their life.

In Nigeria particular, many women are brutally treated by their intimate partners which in some cases lead to death of such women. The high level of this menace is such that two out of every three women in certain communities' experience violence in the family. However, many women do not report the abuse as they are ashamed that their marriages are not working and for most women in Nigeria, divorce is not an option, hence, they suffer in silence (Oluremi, 2015).

These negative acts of violating women's right have continued to attract the attention of local and international organizations like UN, WHO, UNICEF etc that have made efforts towards abolishing this injustice meted against women all over the world. One of such efforts is the use of mass media in spreading information in this regard. The Nigerian media, especially the television have been at the fore front in dissemination information aimed at exposing and condemning such societal ills and stating its consequences as a way of prevention further occurrence of such violence on women. However, it is uncertain whether these media intervention messages have yielded the desired results in preventing violence against women and influencing positive attitude and behaviour towards its total eradication in Nigeria.

### Statement of the problem

Globally, violence against women has become prevalent, with one out of every three women suffering from abuse (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006; WHO, 2013). In order to prevent all forms of violence against women globally and in Nigeria particular, the broadcast media have been on the frontline in the in recent times with intervention messages against this negative societal ill. However, little is known about the success of these intervention messages in preventing this domestic violence. Although, studies have been conducted on media and television programmes on prevention of violence against women in Nigeria, none has been specifically directed towards assessing the influence of television broadcasts in preventing women violence in Delta State. It is against this backdrop, that this study sought to assess the influence of television broadcasts in the prevention of violence against women in Delta State, Nigeria.

### Research Objectives

This study has two specific objectives:

- i. To ascertain the level of awareness of women in Delta State of television campaign to prevent violence against women;
- ii. Find out the extent to which violence against women has reduced in Delta State due to television campaigns against the societal ill.

### Hypothesis

The study was guided by one hypothesis in line with the objectives:

**Hypothesis One:** Television broadcasts have contributed significantly to prevention of violence against women in Delta State.

### Literature/Empirical Review

Violence against women, particularly intimate partner violence is a worldwide public health concern attracting attention globally due to the several known negative consequences such as injury (Sheridan & Nash, 2007), negative reproductive health results (Okenwa, Lawoko & Jansson, 2009), and mental health complications (Ali, Mogren & Krantz, 2013). The incidence of violence against women is high in many countries of the world as it relates to the social construction of gender and gender relations inherent in patriarchal societies that culturally construct males to be assertive and females receptive. This has over the years led to violence in relationships where intimacy is shared among partners and is regarded as violence against women by their intimate partners (Inokoba, 2011).

Animasaun (2017) asserts that domestic violence in Nigeria is increasing at an alarming rate, where “the National Demographic and Health Survey in 2008 (para. 6) showed that over one quarter of Nigerian women have experienced domestic violence. Therefore, in a bid to end the violation of women's right, Nigeria became a signatory to several international conventions and documents aimed at eradicating violence against women in the country. The membership of Nigeria to these international bodies are: the Universal declaration of Human Rights (1998), the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (1981), the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW, (1981), Nairobi forward looking strategies (1985), Vienna Declaration (1993), and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995).

The prevalence estimates of lifetime intimate partner violence range from 20% in Western pacific, 22% in high-income countries and Europe, and 25% in the WHO regions of the Americas to 33% in the WHO African region, 31% in the WHO south-East Asia region. Worldwide, as many as 38% of all murders of women are committed by intimate partners. In addition to intimate partner violence, globally 6% of women report having been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner, though data for non-partner sexual violence are more limited (WHO, 2020).

The awareness of violence against women in Nigeria has increased significantly (Dauda, 2020). A study conducted by Adika, Agada, Bodise-Ere and Ojokojo in (2013) aimed at ascertaining men's knowledge of gender violence against women and attitude towards gender violence against women in Amarata community in Yenegoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. The finding revealed that 40% of the respondents had heard about gender violence while 60% had not heard about gender violence not to talk of intimate partner violence. Finding also showed that 60% of the respondents knew that fighting and battery were gender violence, while 40% were not aware of such acts against women as gender violence.

In their 2014 study conducted in Abuja Nigeria, Agbo and Choji (2014) reported a case of a mother of one who narrated her suffering in the hands of her husband who constantly hit and beat her whenever he was drunk, hence, she lost two pregnancies due to his brutality. In 2011, This Day newspaper reported that about

50% of women have been battered by their husbands. Unfortunately, more educated women (65%) were more of the victims than the low-income women (55%). The statistics of this newspaper also showed that as many as 97.2% of the women were not ready to report the menace to the Nigeria Police. However, most of them endure the situation, with the notion that they do not have anywhere to go and also that to a great extent, the law will not protect them or judge in their favour.

Okofor (2014) who examined the influence of media campaigns in the eradication of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) practice in selected communities of South-South Nigeria, found that the media mix approach for the campaign against FGM practice helped in influencing the attitude of the South-South rural women against the practice. The study concluded that media campaigns against FGM have paid off and recommended that sensitization programmes be organized for traditional rulers, religious leaders and other opinion leaders and the rural women for total eradication of the FGM practice. Also, a study by Aguocha, Duru, Onoh, Emmanuel, Igwe, Amadi and Ogwunga (2017) on female health workers in Southeast Nigeria revealed that 56.6% of the respondents indicated a lifetime experience of abuse with verbal (100%) and sexual abuse (71.7%) being the most commonly mentioned types of abuse experienced.

Okenwa-Emegwa, Lawoko and Jansson (2016) in their study examined the magnitude, extent and predictors of justification of physical intimate partner violence against women among men and women in Nigeria. Data from 33,385 women and 15,486 men from the 2008 Nigerian demographic and health surveys were analysed using chi-square test and multiple logistic regressions. Their finding showed that although larger percentage of women justified physical intimate partner violence, certain categories of men such as poor, illiterate men, and men with secondary education justified abuse more than women. The gender differences observed for predictors of attitudes to physical intimate partner violence suggest a need for gender-tailored interventions to change attitudes toward partner violence in Nigeria. From the available literature reviewed, none of these studies have assessed the influence of television broadcasts in the prevention of violence against women in Delta State, Nigeria.

## Theoretical Framework

**This study was anchored on the agenda setting theory.** Agenda-setting theory was traced to the first chapter of Walter Lipmann's (1922) book titled 'Public Opinion' in which he argues that mass media are the principal connection between events in the world and the images in the minds of the public. According to McCombs & Shaw (1972) who formally formulated the agenda setting theory in 1972, this theory explains the relationships between the emphasis placed on issues by the mass media and the importance media audiences attach to those issues. This theory thus, describes the ability of the media to influence people's opinion and decisions by portraying salient topics on the public agenda.

This theory was found relevant to this study because it is assumed that as mass media messages are frequently focused on the negative consequences of violating women's right in the society, the issue would be regarded as important public discourse and could ultimately influence attitudes towards its prevention. The prevention of violence against women will only be seen as an essential catalyst for ensuring women's right in the society when the media raise the issue through social and behaviour change communication campaigns that seek to influence attitude and behaviour change.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study adopted the mixed method design comprising survey and focus group discussion (FGD). The essence of using mixed-method was to harness the advantages of both forms of data in order to provide comprehensive analysis of the problem (Cresswell, 2014).

### Study Area/Population of Study

The study area was Delta State, Nigeria. The study population comprised all the women living in Delta State, Nigeria. The population figure of Delta State women according to 2016 estimated population census was two million, forty-three thousand, one hundred and thirty-six (2,043,136), (NPC, 2016).

### Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

From the population figure of 2,043,136 a sample size of 383 was statistically obtained using Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula.

**Table 1: Krejcie and Morgan's prescription of sample size for different population at 95% confidence level.**

S/N	Population Size	Sample Size	S/N	Population Size	Sample Size
1	50	44	15	260	155
2	75	63	16	280	162
3	100	80	17	300	169
4	120	92	18	400	196
5	130	97	19	500	217
6	140	103	20	1000	278
7	150	108	21	1500	306
8	160	113	22	2000	322
9	170	118	23	3000	341
10	180	123	24	4000	351
11	190	127	25	5000	357
12	200	132	26	10,000	370
13	220	132	27	50,000	381
14	240	148	28	100,000 & over	384

**Source: Krejcie & Morgan (1970)**

Based on the above Krejcie and Morgan (1971) suggested sampling formula, the highest figure of 100,000 and above corresponds to a sample size of 384, hence 384 was adopted as sample size for the study. The sample size for FGD was 9 participants (women leaders) from the 9 studied communities in Delta State.

The multi-stage sampling technique was used in selecting sample for the questionnaire. Therefore, the selection of sample was done in different stages as follows:

**Stage One** involved purposive selection of the 3 senatorial zones in Delta State – Delta South, Delta North and Delta Central. **Stage Two** involved the selection of three Local Government Areas (LGA) from each of the 3 senatorial zones using simple random sampling technique and this gave a total of nine (9) LGAs. Proportionate stratification was used to determine the number of questionnaire to be allotted to each selected local government area, based on their population. At **Stage three**, one community was selected from each of the nine (9) local governments using simple random sampling and this gave a total of 9 communities that were studied. **Stage Four** involved the selection of individual respondents from the selected communities using convenience sampling technique.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select 9 discussants for FGD, specifically the women leaders in the 9 selected communities. These 9 women leaders were purposively selected based on their positions in the community and their knowledge of the subject under study. They were believed to have objective information regarding violence against women.

### Description of Measuring Instruments

The instruments used for data collection were the questionnaire and focus group discussion guide. The questionnaire contained multiple choice questions in order to provide answers to the research questions raised. The FGD guide was used to obtain direct opinion of women leaders from the selected communities in Delta State. The FGD session comprised 9 discussants from the 9 studied communities. For easy identification, the 9 participants in the FGD group were labeled “Discussant A to I. The duration of the discussion session was two hours, one hour for each question.

### Validity and Reliability of Measuring Instruments

To ensure validity, the instruments were carefully constructed in line with the objectives of the study and submitted for cross-check to two lecturers in the Department Mass Communication, Edwin Clark University. Their evaluation and criticism helped in improving quality and content of the instrument. To ensure reliability of the instrument (questionnaire), a pilot test was conducted using 20 copies of the questionnaire that were distributed in one of the studied LGAs (Burutu LGA) in Delta State at two different intervals. Karl Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient statistical procedure was used to subject the two sets of observations

to reliability test. The calculation showed that reliability between the first and second test administration of the questionnaire was **0.97**. This value from the Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient shows that measuring instrument was reliable.

**Method of Data Collection and Analysis**

Data for questionnaire were collected with the help of two research assistants who were from the study area. For the FGD, data was collected by the researchers, using paper and pen for writing and phone for recording of the responses from the women leaders. One of the researchers was moderating the questions while the other was writing and recording the responses from the discussants. Before the FGD, a date and time was scheduled with the women leaders based on their convenience.

Data collected through the questionnaire were analysed using frequency tables and simple percentages. Data collected through FGD were analysed using explanatory building technique.

**Results and Analysis**

**Demographic Distribution of Respondents**

The age range of the respondents was almost evenly distributed with age bracket 36 – 45 being the highest with 25 percent while age 56 and above was the lowest with 13 percent. Further, the demographic distribution also showed that 56 percent of the respondents were married. As regards educational background, 50% of the respondents have attended tertiary institutions. There are no respondents without formal education. The distribution also shows occupational category of the people surveyed in this study. Civil servants were the highest with 26 percent followed by traders with 22 percent. The lowest were the unemployed with just 5 percent.

**Psychographic Data of the respondents**

A total of 384 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. However, 376 copies were completely filled and returned while 8 copies were not returned. The analysis was therefore, done with the 376 copies that were duly returned. Data were presented based on how they helped to achieve the research objectives.

**Table 1: Responses on whether respondents have heard of television messages to prevent violence against women**

Variable	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	343	91
No	33	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Fieldwork, 2021*

Table 3 showed responses on whether respondents have heard of television messages to prevent violence against women. It can be seen from the distribution that 91 percent agreed to the question.

**Table2: Respondents opinion on whether the rate of violence against women in Delta State has reduced**

Variable	Frequency	Percentages
Yes, the rate of violence against women has reduced	220	59
No, the rate of violence against women has not reduced	156	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Fieldwork, 2021*

Responses on **whether the rate of violence against women in Delta State has reduced showed 59 percent in the affirmative while 41 percent does not believe the statement.**

**Test of Hypothesis**

The decision rule is to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative if chi square  $X^2$  calculated is greater than  $X^2$  table value.

**Hypothesis One:** Television broadcasts have contributed significantly to prevention of violence against women in Delta State

**Table 10: Hypothesis Two Table Statistics**

Response	Question 9	Question 16	OE	EE	(OE-EE)	(OE-EE) <sup>2</sup>
Strongly Agree	221	262	483	188	295	87025
Agree	155	114	269	188	81	6561
Disagree	0	00	0	188	-188	35344
Strongly Disagree	0	00	0	188	-188	35344
Total	376		752	752		164274
<b>X<sup>2</sup> cal. (OE-EE)<sup>2</sup>/EE</b>		376				<b>218.45</b>

KEY:  $X^2$  = Chi-square, OE = Observed Frequency, EE = Expected Frequency.

**Decision:** From the table, the calculated  $X^2$  is 218.45. The  $X^2$  table value, given a degree of freedom of 4 and 0.05 significant level is 9.488. Since the calculated chi square value is greater than the table value (218.45>9.488) therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This implies television broadcasts have contributed significantly to prevention of violence against women in Delta State.

**Qualitative Analysis of Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

From the question regarding the awareness level of women in Delta State of television programmes to prevent violence against women, it was discovered from the unanimous response of the discussants that Delta State women were aware of the issues being discussed because it was always on the media. It was also gathered that the discussants usually educate other women in their communities on what violence against women means, ways to avoid it and ways of seeking help from appropriate authorities.

In the opinion of discussant B: *cases of violence against women have been constantly reported on television, radio and newspapers. I believe with such constant messages, the women in Delta State and other States will be aware of violence against women.* For discussant F: *as a community leader, I usually organize seminars for my fellow women on domestic violence. At the end of such seminars, we have interactive session where every woman freely expresses her experiences with her husband and seek advice.*

Further question was asked regarding the extent to which violence against women has reduced in Delta State due to television programmes. Responding to this question, discussant E said: *we used to get more cases of women who were abused by their husbands or their concubines. In recent times we do not get much reports on women who were abused sexually and domestically.* For discussant I: *cases of abuse of women are still heard from time to time. However, with constant condemnation of such act by international organizations and health agencies and media intervention messages on the consequent punishment to be meted on the perpetrators, the rate domestic violence has really come down in my community.*

**Discussion of Findings**

Data gathered and analysed regarding research question one revealed that the awareness level of women in Delta State of television programme to prevent violence against women was very high. This was evident in responses which showed that 343(91%) of the respondents have heard of media messages to prevent violence against women and 114(30%) of them indicated all **media channels as their sources of information. In terms of specific medium of communication, radio has the highest with 21 percent followed by television with 18 percent.** Also, responses showed that a greater percentage 311(83%) of the respondents said they hear the information on violence against women very often.

The above finding was in line with the responses FGD. The discussants noted that Delta State women were aware of violence against women. The relevance of agenda setting theory was evident in this finding,

because the high level of awareness of violence against women among Delta State women could be attributed to constant reportage of the menace by the mass media, especially the television. This study confirmed the previous findings from a Nigerian study by Adika et al (2013) which revealed that 60% of the respondents knew that fighting and battery were gender violence, with only 40% who were not aware of such acts against women as gender violence.

Findings regarding research question two showed that to a significant extent, violence against women in Delta State has reduced due to television broadcasts. A greater percentage 220(59) of the respondents affirmed the rate of violence against women has reduced. **Further finding revealed that 70% of the respondents believe that rate of reduction of violence against women in Delta State was due to the intervention messages from TV and other mass media.**

In line with this finding, the FGD discussants stated that although they used to get more cases of women who were abused by their husbands, but recently, the rate of cases has reduced which they attributed to constant condemnation of such act by international health agencies and media intervention messages. From this finding, the role of agenda setting theory in influencing behaviour and reducing the rate of violence against women cannot be over emphasized. This finding confirmed the result of **the hypothesis tested**. Since the calculated chi square value is greater than the table value ( $218.45 > 9.488$ ) therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which states that television broadcasts have contributed significantly to prevention of violence against women in Delta State. This finding was contrary to the study conducted in Abuja Nigeria by Agbo & Choji in 2014 which revealed that the prevalence of violence against women is very high in Nigeria. This present study also contradicts the previous finding by WHO (2013).

### Conclusion

From the findings of this study, it was concluded that the awareness of women in Delta State of violence against women was high and that the rate of violence against women in Delta State has reduced due to constant television messages. The agenda setting function of the media ought to be effectively executed by media practitioners in order to x-ray the negative implications of women's right violation, not only in Delta State but Nigeria in general.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Nigerian mass media, especially broadcast media should intensify the campaign against domestic violence until violence against women is totally abolished.
2. Nigerian government through Ministry of Women affairs should organize workshops and seminars on relationship and marriage for couples to educate them on the implication of violence against women and the need for total eradication of such practice.
3. Nigerian government should establish and fund counselling centres at the Local government and community levels with professional counsellors to help victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.

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