

## The Influence of Media Campaign in Curbing Domestic Violence Against Married Women in South East, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*The study focuses on the influence of Media campaigns in curbing Domestic violence against Married women in South-East Nigeria. Domestic violence has become a topical issue all over the world which mostly affect the female folks. The female folks have become regular victims of molestation, beating, maltreatment from their male counterparts which have resulted in physical, emotional, psychological and mental abuses. Despite the effects of domestic violence on women in Nigeria, there is a dearth of successful intervention or messages against the menace by the media. The study was anchored on Agenda-setting and Dominance theories. The researchers adopted cross-sectional studies and descriptive survey method. A sample of 384 was drawn using the online sample size calculator. The 384 respondents were selected from the three senatorial zones of the five states of South East region through using a Multi-stage cluster sampling technique. The findings among others revealed that the media campaign on the incident of domestic violence against women in South-East Nigeria was moderately reported. We therefore recommend that the media should intensify series of campaign strategies in order to alleviate the menace of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria. A stitch in time saves mine.*

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**Keywords:** Mass Media, Campaign, Domestic violence, Married women

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### Introduction

Domestic violence is an intentional abuse of someone by another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family and cohabitation. Domestic violence exhibits varying perspectives, it could be physical, sexual, economic or even psychological. Female folks have been regular victims of molestation, physical beatings and maltreatments from their male counterparts which have resulted in broken hearts, shattered homes and obscure perception of life for the victims.

However, considering the fact that the female folks formed the larger percentage of population of human race globally dedicated several divergent obligations to their families and places of work. It is sad to say that the inhumane treatment meted against female folks by their intimate partners are condemnable, instead of protecting them from harm. Domestic violence or Intimate Partner violence (IPV) against the female gender is a global plague that cut across all nations and diversified traditions and societies in the world (Albana, 2017).

The United Nations Women (2010), in a baseline survey conducted in 2008, viewed violence against women as a human rights violation. Violation against women, the UN Women believed impacts on, and hampers progress in many areas including poverty eradication, combating HIV/AIDS, peace and security.

Domestic violence becomes easily perpetuated and acceptable in some societies that encourages excessive male masculinity, where women are compelled to be submissive to their husbands and obey every obligation given to them by their husbands without complaint. In other words, where there is a strong patriarchal cultural dominance in a society, the template of women subjugation becomes inevitable. Tribes like Efik in the south south part of Nigeria sees domestic violence against women as a norm that showcases a man's asserting of authority over the wife especially in the process of cohabitation (Bazza, 2009). Some Northern states in Nigeria are similar to this practice and as such given a force of law (Section 55(1)(d) of the penal code) which sees nothing wrong in a man beating his wife in so far no grievous harms (physical injuries) are meted on her. To them domestic violence is correctional and lawful (Shija, 2004).

Domestic violence among married women range from sexual assault, abuse, intimidation, battery, lack of health care, mental touch, marital and family life conditions, etc. all these are domestic violence melted out on married women in the South East Nigeria. The Media can as well play a useful role in the sensitization of the people on the issue of domestic violence. The media can create awareness, convey education and act as deterrence to various abuses. The media as a citadel of information can build self-confidence on women and as well discourage men from gender based violence through portrayals of media messages and programmes that will grab attention and possibly sustain the interest of the society to speak out than shy away.

### **Statement of Problem/Justification**

The emergence of violence against women globally has become so prevalent that one out of every three women are victims of abuse (Huesmann & Taylor, 2006; WHO, 2013). In South-East Nigeria, marriage goes farther than the individual couples themselves, it appeals to families and to a bigger environment in the society. The society as the sole keeper of marriage in its traditional, cultural and religious rites should intervene to make right the concept of marriage.

Domestic violence is not an alien occurrence in the Nigeria society and it is saliently obvious in South-East Nigeria. Amnesty international (2007) reports that a third (and in some cases two thirds) of women are believed to have been victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence carried out primarily by their husbands, partners and fathers while girls are often corced into early marriage and are at the risk of punishment if they try to evade from their husbands. Indeed, domestic violence is a global menace that goes beyond boundaries and are obvious in all cultures and societies around the global (Albana, 2017).

The issue of physical abuse against married women lead to complications in female reproductive system especially premature labour. Most of the women faced with poor reproductive system are usually victims of physical abuse or sexual violence, yet the country cannot render adequate health services to such victims (Efetie & Salami, 2007).

However, there is an obvious issue of gross under reporting and lack of success of any intervention messages against domestic violence by the media, this is because the media programmes, messages and adverts are in their infinitesimal cases dedicated to the issue of domestic violence. Also the issue of non-documentation or low statistical records on the cases

of domestic violence are prevalent in South-East Nigeria, due to cultural and religious factors. The law enforcement agencies in Nigeria are not left out of this, courtesy of defective procedures in the implementation of sanctions on perpetrators of domestic violence. It is in line with these problems, that the study tries to examine the effect of Media campaigns on domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The overall objective of this study is to examine the influence of media campaigns on domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria.

Specifically:

- a. To find out whether the incidents of domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria were reported by the media.
- b. To identify the reasons of domestic violence against married women in South East Nigeria
- c. To establish the consequences of domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria.
- d. To find out the extent the media created avenues to curb domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

- a. To what extent were the incidents of domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria reported by the media
- b. What are the reasons of domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria
- c. What are the consequences of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria?
- d. To what extent did the media created avenues to curb domestic violence against married women in South East Nigeria.

### **Literature Review/ Empirical Studies**

The menace associated with domestic violence on women is prevalent in many countries of the world. It pertains to social structure of gender and inherent in patriarchal societies that culturally view the male folks to be aggressively forceful than their female counterparts. This has over the years induced violence in family relationship where intimacy is shared among couples and is regarded as violence against women by their intimate partners (Dopamu, 2018). Similarly, Animasaun (2017) asserts that domestic violence in Nigeria is skyrocketing to an apex level where “the National Demographic and Health Survey in 2008 unveiled that over one quarter of Nigerian women have been victims of domestic violence. Therefore, in a bid to end the abuse of women's right, Nigeria became a signatory to several international conventions and documents aimed at extinguishing violence against women in the country. The international bodies which Nigeria as a country belongs to 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), Vienna Declaration (1993), and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). Nwaeze (2005) classified domestic violence into four forms: physical, psychological, verbal, and sexual violence. In assessing these various strands of domestic violence, Nwaeze affirms that verbal-psychological violence (e.g. cursing and ignoring) was the most rampant, followed

by physical (e.g. hitting, slapping, and kicking) and sexual violence. A study by Aguocha et.al (2017) on female health workers in South-East 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 forms of abuse witnessed by victims. This corresponds with the study carried out by Obi and Ozumba (2007), on the factors associated with domestic violence, in South East, Nigeria, 70% of the respondents reported abuse in their family with 92% of the victims being female partners and the remaining 8% being male.

Furthermore, Agbo and Choji (2014), reported a case of a mother of one child, that narrated her suffering in the hands of her husband who on a regular basis hit and beat her whenever he was drunk, hence, she lost two pregnancies due to his brutality. In 2011, *THISDAY* 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 eager to unveil such report to the Nigerian police. However, most of them endure the ugly incident, due to the phobia induce in them by their perpetrators (partners) and to a large extent on the notion that the law will not protect them.

Daniel, Aniekeme and Nnamdie (2019) examined Uyo Residents' Perception of Selected Newspaper Coverage of Gender-Based Violence in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research method investigating the perception of newspaper coverage of domestic violence among 400 respondents. The study discovers that the majority of the respondents (51.3%) affirmed that *DAILY SUN* and *VANGUARD* newspapers do not cover Gender-Based violence issues frequently.

Consequently, Ilika, et al (2003), on "Intimate Partner Violence among Women Childbearing Age Attending PHC Center in Anambra State", using descriptive survey, revealed that domestic violence is in high percentage (49%) melted on married women of Anambra State. This equally corresponds with the study carried by Duru, et al (2018) on "Domestic Violence among Women in Households in Imo State, Nigeria: Prevalence, Pattern and Determinants", using cross-sectional descriptive survey, discovered a high prevalent level of domestic violence (72.8%) on married women in Imo State. This is indeed much higher in percentage of global cases reported in Africa, but falls within the range reported in Nigeria (WHO, 2013; Umeora et al, 2008; Brisibe et al, 2012). From this prevalence level of domestic violence revealed in the study, the study attributes socio-cultural factors as of part of reasons for domestic violence among Women in households of Imo state.

However, Fawole, Aderonmu and Fawole (2005) affirmed that domestic violence against women is prevalent in intimate or family cohabitation. This may not involve childhood abuse, which could also be referred here as a form of domestic violence. What constitutes physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuses against women seldomly might be influenced by the cultural inclination and norms of a particular society. The Violence Against Person's (Prohibition) Act, 2015 in its interpretation defines domestic violence as any act perpetrated on any person in a domestic relationship where such act causes harm or may cause imminent harm to the safety, health or wellbeing of any person ". A victim in a domestic relationship is one according to the Act is either married to the perpetrator, or have been in a family relationship with him, or is the parent or child, or is affiliated to the person by consanguinity, affinity or adoption or was engaged, dating or in a customary relationship perceived to be romantic, intimate or sexual or could be that they recently share the same residence (Section 46, VAPPA, 2015).

Domestic violence is so prevalent in the society to the extent that pages of most Nigerian newspapers are embellished with reports of women who were beaten or physically injured by their husbands. The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) has interviewed many female victims, the National Orthopedic Hospital, Igbobi, Lagos, as well as Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) have reported such cases too. Public statements before the Civil Resources Development and Documentation Centre Tribunal in Enugu and Abuja since 1996 have unveiled other harrowing cases of wife battering in Nigeria (Nwankwo, 2003).

Pragmatically, domestic is also visible in a situation where the woman is economically dependent on the man. The society is basically patriarchal and women's place within the scheme is decidedly as an appendage. Domestic violence operates as a means of compelling conformity with the role of a woman within customary society. It therefore does not matter if the woman is financially free or not, her position and status, like that of the children is subordinate. Violence against women in the home is generally regarded as a family matter in Nigeria that is not susceptible to external scrutiny. A culture of silence that is masculine oriented reinforces the stigma attached to the victim rather than condemning the perpetrator of such crime (afrolNews, 2007).

#### **Reasons for Domestic Violence**

Several factors contribute to the issue of domestic violence. CDC (2006) identified the following causative factors as: drugs addiction, excessive intake of alcohol, product of a hostile environment, lack of employment. Psychological problem as embedded on personal and mental traits such as anger, poor impulse control and poor self-esteem etc. equally contributes to domestic violence. A follow-up to this issue, Nwachukwu (2006) examined 220 married men from various locations in Anambra and Enugu States who perpetrated violence against their wives using Conflict Tactic Scale. He discovered that men who abuse their wives generally suffered from a range of psychological (bipolar disorder), personal or family problems, and social problems. In the issue of unemployment, the menace of domestic violence becomes more evident when it is the male partner that is jobless. Catalano, et al (2003) discovered that the high nature of unemployment increases the incidence of domestic violence. The researchers found out that the unemployed exerts the feelings of frustration and sadness. This is called 'the provocative effect' because it exhibits the fact that unemployment induces anger into family cohabitation that would otherwise have created room for understanding. Other causative factors include cultural belief system and norms within African traditional setting that sees wife battering and harsh disciplining of children as normal.

#### **Consequences of Domestic Violence on Married Women**

Issues like mental, physical and spiritual alterations becomes inevitable to victims of domestic violence. This is because abuse can orchestrate serious damage to someone's reasoning and relationship with others in his or her environment (Nwafor, et al, 2017).

Domestic violence on married women can cause Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This is a mental health implication that is initiated by horrifying events that are saturated with signs of nightmares, flashbacks, intensive anxiety and unsettled thoughts about the ugly incident. In a meta-analytical study on women as victims of domestic violence, Golding (1999) reported that in the rates of mental health problems caused by domestic violence, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is more in prevalence (63.8%) based on weighted mean across the studies. Depression and dissociations are part of the effect of domestic violence which can also attract psychological problems especially on the female victims. In a study conducted by Ilevbare



(2017) on "An Appraisal of violence against women of Ntigha, Abia State", through descriptive survey of 110 respondents, revealed that majority of respondents agree that violence against women of Ntigha community results to psychological problems. Depression indeed invigorates feeling of sadness, suicidal thoughts, hopelessness, loss of appetite, loss of interest and pleasure in event previously enjoyed by the victim. In most cases, the victim may resort to self-medication, abuse of drugs and alcohol in order to cope with the effects of domestic violence. Domestic violence can equally contribute to homelessness among the married women. They may be coerced from their homes in order to evade physical injury, death and disrupting social support network.

Moreover, domestic violence leads to grievous physical harms such as broken bones, bruises, torn ragged wounds and internal bleeding. Furthermore, some severe injury associated to this menace on the victims include arthritis, spinal cord injury, miscarriage, prolonged labour, destruction of the womb or foetus and finally death of the victim. This effect invariably coincides with the study conducted by Duru, et al (2018), on " Domestic Violence among Women in Households in Imo State, Nigeria: Prevalence, Pattern and Determinants", using a cross-sectional descriptive survey through the aid of multi-stage cluster sampling technique on the sample size of 547 respondents revealed that a greater percentage of the respondents were in affirmative that physical injury and harm is the commonest effect of domestic violence against married women in Imo state.

The alarming effect of domestic violence against women gave rise to the 10 points communique addressed and signed in a conference conducted by the Traditional rulers in Abia State in collaboration with Women Aid Collective (WACOL), Ford Foundation State Ministries of Women Affairs and Justice and 50/50 Action Women of Abia State of which, the issue of all forms of violence against women were vehemently condemned (Udeajah, 2021).

Furthermore, the wife of the former Enugu State Governor, Mrs. Monica Ugochi Ugwuanyi, rounded off her state and zonal campaigns against gender-based violence, by calling for an all-inclusive and sustained crusade to stem the tide of domestic violence, sexual abuse, female genital mutilation, public harassment, among other forms of violence against women in the society.

Sensitizing women during the state flag off campaign against gender-based violence, held at Michael Okpara Square, Enugu, as well as the campaign in Enugu North, Enugu West and Enugu East senatorial districts, Mrs. Ugwuanyi lamented that the violent behaviour has eaten deep into the fabric of the society, adding that it cuts across most human societies, irrespective of gender. (Daily post, 2021).

### **Media and Domestic Violence against Married Women in South East, Nigeria**

In examining the menace of domestic violence, the role of the media are indeed crucial and germane to the issue of societal concern, in other words, the media are placed on the side of responsibility to deliver the required information to ensure that lives and health of the citizens most especially the female folks are set free from any kind of domestic violence. The poor level of awareness given to the issue of domestic violence should be improved by the media through the ability to shape public opinion, proper enlightenment and discussion of topical matters that affect the larger society. Carll (2003), properly captured the ability of the media, when he affirmed that the media attribute vibrant interest within the confines of domestic violence prevention through the influence of their programmes and messages in shaping public understanding about the menace.

However, media can as well be counter-productive on the issue of domestic violence especially if the messages delivered by them to the public are too emotional, fear arousing and controversial. These undesirable measures can be avoided by the media through proper formative investigation in understanding societal issues, experiences and improving the level of awareness of the people especially those in hinterlands on topical issues (Olusola & Osho, 1998). In a study conducted by Talabi (2016), on "The Angle framed around Reported Housewives' Abuse Stories by the Print Media", two Nigerian newspapers were subjected to content analysis, through the aid of purposive sampling, the study however revealed that newspaper actively reported housewives' abuse incidence, but the tone of the editorial bias in most abused stories displayed in newspaper were not clearly given while the ones given were embedded on sentiments. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the newspaper should do more than just creating awareness about housewives' abuses by mere reportage but a mediatory and change stimulating coverage of housewives' abuse should be done. Radio programs like "VIEWPOINT on solid 100.9 Fm, Enugu, as anchored by Mr. Uchenna Gabriel, brought to the public discourse the issue of domestic violence among married women as triggered by the demise of Mrs. Nwachukwu Osinachi(Gospel Singer). Other radio stations in South East, Nigeria example Magic Fm, Aba (102.9), Salt Fm, Abakaliki (98.1), ABS, Awka and Hot Fm, Owerri (99.5) in South East, Nigeria, and so many others together with other mass media outlets, are expected to raise the bar and be committed in promoting human rights advocacy against practices that annihilate or debase the sanctity of women (Brown 2018).

It is true there is no active specific law promulgated to protect women against domestic violence, despite the government initiative to protect children and women, the notion of family in Africa cultural setting has been seen as a private concept that is beyond state meddling and control, that is why the media are expected to synergize with the government and other agencies like family support programs (FSP) Women Aid Collective (WACOL), Global Mission International, 50/50 Action Women of Abia State, FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers), Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), South East, Nigeria etc. to improve the living standard of Nigerian women.

Moreover, Studies figure out that from country to country, 10 to 15 per cent of women have experienced physical violence by intimate partner or other close family relations (Oluremi, 2015). Considering the inconsistency in defining domestic violence, it is hard to get the actual violence statistics data. Not enormous studies on domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria have been carried out and conventional media studies especially the broadcast media and the new media are scarce on this subject matter. This study indeed is an exploratory one that considered the rational, effects and way out of domestic violence on married women in South East, Nigeria.

### **Theoretical framework**

Agenda-setting and Dominance theories provided the platform that anchored the study.

#### **Dominance Theory**

This is a female liberation framework propounded by Catherine Mackinnon in 1946. The theory is centered on the power disparity between men and women. Dominance theory asserts that the larger society, especially men folks use gender disparities to foster power imbalance and inequality. It specifically exhibits men's masculinity and sexual subjugation over women's sexuality and those men choose to behave abusively toward their female partners due to the

receptive nature of their female partners. The assertive male partners adopt such abusive measures to get what they want in form of power and control. This theory supports this study on the premise that domestic violence becomes visible when the male folks exert abusive control and power over their female partners.

### **Agenda-Setting Theory**

This theory was formally propounded by McCombs & Shaw in 1972. This theory appreciates the relationships between the emphasis placed on issues held topical by the mass media and the importance media audiences attach to those issues. This theory further describes the ability of the media to influence people's opinion and decisions by unveiling salient topics that are held on public discourse. The media are expected to set agenda through their programmes, messages and adverts on the consequences of domestic violence in the family especially against the female gender. The frequency in the media messages on this issue would be regarded as important by the residents of South-East region and Nigeria at large. This could ultimately influence attitudes and behavioural change of the people especially the perpetrators towards the prevention of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

In examining the media campaign against domestic violence on married women in South East, Nigeria, the researchers made use of the Convergent Mixed methods design. This design enabled the researchers to collect simultaneously quantitative and qualitative data from the respondents based on the research questions raised. Since Convergent mixed method approach calls for more than one method in a study, the researchers adopted the cross-sectional descriptive survey and in-depth interview method.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of this study consists of all the residents of the five South-East states of Anambra (4,177,828) Enugu (3,267,837) Ebonyi (2,176,947) Abia (2,815,380) and Imo (3,927,563) states in Nigeria. The population of South-East based on 2006 census is 16,365,555 (National Population Commission, 2006). However, considering the fact that 2006 is too far a time, the researchers aligned themselves with Owuamalam (2012) and did a projection of 17 years using the annual growth rate of 3.2 percent (UNDP). The projection formula provides thus:  $P_p = G_p \times P_i \times T$ . Therefore, according to the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2022 projection of the 2006 census figures, there are twenty-five million, two hundred and sixty-eight thousand, four hundred and sixteen (25,268,416) people living in South-East Nigeria.

### **Sample size and Sampling Technique**

A basic sample of 384 was drawn using the online sample size calculator advanced by Wimmer and Dominick (2013) with confidence level of 95% and the confidence interval of 5.0% representing the population of the five states of the South-East region namely Abia-(72), Anambra (87), Ebonyi (63), Enugu (78) and Imo (84). The researchers used the multi-stage cluster sampling technique as the sampling technique. At the phase one of the technique, the researchers went through the four stages by first of all taking into account the three senatorial zones of the five states in South-East Nigeria. Then the researchers randomly and purposively



selected one local government area in the second stage of the process, and two communities made up of urban and rural from each of the local government area in the zone (cluster) in the third stage to manageably represent the population of this study. In the fourth stage, copies of the questionnaire were randomly distributed to the selected households within each selected area/community based on the desired sample sizes designated above to each state in the South-East, Nigeria which were determined by multiplying the unit population of the selected local government area from each of the zone by the total sample size and dividing it by the total population of the 15 local government areas randomly selected from the three senatorial zones accruable to the five states in the South East, Nigeria. In other words, in the stages involved in the technique, 15 senatorial zones, 15 local government areas and 30 communities were randomly and purposively selected from the five states of the South-East, Nigeria. The researchers followed the required entry protocol to distribute and obtained data in the selected local government areas and communities of the five states in the South-East, Nigeria. The phase two considered the qualitative data generated for the study, using the in-depth interview guide, whereby one media practitioner operating in each of the state in South-East, one female lawyer from FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers) of each state, and one staff of the Women Aid Collective (WACOL) in each of the state in South-East, Nigeria were all interviewed as concern the issue of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria.

### **Measuring Instrument**

The measuring instrument designed to generate quantitative and qualitative data for the study were Questionnaire and In-depth interview guide. The 4 points Likert scale option was used in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was partitioned into two sections. Section one consists of demographic data which collected data on the sex, age, marital status etc. of the respondents. Then the section two considered the psychographic data which dwelt on close-ended questions. The in-depth interview guide provided avenues for more probing of the respondents. The questionnaire was validated by a measurement and evaluation expert who checked the grammar, quantity and quality of the question if they are appropriate for the research questions. Test-retest mathematical formular was used to check the reliability value, which was 0.9, implying that the questionnaire was reliable to a large extent. Data were analysed using the mean analysis and presented using tables.

### **Ethical considerations**

The respondents' consent were duly obtained and all ethical guidelines as contained in Heliniski Declaration for carrying out research were followed appropriately.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This section entails the presentation and analysis of data generated through the administration of questionnaire. Three hundred and eighty-four (384) copies of questionnaire were administered to the various respondents, out of which 380 copies were recovered. This presented a response rate of 100%. The data generated were used to answer the research questions

**Research question one: Extent incidents of domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria were reported by the media?**

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean Score	Analysis
Incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria were frequently reported by the media	112	110	88	70	380	2.7	Accepted
Incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria were fairly reported by the media	233	100	29	18	380	3.4	Accepted
Incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria were rarely reported by the media.	210	118	37	15	380	3.4	Accepted
Mean Score						3.1	Accepted

**Decision Rule:** *If the calculated mean is equal or greater than the criterion mean (2.5), then the decision is accepted but if the calculated mean is lower than the criterion mean (2.5), the decision is rejected.*

This section analysed the extent at which incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria are reported by the media. This indicates that incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria, are to a moderate extent reported by the media. This finding is very much connected with the study conducted by Daniel, Aniekeme and Nnamdie (2019) who examined Uyo Residents' Perception of Selected Newspaper Coverage of Gender-based violence in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research method investigating the perception of newspaper coverage of domestic violence among 400 respondents. The study discovered that majority of the respondents (51.3%) affirmed that *DAILY SUN* and *VANGUARD* newspapers do not cover Gender-Based violence issues frequently. This equally supports the observation of Talabi (2016), on "The Angle Framed Around Reported Housewives' Abuse Stories by the Print Media". The study revealed that newspaper actively reported the housewives' abuse, but the tone of the editorial bias in most abuse stories displayed in newspaper were not clearly given while the ones given were embedded on sentiments. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the newspaper should do more than just creating awareness about housewives' abuses by mere reportage but a mediatory change of stimulating coverage of housewives' abuse should be done. This finding also supports the Agenda-Setting theory of the media that requires the media to make topical, issues held on public discourse. This shows that the media are expected to raise the awareness level of the public on the issue of domestic violence through their messages, programmes and frequent reports on the concept, reason, effect and the possible way to curb domestic violence.

### Qualitative Analysis for Research Question One

Qualitative data generated through interview held with five media practitioners and five staff from FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers) and Women Aid Collective (WACOL) representing as individual interviewee for each state in South-East, Nigeria

Question: What can you tell us about the extent the media reported incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria?

#### Media practitioner Abia:

I can say that the we reported cases on domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria when the issue of domestic violence is prominent.

#### Media practitioner Anambra:

From my own observation, I can say that we have not been frequent in our report of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria.

**Media practitioner Ebonyi:**

We rarely reported cases of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria

**Media practitioner Enugu:**

We reported issues of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria when it is incidental to grievous harm or death.

**Media practitioner Imo:**

We moderately reported incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria.

Interview with one of the selected staff of Women Aid Collective (WACOL) of each state in South-East, Nigeria on the same question thus:

**Staff Abia:**

The media are not serious with the issue of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria

**Staff Anambra:**

The media tried their best in their messages on domestic violence, but they need to improve the awareness level of the residents in South-East and Nigeria in general.

**Staff Ebonyi**

The media are too sentimental on the issue of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria

**Staff Enugu:**

The media are not forth coming with their reports on domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria, due to the inadequacy of the victim(s) to share their stories with them.

**Staff Imo:**

The media are moderate with their reports on the issues of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria

Interview with one of the selected female lawyers of FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers) on the same question

**Abia:**

The media are seldom in their report pattern as regards incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria

**Anambra:**

The media made the domestic violence topical when it was for a public issue.

**Ebonyi:**

The media reported the incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria to a very moderate extent.

**Enugu:**

The media set the agenda on domestic violence when dearth becomes inevitable

**Imo:**

The media to a reasonable extent reported the incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria.

Qualitative data presented showed that the majority of all those interviewed concluded that the media reports on the incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria were moderate.

**Research question two: Reasons of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria**

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean Score	Decision
Excessive intake of alcohol	144	180	47	9	380	2.9	Accepted
Product of hostile environment	48	19	95	218	380	1.3	Rejected
Psychological problems	220	89	61	10	380	3.2	Accepted
Unemployment	272	80	15	13	380	3.2	Accepted
Drug Addiction	201	100	55	24	380	3.2	Accepted
Cultural beliefs and norms	230	79	38	33	380	3.3	Accepted
Mean Score						2.9	Accepted

**Decision Rule:** *If the calculated mean is equal or greater than the criterion mean (2.5), then the decision is accepted but if the calculated mean is lower than the criterion mean (2.5), the decision is rejected.*

This section analysed the reasons of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria. However, the analysis of the data revealed that majority of the residents of South-East, Nigeria strongly agree that there are several reasons for domestic violence against married women in the region ranging from unemployment, cultural beliefs and norms, psychological problems and drug addiction etc. This finding is very much connected to the finding of Nwachukwu (2006) who revealed that the examined 220 married men from various locations in Anambra and Enugu States perpetrated violence against their wives. Through the use of Conflict Tactic Scale", he discovered that men who abuse their wives generally suffered from a range of psychological (bipolar disorder), personal or family problems, and social problems. Catalano, Lind, Rosenblatt and Novaco (2003) discovered that the high nature of unemployment increases the incidents of domestic violence. The researchers revealed that the unemployed, exert the feeling of frustration and sadness. Also, in a study conducted in Abuja Nigeria, Agbo and Choji (2014) reported a case of a mother of one child, that narrated her suffering in the hands of her husband who on a regular basis hit and beat her whenever he was drunk, hence, she lost two pregnancies due to his brutality. However, the dominance theory created essence to this finding, owing to the fact that most societies sees domestic violence as a norm for the male folks to use gender disparities to foster power imbalance and inequality against the female folks.

**Qualitative Analysis for Research Question Two**

Question two: Can you tell us the reasons of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria based on the cases reported to your organization?

**Media practitioner Abia:** Exercise of Masculinity

**Media practitioner Anambra:** Financial frustration

**Media practitioner Ebonyi:** Lack of job

**Media practitioner Enugu:** Alcoholism

**Media practitioner Imo:** Excessive rage

Interview with one of the selected staff of Women Aid Collective (WACOL) of each state in South-East Nigeria on the same question

**Abia:** Cheating by any of the partner

**Anambra:** Drug Addiction

**Ebonyi:** Unemployment

**Enugu:** Lack of proper family upbringing

**Imo:** Lack of respect for the female folks

Interview with one of the selected female lawyers of FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers) on the same question

**Abia:** Products of hostile environment

**Anambra:** Psychological problems like bipolar disorder

**Ebonyi:** Lack of financial buoyance from the women

**Enugu:** Repugnant customs and norms that support domestic violence

**Imo:** Lack of education and modernity from the perpetrators.

Qualitative data presented showed that majority of all those interviewed concluded that there are reasons of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria.

### Research question three: Consequences of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean Score	Decision
Mental alteration	134	170	57	19	380	2.9	Accepted
Spiritual alteration	24	38	70	248	380	1.3	Rejected
Depression and Dissociation	210	90	51	29	380	2.6	Accepted
Grievous physical injury	250	80	40	10	380	3.2	Accepted
Homelessness	211	90	59	20	380	3.2	Accepted
Post-traumatic stress disorder	240	70	40	30	380	3.3	Accepted
Mean Score						2.9	Accepted

**Decision Rule:** *If the calculated mean is equal or greater than the criterion mean (2.5), then the decision is accepted but if the calculated mean is lower than the criterion mean (2.5), the decision is rejected.*

This section examined the consequences of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria. Communicating the findings from the data, it was revealed that residents of South-East Nigeria identified several consequences of domestic violence against married women in the region. This was made evident when majority of them, strongly agree that grievous physical injury, post-traumatic stress disorder and homelessness are part of the effects of domestic violence. This finding corroborates with that of Aniche and Ikezue (2015) on "An Appraisal of violence against women of Ntigha, Abia State" which agrees that violence against women of Ntigha community results to psychological problems. Also Duru, et al (2018), based on the research carried on " Domestic Violence among Women in Households in Imo State, Nigeria: Prevalence, Pattern and Determinants", revealed that physical injury and harm is the commonest effect of domestic violence against married women in Imo state. This indeed indicates that there are enormous effects prevalent in domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria.

### Qualitative Analysis for Research Question Three



Question three: From the cases of domestic violence reported so far to your organisation, what can you say about the consequences of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria?

**Media practitioner Abia:** it is depressing for the victims that have passed through this menace

**Media practitioner Anambra:** domestic violence leads to physical injury and death

**Media practitioner Ebonyi:** Here, Mental disorderliness is predominantly the prevalent result of domestic violence.

**Media practitioner Enugu:** domestic violence destabilizes homes

**Media practitioner Imo:** for me I can say that it leads to physical harm to the womb of these married women in South-East Nigeria

Interview with one of the selected staff of Women Aid Collective (WACOL) of each state in South-East Nigeria on the same question

**Abia:** I can say that in South-East married women that are victims of domestic violence, suffer severe complications in their reproductive system.

**Anambra:** Domestic violence in most homes in South-East traumatizes the children

**Ebonyi:** Domestic violence occasions death.

**Enugu:** Well for me, I will say that the domestic violence leads to public shame and labelling of the perpetrators.

**Imo:** Domestic violence leads to mental disorientation of the married women in South-East region who are victims of it.

Interview with one of the selected female lawyers of FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers) on the same question

**Abia:** No doubt it affects both the victims and perpetrators. For the victims it can lead to death, and to the perpetrators it can lead to life imprisonment or death penalty.

**Anambra:** it open doors for the influxes of psychological deficiencies for the married women in South-East Region of Nigeria.

**Ebonyi:** It can lead to dissolution (divorce)of the marriage.

**Enugu:** Domestic violence no doubt can give rise to phobia and low self-esteem of the victims in their relationship with other members of the society.

**Imo:** Domestic violence leads to depression and dissociations among married women in South-East Nigeria.

Qualitative data presented showed that majority of all those interviewed were of the opinion that domestic violence portrays numerous consequences on married women in South-East Nigeria.

**Research question four: Extent of the avenues created by the media to eradicate domestic violence against married women in South East, Nigeria**

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Total	Mean Score	Analysis
The media to a large extent created avenues to curb domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria.	220	108	34	18	380	3.4	Accepted
The media to a moderate extent created avenues to curb domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria.	243	90	27	20	380	3.4	Accepted

The media to a low extent created avenues to curb domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria. 114 108 80 78 380 2.7 Accepted

Mean Score 3.1 Accepted

**Decision Rule:** *If the calculated mean is equal or greater than the criterion mean (2.5), then the decision is accepted but if the calculated mean is lower than the criterion mean (2.5), the decision is rejected.*

This section analyses the extent of the avenues created by the media to eradicate domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria. This indicates that to a moderate extent the media created avenues to eradicate domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria. This finding is very much connected with the finding of Carll (2003), who properly captured the ability of the media, when he affirmed that the media attribute vibrant interest within the confines of domestic violence prevention through the influence of their programmes and messages in shaping public understanding about the menace. This equally supports the recommendation of Olusola and Osho (1998), that the media should avoid the undesired pattern of reporting domestic violence cases which indeed are emotional and controversial, rather they should carry out thorough investigation and as well as improve the level of public awareness on the said menace. This finding corresponds with the agenda setting theory that enables the media to make topical, issues that are sensitive to the public. However, the media through their messages, programmes and reports are expected to make important the issue of domestic violence, the causes, its effects on the families and the society at large and the avenues created to curb it.

#### **Qualitative Analysis for Research Question Four**

Question Four: What can you tell us about the extent of the avenues created by the media to eradicate domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria?

**Media practitioner Abia:** I believe to a meaningful extent that we tried in suggesting avenues to curb the menace of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria

**Media practitioner Anambra:** All I can say that the issue of domestic violence became a topical issue for us especially during the death of Osinachi Nwachukwu (Gospel Singer) and to a reasonable extent we created possible avenues that will be adopted to eradicate the menace of domestic violence against married women in South-East and Nigeria at large.

**Media practitioner Ebonyi:** Fair enough I can say that we tried in suggesting ways out of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria.

**Media practitioner Enugu:** I can say with authority that we made efforts in creating avenues for the eradication of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria, but the level of awareness of the menace was moderate due to the facts that cases of the domestic violence were not made public or reported to us.

**Media practitioner Imo:** We suggested moderately possible solutions to the incidents of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria.

Interview with one of the selected staff of Women Aid Collective (WACOL) of each state in South-East Nigeria on the same question

**Abia:** for me the issue of domestic violence was rarely talked about on the media, so to a fair extent the media created avenues for the eradication of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria

**Anambra:** I can say with certainty that the media to a reasonable extent created avenues in eradicating domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria. As a matter of fact, during the Osinachi's domestic violence program as aired by ABS, Awka, it was suggested that the affected victims should speak out and seek help from us and other agencies like VAWG, FIDA, FSP etc.

**Ebonyi:** The media to a fair extent created avenues in curbing domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria, but not everybody is aware of these avenues especially those in the rural areas.

**Enugu:** Effort wise, the media tried in creating avenues towards curbing domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria, but the awareness level on these measures were in the middle.

**Imo:** To a reasonable extent, the media tried in creating way outs of domestic violence against married women in South-East Nigeria, but much are to be done because not everybody are aware of these suggested solutions.

Interview with one of the selected female lawyers of FIDA (International Federation of Women Lawyers) on the same question

**Abia:** Well, to a reasonable extent, I can say that the media here in Abia State tried in raising the awareness level of the public on the avenues created to eradicate domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria.

**Anambra:** I would not be totally negative about the efforts of the media in suggesting solutions to the issue of domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria, but more work is required especially in informing those in the rural areas about these solutions.

**Ebonyi:** The media to a meaningful extent suggested the way out of domestic violence against married women in the South-East by encouraging the victims to seek help from us and other vibrant agencies like WACOL, FSP etc.

**Enugu:** You see, it is within the jurisdiction of the media to reach out to the general public on the issues of domestic violence and the way outs of it, especially as it concerns the married women in South-East Nigeria. I cannot deny the fact that this role was not properly executed as many are not aware of these suggested solutions of domestic violence.

**Imo:** The media have tried to suggest avenues in eradicating domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria, but they need to create more awareness on these avenues to the general public.

Qualitative data presented showed that the majority of all those interviewed were of the opinion that the media to a very moderate extent created avenues in eradicating domestic violence against married women in South-East, Nigeria.

## **Conclusion**

Domestic violence without doubt is a heinous menace that should be expunged with all possible means. It effects unveil room for vices as against virtues. Many have been sent to an untimely grave and some that are living and are victims of this ugly incident are left with depression, dissociations phobia and low self-esteem to battle with. The perception of the female folks as the weaker link by both cultural setting especially in the South-East, Nigeria and Africa in general have created room for all sorts of violence against women to thrive as of right. The study explored the weakness of these women especially the married ones, whose rights and status have been debased due to the masculine disparities of power and inequality exhumes by the male folks.

## Recommendations

The study recommends as follows

1. That media should synergize effectively with agencies and government legislations to protect tremendously the rights and position of married women in the South-East region and Nigeria in general from domestic violence.
2. The mass media should increase their efforts in sensitizing women especially those at the rural areas on their legal rights and when and where to resort for help when victimized by domestic violence.
3. Women in the South-East region and Nigeria generally are the majority of domestic violence victims, and they should be encouraged to speak out.
4. The campaign against domestic violence especially on married women by their husbands must be discouraged and any perpetrator guilty of such act, should be arrested and prosecuted.
5. Government on the other hand, should intensify efforts via publicity using their instruments to enforce actions and speak against domestic violence and other related family offences that undermine man's dignity at societal level.
6. WACOL, FIDA and VAWG should synergize with the media agencies and other arms of the government to ensure that the masculinities of men are regularly supervised to ensure peaceful co-existence.

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