



MASS MEDIA MESSAGES AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Media can play a useful role in propagation of information about domestic violence. It can be used to create awareness, convey education and act as deterrence to various abuses. Mass media has saturated the industrialized world. The television in the living room, the newspaper on the doorstep, the radio in the car, the computer at work and the fliers in the mailbox are just a few of the media channels daily delivering news, opinion, music and other forms of mass communication. These days, abuse messages are preoccupied with grabbing attention and sustaining interest, rather than transferring persuasion messages. This has largely been due to a perception to build women's self-confidence, discourage men from gender-based violence, and to make society take notice and speak up instead of look away. This article therefore shows the portrayals of women in different messages in the media. Against these backdrops of emerging trends globally and in Nigeria, this article provides an insightful ethnography of mass media messages directed at eradicating domestic violence and as a tool for advocating for violence against women and more specifically, to promote awareness of and to prevent domestic violence in Nigeria.

Key Words: Mass Media, Women, Domestic Violence

INTRODUCTION

The spate of domestic violence worldwide has become startling, with one out of every three suffering from abuse Huesmann and Taylor, (2006). Domestic violence could be physical, sexual, economic or even psychological. Women and girls inclusive have regularly been victims of molestation, physical beatings and maltreatments which have resulted in broken hearts, broken homes and hatred for people. These forms of violence are interrelated and affect women from birth to old age. Despite many interventions by women groups, Non-governmental organisations (NGO's), government, and other stakeholders to address the issues, there has not been assurance that the challenges would be solved. These forms of violence are interrelated and affect women from birth to old age. The United Nations Women (2010), in a baseline survey conducted in 2008 viewed violence against women as a human rights violation. Violence against women, the UN Women believes impacts on, and impedes, progress in many areas, including poverty eradication, combating HIV/AIDS, and peace and security.

An analysis by UN Women with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the Medical Research Council, based on existing data from over 80 countries, found that globally 35 per cent of women have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. This analysis states that most of this violence is intimate partner violence. Worldwide, almost one third (30 per cent) of all women who have been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their intimate partner, in some regions this is much higher. A Gender report in 2012 says that "Up to one third of Nigerian women report that they have been subjected to some form of violence. One in five has experienced physical violence." According to the report, "Violence against women is



unacceptable, archaic, barbaric and unconstitutional in Nigeria. Such violence meted against women includes: trafficking, circumcision, sexual harassment, physical beating et al.”

There are different types of violence that occurs in society, but one type of violence which has been described as pervasive and a gross violator of human rights is the violence against women. At all stages of a woman's life from pre-birth to her elderly years, a woman is prone to violence in her lifetime (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005). According to the Boabab for women's human rights, violence against women cuts across cultures or traditions, class, ethnic identities or religious backgrounds making it a universal phenomenon (Joda et al, 2007).

Three decades ago, violence against women did not attract any significant attention either internationally or domestic that is, among nation-states, but overtime with the gender concept and awareness of the plight of the female gender across cultures all over the world, particularly in the 1980s when women groups were organized locally and at the international level to set the agenda on violence against women as a “legitimate human rights issue” (Ellsberg & Heise, 2005: 5). To this effect, there have been sustained concerns by the international community on violence against women in the different spheres of social interaction which is society-wide, and in specific social spaces which are domestic, occupational and cultural spaces that violence against women mostly occur.

Moreover, domestic violence against women and its incidence is high in countries all over 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 led to, over the years, violence in relationships where intimacy is shared among partners and is regarded as violence against women by their intimate partners in literature relating to violence against women (Inokoba, 2011).

In Nigeria, the awareness about violence against women has increased significantly. Nigeria is a signatory to a number of international conventions and documents targeted at ending violence against women in the country, these are in chronological order: 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).

Arising from the Beijing conference in 1995, stakeholders from civil society, academia and government have been involved in interrogating the phenomenon of violence against women in Nigeria, perpetuated through several practices or types which include rape, verbal abuse, emotional and physical abuse, sexual harassment among others, with a view of explaining why such occurrence still persist despite formal education, urbanism and other socio-economic factors attributed with sociability. This paper seeks to ascertain the perception of violence against women in Nigeria given the ethnic diversity in the country and the preponderance of males to commit violence against their female partners in intimate relationships.

Gender based violence (GBV) refers to violence that has any of the male or female gender as victims and it could occur in different contexts could be social economic or cultural, but violence against women refers specifically to violence that the female gender is the victim. Violence against women is more pronounced given patriarchy, vulnerability, social exclusion, feminization



of poverty, and sex work, menial or forced labour among others. The paper chooses to focus on violence against women in intimate relationships that is, adult females who are have male spouses in legal or consensus marital relationships, or are into dating relationships that are steady but intimate and may culminate into formal mate selection or causal with varying degrees of intimacy, and suffer human rights violation from their spouses or partners through acts that could take different forms.

According to Abama & Kwaja (2009:24), intimate partner violence usually referred to as domestic violence “is one of the most common and universal forms of violence experienced by women” and could be suffered in the hands of an intimate partner or ex-partner. The United Nations definition of violence against women has become the often cited definition of this phenomenon in literature on violence against women, the UN defines violence against women as:

Any act of gender based violence against women that results in, or likely to in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life pg 26 (United Nations 1993 cited in Ellsberg & Heise,2005:11; Noah, 2001; Okemini & Adekola, 2012;Inokoba,2011).

From the definition, it can be observed that violence against women occurs in forms of physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, general community, or condoned by the state. Alokan (2013) citing several literature, gives the types of intimate partner violence and the motion of the perpetrators, and the social and cultural context based patterns, these are: Common couple Violence(CCV), Intimate Terrorism(IT), Violence Resistance(VR), Mutual Violent Control(MVC) (see Alokan,2013:114). It is reported that women are more likely to be abused by someone that they are close to or relate intimately with, this leads to intimate partner violence, and findings from several studies conducted on intimate partner violence show that 40-70% of murders are committed by partners or boyfriends (Alokan, 2013).

Most times, the unequal power relationship between male and female partners in a relationship has been adduced to intimate partner violence that results to violence against females in such relationships (Esere *et al*,2009), most violent acts in relationships have been due to what some researchers described as transferred aggression(ACP,2008). The socialization of boys into men in the Nigerian milieu, harps on masculinity and this socialization often reflects covertly or overtly in gender relations that occurs in the lifetime of these males towards females either in public or private spheres, and in private spheres where there are no spectators, or as cultural ideologies and dogmas have sanctioned males having upper hand in society, most males perpetuate violence against women and give justifying reasons for such acts. Also, in Nigeria, the criminal justice system starting from the police force which is the first agency that comes in contact with the public, regard acts which constitute violence against women as a domestic affair which should be resolved amicably between individuals involved, this action has led to the grievous harm of several women, with often times their lives endangered, murdered maimed or physical scars (Esere *et al*, 2009).

In a survey on National Violence Against Women (NVAW), according to Tjaden and Thoennes (2000 cited in Esere *et al*, 2009)”violence perpetrated against women is often accompanied by



emotional abuse and controlling behaviour”, supporting theoretical literature according to Esere et al, that violence are often are part of systematic pattern of dominance and control.

Similarly, in a study that had two of its objectives determining men’s knowledge of gender violence against women and attitude towards gender violence against women in Amarata community in Yenegoa, Bayelsa state, the researchers found out 40% of the respondents had heard about gender violence while 60% had not heard about gender violence not to talk of intimate partner violence. Also, 60% of the respondents knew that fighting and battery were regarded as gender violence, while 40% were oblivious of such acts against women as gender violence (Adika *et al*, 2013). In a report corroborating violence against women in the private sphere not reported, was that of violence at the domestic front among the Ikwerre ethnic nationality. That no accurate information could be gotten on the phenomenon in that area due to what was given as a “culture of silence” (Okemini & Adekola, 2012: 8). However, it was established that violence did occur, and even at the community level though victims were constrained, as reported above, to be silent about their ordeal. In a study that show how violent practices against women were linked to cultural practices, found a significant relationship between wife battery and cultural practices in Igboland using Ebonyi state as study area (Chukwu et al, 2012).

Arising from these studies presented in the foregoing, there is mounting evidence that there is awareness on the phenomenon called violence against women in Nigeria. Over the years, studies have been conducted by Nigerians on the incidence or prevalence of this phenomenon, though there are no explicit study questions raised about the perception of the Nigerian society on violence against women, nevertheless, there is lot of awareness on the phenomenon making it empirical, despite the nomenclature or approach to the problem. Intimate partner violence often times referred to as domestic violence in Nigeria also has a high prevalent rate in Nigeria, and mostly the victims are females while the perpetrators are males. In this regard, victims are also aware that patriarchy, and existing cultural values, traditions and practices which favour acts of violence against women limits opportunities for redress or grievance-remedial by the victims in the Nigerian society.

Broad Research Objectives

To ascertain the effect of media intervention on the behaviour and attitude of the target audience

Specifics

- To ascertain perception of the target audience on violence against women in relationships.
- To ascertain effect on of media intervention on violence against women:
 - What are their expectations in relationships?
 - Do they realize that they have a right to demand love, value and respect from their partners in both marital and non-marital situations?
 - Do they realize and will they insist that they will no longer accept violence?
 - Do they realize that they deserve more than they are getting?
 - Do they feel now that they have the strength to take the necessary steps towards recovery?
 - Do they feel a greater sense of self-esteem; do they realize how beautiful and strong they are?



- What is the attitude of the men to violence against women?
- Have they ever beaten their women?
- Any change in attitude media intervention against domestic violence? Will men treat their women differently?
- In what ways? What exactly will they now do or say/not do or not say, that they did or said/did not do or did not say before?

METHODOLOGY

The study objectives demanded an approach that is exploratory, thrives on flexibility, allows adequate forum for free self-expression and offers both breadth and depth. The approach employed too should unveil the unconscious of the respondents and promotes the understanding of perceptions and underlying drivers that often inform beliefs, attitude and behavior. Qualitative Research offers all of the above, hence, was adopted for the study. Specific techniques adopted are the "Focus Groups and one on one-on-one depth interviews". Given the general nature of the topic, it is best to use focus groups to enable interaction of respondents allowed for an exhaustive discussion of the relevant issues. The methodology also assisted in establishing the underlying reasons in respondent views and opinions. The interaction of the participants in the focus group discussion created an atmosphere where subtle matters spontaneously emerged from the discussion. The focus groups technique also became appropriate because the group dynamics facilitated a broader understanding of underlying issues as the group members prompted each other. Limitations that normally emanate from the presence of other people in discussing one's choice resemble the real world where decisions are taken with the influences of various social factors. The researcher ensures the highest level of quality through using highly specialized, yet simple, 'implicit' techniques to elicit a great depth of information which would otherwise not have been attained through the normal explicit approaches. In this way our information gathering is very close to reality. A projective and enabling technique was infused into the discussion process, for added value with a view to creating scenarios that enabled respondents expressed their views or feelings where they may otherwise be reluctant or unwilling to do so. To encourage projection onto an external object/third person, thus revealing deep-rooted perceptions that direct questioning will not have achieved. Focus Group Discussion sessions of between 7 and 8 persons among adults in both marital and non-marital relationships. One-on-one depth interviews among adults in relationships, who have experienced domestic violence (women) and men who have practiced domestic violence.

Coverage

The study was conducted in three locations representing the country's regional divide. It is imperative to confine the survey to the four regions considering that they are "home" to the four main "ethnic and religious groups" in Nigeria namely:

- Lagos - representing itself for its cosmopolitan nature and the South West
- Enugu - representing the East
- Abuja - representing the North

For any study to be complete and representative in Nigeria it has to include the three ethnic groups namely Igbo, Hausa and Yoruba. Furthermore, for any investigation to be complete and



nationally representative, it has to capture the opinions, practices and habits of both Christians and Muslims, considering their huge presence in this market. The four centers represent the two influential axes in the Nigerian namely, religion and ethnicity

Respondent Profile

Participants were between the ages of 25 to 45 years. Male and Female in Distinct sessions

Socio Economic Class

Respondents will belong to the total universe of SEC – ‘BCDE’. However, to avoid any feelings of superiority/inferiority, the groups will be split as follows:

- BC1 - Upper/ Upper middle socio-economic
- C2DE - Lower Middle/lower socio-economic bracket

Across the focus groups, efforts were made to include various professionals and occupations for a balance in terms of output.

FGD Structure

Locations	BC1		C2D		Total
	20 - 29 years	30 - 45 years	20 - 29 years	30 - 45 years	
Lagos	F	-	-	M	2
Enugu	-	F	M	-	2
Abuja	M	-	-	F	2
Total	2	1	1	2	6

IDI Structure

Locations	BC1		C2D		Total
	20 - 29 years	30 - 45 years	20 - 29 years	30 - 45 years	
Lagos	F	M	F	M	4
Enugu	M	F	M	F	4
Abuja	F	M	F	M	4
Total	3	3	3	3	12

FINDINGS

That target audience understands marriage to be a necessity, an agreement between two opposite sex partners to live together as one, following some ceremony. They acknowledge that some couples choose to live together prior to any formal ceremony especially where the relationship is “serious” and there is hope of marriage at a future date. Also acknowledged are love relationships that do not involve co-habitation. To the average married person, marriage is



a life-long commitment, a relationship that requires the commitment of partners, tolerance and often, a lot of compromise, often on the part of the woman, to succeed.

“I see marriage as when you gain admission into a school that you will never graduate. It is a place you learn everything about your partner. Like things you did not know about him while courting each other. You keep on learning every day in marriage.” 11mins:43secs

Female, BC1, 20 – 29 years, Married, Lagos

“As for me, I see marriage as what you manage every day. As for my wife and I, we manage our marriage every day. I will say it was rosy at first but as time goes, it changes into something we have to tolerate and condone each other. Marriage is full of ups and down, trust me.” 14mins:33secs

Male, C2D, 20 – 29 years, Married, Enugu

“Marriage simple means bringing somebody legally through the hands of the person parent and you guys to be together as husband and wife; when you pay all the necessary due you are supposed to pay in that person’s head legally.” 01mins:07secs

Male, BC1, 28 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

“Marriage is very important to every woman, as a real woman if you are not yet married you are not yet complete. When you are married, you have the respect, you have children and seeing your kids is one of the joys in someone’s life.” 01mins:36secs

Female, C2, 35 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

Expectations in Relationships

All have very positive expectations when they get into a relationship. These include:

- To love and be loved

“Somebody to take care of you, accommodate you, take you the way you are.”

BC1, Female 30 – 45 years, (FGD) Lagos

- Care
- Security (women)
- Procreation (in marital relationship)
- A family of one’s own/sense of ownership and belonging
- Happiness
- Understanding
- Peace/peace of mind
- Sincerity
- Tolerance
- To be valued/appreciated



- Mutual respect
- Sense of belonging
- Sex/Love-making
- Protection (women)
- Positive impartation; positive change in one's situation as the relationship progresses e.g. additional educational achievement or rise in social status
- Material wealth/comfort
- Companionship

The target audience agrees that these expectations are often met in their marital relationships. There are, however periods, occasions and situations of concern because as one put it:

"Marriage is not a bed of roses. It is full of ups and downs. Joys and sorrows.... In marriage, you will meet the good, the bad and the ugly." 25mins:09secs

"It is not always you come home and you are happy, it is not always you see your partner and you have peace in your mind, you just feel like packing out, cutting it off." 25mins:23secs

BC1, Female, 30 – 45, Married, (FGD), Lagos

"Honestly, it is not the way I want it it's really going to because there are still sometimes I try to endure but at some time I feel like shedding tears but I still have to be tolerant. When I was going into my marriage, that was what I was planning to but when you are planning your own, the devil will be planning their own too." 16mins 27secs

Female, C2, 35 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

Besides procreation, expectations in non-marital relationships are no different.



Identified Issues That Trigger Problems In Relationships Include:

	Mentioned by Females	Mentioned by Males
Infidelity	✓	✓
Drunkenness	✓	
Abusive words/insult	✓	✓
Causing pain (physical or emotional)	✓	✓
Disrespect	✓	✓
Being always right/being unapologetic	✓	✓
Arrogance/Pride	✓	
Irresponsibility	✓	✓
Impotence	✓	
Deprivation of one's perceived right	✓	✓
Sexual assault/rape "Forcefully having his way with you when you are not in the mood."	✓	✓
Bullying	✓	
Aggression	✓	✓
Maltreatment	✓	
Battery	✓	
Malice	✓	✓
Negligence	✓	✓
Depression	✓	
Transferred of aggression	✓	
Being talkative		✓
Not respecting spouse's space and privacy		✓
Public humiliation	✓	✓

Violence against Women

Violence against women is, indeed, wide spread. Although participants for the focus group discussion sessions had not been screened to ascertain whether or not they had either experienced (women) or practiced domestic violence (males), it is interesting to note that this turned out to be the reality, in many cases. Identified acts of violence include:

- Beating
- Hitting with object
- Slapping
- Molestation/rape/use of physical force to have one's way with an unwilling partner.
- Emotional torture; although there is no physical pain, some argue that where emotional hurt occurs, often occasioning weeping, this may be classified as violence.

Violence against women occurs when the partner intentionally inflicts physical pain on the spouse with the intention of gaining the victim's submission, apology or instilling fear. This often causes pain and tears and occasionally, leaves physical signs on the body as evidence.

Personal accounts of domestic violence experienced abound:

"I could remember when I had one of my children; that was the same time my sister also had her baby but mine was a month older than her baby. I had to go and take care of her and the child. I told my husband before I and the children left the house, I told him there was stew and he said no problem that I should not cook.... Getting home at



six my house maid now gave me money that he said I should cook but I couldn't do anything because it was late... he came back beat me with belt and while beating, the belt hit my one month old baby..." 13mins:49secs

Female, 43 years, BC1, Married, (In depth Interview), Lagos

"I have witnessed a kind of molestation from my husband; it was last year around November.... My husband is a Medical Doctor. He actually had a patient that has prolonged cancer he his treating at the hospital, at the long run the patient died and it kind of weigh him down. So when he now came back home, I was now the object of aggression i.e. transfer of aggression. I was not really in the mood and everything was like... he has never acted like this before. He kind of pour his aggression on me, I won't say it's rape because he did it out of his own will; I was really messed up I had to call my brother to come and pick me in the morning...." 49mins :23secs

Female, 20 – 29 years, BC1, Married, (FGD), Lagos

"I have experience violence in my marriage that is the first experience I experienced in my marriage. The first day we had an argument and the man rained slap on me; i thought it was a joke, I was like, are you for real? He was like "am the man"... the last time it happened he beat me well well and I was pregnant, he made it his habit and then he just brought a new car; I used stone to break his wind screen for him to learn his lesson...." 40mins :30secs

Female, 30 – 45 years, C2D, Married, (FGD), Abuja

"He is this quiet person but anytime he is angry he does not know how to control his anger. The first day when we started dating, he wasn't like that. The first violence act was him beating me. What happened was that a guy, someone else was coming after me, for my hand in marriage so he thought he will lose me... he came to visit me in school and started asking me and I told him am still thinking about it, the next thing I say was he beat me till he broke my leg self...He and my friends started to carry me about to hospitals..." 18mins:49secs

Female, 29 years, BC1, in Relationship, (In Depth Interview), Enugu

"From my cultural background, I believe my woman has to be 100% loyal to me. She has to wake up very early in the morning, take care of my breakfast, take care of the kids, I will drop them in school, not many at times we will be sleeping up to 7 o'clock-8 o'clock which is very wrong. We wake up very early in the morning to pray, she does not wake up in the morning to pray and it is very very wrong. She does not cook on time, she goes out without telling me, she always complains about money money money; these are some of the issues."

Male, BC1, 28 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

"There are lots of violence. Like now there are some men, most especially the northerners, when you are not expecting your husband to go and marry another wife, before you know it they will just come and tell you that they are going to marry another wife again. With that one, you will be confuse, you will end up totally like crazy. It is still part of violence, enough for someone to say you want to divorce your marriage. Like in child birth, the northerners are really suffering on the issue of child birth. Like when they want to go for delivery, he doesn't want them to go to the hospital they will prefer to give birth at home. With that one, they will cry and suffer pain and everything. They end up dying. " 08mins:43secs

"There are lots of obstacle that came into my marriage because I married an Hausa man that culture is all about marrying two-three wives. Immediately after our wedding, after one year, I had my baby; my baby boy. Immediately, they were like they are going to marry another woman. I was now thinking that, so, this is how I am going to end up your life. It was very painful, serious pain, sometime I will sit down and cry me alone....i will just bear it and I was just like God will help me out so I started praying..." 17mins:10secs

Female, C2, 35 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

It is interesting to note that despite all these experiences of violence, these women remain in their relationships (marital and non-marital).

Wide held perception is that the single women hope to get married to their spouses some day and have a ready response for why they continue to tolerate violence: "The Devil you know is better than the Angel you don't know". Some fear that if they walk out, key reasons for remaining in an abusive relationship:



Reasons	Single	Married
Fear that the next relationship may be worse	✓	✓
Perception that that desire to dominate is inherent in men	✓	✓
Stigma associated with divorce and single parenthood	✓	✓
Fear of being thought a failure	✓	✓
Lack of Financial wherewithal		✓
Fear of rejection by own family	✓	✓
Desire for a sense of belonging	✓	✓
Fear of losing access to one's children		✓
Fear of losing the respect of others/social status/standing		✓

“In marriage, there are lots of obstacles that comes but despite that, we cannot say that we will not go into marriage. We will still go into marriage, we should because of that obstacles and not want to get married. Most especially in Africa, our women are seriously suffering mostly we that are in north side. There are lots of things you see in your husband’s house, you cannot go back home again. Even if you go home and tell them they will tell you to go back, to go back and endure; even if you are saying it, they will never believe it, all they know is you are married, just go and endure everything. There are some situations that will come and you will say am tired, even searching for divorce but they will say endure it.” 07mins:35secs

Female, C2, 35 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

Women’s Perception of Their Rights In Relationships

The women realize that they have the right to demand love and respect in both marital and non-marital relationships. Other rights of which they are aware include:

- The right to participate in decision-making
- Freedom of speech (albeit with some caution)
- Freedom of movement
- Freedom to reject polygamy/husband marrying more wives
- The right to have a say on the number of children to have
- The right to work/be employed
- Right to be heard
- Right to financial support
- Right to visit family members and relatives
- Right to know spouse’s whereabouts (an issue that particularly annoys a good proportion of males)
- Right to be happy
- Right to higher education

“Yes, I have the right to call my husband at any time and ask of where he is; I have the right as his wife. Some men are always angry when their wives call them to ask of where they are, they always think you are monitoring them.” 1hour 14mins



“My husband is always against me visiting my parents and I don’t know the reason. Most times when I go there, he must not know because he believes if I do, they want to destroy our marriage. I feel I have the right to visit my parent anytime because they need me for some certain things they cannot do for themselves.” 1hour 20mins 33secs

Female, BC1, 30 – 45years, (FGD), Enugu

Some women are assertive and stand up for their rights. Some have understanding and caring husbands that respect them.

Others are not so lucky, describing their husband as domineering and often inconsiderate. Most in this group are submissive for fear of triggering a negative response/violence from their spouses.

Men’s Perception of Their Rights In Relationships

The men acknowledge that their spouses have these rights, on the condition that in exercising them, the women are neither insubordinate nor disrespectful of the man’s position as head.

“My wife has equal right with me in my house. She has the right to do whatever she desires to do but you know women, if you give them one kilometer they will go ten miles so that is why I do not allow my wife to do some certain things.”

“She has the right to do some things in our marriage. But as men, in our relationship, we create fear in the life of our woman that she does not have the right to talk in the house even the right to share her opinion is not there because she will look at her husband as a terrorist or a lion because I was brought up in that kind of settings. She 100% right to say or do whatever she wants to do as long as the man has the backing.”

Male, C2D, 30 – 45 years, (FGD), Lagos

“That one is a natural thing. To me, I don’t call that beating. It is not that I am beating or slapping my gal, it is a way of correcting her from what she had done and if I do, she gets to do what I want and will not do it again. It is an act of correcting.” 39mins:41secs

Male, C2D, 20 – 29, Married, (FGD), Enugu

“All human being has right. Her right is that I have to meet all her expectations as my wife before I married her to my house there are some expectations I have to meet up from her parents. I have to feed her, I have to cloth her, I have to shelter her, and I have to meet her physical and psychological responsibilities plus her sexual needs too. As my wife she has high value, after my mum is my wife.” 10mins:18secs

Male, BC1, 28 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

Attitude of Men to Violence against Women

Attitude varies from one individual to the other. It is worth nothing, however, that a very noticeable proportion of male participants have at one time or the other hit their women in anger. Some justify their actions, claiming that violence is a necessity to keep their women’s excesses in check. Others acknowledge that it is wrong and abhorrent. Some in this later group admitted, however, that despite this knowledge, they are occasionally guilty of violence against their spouses, blaming this on “hot temper” and provocation by their female partners.

Interestingly, some of the issues that have occasioned violence against their women border on the absurd and yet find justification among the men. These include:

- Being too talkative/nagging
- Going through his phone call list



- Not preparing his meal/preparing his meal late
- Disturbing, his enjoyment of a football match
- Going out with no prior communication
- Bandyng words with him/talking at the same time that he is.

“At times, women, they need beating. My wife knows I like football a lot, that is when she knows she wants to talk and she knows I don’t like to be disturbed while I watch my football. It annoys me when she tries to do it any time I want to watch Chelsea.” 37mins:32secs

“My own is, one, if we are having misunderstanding inside the house, don’t bring it to the public, if you do it, I will beat you. Secondly, I don’t like her searching my phone, searching the names and the messages. I have always warned her, if you keep searching and reading my messages, I will descend on you.” 36mins:56secs

Male, C2D, 30 – 45, Married, (FGD) Lagos

It is also interesting to note that there is not much difference in attitude among the married and the single. The single man who has not made any formal commitment to his woman feels that he has as much right to express his anger physically, as does the married man who has made formal commitment to his woman. Also the married man who should know better, given his experience of relationships on both sides of the divide, often does not.

It is, therefore, not surprising that prior to exposure to the Singing Against Violence Album, many insisted that they were justified in their actions and would persist as the end results (submission, apology and respect/fear) are, in their views, worth it.

“I beat my wife because once she makes me angry and I try to walk out she will lock the door by herself that I am not going anywhere, that I have to beat her so with that I will be so angry and that will make me beat her.” 31mins:00secs

“If a woman is exchanging words with me when I am angry, I don’t like it. For example if I am angry and am talking just don’t talk, just keep quiet or you did something have warned you of and you repeat it pisses me off so much. Even if she wants to talk let it be when am clam.” 32mins:11secs

“I hate when i am talking aggressively and she replies back at me immediately the same way because two wrongs can never make a right... she will be screaming at the top of her voice but what I do is to walk away.” 35mins:35secs

“Let’s be frank with ourselves, some women need beating.” 37mins:32secs

“There are several ways of dealing with women, without beating them ... I use this technique emotional torture. I can torture a woman and she will never remain the same for the rest of her life.” 39mins:36secs

Male, C2D, 30 – 45 years, (FGD), Lagos

“If I raise up my hands to beat her it is violence but to me it is not violence, it is correction. I spank her, if I do not do it I will feel cheated, I will feel am not the boss, I will feel she has something superior than me. But I have to bring her down to her knees for her to know I was the one that married her, I paid her bride price and so she has to be under my feet.” 08mins:08secs

Male, BC1, 28 years, Married, (In depth Interview) Abuja

Trusted sources on domestic violence related information

The target audience pays attention to diverse media for different reasons. These media include:



- ❖ The Television
- ❖ The Radio
- ❖ The internet
- ❖ Billboards and posters
- ❖ Mobile phones; Blackberry pinging, Tweets, Facebook and other sites, SMS texts, radio feature, chat and phone calls
- ❖ Newspapers and magazines
- ❖ Word of mouth communication from family, friends and acquaintances

Interestingly, the Television first and then the radio are the most trusted sources of information on domestic violence related issues.

The Television is appreciated for offering additional visual advantage. This way the viewer can instantly verify pronouncements via the images and scenarios transmitted on air.

"I watch the TV often because I will see and can easily memorize what I saw and heard."
FGD, Female, C2D, 34 – 45 years, Abuja

The radio is also an appreciated source of governance related issues. Consumers noted that several radio broadcasts make effort to analyse situations from diverse perspectives/to be objective through the invitation of key players and experts to air/share their views as well as the involvement of the listening public via phone in programmes.

Another reason for the appreciation of this medium is that it tends to target rural communities and hence does more in depth analysis of needs at the grassroots level than the television has been observed to do.

"I prefer the radio because people participate by calling in. it also gives information fast before the newspaper or any other source."

FGD, Female, C2D, 34 – 45 years, Abuja

"I trust the radio because you find it very difficult hearing news on the radio that is not true or real...I trust the radio because any news you hear from it is authentic, especially the foreign stations. The foreign stations give in-depth news."

FGD, Male, C2D, 34 - 45 years, Lagos

It (the radio) is the easiest way of getting information. With my N30 battery, I can easily get quick and fast information.

FGD, Male, C2D, 18 – 25 years, Abuja

"With the radio, I listen to news from everywhere most especially the rural areas."

FGD, Female, C2D, 34 – 45 years, Enugu

Other reasons for the appreciation of the radio include that:

- ❖ It is very portable and mobile; these days it is an integral feature on many mobile phones, rechargeable lanterns, in cars etc. enhancing its accessibility



- ❖ May be listened to with or without electricity (battery-operate) unlike the TV
- ❖ Is relatively much more affordable than the Television set

Another fairly well trusted source among savvy users is the Internet. Some, more particularly in urban areas and more particularly among teenagers and young adults additionally trust the Internet for governance-related information. This group acknowledges that several media houses e.g. thesunnews.com have readily assessable websites that are rich in content in this regard, at no extra cost to the Internet user.

"I do a lot on my BB, I receive news and current happenings. There is an application in my phone from MTN ... I pay N120 for thirty days on whatever is reported in the newspapers."

IDI, Female, ABC1, 18 – 25 years, Lagos

"For me, it is through the internet that you can get present and past information. I also trust the television because you will see what is happening live."

IDI, Male, C2D, 18 – 25 years, Enugu

Response to Research Findings on Radio Listenership

Opinion is divided on whether or not listenership to the radio has waned or not. Below are predominant perceptions.

Comparatively, more in the urban areas agree with the research findings while more in the rural areas disagree.

Assessment of media message ever seen by women

The women applauded the message they have ever heard on the following strengths

Specific Messages Perceived

- Be bold; take charge of your situation.
- You can initiate the change that you desire in your life.
- Say no to abuse/violence, walk away.
- It is not too late to make a fresh start.
- Today is a new day, get a better life.
- Seek the support of family, for the healing process.

This song is clear in its communication.

"What the song is trying to say is that she is trying to make the man understand that she can do much better without him. ... She can do better because the man can even beat her to death."

Female, 20 – 29 years, BC1, Enugu



“To me, she is trying to express herself from the inside. It has been going on and she had been bearing it; so it happened that last night made her to decide because he had finished showing himself and he had taken away her dignity, hit her and battered her to the extent that she cannot bear any more. Now, it is a new morning, she wants to move on, that’s it, she needs to move on with her life.”

“The key message is when the time comes for you to put an end to something; you should stand your ground and stop it.”

Female, 20 – 29 years, BC1, Lagos

“Mine is, a habit is a habit, it sits there like a gum, and difficult to remove so there is no way you can change it when it is there. The other one is enough of the trash; you can never change a man except God... you take a step ahead. It is better you go, a better life await you ahead.” 01hour: 51mins:41secs

“Mine is that, last night you have shown me who you truly are and I’m going to pack my bags and leave back to my family and leaving is the best option.” 01hour 58mins 30secs

Female, 30 – 40, C2D, FGD, Abuja

“I think she is angry. The song is all about what she was expecting is not what she saw may be in her marriage or her relationship. Last night the guy showed her who he truly was that in the morning, she is going to pack her things and leave; she is going to go back to her family and they will show her a new way to start her life. The song is about a woman who is trying to express her anger; I thought you are an angel but last night you showed you are a devil.” 39mins:59secs

Female, BC1, 26 years, Non marital relationship, (In depth Interview) Enugu

Likes

Specific likes are that:

- This song the woman in a bad relationship to stop, reflect and hopefully, take charge of her situation.
- It helps her to come to terms with facts; the abuse is unlikely to stop so the sooner one does something about the situation, the better.
- It could also cause the abusive man to have sober reflection and change for the better.

The average Nigerian woman lives on hope; hope for a better tomorrow, better financial situation, better quality of life etc. She continues to hope that things will ‘somehow’ change for the better, even where she takes no action.

The married woman, more particularly, emphasizes that her relationship is “for better, for worse” and that she has committed to a lifelong relationship. This woman, even after listening to this message, is unlikely to do something about her bad/unhappy situation.

Barriers to taking action based on the message include:

- Poor finances



- A good proportion of women depend largely on their partners' income to meet their financial needs. Where this avenue closes, fear is that their overall situation in life will become worse.
 - Fear of being denied access to their children/separation from their children.
 - Societal stigma associated with single parenthood.
 - Fear of rejection by embarrassed parents/family
 - Fear of being perceived as a failure by society
 - Fear of losing social status/standing currently enjoyed; married woman/"madam", wife of a respected member of the society etc.
 - Fear that the next relationship may be worse.
 - Fear of what the future may hold for their children if they walk away; exposure to a wicked step mother or miscreants where she is not there to guide them aright etc.

This message clearly makes the woman in an abusive relationship realize that she deserves better and can do something about it. This message, indeed, makes the women reflect and conclude that she is beautiful inside and outside and deserves better than she is getting. A fairly noticeable proportion of women expressed willingness to take their destiny into their own hands and initiate the change that they desire by walking out on the relationship if the violence persists. Comparatively, though, the single woman in a relationship is more likely to stand up against domestic violence than the married woman, especially where children are involved. The message awakes the consciousness in the woman that her destiny is in her hands, that she can choose to do something to change the situation. The abused woman will seek dialogue with her partner in the hope of ending her unpleasant situation. She will seek the support of a respected member of their party; parent, parent-in-law, religious leader etc. Packing up and leaving is, however, a difficult consideration for the married woman and most will not consider this "extreme" response. The message impacted comparatively more palpably among single women, even among those, those who have invested several years in their relationships and believe that marriage will happen in the near future have more difficulty considering leaving than those in newer relationships. Most will seek less 'drastic' means to put an end to their misery. The messages are always impactful. It awakened a consciousness that life can and will be better if one takes her destiny into her own hands and makes the change that she desires.

There are, however, many barriers to taking that decisive step to walk out and the spinster in a new relationship is more likely to consider this action than the married woman or older spinster in a long term relationship.

"I think there is a time we should put an end to some things no matter how it is ... don't think of what people say because they are not in your shoe, if they say your marriage had crashed so what? But It will not be easy for a married woman to leave but am thinking it's interwoven."

Female, 20 – 29 years, BC1, FGD, Lagos



“There is an extent of how things will be going and you really need someone to talk to, you need to listen to somebody, you just want to need somebody to talk. There are sometimes some things will be bordering you that you will not even mind to talk to somebody... because you need to hear somebody advice no matter how little.”

Female, 29 years, marital relationship, In depth Interview, Enugu

“This songs gave me morale because there are thing am enduring that I have been swallowing in my marriage, the message is saying I should stand firm in some of the things, to be diplomatic when I feel am about to experience violence in my marriage. 02hours:02mins:11secs

Female, 30 – 45 years, BC1, FGD, Enugu

“I have said am not going to leave, am not going to leave; I have developed tick skin. When am married for 21 years, what again have I not seen? I have seen it all, even I can be a councillor for a marriage. For me, this message is not for me because I have decided that am going to stay. I am going to stay but fight for my right, I will let those things I don't want and say no and stand on it. Enough is enough, I am not going to call it a quit.” 52mins:15secs

Female, 43 year, BC1, Marital relationship, In depth interview, Lagos

“One, after listening to this messages, I found out that it is very important for me to protect my wife, value her opinion, make her understand that I love her because women equally need praises...I have not been doing all these to my wife or let me say I have been doing some but to a point I stopped and some have not been doing at all but now I have really activate it back.” 59mins:50secs

Male, 29 years, C2D, Marital relationship, IDI, Enugu

Do they realize that they deserve more than they are getting?

“Yes I deserve more than what am getting now because I don't enjoy anything than for the fact that I have children and they make me happy and I decide to make myself happy but I know I deserve more than what am getting.”

Female, 43 year, BC1, Marital relationship, IDI, Lagos

“Yes I deserve it o, I know I deserve it but another problem am having is that... but that is why I talk about being prayerful earlier because most times men are being manipulated. Maybe someone that don't like you or does not want your marriage to work, the person will be there manipulating you and you won't know what is happening, you will just be pissing your husband off or manipulating even your husband to be beating you so that you will leave the house.” 01hour: 05mins:37secs

Female, 29 years, Marital relationship, In depth Interview, Enugu

Do they feel a greater sense of self-esteem; do they realize how beautiful and strong they are?

“Yes, because I now know I am not alone in the battle. For a woman to sing this which means they are one way or the other victims of what I am passing through which I know African women, 60% of us are in this, whether we agree or not.” 55mins:39secs

Female, 43 year, BC1, Marital relationship, In depth interview, Lagos

“Every woman is beautiful, there is no woman that will say am not beautiful. It depends on how you see yourself as a woman. That is part of what I do to make myself happy. I will dress well and do a nice hair.” 01hour: 20min: 13secs

Female, 29 years, Marital relationship, In depth Interview, Enugu



DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results from this study reported a high prevalence of domestic violence in all parts of Nigeria. Nearly two-thirds of women and girls interviewed in this study have experienced one form of physical, sexual or psychological violence in the family. The study also established that gender based domestic violence in Nigeria is common place, most participants were said to have been sexually abused by their intimate partners. Finding from the study also revealed among other findings that socio-cultural factors promoted domestic violence in Nigeria and that women who experienced domestic violence preferred to rather keep mum than report to the law enforcement agencies. Also, the incidence of and dimension of violence against women in the country was to determine the general attitude of people in Ilorin metropolis towards violence against women, the study discovered that while a large proportion reported their victimhood experiences to significant others and superiors in the workplace, only a few of the respondents in the study reported that they were victims of violence to the police. Reasons advanced were fear of reprisals, stigma and lack of commitment from the primary law enforcement-the police, to prosecute cases of violence against women, preferring to leave the perpetrators to God.

The study also finds that mass media intervention has indeed been very impactful as evidenced by increased awareness and knowledge on domestic violence sponsored jingles on the available mass media mediums. Most participants have also taken advantage of and benefiting from such programmes. The programmes that are aired have generated a positive change in attitude in the participants as they now have come to embrace the lessons of the media messages. The media are better equipped to carry out the duties, and believe that they now produce programmes that meet world standards. The media is an appreciated source of information to the respondents. Respondents noted that several media broadcasts make effort to analyse situations from diverse perspectives/to be objective through the invitation of key players and experts to air/share their views as well as the involvement of the listening public via phone in programmes. Another reason for the appreciation of this mass media by the respondents is that it tends to target rural communities and hence does more in depth analysis of needs at the grassroots level. Participants also agree with the research findings that the radio is the commonest and widest coverage tool in getting first-hand information. They noted that the advent of phones with in-built radio eliminates the need for further expenses on radio purchase or batteries. The respondents also noted that radio is mobile, and can be moved around with, especially on handsets, therefore allows for on the go listenership and 24hours daily broadcast allows for listenership at any time of day

CONCLUSION

This article has tried to justify the function of mass media as an agent of socialization in our society. To achieve this, the article looked at the current impact of the mass media in the area of reduction in domestic violence. Since almost everyone gets information from the mass media, the function and the role of mass media considered will help influence public opinion, encourage social responsibility, help grow development, determine political agenda, act as watchdog and further enhanced the democratic participation of the majority to the strategies for effective education of the people to the ills of domestic violence in our society.

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