

# Media Programmes on Domestic Violence against Men (DVAM) in Owerri Metropolis:

## AKAP analysis

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** DVAM can pose a great threat to the development of the victim, society, and the nation. This necessitated the investigation of the knowledge, attitude, and practice of men in Owerri metropolis towards media programmes on DVAM. This study hinged on agenda setting and social learning theories. **Method:** The survey research design was used as the research method, and a sample size of 384 was derived using the Australian sample size online calculator from the projected population of 275,340. Multi-stage, simple random, and purposive sampling techniques were adopted to reach out to respondents. A questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data. **Results:** The paper revealed that the level of exposure of men in Owerri metropolis to media programmes on DVAM is low at 33.9%, with a high knowledge level on DVAM at an average mean of 3.3 (N=375). The study also revealed that the respondents perceive DVAM as a menace that results in a reduction of a man's self-confidence and self-esteem and leads to disharmony, distrust, and untimely death at an average mean of 3.5 (N = 375). It was further revealed that media programmes on DVAM have induced attitudinal change in the respondents at an average mean of 2.9 (N =375). **Conclusion:** The researchers concluded that domestic violence victims go through emotional and psychological traumas with little attention given to them in the media. The propagation and promotion of well-designed and content-rich media programmes on DVAM and/or gender-based violence by every media organisation as a compulsory law from the National Broadcasting Commission was recommended.

**Keywords:** Media, media programmes, violence, domestic violence, men

### INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence respects no boundaries, and cuts across racial, ethnic, class, age, economic, religious and cultural divides. It takes place everywhere in society. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (UNDEVW) as cited in Akarika, et al. (2019) describes “violence as a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women,” and as “one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men”.

The World Bank noted in their 2019 report as cited in Obayi (2021) opine that “gender-based violence (GBV) is one of the most oppressive forms of gender inequality, posing a fundamental barrier to the equal participation of women and men in social, economic, and political spheres. Gender-based violence impedes gender equality and the achievement of a range of development outcomes”. This is why Sida (2015), Onyebuchi, et al. (2023) opine that “gender equality is achieved when women and men, girls and boys, have equal rights, life prospects, and the power to shape their own lives and contribute to society”.

In 2006, Nigeria adopted a Framework and Plan of Action for the National Gender Policy in order to checkmate the cases of gender-based violence in the country. “Consequently, the federal and state governments adopted several legislative and policy instruments, including The Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act of 2015, which prohibits female genital mutilation, harmful widowhood practices, harmful traditional practices and all forms of violence against persons in both private and public life” (Obayi, 2021).

“There is lack of information on accurate estimates of the magnitude of physical and sexual violence against men in Nigeria largely due to violence against men being unreported; and in most cases, those reported are not recorded by authorities simply because violence against men are not given a voice” (Akarika, et al., 2019). Information provides stimulus for all thought and actions of human beings. That is why Akarika, et al. (2019), Fab-Ukozor and Etumnu (2022) corroborate that “information entails data, facts, imaginations, ideas, opinion, cultural values in a variety of media which include print, broadcast, audio-visual materials and electronic processors”. Also, most of the studies done are tilting towards violence against women without commiserate attention to violence against men. It is because of the above reason this study was motivated so as to help in closing the existing gap in this regard.

News Agency of Nigeria, (NAN) (2021) reports that “a doctoral study conducted by Chukwuma Uzoamaka in the University of Ibadan revealed that more men are becoming victims of gender-based violence in Nigeria. The study further revealed that in spite of being abused, men will not report their ordeal, because they fear stigmatisation from friends and family. They usually do not want any third-party interference and because they are still financially dependent on their wives. More married men are becoming victims of spousal abuse, but suffer in silence, because the society does not believe men can be victims of spousal abuse, hence, the non-disclosure of such experience for fear of stigmatisation”. Zabala (2016) cited in Shabani (2021) avers that, “in public view, men are considered as the most violent persons in the homes; however, women have been great perpetrators of violence against their counterpart spouses. Zabala’s assertion indicates that men pass through various life ordeals alleged to be caused by their wives”.

Biblically, with reference to the context in Genesis 39, Stiebert (2019) in Shabani (2021) “the passage suggests women being perpetrators of violence against men in time immemorial”. Referring to the current situation of rape culture in the American context, Stiebert (2019) paints thus, “maybe, the story of Joseph and Potipher’s wife highlights the important truth that males, too, can be victims of sexual abuse. Maybe this story demonstrates that women can also be aggressors and perpetrators of gendered violence and abuse.

Despite the efforts of the government and media programmes and reportage on GBV, domestic violence against men still persist overwhelmingly. The media have a role to play in the fight against GBV given the fact that media is saddled with a social responsibility role to the society. The media have an influential role to play in informing, sensitising and conscientising all critical stakeholders to the menacing issue of GBV through media programmes. For instance, Boss 88.9FM airs “Pillow Talk Show”, a relationship themed programme scheduled at 10:PM from Mondays through Thursdays as a two hours phone-in

programme where the audiences are given the avenue to call and contribute their opinions and views on the issue under discussion. However, this study sought to ascertain media programmes designed for ameliorating issues of domestic violence against men (DVAM) because it has been established that media tendency to shape or influence public opinion and behaviour is very high (Murtada, 2017) cited in (Emecheta & Onyebuchi 2021).

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In Nigeria, like in most African societies, domestic violence is gendered and culturally patterned. Liyeh et al. (2021) cited in Obayi (2021) aver that gender-based violence is a “serious, life-threatening global problem that affects women, girls, boys, and men, and it is widely underreported in all settings”. “Domestic violence is more dangerous than cancer, motor vehicle accidents, war, and malaria. It cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth, and geography” (Srivastava, 2016).

Men are increasingly becoming victims of spousal abuse, but suffer in silence, because the society does not believe men can be victims of spousal abuse, hence, the non-disclosure of such experience for fear of stigmatisation and the media does not seem to be doing their bid, or rather, the media is not giving the much needed attention to it in order to nip the act in the bud.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aim of the study is to assess media programmes on domestic violence against men (DVAM) in Owerri metropolis. Specifically, the objects are to:

1. Find out the level of exposure of men in Owerri metropolis to media programmes on DVAM.
2. Determine the knowledge level of men in Owerri metropolis on DVAM.

3. Ascertain the attitudes of the men towards domestic violence against men as a result of their exposure to media programmes on DVAM.
4. Find out the influence of media programmes on DVAM on the behaviour of men in Owerri metropolis towards domestic violence from their spouses.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Conceptual Clarification of Domestic Violence**

“According to Kenya’s Protection Against Domestic Violence (PADV) Act 2015, domestic violence is defined as any form of violence against a person, or threat of violence or of imminent danger to that person, by any other person with whom that person is, or has been, in a domestic relationship. Domestic violence can manifest socially, psychologically, physically, sexually, emotionally, and financially” (Obegi et al, 2017; Mangare et al, 2018). “Domestic violence refers to violent behaviour between current and former intimate partners, typically where one tries to exert power and control over the other, usually through fear. It can include physical, sexual, emotional, social, verbal, spiritual and economic abuse” (Ewa-Ibe & Iroh, 2021). “While domestic violence affects both genders, more is known about male-perpetrated than female-perpetrated DV, and it is not clear whether what is known about male violence also holds true for female violence. GBV is said to be endemic in Nigeria, with factors such as insurgency, economic downturn, weak legal systems, and gender inequality, among others, facilitating it” (Ekweonu, 2020; Chime, Nduagubam& Orji, 2022).

### **Domestic Violence Against Men: An Overview**

“Overtime, violence against men has been going on in some parts of the world but under great cover. Many societies do not encourage men to talk publicly about their misery. Rather, some men suffer violence in their families in silence and in fear of intimidation by other

men” (Ingolo, 2015). “Gender violence affect men too, although many men may feel uncomfortable discussing an issue, which at times seems to reflect on men in general, portraying all of them as aggressive, violent, irresponsible, wife beaters or sexual predators. In Nigeria, some men have abandoned their families because their women have become tormentors in verbal and physical abuse. Some of these men drown their frustrations in wine shops, while others take to drugs as a source of escape from the realities of life. Frustrations are even more for the jobless, retrenched, motor park touts and men who earn less than their spouses” (Akarika, et al 2019).

“The victimisation of men by their women partners is a serious social problem and it is largely ignored by the society. A part of America’s social norm reveals that men are the stronger and more dominating gender who does not allow women to dominate. Consequently, male victims do not freely admit being victims of intimate partner violence at the hands of females” (Barber, 2008). “Sadly, domestic violence is regarded as family business, which does not require intervention of law. Hence many cases remain unreported and it will continue to remain behind closed doors as long as the society continues to regard domestic violence as normal, or to dismiss it as a private matter. Then men or women continue to suffer gross violations of human right within their homes” (Srivastava, 2016).

### **The Media as a Preventive Approach to Domestic Violence**

“With the purported increase of domestic violence in the society, the media are placed on the side of responsibility to deliver the needed views to ensure that the lives and health of both married men and women and males and females in relationships are set free from domestic violence of any kind. This is because the media wield enormous power to shape and manipulate public opinions and discussions in matters that affect the larger society” (Ewa-Ibe & Iroh, 2021; Iheanacho et al., 2021). This was captured more clearly by Carll (2003) when

he argues that “the media features are seen as the most vibrant priority area in primary prevention of domestic violence because it has the potential influence to guide and shape public understanding of domestic violence against men through designed media programmes and frequent reports”. Considering the why and how of media influence on its audience belief system, Easteal et al. (2015) vehemently argued that unquestionably, the way information is structured can increase public understanding of domestic violence against men.

This is why Boss 88.9FM has a programme “Pillow Talk Show”, a relationship themed programme scheduled at 10:PM from Mondays through Thursdays with the programme Presenter, “Ify De Radio Maestro”. “Pillow Talk Show” is a two-hour phone-in radio programme where the audience are given the avenue to call and contribute their opinions and views on the issue under discussion or through WhatsApp enabled platform for messages from the audience in order to carry everyone along on the disadvantage of those who could not call during the programme.

## **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Obayi (2021) carried out “a study on a critical analysis of the mass media and gender-based violence in Imo State, Nigeria which revealed that the extent to which residents of Imo State are exposed to media reports and programmes on gender-based violence is high at 44%. Analysis also revealed that, at a mean average of 3.5 (N=379), the knowledge level of residents on gender-based violence is high. The study further revealed that, at an average mean of 3.5 (N=379), media programmes and reports have been able to induce perceptible/attitudinal change on gender-based violence positively. This is so because the respondents perceive the menace or act as a threat to human, family, societal and national development. The study went further to reveal that adequate awareness campaigns, enlightening programme, media programmes/reports on the need for the abolition of harmful

social practices were the factors that can aid media efforts in actualising perceptive/attitudinal change on gender base violence”. In a different study, Orji, et al. (2020), it was revealed that “the level of awareness of the campaign against discrimination and violence among women based on their exposure to television broadcast is minimal at 50% and that television broadcast's in the campaign against discrimination and violence against women were perceived to be unsatisfactory at 46.1%. In essence the finding indicated that exposure to television broadcasts do not significantly influence women's participation in the campaign against discrimination and violence among them”.

The investigation carried out by Ewa-Ibe and Iroh (2021) indicated that “the issue of domestic violence against women in Ebonyi State was not given the prominence it deserved in the papers as they were mainly reported in the centre spread pages. There was also limited depth of coverage, and majority of the reports were straight news stories, thereby, denying the needed interpretations. The tone was however, unanimously unsupportive of domestic violence in the society. The study recommends more media attention to gender issues and gender violence in particular through greater interpretations of the menace. It further recommends possible integration of gender reporting into journalism curriculum to better acquaint future reporters with the requisite skills and technicalities involved in reporting gender issues including violence against women”. Similarly, Ekweonu(2020) “content analysed newspaper coverage of domestic violence against women during covid-19 (Corona virus disease 2019) lockdown in some select dailies and found that the newspapers neither gave prominence nor adequate coverage to domestic violence against women within the lockdown period”. Shodipe, et al. (2023) found out that “gender-based violence cases in selected Nigerian newspapers varied significantly between 2019 and 2022. As a result, more cases of sexual gender-based violence were reported in the selected newspapers in 2019, while more cases of physical gender-based violence were reported in 2022”.

In another endeavour, Ondicho and Mwanyuli (2021) carried out a study entitled “*COVID-19 and domestic violence against men in Kenya: Issues and policy directions*” which established that “DVAM is a serious social problem that occurs with impunity behind closed doors and in secret. The respondents indicated that they experienced episodes of physical abuse including being grabbed or punished in a manner that hurt, beaten with an object, kicked, bitten, and forced into a sexual activity when they did not want. The study further revealed that the respondents did not seek any form of external intervention including legal redress for the violence experienced”.

This result is in confirmation with the findings of Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2014) which showed that “44% of men aged 15-49 and 45% of women had been physically abused since age 15 while 12% of men and 20% of women had experienced physical violence within the 12 months prior to the survey. Most had also experienced psychological violence in the form of insults, humiliation, limiting contact with family and friends, denied sex, demanding to know where they were and with who, controlling family income and demanding to have access to their mobile phones”.

The results above are in consistency with the findings of MAWE (2017) in their “study of DVAM in ten Kenyan counties which found out that domestic violence abused men suffered physical consequences ranging from minor to severe injuries, and even death. In addition to physical injuries, the study revealed that the victimized men experienced serious psychosocial problems, including high levels of anxiety, depression, and stress from ever-present threat of attack. Abused men working from home reported that domestic violence disrupted their work, prevented them from seeking employment, caused them to resign and abandon their career and promotional opportunities during COVID-19”.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The agenda setting and social learning theories were the theoretical foundation for this study.

### **.The Agenda Setting Theory**

This theory was propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in the year 1972. The theory is premised on the argument that the media lead the public in assigning relative importance to various public issues (Miller, 2002) cited in Obidike and Ezeabasili (2020). Agenda setting theory discusses how much importance the audience places on an issue based on information in a news story and the persistence with which it is reported (Alaekwe & Ilomuanya, 2023; Alphonsus et al., 2022). “Hence, the media agenda influences the public agenda by giving more space and time as well as more prominence to some issues where others are left uncovered. This implies that, if the media raises an issue, the issue is likely to be seen as important item on the public agenda” (Miller, 2002) in Obidike and Ezeabasili (2020). “However, if the media decide to ignore an issue, no matter how vital it is to the development of the society, the issue may not be the subject of public debate” (McCombs, 2003; Nwamara & Etumnu, 2022). In this same vein, if the media keeps silent on the issues of domestic violence against men, the issue will never command public attention not to talk of reaction from the general public as well as the attention of the relevant authorities.

This theory is relevant to this study because the agenda setting theory is premised on the tenet of setting the agenda for public discuss through raising salient issues. Therefore, the agenda setting role of the media is very crucial in raising awareness about the problems of the society such as domestic violence against men through media programmes like “Pillow Talk Show” on Boss 98.9FM, thereby help in finding solutions that will enhance a positive development and peaceful co-existence.

## **Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory was developed by Albert Bandura in 1977 as an alternative to the earlier work of fellow psychologist B.F. Skinner, known for his influence on behaviourism. Obayi (2021) citing Online MSW Programs (2020) assert that while behavioural psychology focuses on how the environment and reinforcement affect behaviour, Bandura as cited in Onyebuchi et al. (2023) put forth that individuals can learn behaviour through observation. According to Susman and Kendra (2021), one of the most popular explanatory frameworks for gender-based violence suggests that individuals learn how to behave through both the experience of and exposure to violence.

This theory is relevant to this study because it reveals that anyone can learn violent behaviour from the social environment and be motivated to act it out based on the level of motivation or benefit he/she is likely to gain, given that such benefit outweighs the punishment.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Survey research design was employed for the study because it is the most suitable in a study of this nature in order to elicit the opinions of respondents on the topic under investigation (Iheanacho, et al. 2021). The study has a population of 197,944 males from the 2006 census according to the National Population Commission of Nigeria (2016), National Bureau of Statistics (2016). However, it is 17 years since the last census hence there is need to project the population using the UNDP's population growth rate of 2.28%. Having used the growth rate over 17 years period the projected population of males in Owerri Metropolis is 275, 340.

See the calculation below:

The population extrapolation index, as showed above could be stated

$$P_i = 2.28\% = 0.023$$

$P_p = G_p \times P_i$  T, where  $P_p$  = Population Projected

GP stands for Given Population (as at last census)

Pi is the population growth index.

T = Time interval between the supplied population and the study year.

(2006 population figure given as 197,944)

$P_p = GP \times P_i \times T$

$197,944 \times 0.023 \times 17 = 77,396$

Population increase from 2006 to 2023 is 77,396

$197,944 + 77,396 = 275,340$

2023 population = 275,340

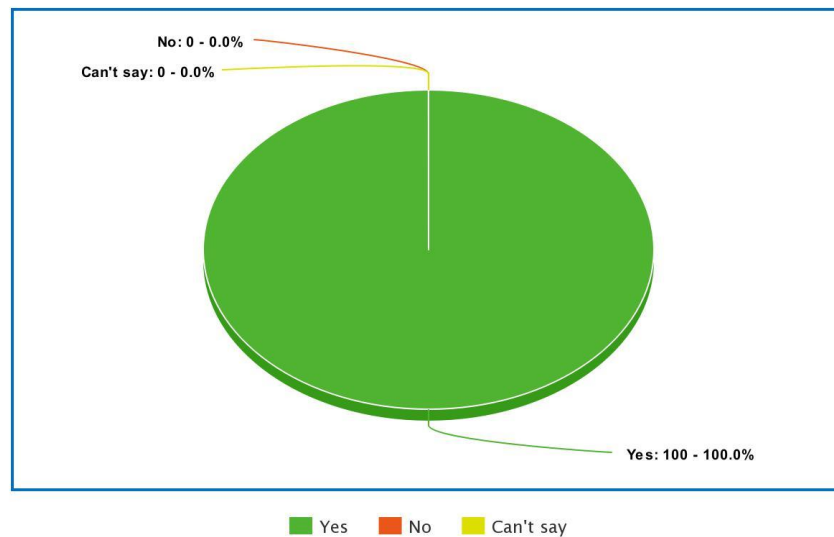
The sample size of 384 was arrived at using the Australian sample size online calculator. The sampling techniques used for this study were the multi-stage sampling technique, **simple random technique** and the purposive sampling technique. The multi-stage sampling technique required that Owerri metropolis be divided into three local government clusters. Two communities were randomly selected from each local government area for proximity and accessibility to the researchers. The communities selected were Amakohia, Uratta and Egbu (Owerri North); Umuoyima and Amawom (Owerri municipal); Nekede and Ihiagwa (Owerri West). Purposive sampling technique was employed to sample 64 respondents from each of the communities for equal representation **using proportionate approach**. **A self developed questionnaire containing 16 items was used as the instrument for data collection. It was face validated by an expert in Mass Communication Department, Imo State University, Owerri. The instrument was self-administered by the researchers in the year 2023 within the geographical scope of the study for the period of two weeks.** Simple percentages, pie charts and mean analysis were used to analyse the data.

## **RESULTS**

From the 384 copies of the questionnaire that were administered to the respondents to the communities sampled, the response rate of the valid retrieved items was 97.7%. 375 (97.7%)

copies were retrieved, found valid and analysed for the study. This means that 9 (2.3%) copies were found invalid.

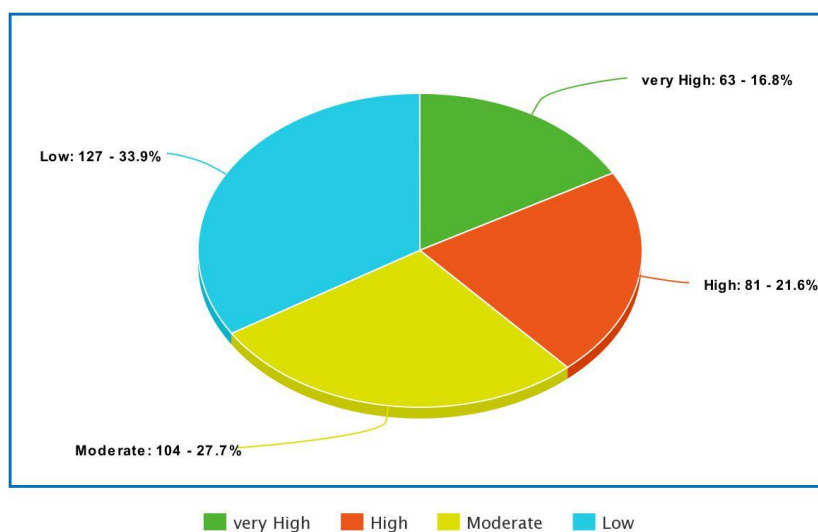
**Figure 1: Responses of respondents on whether they have been exposed to media programme/reports on domestic violence against men before**



*Source: Field Survey, 2023*

Data as shown in Fig 1 above showed that all the respondents have been exposed to media programme/reports on domestic violence against men before. By implication of this result it means that those who participated in the study are fully aware of media programme/reports on domestic violence as such it is believed that they are qualified to be included in the study.

**Figure 2: The level of exposure of the respondents in Owerri metropolis to media programmes on DVAM**



*Source: Field Survey, 2023*

Result of the analysis revealed that the respondents attested to being exposed to media programme/reports on domestic violence against men before, but their level of exposure to media programmes on DVAM is low at 33.9%. This implies that in as much as they are exposed to media programmes/reports on domestic violence against men as seen in Fig 1 it is obvious that the level of exposure is low as seen in Fig 2 data reports.

**Table 1: Responses of respondents on their knowledge level on DVAM**

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Violence against men is sexual, verbal, physical, and emotional abuse on a man	201	145	20	9	3.4	Accepted
It reduces the self-confidence of man	162	137	41	35	3.1	Accepted
Domestic violence can lead to untimely death	190	144	34	7	3.4	Accepted
It is an abuse on the fundamental human right of the man	131	202	24	18	3.2	Accepted
<b>Average Mean</b>					<b>3.3</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2023*

*Decision rule: Given that the benchmark of a 4-point Likert scale for decision is 2.5, it means that if the calculated mean is 2.5-4.0, then the item in question is accepted. However, if the calculated mean is 1-2.4, then the item in question is rejected. Let 1.0-1.5 (Very Low), 1.6-2.2 (Low), 2.3-2.9 (Moderate), 3.0-3.5 (High) and 3.6-4.0 (Very High).*

Result of the mean analysis of 3.3 above which is above the decision rule indicates that respondents are knowledgeable about DVAM and the respondents' knowledge level towards DVAM is high. **By implication of the data analysis, it is quite evident as seen in the responses from respondents that they are knowledgeable on the issue of domestic violence against men via media programme/reports.**

**Table 2: Responses of respondents on the attitudes of the men towards domestic violence against men as a result of their exposure to media programmes on DVAM**

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
It leads to chaos, disharmony, disunity, distrust and untimely death	211	140	13	11	3.5	Accepted
It distorts the peace of the home	220	147	6	2	3.6	Accepted
It reduces a man's love for his spouse	209	151	3	3	3.5	Accepted
It reduces a man's self-confidence, self-esteem, dignity and respect	231	122	8	14	3.5	Accepted
It gives room for regret to a man over his choice of partner	158	191	17	9	3.3	Accepted
<b>Average Mean</b>					<b>3.5</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2023*

*Decision rule: Given that the benchmark of a 4-point Likert scale for decision is 2.5, it means that if the calculated mean is 2.5-4.0, then the item in question is accepted*

Result of the mean score indicates 3.5 which is above the standard rule, showing that respondents attitude towards domestic violence against men as a result of their exposure to media programmes on DVAM implies that DVAM is harmful to the general well-being of the men.

**Table 3: Respondents responses on the impact of media programmes on DVAM on the behaviour of men in Owerri metropolis towards domestic violence from their spouses**

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
As a result of media programmes on DVAM, I now break the silence of domestic violence act against men	124	149	68	34	3.0	Accepted

As a result of media programmes, I report cases of DVAM to the appropriate authority in order to avoid taking laws into my hands	111	136	71	57	<b>2.8</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
I walk away from home for a few moments as a source of escape from the drama to calm my head when am domestically violated by my partner	194	141	24	16	<b>3.4</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
I take laws into my hands by retaliating to prove the man in me instead of reporting to appropriate authority	49	33	125	168	<b>1.9</b>	<b>Rejected</b>
Media programmes on DVAM have enlightened and informed me on how to handle issues of domestic violence by speaking up	181	159	18	17	<b>3.3</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Average Mean</b>					<b>2.9</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

*Source: Field survey, 2023*

*Decision rule: Given that the benchmark of a 4-point Likert scale for decision is 2.5, it means that if the calculated mean is 2.5-4.0, then the item in question is accepted*

Analysis on table 3 above revealed that at average mean of 2.9 (N=375), media programmes on DVAM have induced attitudinal change on the respondents. As result of media programmes on DVAM, the respondents have learnt to break the silence on cases of domestic violence against them, rather they resort to the relevant authority other than taking laws into their hands. **In summary, the data showed that the media programmes/reports have impact on the behaviour of men in Owerri Municipal towards domestic violence from their spouses.**

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Result of the findings on the level of exposure of men in Owerri metropolis to media programmes on DVAM revealed that the respondents are exposed to media programmes on DVAM, but their level of exposure to media programmes on DVAM is low at 33.9%. The reason for the low exposure could be that there are few media programmes on DVAM tentatively because barely little attention is given to issues of violence against men on the media as men are regarded as weaker sex and cannot be abused. This result supports the findings of Ekweonu (2020) which found out that the newspapers neither gave prominence

nor adequate coverage to domestic violence against women within the lockdown period. The investigation carried out by Ewa-Ibe and Iroh (2021) indicated that “the issue of domestic violence against women in Ebonyi State was not given the prominence it deserved in the papers as they were mainly reported in the centre spread pages. There was also limited depth of coverage, and majority of the reports were straight news stories, thereby, denying the needed interpretations”. This is contrary to the findings of Obayi (2021) which revealed that “the extent to which residents of Imo State are exposed to media reports and programmes on gender-based violence is high at 44%”. In another study, Orji et al (2020) found out that “the level of awareness of the campaign against discrimination and violence among women based on their exposure to television broadcast is minimal at 50%”.

Findings on the knowledge level of men in Owerri metropolis on DVAM indicated that the respondents are knowledgeable about domestic violence as they affirmed that it is a sexual, verbal, physical, and emotional abuse on a man. However, their knowledge level on DVAM is high at an average mean of 3.3 (N=375). Registering with the findings of Obayi (2021) which is in tandem with this present findings as his study revealed that at a mean average of 3.5 (N=379), the knowledge level of residents on gender-based violence is high. Ondicho and Mwanyuli (2021) carried out a study entitled “*COVID-19 and domestic violence against men in Kenya: Issues and policy directions*” which established that DVAM is a serious social problem that occurs with impunity behind closed doors and in secret. The study also indicated that they experienced episodes of physical abuse including being grabbed or punished in a manner that hurt, beaten with an object, kicked, bitten, and forced into a sexual activity when they did not want. From a different perspective, Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2014), it was revealed that most had experienced psychological violence in the form of insults, humiliation, limiting contact with family and friends, denied sex, demanding to know where they were and with who, controlling family income and demanding to have

access to their mobile phones. This underscores the agenda setting theory of the media which is premised on the media raising salience issues for public debate which transcends to knowledge creation.

In furtherance, findings on the attitudes of the respondents towards domestic violence against men as a result of their exposure to media programmes on DVAM revealed that at an average mean of 3.5 (N=375), the respondents perceive domestic violence against men as a menace that can result to a reduction of man's self-confidence, self-esteem, dignity and respect; leads to chaos, disharmony, disunity, distrust and untimely death; births regrets; distorts peace and love. Findings of MAWE (2017) corroborated that "domestic violence abused men suffered physical consequences ranging from minor to severe injuries, and even death. In addition to physical injuries, the study revealed that the victimized men experienced serious psychosocial problems, including high levels of anxiety, depression, and stress from ever-present threat of attack. Abused men working from home reported that domestic violence disrupted their work, prevented them from seeking employment, caused them to resign and abandon their career and promotional opportunities during COVID-19". The study of Ondicho and Mwanyuli (2021) established that "DVAM is a serious social problem that occurs with impunity behind closed doors and in secret. The respondents indicated that they experienced episodes of physical abuse including being grabbed or punished in a manner that hurt, beaten with an object, kicked, bitten, and forced into a sexual activity when they did not want".

Result of the findings on the influence of media programmes on DVAM on the behaviour of men in Owerri metropolis towards domestic violence from their spouses revealed that at average mean of 2.9 (N=375), media programmes on DVAM have induced attitudinal change on the respondents by having learnt to break the silence on cases of domestic violence and resorting to the relevant authority other than taking laws into their hands. This contradicts the findings of Orji et al (2020) which indicated that exposure to television broadcasts do not

significantly influence women's participation in the campaign against discrimination and violence among them. Ondicho and Mwanyuli (2021) revealed in their study that victims of domestic violence did not seek any form of external intervention including legal redress for the violence experienced. However, the present findings of the study align with that of Obayi (2021) which revealed that, at an average mean of 3.5 (N=379), media programmes and reports have been able to induce perceptive/attitudinal change on gender-based violence positively. Theoretically, this findings does not align with the social learning theory in which suggests that individuals learn how to behave through both the experience of and exposure to violence.

## **CONCLUSION**

Seemingly, there is lack of information on accurate estimates of the vastitude of domestic violence against men in Nigeria largely due to the fact that violence against men are unreported; and in most cases, those reported are not recorded by authorities simply because violence against men are not given a voice and men shy away from reporting their ordeal to avert stigmatization. This study concludes that domestic violence abused men go through emotional and psychological traumas and little attention is given to it on the media.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study put forward the followings recommendations as result of the findings made:

1. Having found out that the level of exposure of men in Owerri metropolis to media programmes on DVAM is low, the researcher recommends more airing of such programmes/reports by media organisations in order to encourage higher exposure of men to the programmes as the programmes will be a source of orientation, reorientation, enlightenment and sensitisation on domestic violence related cases to the residents.

2. Since the knowledge level of the respondents on DVAM is high, it is recommended that men be properly counselled against an abuse on their fundamental human right by their spouses
3. Given that the respondents perceive domestic violence against men as a menace that can result to a reduction of man's self-confidence, self-esteem, dignity and respect; leads to chaos, disharmony, disunity, distrust and untimely death; births regrets; distorts peace and love, the study recommends that the government through the relevant authorities have clear cut policies and measures to tackle issues of DVAM and gender-based violence.
4. Having established that media programmes on DVAM have induced attitudinal change on the respondents, the study recommends for the propagation and promotion of well-designed and content rich media programmes on DVAM and/or gender-based violence by every media organisations as a compulsory law from National Broadcasting Commission (NBC).

#### **STUDY LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

The limitation of this study can be seen in the fact that data was collected from only male respondents without considering the female respondents, who may have given a different perspective to this study. Secondly, the fact that the study surveyed only male respondents in Owerri Metropolis and the narrowness of the scope may not allow the findings to be generalised. Further limitations hinge on the fact that the study adopted only one method, which may not have given the study rigour. Future researchers should consider including both males and females in their studies. A wider scope should equally be used to enable proper generalisation. Researchers should consider adopting more than one method in order to add rigour to research such as this.

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