

Public Perception of Radio Programmes on Parental Sexual Abuse on Children: A Study of Residents of Owerri Metropolis

Abstract

This study examined public perception of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse on children in Imo State metropolis. The study was anchored on Agenda setting theory. The study adopted the survey research design. From the population of 555,500 residents in Owerri metropolis 400 was derived using Taro Yamani formula. The multistage sampling technique was used. Questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The percentage and mean analysis methods were used for the analysis. The findings revealed that an average of 41.4% of the respondents are of the perceptions that radio programmes on parental sexual abuse are not properly packaged; programmes on parental sexual abuse are not aired at the right time so as to get many listeners; and radio programmes on parental sexual abuse do not influence parents positively. Further finding revealed that at a mean of mean of 2.4 it was confirmed that radio programmes on parental sexual abuse were not effective in influencing the behaviour of Owerri metropolis residents on issues of parental sexual abuse. It was recommended that producers of programmes that focus on child abuse should enrich their content and schedule the programme at the appropriate time so as to attract a good number of listeners so as to influence them positively. Efforts should be made by radio stations and programme producers to make their programmes effective in curtailing the issue of child abuse in Imo State and, by extension, Nigeria.

Keywords: Children, public perception, programme, parents, radio, sexual abuse

Introduction

In recent times, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), child abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity (Karayel, 2018). Statistics show that the level of violence and/or abuse against children has increased at the rate of 90% over the last four years (Karayel, 2018). Owolabi (2012) notes that child abuse is a big challenge in all nations of the world and plenty children still fall prey on daily basis. They fall victim of early marriage, early pregnancy, child molestation, child trafficking, child labour, communal violence, child

prostitution, child abandonment among others. The focus of this study is on parental sexual abuse on children.

Child sexual abuse is a phenomenon that cuts across all boundaries. It is just one of the worst forms of child abuse that can manifest as rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, incest, forced prostitution, sexual exploitation, and molestation (Botswanan Family Welfare Association, (1996) as cited in Mathoma et al., 2006).

In the Nigerian socio-religious society, sexual abuse has been on the increase. Numerous factors have been attributed to that effect. These include, "low level in education, skill training, and bargaining capacity" (Ibrahim & Shehu 2009, p.107). Meanwhile, females and children bear the grunt of those that are victims of sexual abuse. Nkwegu (2009, p.123) observed that the "nature of child exposure to modernity and pornographies and parents attitude towards sex" have led to increase in cases parental sexual abuse of children. SWAGAA (1999) as cited in Mathoma et al., (2006) notes that child sexual abuse is a cause of family disruption particularly when the perpetrators are family members.

Articles 37 (a) of the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC) declares; No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age. The Convention on the Right of the Child forms an international basis for ensuring children right are protected. According to the United Nations, many people are not aware of the existence of these rights. This is why child abuse is rampant in many countries of the world including Nigeria today. Young (2001) in Nwokedi (2016) observe that, "child abuse and neglect are an integral part of the modern world including African society and Nigeria in particular. Corporal punishment is widely given as a

result of disobedience in any child. These include caning and in some communities in Nigeria, painful punishment such as rubbing pepper into the genital region is practiced”. According to Mathews and Collin-Vézina (2016), child abuse “is any act of misuse of a child in any form, it is situation where a child is not being provided the much needed necessities of life, where a child is maltreated physically, sexually or emotionally and this is detrimental to the future growth and development of such a child”.

However, in most countries of the world, there are children who continue to fear and experience abuse even from their parents as the case may be. Regrettably, the scar of that abuse can continue to influence their development throughout their lives, behaviour, and health (Al-Odhayani et al., 2013). In view of this, Nkwam-Owaoma and Ndukwu (2020) note that in Nigeria, laws that protect children from violence have been properly codified in the constitution but most citizens seem to be either uninformed or unwilling to abide by these laws. The social responsibility theory of the press saddles on media practitioners the responsibility of reporting issues that are of importance to the society and present them in a manner that their audience will derive the appropriate lesson.

It is believed that the mass media have always been the major channel through which programmes are made popular to the people in the country. The mass media, no doubt, is potent in the spread of innovations and mobilization of the people for a particular course, of nation benefit. It means that the media can be a potent instrument in the mobilization and education of the people, on the need to participate in the actualization of the campaign against child abuse (Anorue et al., 2011).

In the words of Nworgu (2011), the society relies greatly on the mass media for its survival and positive growth. The radio is one of the commonly sought after media because of its

unique features; it plays a significant function in educating, informing and influencing people's attitudes and behaviour. It draws attention by increasing society's awareness of, and response to child rights act and the danger of child abuse particularly sexual child abuse by parents. It is the responsibility of the media to bring to limelight this child rights acts to the public through its programmes. For instance Darling FM Owerri as a radio station produce and air some programmes like "The Consequence" every Friday which is a human right programme organized by human right activist. The objective of this programme is to make people knowledgeable about their rights as established by law. "Play School" which is organised by children every Saturday where everything that concerns children both at home and in school is being deliberate on. The purpose is to enlighten parents and guardians on their children's feelings towards their actions or treatments at home. It is imperative to stress that if the media through the radio programmes play their role very well by projecting child right issues to the public through their various, it will likely reduce the instances of parental sexual child abuse in the state. It is against this backdrop that this study wants to investigate public perception of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse on children in Owerri metropolis.

Statement of Problem

Child sexual abuse is a devastating problem that poses a serious threat to the emotional and mental well-being of the victims; thus, it has been linked with the development of various problems affecting the physical and mental health of the victims. The increasing case of abuse on children shows the lack of preventive knowledge about it. With the increase of sexual abuse against children in Nigeria in recent years, one then questions what the mass media (radio) have done to curtail these menaces through their programmes.

It is very much disturbing to see the high level of parental sexual abuse on their children in our contemporary society. Could it be that these parents who seem to engage in this act of

incest are ignorant of the consequences of their act on their children or the programmes on child abuse is not effective in sensitising the public on the danger attached to parental sexual abuse?

Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to investigate public perception of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse on children. The specific objectives tend to:

1. Find out the level of awareness of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse by Owerri metropolis residents.
2. Ascertain the extent do exposure to radio programmes on parental sexual abuse enhance the knowledge of Owerri metropolis residents on issues concerning child abuse.
3. Examine the perception of Owerri metropolis residents of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse.
4. Ascertain the effectiveness of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse in influencing the behaviour of Owerri metropolis residents on issues of parental sexual abuse.

Literature Review

Sexual Abuse: An Overview

Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual activity, with perpetrators using force, making threats or taking advantages of victims where they are unable to give consent. These unwanted sexual activities may be acted against a child in the forms of: Use of child for sexual stimulation and satisfaction; use of child in pornographic performance and similar materials; Forced prostitution; Touching of a child's private parts; Exhibitionism; Rape, etc. Sexual abuse may be committed against children by their mother, father, siblings, stepmother, stepfather, half- siblings, relatives, teachers, neighbours or strangers (Karayel, 2018).

Sexual abuse includes both touching offenses (fondling or sexual intercourse) and non-touching offenses (exposing a child to pornographic materials) and can involve varying degrees

of violence and emotional trauma (Slavin et al., 2020). The most commonly reported cases involve incest sexual abuse occurring among family members, including those in biological families, adoptive families, and step-families. Incest most often occurs within a father-daughter relationship; however, mother-son, father-son, and sibling-sibling incest also occurs. Sexual abuse is also sometimes committed by other relatives or caretakers, such as aunts, uncles, grandparents, cousins, or the boyfriend or girlfriend of a parent (Davis & Knight, 2019).

Karayel (2018) notes that Sexual abuse can affect children's long term behaviours and emotions and the effects of sexual abuse on children according to him include • Fear • Depression • Aggression • Inappropriate sexual behaviours • Crying without reason • Become introverted • Low academic success • Sexual and psychological disorders in the advancing ages • Low self-esteem • Loss of social competence • Alcohol and drug addiction.

The Consequence and Play School Programmes

This is a life programme anchored by presenters and experts every Friday by 9 to 10am. Basically the aim of this programme is to make listeners know their right as established by law; give them opportunity to talk to lawyers. This programme looks at women's right, Child rights, viewers and adults' rights. The programme also x-rays everyday activities to see if individuals are breaking the law, whether the consequences of individuals' actions are breaking or backing the law. The chief host of this programme are NGOs like Alliances for Africa and Lawyers.

This is a life programme anchored by presenters and children every Saturday by 1 to 2 pm. The major objective of this programme is to make parents and guardians who do not know that some of the practices they exhibit on children affect them mentally, emotionally and psychologically and to make them see how children feel when they are being denied opportunities or beaten up which is against their rights as a child. It is a programme where

children are availed the opportunity to share their views, feelings, Ideas and experiences of their everyday life. Issues bothering on children and their parents and caregivers are being discussed. It is from this programme that parents get to know the emotional status of their children.

Media Role in Protection and Promotion of Child Rights

The media of mass communication play active role in the protection and promotion of child right because of their efficiency in Information spread. Melkote and Steeves (2001) as cited in Okoli and Orji (2020) noted that mass media play the role of a catalyst to bring about change in the society. They can exert a powerful influence, for good or for ill. They can promote democracy, good governance, peace and human rights, combat poverty and crime, inform people about issues and enable them to participate in public debate. Onyebuchi et al. (2023) notes that media are used to give voice to marginalized groups, such as women, ethnic and religious minorities, as well as promoting their rights .In Imo state, for example, the Child Protection Network produces a weekly radio show to encourage the people of the state about the relevance of child protection and why it is necessary they report issues of child abuse.

The committee on the rights of a child (1996) cited in Okolie(2018), believes that audio and audio-visual is highly important in efforts to make reality the principles and standards of the convention. The media can play a significant role in monitoring the actual implementation of the rights of a child. They are powerful because they penetrate every segment of modern day society and effectively influence how people view themselves, theirneighbours, their communities and their world. Media attention on child right issues can positively influence public opinion, professional and political responses to the circumstances in which children and young people find themselves. Anyanwu et al., (2022) observes that journalists play a major role in constructing what is considered “deviant” in our society and, therefore, what is “normal”.

Empirical Review

Mathoma et al. (2006) in their study reported that the respondents acknowledged the prevalence of child sexual abuse in Botswana and Swaziland and further demonstrated their knowledge of the predisposing factors, perpetrators of the problem, and effects of sexual abuse on children. They placed major emphases on community involvement in fighting against the problem; appropriate education of children, parents, families, and community members about child sexual abuse; and improvement on the laws that protect children against sexual abuse to successfully curb the problem.

Ituma et al.(2013) carried out a study on the problem of sexual abuse in Nigerian socio-religious society and they revealed that sexual abuse is on the increase in Nigeria in spite of the religious proliferation. Religious groups, parents and government were advised to step up measures to arrest the situation, such as religious NGOs stemming the tide in enlightening their members as well as the public on the dangers of involving oneself in sexual abuse.Ojiakor et al. (2020) in their study reported that Imo State residents were aware of child abuse through Darling 107.3 FM at a moderate extent and that exposure to Darling 107.3 FM “The consequence” programme improved the knowledge of Imo State residents in the campaign against child abuse to a moderate extent meanwhile the programme is effective in influencing Imo State residents’ behaviour on issues of child abuse. Uzochukwu et al. (2015) in their study found that in all the stations studied, only six issues were reported on children by ABS radio, Purity FM, Silver bird TV, and NTA, with just three related to child’s right and protections. They noted that the implication is that child rights and protections as well as child related issues are not salient in Nigerian broadcast media despite the important part that children occupy in any nation.

Nwosu and Onyekwere (2017) conducted a study on and revealed that the cold relationship between some parents and their children, insubordination among children and increase in “Lumpen” children: (Almajiris, Area boys and Millitants) in Africa may stem from failed child development system. The research showed that change, the degree of elasticity in the changing Nigerian family and child rights campaign can guarantee or thwart acceptable, positive and stable development process of the African child.

Nkwam-Uwaoma and Ndukwu (2020) conducted a study and found that the frequency of the newspapers’ reportage of violence against children in Nigeria was low. Again, it was found that the length or space given to reports on violence against children was inadequate, the direction of the few reports on violence against children was in favour of the course or fight against child violence and these newspapers gave no prominence to reports on violence against children. Egbo (2014) also found that Nigerian newspapers do not give prominence to sexual violence stories. This they have done by not placing them on the front pages, newspapers do not frequently report sexual violence, the selected newspaper do not amplify utilize features in presenting sexual violence stories. Doing that could entails analyzing the facts of the stories and injecting emotion slant scent to precipitate public outcry against the problem.

Nkwam-Uwaoma et al. (2021) in a study revealed that respondents confirmed that they were exposed to radio programmes on the issue of child violence at a moderate level. Also, at an average of 53% of respondents are of the view that the programmes have enhanced their knowledge of the issues of child violence at a moderate level. Further findings showed that an average of 53% of respondents confirmed that Because I am Happy on Groove 98.1 FM and the Mega Kid hour on Megaband 97.3 FM are effective in the fight against child violence in Imo State.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Agenda setting theory as proposed by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. The theory assumes that the mass media do not tell what people think but what they should think about due to their gate keeping role. It is quite obvious that they determine and refocus or direct public attention to issues considered more relevant, by the emphasis and prominence given to the issues in the media. Asemah et al. (2017a) citing Wimmer and Dominick note that the theory on agenda setting by the media proposes that the public agenda or what kinds of things people discuss, think and worry about is powerfully shaped and directed by what the media decide what to publicise through their medium (Etumnu et al., 2024). By implication, this means that if the media decide to give the most time and space to reporting issues on parental sexual abuse or children abuse, this issue will become the most important item on the audiences' minds. It is based on this postulation that Coleman(2009) submits that the issue (such as parental sexual abuse on children) or message that constantly features in the media becomes the public agenda of the people to discuss, hence the title agenda setting.

The relevance of this theory to this study is based on the fact that the issue of parental sexual abuse in recent years has continued to re-occur in our society despite the extant laws prohibiting such. As this abuse occurs children are left traumatized throughout their lives which in the long run it will affect the society. Be that as it may, the media set this issue as a public agenda by constant reportage or coverage in order to create awareness of the danger associated to issues as this, to necessitate discourse on the way forward. This theory is relevant because it explains how the media will help reduce the issues of child abuse, as people will now know that

there are rights attached to children that need not to be violated no matter what through programmes on child abuse.

METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted survey method, which according to Asemah et al. (2017b), is a process of documenting current information for future use. The rationale for adopting the survey research design is based on the fact that survey enables a researcher to sample respondents' opinion or perception concerning any phenomenon that can later be generalized. This is supported by Etumnu et al. (2024b) where it was noted that survey describes the population been studied, and uses the questionnaire strategy to gather information regarding their opinions, beliefs, values and behaviours of the respondents.

Population of the Study

Amaefula, and Jacob, (2014) define population as the total number of elements or objects in a particular situation under investigation. According to (2023) Macrotrends.com report, Owerri metropolis projected population is 983,000.

Sample Size

It will be difficult to study the entire population of Owerri metropolis. As a result, a sample was selected to represent the entire population of the areas studied. In achieving this, the Taro Yamane was used to obtain sample size of 400.

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in this study is the multi stage sampling technique. The reason for this procedure was because multistage sampling technique enables the research to get to least

person within the sample. Firstly, the researcher divided Owerri metropolis into 3 zones. These zones were selected because of their urban placement in catchment areas with abundant infrastructure that facilitated easy accessibility of population. The selected areas chosen are:

Owerri North: Emekuku, Uratta, Akwakuma, Amakohia, Alaenyi, Works Layout and Federal housing Egbu.

Owerri West: Umuguma, Federal housing Egbeada, Irete, Nekede, Obinze, Ihiagwa and Avu.

Owerri Municipal: Ikenegbu, New Owerri, World Bank, Aladinma and Owerri Nchi Ise.

Secondly, the communities were selected for the study. From each of the local governments, three communities were selected. They are Emekuku, Amakohia, Uratta (Owerri North), Umuguma, Ihiagwa, Nekede (Owerri West), Umuororonjo, Amawom, Umuonyeche (Owerri Municipal).

Thirdly, the communities selected were nine (9). Therefore, 400 (sample size) divided by 9 communities resulted to 44. This means that 44 persons were selected from each of the communities and studied.

Instrument for Data Collection

The questionnaire was used to extract specific information from respondents by filling in the answers in the space provided for the purpose. The questionnaire was designed to have closed ended items. The closed ended questions restricts respondent to questions provided in the questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of two parts the first part section "A" which was design to elicit the biographical data from respondents. While section "B" was designed in line with the research objectives. The questionnaire items was in form of likert item and nominal pattern.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher and his assistant distributed the copies of the questionnaire on a face-to-face basis. This method was used for easy retrieval of the copies of questionnaire. However, the respondents was given one week open window after which the researcher returned to collect the instrument.

Reliability/Validity of Instrument

Validity is the ability of the research instrument to evaluate the concept it is set out to measure. It is the degree at which the survey information is relevant to the conclusions been drawn and sufficiently accurate to support the conclusion to be arrived at in the study. Based on this, copies the survey instruments, objectives, research questions and questionnaire were given to the project supervisor for face validation and correction.

This is the degree of consistency between two measures of the same thing. To guarantee the reliability of the research instrument in producing identical results when tried outside the original population of study, the Pilot study will be used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. To achieve this, the researcher distributed 20 copies of the questionnaire to respondents. The retrieved, questionnaire responses was computed using Pearson Product moment of correlation to check for consistency it was observed that the clarity of responses and ease with which answers were given indicates that the respondents understood the questions contained in the questionnaire. Therefore, the instrument was said to be reliable at 0.7.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using the descriptive statistics method such as simple percentages and mean analysis.

Results

This section focuses on data presentation and analysis. From the 400 copies of questionnaire administered to respondents 362(90.5%) was found usable in this study meanwhile 38 (9.5%) was not valid for the study. Therefore, analysis was done in based on the valid copies of questionnaire returned.

Table 1: Respondents' response on do you listen to radio programmes on parental sexual abuse

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	362	100%
No	-	-
Can't say	-	-
Total	362	100

Analysis of data from the above table 1 revealed that 100% of the respondents listen to radio programmes on parental sexual abuse. This implies that all the respondents listen to radio programmes on parental sexual abuse.

Table 2: Respondents' response on how often do you listen to programmes talking about child abuse

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	95	26.2%
Often	110	30.4%
Rarely	133	36.7%
Not at all	24	6.6%
Total	362	100

Analysis of data from the above table 2 revealed that 36%.7% of the respondents confirmed that they rarely listen to programmes talking about child abuse. This means that respondents rarely listen to programmes talking about child abuse.

Table 3: Respondents' response on the level at which you listen to programmes on parental sexual abuse

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Very high level	12	3.3%
High level	45	12.4%
Moderate	165	45.6%
Low level	140	38.7%
Total	362	100

Analysis of data from the above table 3 showed that 45.6% of the respondents listen to programmes on parental sexual abuse on a moderate level. By implication many of the respondents listen to programmes on parental abuse on a moderate level.

Table 4: Respondents’ response on your exposure to programmes on parental sexual abuse has it made you to know the trauma a child will pass through if abused

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	175	48.3%
No	141	38.9%
Can’t say	46	12.7%
Total	362	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Analysis of data from the above table 4 revealed that 48.3% of the respondents confirmed that their exposure to programmes on parental sexual abuse has it made them know the trauma a child will pass through if abused. This means that exposure to programmes on parental sexual abuse has made respondents know the trauma a child will pass through if abused.

Table 5: Respondents’ response on your exposure to programmes on parental sexual abuse has made you to know how not a touch a little child

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	167	46.1%
No	89	24.5%
Can’t say	106	29.2%
Total	362	100

Analysis of data from the above table 5 showed that 46.1% respondents confirmed that their exposure to programmes on parental sexual abuse has made them to know how not a touch a little child. By implication, many of the respondents indicated that their exposure to programmes on parental sexual abuse has made them to know how not a touch a little child.

Table 6: Respondents' response on to what extent exposure to radio programmes on parental sexual abuse has enhance your knowledge on issues concerning child abuse

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very large extent	47	12.9%
Large extent	59	16.2%
Moderate extent	151	41.7%
Low extent	105	29.0%
Total	362	100

Analysis of data from table 6 revealed that 41.7% of the respondents confirmed that the extent exposure to radio programmes on parental sexual abuse has enhanced their knowledge moderately on issues concerning child abuse. This is indicative that many of the respondents have moderate knowledge on issue concerning parental sexual abuse as a result of their exposure.

Table 7: Respondents' responses on the perception of Owerri metropolis residents of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	N	Decision
1.	radio programmes on parental sexual abuse is properly packaged	2.3	362	Reject
2.	programmes on parental sexual is aired at the right time so as to get many listener	2.4	362	Reject
3.	radio programmes on parental sexual abuse can influence parents positively?	2.1	362	Reject
Grand mean		2.2		

The results as presented in Table 7 above show that, respondents disagreed to all the items on the table with a mean range of 2.1 to 2.4. The grand mean rating of Table 7 is 2.2, which implies that respondents have negative perception on radio programmes on parental sexual abuse.

Table 8: Respondents' responses on how effective does radio programmes on parental sexual abuse in influence the behaviour of Owerri metropolis residents on issues of parental sexual abuse?

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	N	Decision
1.	Radio programmes on parental sexual abuse has made people report causes of parental sexual abuse	2.4	362	Reject
2.	Radio programmes on parental sexual abuse has contributed in making people condemn the act	2.6	362	Accept
3.	Radio programmes on parental sexual abuse on a child has helped in reducing the act by parents	2.3	362	Reject
4.	Radio programmes on parental sexual abuse has been effective in influencing the behaviour of residents towards the issue of parental sexual abuse	2.3	362	Reject
Grand mean		2.4		

The results in Table 8 above indicated that respondents disagreed to items 1, 3 and 4, while they agreed on item 2 with a mean range of 2.3 to 2.6. The grand mean rating of Table 8 is 2.4, which implies that the respondents studied confirmed that radio programmes on parental sexual abuse is not effective in influence the behaviour of Owerri metropolis residents on issues of parental sexual abuse.

Discussion of Findings

Analysis of data revealed that at an average of 70.5% of the respondents are moderately aware of radio programmes on parental sexual abuse in Owerri metropolis. This finding is in consonance with that of Uzochukwu, et al (2015), who revealed in their study that the fact that the media informs and creates public awareness on development issues of any nation, children, who constitute the future leaders, should at all times be informed and reminded of their basic rights, while issues affecting them should form a major part of the media agenda. However, the media coverage of children's related issues has been inadequate and has contributed to the level of

awareness of residents. Similarly, the Nkwam-Uwaoma and Ndukwu (2020) study revealed that the frequency of newspapers' reportage of violence against children in Nigeria was low. Again, it was found that the length or space given to reports on violence against children was inadequate, the direction of the few reports on violence against children was in favour of the course or fight against child violence, and these newspapers gave no prominence to reports on violence against children. By implication, this inadequacy by the media gives room for a poor level of awareness of issues related to child abuse. This finding is supported by the agenda setting theory

Analysis revealed that, at an average of 45.3% of respondents, exposure to radio programmes on parental sexual abuse has enhanced their knowledge of issues concerning child abuse at a moderate level. This is in line with Egbo (2014), whose finding revealed that Nigerian newspapers do not give prominence to sexual violence stories. This they have done by not placing them on the front pages. Newspapers do not frequently report sexual violence. The selected newspapers do not amplify or utilize features in presenting sexual violence stories. Doing that could entail analyzing the facts of the stories and injecting an emotional slant scent to precipitate a public outcry against the problem. This invariably means that the knowledge level of such ills in society will be low when the media does not give them prominence. In their study, it was revealed that the extent to which Imo State residents were exposed to child abuse through Darling 107.3 FM "The Consequence" programme was moderate at 40%; the extent to which exposure to Darling 107.3 FM "The Consequence" programme improved the knowledge of Imo State residents in the campaign against child abuse was moderate, and Darling 107.3 FM "The consequences" programme improved the knowledge of Imo State residents in the campaign against child abuse was moderate. From the theoretical standpoint, this study was anchored on how media exposure will influence what people think about as it concerns child abuse.

The analysis of data revealed that at a mean of 2.2 the respondents have the following perceptions: radio programmes on parental sexual abuse are not properly packaged; programmes on parental sexual abuse are not aired at the right time so as to get many listeners; and radio programmes on parental sexual abuse do not influence parents positively. These perceptions could translate to be negative. The finding of Mathoma et al (2006) revealed that the respondents acknowledged the prevalence of child sexual abuse in Botswana and Swaziland and further demonstrated their knowledge of the predisposing factors, perpetrators of the problem, and effects of sexual abuse on children. They placed major emphasis on community involvement in fighting against the problem; appropriate education of children, parents, families, and community members about child sexual abuse; and improvement of the laws that protect children against sexual abuse to successfully curb the problem. Nwosu and Onyekwere (2017) revealed that respondents perceived the cold relationship between some parents and their children, insubordination among children, and the increase in "Lumpen" children (Almajiris, Area boys, and Militants) in Africa may stem from a failed child development system. The research showed that change, the degree of elasticity in the changing Nigerian family, and child rights campaigns can guarantee or thwart an acceptable, positive, and stable development process for the African child.

Analysis of data revealed that at a mean of 2.4 respondents confirmed that radio programmes on parental sexual abuse were not effective in influencing the behaviour of Owerri metropolis residents on issues of parental sexual abuse. Ituma, et al (2013) revealed that the upsurge in cases of sexual abuse in Nigeria has been aggravated by the silence exhibited by those sexually abused, and the lackadaisical attitude shown by parents and the government in response to cases of sexual abuse. Sexual abuse is on the increase in Nigeria in spite of religious

proliferation. What this means is that if radio programmes or other broadcast media were effective, the rate at which parental sexual abuse occurs would be reduced. However, Ojiakor, et al (2020) revealed in their study that Darling 107.3 FM "The Consequence" programme is effective in influencing Imo State residents' behaviour on issues of child abuse. The truth is, with the level of prominence given to this issue of parental child abuse, it will be difficult to have a positive influence. This could be one of the reasons why the issue is still prevalent in our society today. From the theoretical angle, if the media is not effectively doing their job regarding child abuse, it will be difficult to influence people about what to think about.

Conclusion

The issue of parental sexual abuse is a concern that should bother everyone in society because the future of any country lies with children. When these children are constantly being exposed to parental sexual abuse, society will be at the receiving end of the consequences, because any traumatized child will definitely display some unacceptable behaviour in society. Based on the findings, it is safe to conclude that the extent of exposure and level of knowledge of programmes on parental sexual abuse could be contributing factors to the negative perception of this programme and, as such, lead to the ineffectiveness of the programme in curtailing the menace of the issue of parental sexual abuse. This could be adduced as one of the reasons the menace is still lingering.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are hereby put forward:

1. Producers of programmes on child abuse should endeavour to create adequate awareness in order to raise the awareness of people towards programmes designed to handle the issues of child abuse.

2. Radio stations should make efforts to make their programmes, especially on child abuse awareness, rich in order to attract more audiences and enhance their knowledge of issues concerning child abuse.
3. Producers of programmes that focus on child abuse should enrich their content and schedule the programme at the appropriate time so as to attract a good number of listener so as to influence them positively.
4. Efforts should be made by radio stations and programme producers to make their programmes effective in curtailing the issue of child abuse in Imo State and, by extension, Nigeria.

Study implications

Professionally, the findings of this study It will help radio programme creators or producers in providing useful information on the best way effectively engage the public on the persistent issue of child abuse and their rights mainly as it concern programme packaging, audience selection and programme time.

This study will be of immense important to government and non government organizations in charge of child right abuse because the statistics that this study will reveal will enable them to take necessary actions for the interest of the children.

Findings of this study will enhance the knowledge of the public on the existence of certain rights and laws established to guide the relationship between the parents or caregivers and the child. Not only that, it will equally arouse the consciousness of the public to the avoidance and prevention of things that have the tendency of leading to the abuse of children and also take appropriate measure in any case of abuse.

This study will add to the body of literature to the existing ones on child abuse issues and it will be a reference material for policy makers, law interpreters, scholars and students who may desire to undertake a study in similar area.

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