ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Influence of ABS "Life and Living" Programme in Creating Awareness against Domestic Violence in Awka Metropolis

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Abstract

This study investigated how media platforms could be used to create awareness about domestic violence with the aim of curbing the obnoxious practice. The study objectives among others were to: assess respondents' knowledge of domestic violence and to understand respondents' attitudes toward the use of media advocacy in preaching against domestic violence. The study adopted the survey research design in studying the 372 samples drawn from the 149, 603 population of Awka Metropolis. The purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the actual respondents. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. Findings from the study revealed among others that respondents had good knowledge of domestic violence and also had a positive attitude towards the use of media advocacy in preaching against domestic violence. The study recommended among others that more time should be devoted to programmes and campaigns that deal with domestic violence against women and that broadcast stations should see it as a call to duty to air programmes or design campaigns that will create the necessary awareness about the ills of domestic violence.

Key Words: ABS, 'Life and Living', Awareness, Domestic Violence, Awka Metropolis

Introduction

In the book of Genesis, the Bible states that the Garden of Eden was the place, where human beings (Adam and Eve) lived without the usual commotion, fear, pains, oppression, and multiplicity of woes that face human beings today (Genesis 3). It goes without saying that till date the Garden of Eden remains the only habitation that God Himself built for the comfort of humans, and provided every good thing free and is devoid of struggles and acrimony. However, the couple began to suffer pains, deprivations, sickness and death soon after they sinned. According to Ekeli and Tsebee (2012), the world began to expand along with multiplicity of problems leading to a state of inequality, unequal rights, and discriminations based on race, religion, gender, among others.

The state of inequality among humans led to discrimination. It transverses mankind's way of life and retains it vicious circle from generation to generation. The preference of male children over their female counterpart as an age long practice in greater part of the world draws attention to the male child and placed him above her female counterpart. And then, when the boys become men and fathers and the girls become women, wives and mothers, the situation remains the same (Ekeli & Tsebee, 2012). This is the genesis of the inequality and unequal rights observed in homes today, leading to domestic violence.

One of the most pervasive but the least recognized human abuse in the world is domestic violence. To every good conscience, domestic violence remains the most abusive treatment meted out mostly against women, which as a direct consequence violates their fundamental human rights (Abama &Kwaja, 2009; Afro News, 2007; Amnesty International, 2007; Nwabugwu, 2012; Nworah 2011; Obi & Ozumba, 2007). Okeibunor and Egbulefu (2012) hold that domestic violence is an age long and deep seated cultural practice exhibited in violent behaviours that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm, injury and distress or pain on women, which subjugates them to second class status. It is a culture of silence which instead of prosecuting the perpetrator inflicts a condemnable

stigma on the victim and as well reinforces it (Afro News, 2007; Aihie, 2009; Nworah, 2011).

In a more expressive manner, Nworah (2011) made the following exposition about domestic violence when she said that:

> Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner… or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviour that intimidates, manipulates, humiliates, isolates, frightens, terrorizes, coerces, threatens, blames, hurts, injures or wounds someone (p.4).

The foregoing makes it imperative to assert that domestic violence can manifest in various forms and magnitude, which include spousal rape, spousal abuse, battering, name-calling, disrespect, and private and public criticism. In a more concise categorisation, Aihie (2009) and Nworah (2011) placed the foregoing into economic abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, etc.

Incidences of domestic violence abound in Nigeria (Okeibunor & Egbulefu, 2012). A highlight by Nnabugwu (2012) narrated how one Mr Godwin Udonta, who resided in Kwali Street, Phase 1, Site 2, Kubwa, Abuja, on Saturday March 31, 2012, attempted to murder his wife, Mrs. Nsini Udonta, after years of continuous battering, name-calling, disrespect and economic deprivation. The case of Brume, a lawyer, who made his marriage with his wife Iretioluwade a living nightmare, was also reported. The marriage was seriously bedeviled and marred by incessant physical violence, dehumanising treatments, marital rape, verbal abuse and horrifying raging incidents (Okeibunor & Egbulefu, 2012).

Narrating the incidence, Iretioluwade stated that it all started with a foul, gut wrenching and debilitating verbal abuse, which then graduated to pelting with items like shoes, remote control, hangers, bags and bottles. These were then followed by dragging, pushing and pulling of her clothes and hair on the ground, and utter dehumanizing beatings. There were also other reported cases of the death of a 29 year old banker, Titilayo Arowolo, caused by her husband Akolade; a scandalous wife battering of Tess Wigwe by her husband, Dr Wilcox Wigwe, a Nigerian High Commissioner to Kenya; and Deji of Akure, Adesina Adepeju who engaged his wife, Olori Bolanle, in a public brawl before her death (Wigwe, 2011). Most nations of the world and Nigeria in particular traditionally enthrone and justify domestic violence as a form of discipline and not a taboo. Beating of wives by husbands and beating of children by parents are accepted as a measure of instilling discipline in both parties as women are regarded as children who are equally prone to misconducts (Okeibunor & Egbulefu, 2012). The incidence of domestic violence is therefore regarded as normal or as a means of enforcing and ensuring total submission of women to their subordinate status and as a private matter that must be protected from public scrutiny (UNICEF, 2001).

The mass media have been in a frontal place of carrying out advocacy and campaigns for the rights of women over the years. This is because of their perceived powerful forces to reckon with in the fight against domestic violence. Jensen (2008) affirms this position when he asserts that the press is the most potent instrument of a society for economic and social transformation. Reinforcing the above position, Ogan (2007) avers that the media play a paramount role in awareness creation and education against violence on women. Journalism techniques can be employed in advocating for women's right as well as helping media audiences live a better life in the society (Niles, 2011).

The broadcast media have demonstrated undeniable prowess in fighting for women's right in the society. Through their well packaged programmes, radio stations have been known for creating a far-reaching awareness about women's welfare in Nigeria and the world over. The Anambra Broadcasting Service, FM Radio station

has created and packaged a programme called "Life and Living" with its primary objective being to denounce domestic violence and assert the rights of women in the society. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to know whether ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" has been able to create the necessary awareness against domestic violence among couples in Awka Metropolis.

Statement f Problem

All over the world, women are passing through harrowing experiences of domestic violence in one form or the other. The situation is such that transcends all known dehumanising conditions and speaks volumes in the overall subordinate status of women. It enthrones discriminations against women, deprivations of their resources and denials of their fundamental human rights in its entirety. The fight to stop violence against women and enhance their status and development in the society cannot be left to the women alone. The battle needs to be fought on several fronts, with the mass media playing a key role; hence, the broadcast media, print media, social media, etc. need to join forces to combat this patriarchal anomalies dominant in our multi-ethnic society.

The fight can be won through sustained awareness campaign strategies capable of calling all concerned parties to order, prosecuting the perpetrators of domestic violence, protecting the victims (women), and turning the culture of silence to a culture of equity, justice and fair play. There is also the need to create an enabling environment where women are free to participate as equal partners in socio-cultural, economic and political engagements, without undergoing any physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The broadcast media have all it takes to achieve these in the society. The problem therefore is whether the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" has been able to adequately create awareness against domestic violence in Awka Metropolis.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

1 to assess respondents' frequency of exposure to the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" on domestic violence.
2 to ascertain whether the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" has created the necessary awareness against domestic violence among couples in Awka Metropolis.
3 to determine whether the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" has helped the respondents in curbing domestic violence in their homes.
4 To examine respondents' attitudes toward the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" in Awka Metropolis.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in Agenda-Setting theory. The theory according to McCombs and Shaw (1972 and 1976) emphasizes selective highlights of issues or topics by the media to draw the attention of the audience to those issues. As a part of their gate keeping function, the media select issues of public interest and constantly feature these issues till they become public agenda of the people. Goffman (2002) and McCombs and Shaw (1976) cited in Ndolo (2005) were of the view that the audience learns how important an issue is by the emphasis and prominence given to the issue by the media. The theory is apt to this study because it depicts the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" whose primary objective is to create awareness against domestic violence on women.

The Review

The Concept of Domestic Violence

Definitions of domestic violence are socially constructed. They have developed over time, and reflect prevailing understandings, interests and power distributions (Muehlenhard & Kimes, 1999). Feminist understandings shaped by the lived experiences of abused women and by supporting research evidence have helped to expand conceptualisations of domestic violence as

physically injurious assault by highlighting the interrelated range of abusive, coercive, controlling behaviours causing psychological, sexual or physical harm, which often accompany or precede the use or threat of physical force. However, researchers have given considerably less attention to sexual, psychological and other forms of abuse (Bergen, 1999; O'Leary, 1999; Dekeseredy, 2000; Saunders, 2002). Some issues of terminology remain actively contested, such as whether domestic violence should be a gender-specific or neutral referent and/or encompass all forms and incidence of abuse in all types of intimate relationships (Muehlenhard & Kimes 1999; Mullender, 2001).

The relationship between gender and violence is complex. The different roles and behaviours of females and males, children as well as adults are shaped and reinforced by gender norms within society (Campbell, 2002). These are social expectations that define appropriate behaviour for women and men (e.g. in some societies, being male is associated with taking risks, being tough and aggressive and having multiple sexual partners).

Differences in gender roles and behaviours often create inequalities, whereby one gender becomes empowered to the disadvantage of the other (Ilika, *2005*). Thus, in many societies, women are viewed as subordinate to men and have a lower social status, allowing men control over, and greater decision-making power than women. Gender inequalities have a large and wide-ranging impact on society. For example, they can contribute to gender inequities in health and access to health care, opportunities for employment and promotion, levels of income, political participation and representation and education (Plichta, 2004).

Often inequalities in gender increase the risk of acts of violence by men against women. For instance, traditional beliefs that men have a right to control women make women and girls vulnerable to physical, emotional and sexual violence by men (*Mitra &* Singh*, 2007*). They also hinder the ability of those affected to remove themselves from abusive situations or seek support (Heise & Garcia-Moreno, 2002). Violence against women is most often perpetrated by an intimate partner, but it takes many other forms: violence by a family member, sexual harassment and abuse by authority figures, trafficking for prostitution, child marriages, dowry-related violence, honour killings, sexual violence committed by soldiers during wars and so on (Heise, Ellsberg,& Gottmoeller, 2002). Health consequences of such violence range from physical injuries and unwanted pregnancies to sexually transmitted infections (including HIV), emotional problems such as anxiety and depression and (in extreme cases) homicide or suicide (Heise & Garcia-Moreno, 2002; WHO, 2008; Sarkar, 2008).

For decades, therefore, promoting gender equality has been a critical part of violence prevention. This has included interventions that confront the entrenched beliefs and cultural norms from which gender inequalities develop, and efforts to engage all sectors of society in redressing these inequalities, both of which are thought to reduce gender-based violence. Despite the long history and high visibility of such measures, however, few have been subject to any kind of scientific evaluation (Coker, 2007).

Gender Equality in an African Context

In September 2008, the United Nations' Secretary-General, Ban Ki Moon, addressed the organization on the progress of the Millennium Development Goals regarding women issues. According to him, "The gender gaps remain considerable and the full potential of women is untapped". This was not surprising, considering that various studies in recent times have shown an increase in the rate of domestic and gender-based violence (including honor killings, genital mutilation, trafficking and forced marriages), the victimization of women and girls in conflicts, a lack of women in political and economic decision-making positions, and a refusal to guarantee women's reproductive rights, particularly in the area of abortion (Moon, 2008).

Although African countries have adopted a number of universal declarations and

commitments, little has been done in translating those declarations into national policies (ERICarts, 2005). Even where commitments have been implemented African women are persistently marginalized in accessing information and information communication technologies (ICTs) due to problem of illiteracy, socio-cultural attitudes and lack of understanding of the resources and situational impediments experienced by women (MDG Monitor, 2008). This is perhaps as a result of low access to productive information resources and wide gap between commitments and implementation (ERICarts, 2005).

The enormous task of charting a course for women libration cannot be done by government in African countries alone. This is the reason Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Africa have stood up to the responsibility of empowering women in different areas. In fact the ERICarts (2005) commended the efforts of the NGOs in the development and adoption of the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Saunders (2002) however had earlier purported that empowerment cannot be conferred by external agents and suggested that such agents can play a role in providing 'support in ways that encourage the disempowered to free themselves of traditional dependency'. Empowerment therefore becomes an effort to achieve social, political and psychological well-being. Looked at from the perspective of people in households, these various states of power can be achieved and further sustained with education and proper information acquisition (Okunna, 1996).

Women Liberation: The Nigerian Case

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa. Located in West Africa, women make up about 50 percent of its 140 million people Men make up 30 percent, while children make up the remaining 20 percent (Onyedika, 2009). Women's liberation, empowerment and gender equality became a major part of Nigerian life following the Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995. Prior to that, Maryam Babangida, the nation's first lady from 1985 to 1993, created a Better Life for Rural Women programme to address the issues of women's "unappreciated" and "marginal position" in the country (Babangida, 2008). The programme's goal was to "empower rural women socially, economically and politically through adult education and training in the fields of education, agriculture, public health, arts and crafts, and food processing" (Nwonwu, 2001).

A National Commission for Women was created to oversee the programme, which later became the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development under General Sani Abacha in 1997 to further "confer institutional recognition on the contribution of women to national development" (Mama, 1998). Since Babangida, other Nigerian first ladies have undertaken programmes geared directly at women and such efforts have sparked feminism, which in this study refers to "the awareness of women's oppression in the society within the family, economy, law, at work, etc., and the struggle by women and men to change the situation for a just and fairer society" (Adamu, 2008).

Nigerian women today are more visibly recognized in the economic, educational and political spheres, but still fight patriarchy daily instituted through religion and tradition. Many are also still disadvantaged by poverty (including ownership of the means of production), harmful traditional practices (genital mutilation, violence, and inheritance and widowhood customs), religion, customary laws and illiteracy (Okunna, 2002; Para-Mallam, 2006). Some women have created non-governmental organizations at the national, grassroots and international levels to deal with these issues, which deal directly with empowerment and gender equality. These organisations have been effective in some areas. But what is really holding women back? Could it be the messages they are getting from the Nigerian mass media, which "men produce an overwhelming majority of?" (Okunna, 2002).

Use of Media Advocacy as Imperative for Curbing Domestic Violence

Media advocacy is the process of disseminating policy related information through the instrumentality of the media especially to effect change. The mass media can set the agenda on gender profiling for policy makers and formulators to consider (Osuagwu, 2012). This agenda will include debates on cultural issues affecting gender imbalance, discussions, seminars, conferences among others on the factors that still cause domestic violence in our society.

The above can be followed be correlation, where gender issues leading to profiling or discrimination are explained and interpreted through columns, editorials, commentaries, news analyses. According to Akpan (2009) and Iyimoga (2009), we can create adequate programming, using our broadcast media, we can create the needed outlet for our products. Advocacy goes beyond just raising issues to a continued and deliberate action to draw attention of both policy makers and other members of the society to an issue (Usua & Osuagwu, 2010). Media advocacy can, therefore, be mobilized to harness issues of gender imbalance and practice of domestic violence for a more inclusive development efforts in Nigeria. Journalism, in all its ramifications, is a weapon of change. Journalists are critical elements to the survival and continuous sustenance of a modern society. This, according to Asemah, Edego and Ezebuenyi (2013), makes them true watchdogs of the society. As watchdogs, the onus is on them to safeguard the society from unwarranted intrusions just the same way watchdogs keep away unwanted people from residences of their masters (Iwokwah, 2012).

Media advocacy techniques are used to promote a specific political or social cause. It is an evidence-based reporting with a stand point. Through the application of status conferral, agenda setting and gate keeping functions, journalists shape public discourse and events (Grosberg, Wartella, Whitney & Wine, 2006). Journalists have greater responsibilities in maintaining social order, even above the capacity of the government. Media advocacy can be properly utilized to highlight the prejudice against women. In the same manner, through media advocacy, the government can be pressured to legislate against domestic violence in Nigeria.

Women and the Mass Media

Mass communication scholars like Marshall McLuhan, Roger Everett and Daniel Lerner have argued since the 1950s that the mass media is a powerful tool for national development and social change. This is because "Mass media are key components in any nation's culture" that are "so pervasive and touch so many people" (Ogan, 2007). However, the media have been criticized for stereotyping women as sexual objects, passive, evil and submissive, and under-representing them in several countries (Yunjuan & Xiaoming, 2007). In the United States for instance, studies show that the media still perpetuate unhealthy and unrealistic images of women. Giffard, Cunningham and Van Lueven (2006) found in their study that the way the media frame women and women's issues helps set the agenda for public discussion on the MDGs. "Media have defining power, whether we like it or not" (Fröhlich, 1998). The media are thus hypothesized to fulfill the structural needs of a patriarchal and capitalist society by reinforcing gender differences and inequalities" (Yunjuan & Xiaoming, 2007).

Take the medium of film for instance which, according to Adenugba (2008), plays a vital role in social mobilization and information. Owing to its ability to hold a captive audience, films are used more than any other means of mass communication to promote ideas of positive social transformation as well as to consolidate and build new relationships between culture and national development. As Norma Iglesias puts it, "Cinema creates and disseminates important symbols that we use to shape representations".

However, film is a "gendered technology," one that like any mass medium or technology men control. Though women are actors, they are

excluded or few in the ownership and production arenas (Iglesias, 2008). Many movie industries still perpetuate stereotypical images of women. From 1993 to 2003, women directed only 3 percent of the top 50 movies in Europe (ERICarts, 2005). Byerly (2007) explains that "women's marginalization and stereotyping" in film is "the result of a patriarchal media system that has manifested male biases in neglecting and undervaluing women's experiences, meanings, ongoing daily contributions, and imagery". But one must not conclude that women have not made any gains in the film industry. For example, Mexican women have produced films that challenge traditional notions, images and identities of women (Iglesias, 2004). Organizations like Women in Film actively support and promote the contributions of women in the film industry with the purpose of empowering them. Its members' works have won awards and critical acclaim in several arenas. "Women's access to media and ICTs is obviously crucial for their personal empowerment" (Steeves, 2007). Therefore, the image of women in film has changed over time.

But Steeves (2007) warns that though women are present, content has not changed much. Also, regardless of the culture, media portrayals of women are "related to the broad socio-economic, political and cultural context of a society" (Yunjuan & Xiaoming, 2007). Therefore, significant studies on how film portrays women must be "based on specific social, economic, political, and cultural conditions of a given country within a particular period of time" (Yunjuan & Xiaoming, 2007). The mass media have played a vital role supporting women empowerment campaign in Nigeria. This it achieves using its channels which include: the radio, the television, newspaper and magazines, books journals and so on. In addition to supporting women empowerment campaign, they also perform the functions of socialization, information, education, communication by carrying out enlightenment programmes. They create forum for information and motivation (Adenugba, 2008).

The fundamental function of the mass media is mainly to expose, provide and enhance incidental learning. They have the capacity to reflect and shape opinion thus playing active role in public attitude formation. It is a very effective body of communication with good and wide availability which makes it more convincing that a large number of people are more likely to be influenced. Therefore, the mass media aims at converting, re–enforcing, charging or persuading the activities of people in a given society (Okunna, 1999).

Methodology

The survey research design was used in conducting this study. Survey research method enables the researcher to focus on representative sample, derived from the entire population of study. The essence of using survey method for this study is because it lends itself to the application of samples as a way of studying very large populations (Nwodu, 2017; Wimmer & Dominick, 2011).

Population of Study

The projected population of 149,603 Awka Metropolis extrapolated from the 2006 National Population Census at 2.28% annual increase rate according to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) cited in Owuamalam (2012) was used for the study.

Sample size and Sampling Technique

A sample is a representative unit of a population (Asekun & Oluwa, 2010). According to Owuamalam (2012) it is a faithful representation of a specific population. The essence of sampling is to obtain external validity (Osuala, 2005). For this study, 372 samples were selected from the 149,603 population of Awka Metropolis using the Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula and supported by Wimmer and Dominick (2011), who state that for a study like this, a sample of about 300 and above is good.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument used in collecting data for this study

is the questionnaire. It contained multiple choice questions. The questionnaire was administered on face-to-face basis. This was to ensure that the respondents have clear understanding of the questions from the researcher. Also, the researcher's presence ensured that the respondents fill the questionnaire without mistakes and return same to him on the spot. Data collected through the questionnaire were presented in tables while frequency and simple percentages were used in the analysis. Data were analyzed to exclusively answer research questions. The results of the study were presented in an understandable and convincing form using statistical tables.

Data Presentation and Analysis

A total of 372 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents who are married couples resident in Awka Metropolis to ascertain the influence of ABS Radio Programme "Life and Living" on domestic violence among them. The filled copies of the questionnaire were collected and checked for usability. Out of the 372 copies distributed, 366 copies were returned and found usable, giving a response rate of 98.4 percent and mortality rate of 1.6 percent which accrued from the 6 copies that were either unreturned or badly filled.

Research Question 1

What is respondents' frequency of exposure to the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" on domestic violence?

Table 1: Assessment of respondents' frequency of exposure to ABS Radio Programme "Life and Living"

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	74	20.2
Often	82	22.4
Sometimes	106	29
Rarely	70	19.1
Very rarely	34	9.3
Total	366	100

Analysis of data in Table 2 shows that 74 representing 20.2 percent of the respondents answered 'Very often' when asked to indicate their frequency of exposure to the ABS Radio programme 'Life and Living', 82 or 22.4 percent answered often, 106 or 29 percent answered 'Sometimes', 70 or 19.1 percent answered 'Rarely', while 34 or 9.3 percent answered 'Very rarely'. This shows that a majority of the respondents have had a good exposure to the programme.

Research Question 2

Has the programme created the necessary awareness against domestic violence in Awka Metropolis?

Table 2: Assessment of whether the programme has created awareness against domestic violence

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	220	60.1
No	82	22.4
Don't know	64	17.5
Total	366	100

Analysis of data in Table 3 shows that 220 representing 60.1 percent of the respondents answered 'Yes' when asked to indicate whether the ABS "Life and Living" programme has created awareness against domestic violence, 82 or 22.4 percent answered 'No' while 64 or 17.5 percent had no opinion on the question. This shows more than two-thirds majority of the respondents agreed that the ABS Radio programme has been used in creating awareness against domestic violence.

Research Question 3

Has the programme helped the respondents in knowing how to curb domestic violence in their homes?

Table 3: Assessment of whether the programme has helped in curbing domestic violence

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	149	40.7
No	103	28.1
Don't know	114	31.2
Total	366	100

Analysis of data in Table 4 shows that 149 representing 40.7 percent of the respondents answered 'Yes' showing that the ABS 'Life and Living' programme has helped in curbing domestic violence, 103 or 28.1 percent answered 'No' while 114 or 31.2 percent had no opinion on the question. This is an indication that a majority of the respondents did not agree that the programme has helped in curbing domestic violence.

Research Question 4

What are respondents' attitudes towards the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living?"

Table 4: Assessment of attitude towards ABS 'Life and Living' programme

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Very interesting	97	26.5
Interesting	103	28.1
Fairly interesting	50	13.7
Boring	64	17.5
Very boring	52	14.2
Total	366	100

Analysis of data in Table 5 shows that 97 representing 26.5 percent of the respondents answered 'Very interesting' when asked to indicate their attitude towards ABS 'Life and Living' programme, 103 or 28.1 percent answered 'Interesting', 50 or 13.7 percent answered 'Fairly interesting', 64 or 17.5 percent answered 'Boring' while 52 or 14. 2 percent answered 'Very boring'. This is an indication that respondents have positive attitude towards the programme.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study show that majority of the respondents had good exposure to the ABS Radio programme "Live and Living". These findings support an earlier observation by Adenugba (2008) who held that mass media have played a vital role in supporting women empowerment campaign in Nigeria. This it has achieved using its channels which include: the radio, the television, newspaper and magazines, books journals and so on. Supporting the findings also, Okunna (1999) stated the fundamental function of the mass media is mainly to expose, provide and enhance incidental learning. They have the capacity to reflect and shape opinion thus playing active role in public attitude formation.

Findings from the study also show that the ABS programme "Life and Living" has created the necessary awareness on domestic violence against women. From the data presented and analysed in Table 3 in the study, it could be seen that more than two-thirds majority of the respondents agreed that the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living" has been used in creating awareness against domestic violence. These findings are in tandem with an earlier submission by Ogan (2007) and Adenugba (2008) which states that the media play a paramount role in awareness creation and education against violence on women.

Further findings show that the majority of the respondents did not agree that the programme has helped in curbing domestic violence. Despite agreeing that the ABS programme has created the necessary awareness on domestic violence against women, the respondents said domestic violence has persisted. Reinforcing the findings, Fröhlich (1998) and Yunjuan and Xiaoming (2007) observed that media have defining power and that whether we like it or not" the media are thus hypothesized to fulfill the structural needs of a patriarchal and capitalist society by reinforcing gender differences and inequalities".

Finally, findings from the study show that the respondents have a positive attitude towards the ABS Radio programme "Life and Living". These

findings are sequel to the data presented and analysed in Table 5 in the study where the majority of the respondents expressed a positive attitude towards the programme. These findings also support an earlier observation by Jensen (2008) who stated that journalism techniques can be employed in advocating for women's right as well as in helping media audiences live a better life in the society. In a similar manner, Niles (2011) hold that the broadcast media have demonstrated an undeniable prowess in fighting for women's right in the society. Through their well packaged programmes, radio stations have been known for creating a far-reaching awareness about women's welfare all over the world.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is safe to say that the study has filled the gap-in-knowledge by establishing that the ABS Radio programme 'Life and Living' influences respondents' awareness of domestic violence. In essence, the mass media have played a vital role in supporting women empowerment campaign in Nigeria. This has been achieved using its channels which include: the radio, television, newspapers and magazines, books, journals, and so on. In addition to supporting women empowerment campaign, the media also perform the functions of socialization, information, education, and communication by carrying out enlightenment programmes. They create the fora for information and motivation.

The fundamental function of the mass media is mainly to expose, provide and enhance incidental learning. They have the capacity to reflect and shape opinion thus playing an active role in public attitude formation. The media are very effective body of communication with wide availability which makes with the result that a large number of people are more likely to be influenced. Therefore, the mass media aims at converting, re–enforcing, charging or persuading the activities of people in a given society. In assessing the role of the mass media in supporting women empowerment campaign in Nigeria therefore, it is important to take into cognizance those roles both the radio, television, newspapers, magazines, books and journals etc. have played by improving and ensuring the welfare of women in our society.

Recommendations

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

1. More time should be devoted to such programmes that deal with domestic violence against women.
2. Other broadcast stations should see it as a call to duty to air programmes that will create the necessary awareness about the ills of domestic violence.
3. The broadcast stations should endeavour to frame the incidences of domestic violence comprehensively and elaborately so as to expose its forms and incidence to enable families, the public and government to recognize and embrace different positive roles for peaceful and harmonious coexistence.
4. Women groups such as National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL), etc. should engage in massive campaigns to stop the onslaught.

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