ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Re-Evaluating the Vulture Reporting Hypothesis Vis-à-Vis Nigeria Press Reportage of Osinachi the Popular Gospel Artiste's Death Via Domestic Violence

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Abstract

This study aimed at re-evaluating the vulture reporting hypothesis in relation to Nigerian press reportage of the death of Osinachi Nwachukwu the popular gospel music artiste via domestic violence. The study is a review of whether the Nigerian media exhibited vulture reporting mentality, which they have been accused of in previous studies in this present case of the death of the gospel artiste of the "Ekwueme" fame. Specific objectives of the study are to: ascertain the prevalence of domestic violence in the family of Peter and Osinachi Nwachukwu as a couple; assess media reports of whether Osinachi actually died from domestic violence; find out whether the media reinforce vulture reporting mentality from the manner of reportage of the death of Osinachi and determine the direction of Nigerian press reportage of the death of Osinachi. The study was anchored in the Vulture Reporting Hypothesis postulated by a renowned communication scholar Prof Ikechukwu Emmanuel Nwosu, which held that the mass media feast on an issue or newsworthy incident while it is hot and abandon it after it has cooled down. The qualitative research design was adopted while utilizing the library research method in which both conceptual and empirical studies were reviewed. It is therefore on the strength of the reviewed literature that conclusions were drawn. The study found among others the prevalence of domestic violence in the family home of Peter and Osinachi Nwachukwu which led to the death of the gospel music artiste; that the death of the popular Nigerian gospel singer was linked to domestic violence; that the Nigerian media was not found to reinforce vulture reporting mentality in the case of Osinachi Nwachukwu and that the direction of the reportage is in the positive. The study recommends among others that media platforms should endeavour to follow up on the incidences of domestic violence comprehensively and elaborately so as to expose the forms and extent for a result-oriented knowledge of families, the public and government to recognize and embrace different positive roles for peaceful and harmonious existence.

Introduction

The news of the alleged gruesome murder of Mrs. Osinachi Nwachukwu, a famous gospel music singer received wide attention from both the conventional and social media platforms and has once again brought to the fore the evils of domestic violence. Several bloggers and national newspapers have written and published articles and news on how the popular gospel singer died. According to Ochogwu (2022), the death of the popular Nigerian singer has been linked to domestic violence. The report also held that sources close to the family confirmed that Osinachi was a victim of domestic violence. Corroborating the above report, Odita (2022) affirms that the husband of the late gospel singer Peter Nwachukwu has been arrested by the Police after her family formally filed a complaint of culpable homicide against him.

The Nigerian press was consistently awash with stories of the incidence and this contributed to the fact that it dominated discussions across the nation at that time. This development is in tandem with the agenda-setting theory of the media which posits that by frequent reportage of an issue, the media can determine what dominates public discussions at any given time (Nwabueze, 2004; Ezebuenyi, Ntomchukwu & Okika, 2019). The media blitz on the alleged death of Osinachi Nwachukwu however took a vulture reporting mentality according to Downs (1972), which hypothesized how a public interest cycle that many major issues go through in modern socio-cultural, political and economic spheres. In his submission, Downs (1972) states that:

> American public attention rarely remains sharply focused upon anyone domestic issue for very long-even if it involves a continuing problem of crucial importance to society. Instead, a systematic 'issue-attention cycle' seems strongly to influence public attitudes and behaviour concerning most key domestic problems. Each of these problems suddenly leaps into prominence,

> remains there for a short time, and then- though still largely unresolved - gradually fades from the center of public attention.

In what sounds as a massive support for the above position, Nwosu (1996, p. 103) states that the manner of media coverage of events in Nigeria reflects the 'Vulture Reporting Hypothesis'. According to him, Vulture Reporting Hypothesis simply states that "the media feast on an issue or newsworthy incident while it is hot and abandons it after it has cooled down." The Vulture Reporting Hypothesis was postulated by a renowned communication scholar, Professor Ikechukwu, Emmanuel Nwosu, after he carried out a study of selected foreign media and coverage of wars in the continent of Africa. He discovered that the pattern of coverage of the wars under study (Nigeria-Biafra, Angola, Zaire and Uganda-Tanzania wars) by foreign media reflects the behaviour of a vulture which feasts on a dead body and abandons its carcass when it is no longer fresh (Nwosu, 1996).

It is therefore worth reflecting how the Nigerian press coverage of the death of Osinachi, the popular music singer of the 'Ekwueme fame,' might fit (or not fit) into this schema. The alleged death of Osinachi via domestic violence has the tendency of reflecting the vulture reporting mentality similar to the above expositions enunciated by Downs (1972) and Nwosu (1996). This is so given that the coverage by the Nigerian press of the death of the popular music singer and the fate of the husband alleged to have killed her through domestic violence has been barely significantly reported. Moreover, the fear of this researcher is that the Nigerian press may even not do a proper follow-up to let the public know what might finally be the fate of the alleged killer and then assuage public outcry over the issue.

The major observations of both Downs (1972) and Nwosu (1996) seemed to be the lot of Nigerian media. Reinforcing the above position, Nwabueze (2004), Ukonu, Akpan and Anorue (2012), Nwala (2014) and Ezebuenyi, Ntomchukwu and Okika, (2019) have expressed strong biases against Nigerian press' coverage of some issues. They observed that the Nigerian media do not give significant coverage and interpretation to various issues of monumental national importance. Much as the media dispense their agenda-setting function, care must be taken to avoid performing such functions to the detriment of the society. Media coverage should also be done from the perspective of truth, objectivity and ethical principles, which are basic tenets of media practice. This, according to Mboho (2004), will likely stem the tendencies of causing confusion and/or discontentment.

One of the most pervasive but the least recognized human abuse in the world is domestic violence. In the broadest sense, the social and legal concept of domestic violence refers to any abuse- including physical, emotional, sexual, or financial – between intimate partners, often living in the same household. The term is often used specifically to designate physical assault upon women by their male partners, but, though rarer, the victim may be a male abused by his female partner, and the term may also be used regarding abuse of both women and men by same-sex partners (Encyclopaedia Britanica, 2022).

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 the view that domestic violence is an age long and deep-seated cultural practices exhibited in violent behaviours that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm, injury and distress or pain on women, which subjugate 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).

In a more expressive manner, Nworah (2011) observes 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).

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

Apart from the gruesome murder of Osinachi Nwachukwu, 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.

A report of the case of Brume, a lawyer, who made his marriage with his wife Iretioluwade a living nightmare was also recorded. 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, then followed by dragging, pushing and pulling of her clothes and hair on the ground, with utter dehumanizing beatings that followed. There were also other reported cases of the death of a 29 year old banker, Titilayo Arowolo 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 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 private matter that must be protected from public scrutiny (UNICEF, 2001).

The mass media have been in a frontal place of exposing these evils through their reportage. This is because of their perceived powerful attributes as the watchdog of the society. It is also very clear that the media do not condone injustice, intimidation, deprivation and evil of any dimension. Therefore, the fight against domestic violence cannot be left to the whims and caprices of the couples or the families involved in it. 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 help media audiences live a better life in the society (Niles, 2011).

The media have demonstrated an undeniable prowess in fighting for women's right in the society. Through their surveillance function, the media have reported incidences of domestic violence and have been in the forefront of the campaign against the social miasma. The case of the late Osinachi Nwachukwu is not different; the public outcry points to massive demand for justice. This study therefore seeks to assess media reports of the murder of the popular Nigerian singer as well as urge the press to eschew their vulture reporting mentality and display their social responsibility role to the letter by doing a proper follow-up of the issue, especially what would happen to the alleged

murderer.

Statement of Problem

More often than not, the subtle manner domestic violence is practiced in homes makes it very difficult for early discovery and arrest. The case of Osinachi Nwachukwu was such that was hidden under religious piousness. Peter Nwachukwu, the husband and the alleged murderer, poses as a pastor, leaving no doubts about maintaining a harmonious home. 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 volume 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 these 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 and protecting the victims (women) and stemming the culture of silence to a culture of equity, justice and fair play (Igboeli, Ekwunife & Ochomma, 2020; Ezebuenyi & Edike, 2021). 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 (Ekeli & Tsebee, 2012). The media have all it takes to achieve these in the society. The problem in this present case of the murder of Osinachi Nwachukwu is whether the media can eschew their vulture reporting mentality in which they merely feast on the news while it is hot and abandon it after it has cooled down. Can the public outcry over the incident and their rights to know be sustained by the media in this present case?

Whether the Nigeria press would follow-up on the case of Osinachi's death becomes the contention of this study especially with Nwabueze (2004) citing Nwosu (1996), Ukonu et al. (2012) citing Downs (1972), Nwala (2014) and Ezebuenyi *et al*. (2019) all accusing the media of vulture reporting in relation to socio-cultural political and economic happenings in the country. Based on the foregoing therefore, this researcher is interested in providing empirical evidence that will establish the true trend of reportage of the death of Osinachi via domestic violence by the Nigerian press.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

1. To ascertain the prevalence of domestic violence in the family of Peter and Osinachi Nwachukwu as a couple.
2. To assess media reports of whether Osinachi actually died from domestic violence.
3. To find out whether the media reinforce vulture reporting mentality from the manner of reportage of the death of Osinachi.
4. To determine the direction of Nigerian press reportage of the death of Osinachi.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in the 'Vulture Reporting Hypothesis' - a postulation by a renowned scholar, Professor Ikechukwu, Emmanuel Nwosu, who stated that the media feast on an issue or newsworthy event while it is hot and abandons it after it has cooled down (Nwosu, 1996). Prior to the postulation of Vulture Reporting Hypothesis, an American scholar, Anthony Downs in a study titled: "Up and down with ecology – the issue- attention cycle" observed that American public attention rarely remains sharply focused upon any one domestic issue for very long – even if it involves a continuing problem of crucial importance to the society (Downs, 1972).

To critically dissect the above observation, it is important to note that the mass media, which have the sole responsibility of reflecting issues of public interest either compromised their function of

agenda-setting as well as being socially responsible to the society or could not apply themselves to the professional tenets of journalism among others, to ensure that follow-up on issues of public interests are published to keep the public abreast with how such issues were brought to a logical conclusion. Downs' submission therefore draws attention to the fact that the mass media highlight newsy events without corresponding follow-ups to sharply focus public attention on the issue.

Postulating the Vulture Reporting Hypothesis, Professor Ikechukwu E. Nwosu, after carrying out a study of selected foreign media and their coverage of African wars discovered that the pattern of coverage of the said wars (including Nigeria-Biafra, Angola, Zaire and Uganda wars) by foreign media was akin to the behaviour of a vulture which feast on a dead animal and abandons its carcass when it is done (Nwosu, 1996). Nwosu's submission on the "hypothesis" is based on a widely accepted and research-supported observation that the mass media did not report much of the limited wars until the shooting wars start, when the media would then descend on the affected areas, country or war theatre en-mass and tear it to shreds like a pack of vultures would do to a dead animal (Nwabueze, 2004).

Though, the two observations were made after a study of foreign media coverage of events, the same hypothesis applies in Nigeria's media coverage of events as this present study seeks to validate. How the Nigeria press covered the death of Osinachi could be likened to the behaviour of the vulture. The thrust of this reassessment therefore is to further reinforce the ideals of the Vulture Reporting Hypothesis and to urge the media to eschew the practice especially given the public outcry and their right to know what would happen to the alleged murderer of the famous music singer, Osinachi Nwachukwu.

It is very important to note that in relation to the present study, the Vulture Reporting Hypothesis is quite apt. Being that the basic tenet of the hypothesis emphasizes the behaviour of the media to feast on newsy events and abandon it after a while, the coverage of the alleged death of Osinachi Nwachukwu via domestic has shown tendencies of an issue that has gone through vulture reporting experience, hence the use of Vulture Reporting Hypothesis as its anchorage.

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 times, 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 developed, 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).

Media Reports/Headlines of Osinachi Nwachukwu's Murder in Perspective

The Vanguard newspaper of 12th April, 2022 published what it termed "Untold story of how popular female gospel singer Osinachi, died with a rider Hubby allegedly hit her on the chest – Deceased's elder sister (www.vanguardngr.com).

Osinachi Nwachukwu: Untold story about cause of death of popular female gospel singer-hubby hit her on the chest/Vanguard news.

The Cable News OF 14th April, 2022 in its headline said, "For Osinachi Nwachukwu: It was for better for worse. According to the report, Osinachi died from complications she suffered as a result of domestic violence (www.thecable.ng).

Lawan: Osinachi's death should be probed – citizens' lives matter/TheCable 14th April, 2022. According to the report "I was woken up to the news of the untimely death of one of Nigeria's finest female gospel artiste Osinachi Nwachukwu, who was said to have died as a result of cancer on 8th April, 2022. This could have passed as one of those until new facts started emerging that she died as a result of domestic violence." Lawan, the Senate President continued: "Then you begin to wonder and ask how such a talented and self-accomplished individual who loved God has been a victim. It is now truly obvious that violence knows no class or creed."

The Daily Post of 11th April, 2022, published: How Osinachi Nwachukwu died of domestic violence revealed, police arrest husband.

Osinachi's death: Real reason Ekwueme singer refused to divorce her husband revealed Dailypost/ 11th April, 2022. The report held the singer opted to stay in the abusive marriage due to how her followers would perceive her. According to the sources, Osinachi is very quiet and God-fearing. She concealed all these just to appear safe to her followers.

ChannelsTv of report of 14th April, 2022 held, Osinachi's death: Police forward autopsy result to DPP for prosecution. The death of the songstress led to the arrest of the husband Peter Nwachukwu, the alleged wife beater and have swung into investigation including conducting an autopsy at the National Hospital Abuja. This has sparked public outcry and national discourse on gender violence (https://www.channelstv.com>osina...).

Premium Times report of 14th April, 2022, published: What I know about Osinachi's death – Pastor Paul Enenche. According to the pastor of Dunamis Gospel International Centre, Abuja, who held that Osinachi 44, was a lead singer at the

church stated that, "If it was domestic violence that led to or coincided with those symptoms that she came with two to three months ago, there is no way I would know". She was alleged to have died from health complications and suffered from domestic violence (https://www.premiumtimesng.com).

Domestic Violence Allegation: Autopsy Conducted on late Osinachi's body, husband still in police custody/Premiumtimes/12th April, 2022.

The Nation report of 14th April published a headline; "Pastor Enenche opens up on Osinachi's death. According to the report, many have alleged she was a victim of domestic abuse with her husband Peter Nwachukwu believed to have assaulted her several times, leading to her death" (thenationonline.net).

Sahara Reporters report of 10th April, 2022. Published a headline; "Family reveals cause of death of singer of Ekwueme gospel song, Osinachi, husband's whereabouts. The report held that Osinachi died in silence, trying to conceal the maltreatment meted on her by the husband (https://saharareporters.com).

PM News report of 20th April, 2022 published a headline; "IGP Baba gives update on gospel singer Osinachi's death. The Inspector General of Police, Usman Baba on Wednesday said he has ordered a post mortem examination on the late gospel singer, Osinachi Nwachukwu to ascertain if her husband was responsible for her death". The IGP further noted that the untimely death of Osinachi was hearth-breaking, particularly as information from sources close to the family and independent witnesses fingered her husband, Peter Nwachukwu, as being responsible for her death (pmnewsnigeria.com-de).

The Daily Post of 11th April, 2022, published: How Osinachi Nwachukwu died of domestic violence revealed, police arrest husband.

Osinachi's death: Peter Nwachukwu indicted – Idoma Voice. The report held that the Nigerian Police have given a new update on the investigation over the death of gospel music minister, Osinachi Nwachukwu, which has indicted the husband of culpable homicide.

Review of Empirical Studies

Drawing an inference on a study entitled: *Re-appraising the Vulture Reporting Hypothesis: A study of mass media coverage of the "Okija Shrine" crisis in Anambra State,* Nwabueze (2004) validates the Vulture Reporting Hypothesis accusing the Nigeria mass media of merely feasting on the Okija shrine imbroglio without corresponding follow-up to keep the public abreast with how the incident were brought to a logical conclusion. According to him, feasting on a crisis situation when it is still "hot" and abandoning it when it is seemingly cold does not portray the media as being socially responsible to the society.

In the same manner, Ukonu, Akpan and Anorue (2012) in a study entitled: *Nigeria newspaper coverage of climate change 2009-2010* noted that Nigerian press did not give significant coverage and interpretation to the various issues arising from climate change and then accused the press of vulture reporting, showing interest mostly when there is a newsy event. According to them, the press gave climate change undue publicity and manipulating its reports which in turn tend to bring more confusion than mitigation.

Reinforcing Ukonu et al.′ position, Nwala (2014) in a study entitled: *Press coverage of 2012 flood in Nigeria: A study of The Guardian, The Nation and The Punch,* did not spare the media either from being culpable of vulture reporting. According to him, the press merely highlighted the 2012 devastating unprecedented flood disaster in a way that contradicts public perception, introducing divisionary debates without further efforts to follow-up the debates to avoid negatively affecting people's understanding and government's readiness to mitigate flood disasters and its vulnerabilities.

Similarly, Ezebuenyi, Ntomchukwu and Okika (2019) in a study entitled: *Re-evaluating the vulture reporting hypothesis: The case of 'mmm' crash in Nigeria also found the media culpable of vulture reporting* also found the Nigerian press culpable of vulture reporting. In their submission, abandoning an issue after what could be described as 'newsy period' is against the tenets of journalism and professionalism. It is the responsibility of the media

to follow an issue to its logical conclusion and keep the public abreast of developments on the issue. Mere feasting on newsy event when it is still 'hot' and abandoning it when it is seemingly cold does not portray the media as being socially responsible to the society. Thorough and sequential investigative journalism give an issue different perspective and enhance the publics' right to know.

Method of the Study

The study adopted the qualitative research design while utilizing the secondary or library method in which various conceptual and empirical literature related and relevant to the study was reviewed. Basically, the method makes a bold claim to documented facts and their relevance to the subject of inquiry. It involves identifying and locating sources of information or personal/expert opinions on a research objective. The method is apt in this study because presently the Nigeria media are awash with reports of the gruesome murder of Osinachi Nwachukwu, the popular gospel music singer allegedly murdered by her husband. The reports held that the act is domestic violence. It is therefore on the strength of the reviewed literatures that the conclusion is drawn in this study.

The Discussion/Conclusion

With an extensive review of both conceptual and empirical studies, we can clearly understand that the Nigerian media have been awash with reports of the death of Osinachi Nwachukwu the popular Nigerian gospel singer. This discovery gives credence to the fact that the media have been alive to their surveillance function in the society. The foregoing is germane to extracting the validity of the subject of inquiry cum objectives of the study.

Therefore, to ascertain whether there was prevalence of domestic violence in the family of Peter and Osinachi Nwachukwu leading to her death, (which is research question one), the media made exciting revelations. According to the Cable News of 14th April, 2022 in its headline said, "For Osinachi Nwachukwu: It was for better for worse. The report held that Osinachi died from complications she suffered as a result of domestic violence (www.thecable.ng).

Also, Sahara Reporters report of 10th April, 2022. Published a headline; "Family reveals cause of death of singer of Ekwueme gospel song, Osinachi, husband's whereabouts. The report held that Osinachi died in silence, trying to conceal the maltreatment meted on her by the husband (https://saharareporters.com). These reports have therefore answered the research question which points to the fact that that there was prevalence of domestic violence in the Nwachukwu's family home leading to the death of Osinachi.

Again, to answer research question two, "To assess media reports of whether Osinachi died from domestic violence", it becomes imperative to note that the Nigerian media have dispensed their social responsibility role of exposing the evils in the society and satisfying the publics' interests to know. Available media reports in the study held that the popular Nigerian songstress died of domestic violence. Evidences from some of the headlines are as follow: The Nation report of 14th April published a headline; "Pastor Enenche opens up on Osinachi's death. According to the report, many have alleged she was a victim of domestic abuse with her husband Peter Nwachukwu king news of the death of Osinachi Nwachukwu

The Daily Post of 11th April, 2022 published: How Osinachi Nwachukwu died of domestic violence revealed, police arrest husband. Osinachi's death: Peter Nwachukwu indicted – Idoma Voice. The report held that the Nigerian Police have given a new update on the investigation over the death of gospel music minister, Osinachi Nwachukwu, which has indicted the husband of culpable homicide. Osinachi Nwachukwu: Untold story about cause of death of popular female gospel singer- hubby hit her on the chest/Vanguard news. The above reports point to the fact that the death of the popular Nigerian gospel singer, Osinachi Nwachukwu, in one way or the other died as a result of domestic violence. The media reports confirming the death of Osinachi via domestic violence cannot be exhausted in a single study. It is therefore in the interests of the Nigerian public to know the truth about the incident.

Also, to find out whether the media reinforce vulture reporting mentality from the manner of reportage of the death of Osinachi, the pervasiveness of media reports of the death of the famous gospel singer does not signify culpability of vulture reporting. Since the breaking news of the death the popular gospel music artiste, the Nigeria media have truly been awash with massive reports of the event. It becomes very difficult to significantly state that the Nigerian media are guilty of vulture reporting in the case of the death of Osinachi Nwachukwu. We however urge the media to ensure that the public interest to know as an index of their social responsibility role be sustained especially as the prosecution of the wife-beater would soon commence.

Finally, to determine the direction of Nigerian press reportage of the death of Osinachi, which is research question four, the study was able to establish that the direction of Nigerian media reports of the death of Osinachi Nwachukwu have been positive. The various reports were emphatic in their efforts to unearth the cause of the death and to condemn it. The fundamental function of the mass media is mainly to expose as part of their surveillance function every evil in the society. They have the capacity to reflect and shape opinion thus playing active role in public attitude formation. The media are very effective body of communication with good and wide availability which make them more convincing that a large number of people are more likely to be influenced.

Recommendations

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

1. More time and space should be devoted to the reportage of domestic violence against women.
2. All media platforms should see it as a call to duty to report incidences of domestic violence and create the necessary awareness about the ills of the social miasma.
3. Media platforms should endeavour to follow up on the incidences of domestic violence comprehensively and elaborately so as to expose the forms, and extents for a result-oriented knowledge of families, the public and government to recognize and embrace different positive roles for peaceful and harmonious existence.
4. Women groups such as National Association of Women Journalists (NAWOJ), National Association of Women Lawyers (NAWL) etc. should engage in a massive campaign to stop the onslaught.

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