

## **UYO RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION OF SELECTED NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA**

**Daniel Calixtus Akarika, PhD**

Department of Mass communication

Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

**Aniekeme Okon Ikon, PhD**

Department of Mass Communication

Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

**Nnamdie Udo Kierian**

Department of Mass Communication

Akwa Ibom State University, Obio Akpa Campus, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study examined Uyo Residents' Perception of Selected Newspaper Coverage of Gender-based violence in Nigeria. The study made use of survey method. Simple random sampling technique was used for the study and the sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. The sample size of the study was 400. From the findings, majority of the respondents (51.3%) were of the opinion that Daily Sun and Vanguard newspapers do not cover Gender-based violence issues frequently. Based on these findings, the study recommend that there is need to strategise ways that will facilitate the prominence of GBV stories in the newspapers (like putting GBV stories on the centre spread or front pages) where all genders are well covered and given prominence in order to aid readers in understanding the issues of GBV.*

**KEY WORDS:** coverage, perception, violence, gender-based violence, agenda setting.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The term 'gender' refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women. This may however be confused with 'sex', but while sex refers to the biological distinction between male and female, gender is a cultural distinction. Gender-based violence can also be used to refer to violence experienced by men as a result of their gender and so does not specifically refer solely to violence experienced by women. However, it is a term that is used broadly throughout the world and the use of the word 'gender' initiates thinking about the differences in the ways that women and men experience, and are subject to, violence particularly from someone known to them.

The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (UNDEVW) describes violence as “a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over, the discrimination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women,” and as “one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men”. Women’s lack of social and economic power, accepted gender roles and the low value put on women’s work perpetuate and reinforce this subordinate position. Early marriage, inheritance of widows and male control of property encourage female dependency, particularly in regions with high under and unemployment of women and poor access to social welfare Services and limit women’s ability to escape violent situations.

There is lack of information on accurate estimates of the magnitude of physical and Sexual violence against married women in Nigeria largely due to violence being unreported; and in most cases, those reported are not recorded by authorities. Information provides stimulus for all thought and actions of human beings. According to Olawu (2014) cited in Akarika, Iwok & Ikon (2019) information entails data, facts, imaginations, ideas, opinion, cultural values in a variety of media which include print, audio visual materials and electronic processors. The Amnesty International (2002) report titled: “Rape – The Invisible Crime”, noted that victims of rape in Nigeria had an enormous problem persuading the police and other prosecuting authorities that they had actually been raped. The victims had to prove that they did not consent to the act, or that their agreement was obtained through threats. Also because of the stigma attached to sexual abuse in many Nigerian cultures, women blame themselves and fear that they will be ostracised from society if they admit to being sexually abused (IRIN, 2017), and thus continue to suffer in silence. Hence, the available statistics may not reflect the actual prevalence. However, Men experience violence perpetrated by women, though theirs is not alarming.

Surveys conducted by women’s organisations have shown that the media portray gender stereotypes that are detrimental to women and that can impact negatively on the attitudes towards violence against women. However, because mass media communications reach and influence large numbers of people, they also have the potential to play a positive role in the struggle against violence against women (Pickup, Williams, and Sweetman 2011). The vital role played by the print media in the society is of pivotal importance in confronting gender-based violence. One of the roles is creating awareness, in this case, issues to do with gender-based violence in the society. The media also updates the readers on what is currently going on. Another role of print media is to reflect the public opinion on broad issues, mostly through the letters to the editor. Readers are able to let known how they feel on issues on GBV and how the government may deal with these issues.

Gender-based violence knows no boundaries, and cuts across racial, ethnic, class, age, economic, religious and cultural divides. It takes place everywhere in society. In Nigeria, like in most African societies, domestic violence is gendered and culturally patterned. Within the prevailing norms, it can be argued that the husband has the right to control his

wife as he deems appropriate (Amnesty International, 2002; IRIN, 2017). Challenging the social attitudes and beliefs is of great importance in solving the problem of gender-based violence (GVRC, Annual Report 2011-2012).

The dominant myth and expectation is that the media are neutral and objective and journalists are guided mostly by the code of conduct in their reporting of issues of gender-based violence. This is not always the case and thus each journalist brings to the newsroom his/her views, opinion, beliefs and attitudes. These essentially inform the way in which the journalists view a particular issue. Thus the media are not passive transmitters of information to society but are sources of information that come with value judgments. Based on these observations, this research seeks to examine Uyo residents' perception of selected newspaper coverage of gender-based violence in Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study were as follows:

- (i) Examine how newspapers present Gender-based violence issues.
- (ii) Ascertain the extent of coverage of gender-based violence in Nigeria.
- (iii) Find out the perceptions of Uyo residents towards newspaper coverage of gender-based violence in Nigeria.
- (iv) Examine the influence of newspaper coverage of gender-based violence issues on Uyo residents.

### **Research Questions**

The study seeks to address the following research questions:

- (i) How does Nigerian Newspapers present gender-based violence issues?
- (ii) To what extent do newspapers cover gender-based violence in Nigeria?
- (iii) What are the perceptions of Uyo residents towards newspaper coverage of gender-based violence in Nigeria?
- (iv) How does newspaper coverage of gender-based violence influence Uyo residents?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The term "gender-based violence" refers to violence that targets individuals or groups on the basis of their gender. The United Nations' Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) defines it as "violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately." This includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, the threat of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. Together with "sexual violence" and "violence against women," "gender-based violence" is used interchangeably.

This does not mean that all acts against a woman are gender-based violence, or that all victims of gender-based violence are female. The surrounding circumstances where men

are victims of sexual violence could be a man being harassed, beaten or killed because they do not conform to view of masculinity, which are accepted by the society.

Gender-based violence is violence involving men and women, in which the female is often the victim, and which is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women (UNPFA, 2013). According to Coalition on Violence against Women (COVAW, 2012) Domestic violence within the home is about power and control, where the perpetrator of the same uses violence as a way of immobilising the other. Gender based violence is violence directed at individuals on the basis of their gender and boys and men can also be the target. Gender based violence is acknowledged as a violation of human rights and a constraint to development throughout the world (WHO, 2014). It affects women and men, girls and boys of all ages in different ways. However, females are more often the victims than males, with children and women with disabilities facing the most challenges.

According to Neft and Levine (2016), gender-based violence takes place throughout the life cycle and can be grouped into five main categories:

- (i) **Sexual violence;** for example, Sexual harassment, incest, rape, forced prostitution and sexual slavery;
- (ii) **Physical violence;** involves, wife battering and assault, female infanticide, child assault by teachers and gay bashing;
- (iii) **Emotional and psychological violence;** such as threats of violence, insults and name calling, humiliations in front of others black mail and the threat of abandonment;
- (iv) **Harmful traditional practices;** include female genital mutilation (FGM), denial of certain foods and forced or early marriage.
- (v) **Socio economic violence;** such as discriminatory access to basic health care, low levels of literacy and educational attachment, inadequate shelter and food, economic deprivation, armed conflict and acts of terrorism.

Gender-based violence in Nigeria is a problem as in many parts of Africa. There is a deep cultural belief in Nigeria that it is socially acceptable to hit a woman and to discipline a spouse thus, domestic violence shows no signs of lessening in Nigeria.

Traditionally, gender based violence is committed against females. Common forms of violence against women in Nigeria are rape, acid attacks, molestation, wife beating, and corporal punishment. The Nigerian government has taken legal proceedings to prosecute men who abuse women in several states. There is currently a push in Nigeria for federal laws concerning gender based violence and for a stronger national response and support for domestic violence issues. Women often face physical violence at the hands of their family members. The most common forms of physical violence include rape, murder, slapping, and kicking. Some of the reasons that were given for physical abuse include their husbands being drunk, financial issues, and the rejection of a partner's sexual advances. Relationship inequality is also a strong indicator of physical violence. High levels of wife beating occur when the woman is making more money than her husband or partner is. This

has been attributed to the lack of control the male partner feels within the relationship. Women also often link the perpetration of physical violence with husbands who are very controlling.

Sexual violence in Nigeria largely goes unreported because of the burden of proof necessary for conviction as well as the social stigma it brings. Nigerian police have not been seen to arrest for sexual assault resulting in less reporting of the act. About 25% of women reported forced sex in the hands of either their current partner or a former partner. Furthermore, the 2008 Demographic and Health Survey showed that over 30.5% of married women have experienced at least one or more forms of physical, emotional or sexual violence in their marriage.

According to (Heisse, 2011) violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, often leading to domination over and discrimination against women. In addition, violence against women is often a cycle of abuse that manifests itself in many forms. For instance, at the very beginning of life, a girl is a target of sex selective abortion or female infanticide in cultures where son preference is prevalent. During childhood, girls face enforced malnutrition, early marriage and forced prostitution or bonded labour (UNICEF, 2013). In fact, some go on to suffer throughout their lives through rape and murder in the hands of intimate partners (UNFPA, 2013). Girls at puberty are prone to female genital mutilation in some cultures and often become victims of incest, child prostitution and pornography. More so, at the adolescent stage they face date rape, courtship violence which can be in form of acid throwing, verbal and physical abuse. Adult women mostly become economically dependent on men and often become victims of incest, sexual harassment, pornography, marital rape, trafficking in women, dowry abuse and partner homicide. The elderly women often face abandonment while disabled women at times become victims of rape.

Violence against men on the other hand has been going on in some parts of the world but under great cover. Many societies do not encourage men to talk publicly about their misery. Rather, some men suffer violence in their families in silence and in fear of intimidation by other men (Ingolo, 2015). Gender violence affect men too, although many men may feel uncomfortable discussing an issue, which at times seems to reflect on men in general, portraying all of them as aggressive, violent, irresponsible, wife beaters or sexual predators. Women can also be violent and many men may not be violent. Men are also frequent victims of violence, particularly young men, with homicide being a major cause of death amongst 15-44 year old men.

A review of literature on Crime and Violence cited by Barker (2012) concludes that masculinity has been seen as inherently violent and that the impact of gender socialisation on men has largely been ignored in the study of violence. Some of the literature suggests that while girls are usually socialised closer to home, young men tend to find their peer support on the street or outside the home. Maleness is defined in many cultures as aggression, control and dominance of women or others who are considered weaker. Many

cultures condone aggression as a means for males to express anger. In some cultures, there may also be rigid codes around "family honour" leading to "honor killings" of women who have been raped, usually by male members of their own family.

Barker (2012) observes that in low income settings, where mainstream sources of masculine identity such as educational achievement or stable employment are difficult to access, young men may be more inclined to adopt violence or other behaviours of control as a way to prove their manhood. A better understanding of how masculinities are shaped in different environments would be an important contribution to the field of violence and not just to violence against women. In terms of prevention and other interventions, it is certainly important to have more men address violence against women as an issue and to take some responsibility for changing the social norms and values that allow this gross violation of human rights to go on unquestioned (Piot, 2013). However, at the same time it is necessary to critically assess the approaches being used, and to ensure that resources to address the issue are allocated in the most effective way and are not diverted from the hard-won programmed efforts of many women's organisations.

Over the last twenty years it has been these organisations that have provided basic care and support to women experiencing violence and their children, and increasingly work on prevention and even programmes for batterers. The growing interest in men's groups working on violence against women does not always recognise that changing the norms and values of relationships from those of control and dominance to those based on mutual respect and equity requires not only individual but also structural change.

In Nigeria, some men have abandoned their families because their women have become tormentors in verbal and physical abuse. Some of these men drown their frustrations in wine shops, while others take to drugs as a source of escape from the realities of life. Frustrations are even more for the jobless, retrenched, motor park touts and men who earn less than their spouses.

In many societies, there are cultural institutions, beliefs and practices that undermine women or men's autonomy and contribute to gender based domestic violence. Certain marriage practices can disadvantage families especially where customs such as dowry and bride wealth have been corrupted by western consumer culture. Over the years, dowry has become an expected part of the marriage transaction. In effect, dowry demands can escalate into harassment, threats and abuse, and in extreme cases partners are driven to suicide, divorce or pursue another marriage (Armstrong, 2014).

Almost every traditional African society was patriarchal and a woman's place within this scheme was decidedly subordinate. Institutionalisation of this inequality remains woven in African customary law. For example, in most customary systems, the women have no right to inherit from their husbands and are not regarded as sharing ownership of marital property. Some argue that wife beating is regarded as normal within traditional African culture. For example, culture allows men to beat their wives among the Yoruba of Nigeria,

the Maasai, Kamba, Luhya and the Kalenjins of Kenya (Mbiti, 2013). Other cultural practices that perpetuate gender violence include uneven distribution of power within traditional African marriages, the impact of polygamy, the acceptance of male promiscuity and the power of extended family over the married couple.

Albeit culture can aggravate women's vulnerability, it can also serve as a creative resource for intervention. Many traditional cultures have mechanisms such as public shaming or community healing that can be mobilised as resources to confront partner abuse.

## **REVIEW OF STUDY**

Yusuf, O., Arulogun, O., Oladepo, O., and Olowokeere, F. (2011) study examined gender based violence with emphasis on physical violence among men and women in intimate relationship. The study also reports the prevalence and factors associated with physical violence taking into account the hierarchical nature of the data. A description cross sectional study was carried out on adult women and men in three selected states of Nigeria. The minimum sample size required to determine level of domestic violence at a 5% level of significance with a 90% power and a 5% error tolerable was calculated and a minimum sample size of 989 was arrived at which was increased to 1000 per state. A multi stage cluster sampling procedure was employed. The 6 geo-political zones of Nigeria were identified as clusters. Findings of this study revealed that more females experienced physical violence than males. This might be due to obvious notion that men are stronger than women.

The study recommend that strategies should be put in place and all major stakeholders should help to curb this menace. This study is however relevant to this research because its shades more light on physical violence which is the most recurrent practice in recent time and an aspect of gender based violence.

Talabi, F. (2016) study was to examine the angle framed around reported housewives' abuse stories by the print media. The research design for this study was content analysis. The units of analysis in this study were stories, features articles, opinion articles, editorials and cartoon/graphics. The study employed multi-stage sampling method at various stages to choose sample. Purposive sampling was used to select two Nigerian national newspapers. The reason was to ensure that the population was well represented and the two newspapers have popularity, credibility and the newspapers' focus on national and human interest issues. Each newspaper edition for sampling had duration of six months, that is, from January to June, 2016 and the issues (daily editions) content analysed was picked randomly. In the findings, the study showed that newspaper actively reported housewives abuse incidence, but the tone of editorial bias in most abuse stories portrayed in newspaper were not clearly given while the one given titled towards neutrality. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the newspaper should do more than just creating awareness about housewives' abuses by mere reportage but a mediatory and change-stimulating coverage of housewives' abuse should be done.

This study is of relevance to this research because the print media always cover issues of gender based violence but without any effort of stimulating a change, hence, the reason for this research.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical perspectives used to explain Residents' Perception of Newspaper Coverage of Gender-based Violence in Nigeria were: Agenda Setting Theory and Individual Differences Theory. The agenda setting theory was propounded by McCombs and Shaw in 1972 as cited in Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso (2008), provides theoretical insight on how media report news. According to McCombs and Shaw (1972) agenda setting is the idea that there is a strong correlation between emphasis that mass media place on certain issues - based on relative placement or amount of coverage - and the importance attributed to these issues by mass audiences. Price and Tewksbury (1997:184) cited in Wilson and Roy (2012) summarises it as: Agenda setting looks on story selection as a determinant of public perceptions of issue importance and, indirectly through priming, evaluations of political leaders. Framing focuses not on which topics or issues are selected for coverage by the news media, but instead on the particular ways those issues are presented.

Price and Tewksbury (1997) argue that agenda setting is based on memory-based models of information processing. The temporal sequences of agenda setting assumes that media can make certain issues or aspects of issues more accessible and thus easily recalled, for people and thereby influence the standards they use when forming attitudes about issues. Wilson and Roy (2012) emphasise that mass communication plays an important role in the society, its purpose being to inform the public about current and past events. Thus, within the process of news making, gatekeepers take control of the information the audience see or hear. On the other hand, Littlejohn (2014) notes that communication takes place in levels where first level enacts the common subjects that are most important; and the second level decides what parts of the subject are important.

The individual difference theory is an important theory based on psychological approach to understand mass media effects. According to this theory, different personality variables result in different reactions to the same stimuli. In other words, the psychological make up of a person is very much responsible for how he or she will consume media. Therefore, different people will react differently to same information or message. In other words, reaction of media message or content will differ according to motivation of audience members, their predisposition to accept or reject a given message, their prior beliefs, values, bias, intelligence level, moods etc.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research adopts the survey method as its research design. The rationale for the use of survey method is to elicit responses from the sampled respondents. The use of a survey for data collection is justified by the fact that it is the most appropriate method of gathering

data related to demographics, attitudes, opinions and perceptions (Asemah & Kierian, 2018). The population of this research work comprises residents of Uyo Metropolis, Nigeria. The total population of Uyo Metropolis according to National Population Commission estimate is 1,067,170 (One million, sixty seven thousand, one hundred and seventy) (NPC, 2018). The sample size of the population was 400 determined using Taro Yamane's sample size formula. The data collected from the questionnaire used in this research work were analysed using simple percentages and presented with the aid of tables.

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

A total number of 400 copies of questionnaire were distributed to respondents and 390 copies were returned and found useful for the analysis.

**Table 1: Sex Distribution of Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	265	67.9
Female	125	32.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2018

Table 1 indicates the sex distribution of the 390 respondents which formed the sample population for the study. The breakdown of the sampled population in terms of the sex distribution indicates that 265 respondents which represent 67.9 % are males and 125 of the respondents representing 32.1% are females. Thus, this study could be said to have involved more males than females.

**Table 2: Readership of Newspaper**

Option	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	381	97.7
No	9	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2018

Table 2 shows that 381 (97.7%) of the entire respondents read newspapers while 9 (2.3%) do not. This implies that there is a higher percentage of readership of newspaper by respondents.

**Table 3: Respondents' Newspaper Choice**

Newspaper Choice	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily Sun	100	25.6
Vanguard	88	22.6
Both	202	51.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2018

Table 3 shows respondents' newspaper choice. While more than half of Uyo residents (202 representing 51.8%) read *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspapers, 100 (25.6%) read *Daily sun* and 88 (22.6%) read *Vanguard*.

**Table 4: Frequency of newspaper readership**

Frequency of Readership	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Occasionally	35	8.9
Very Occasionally	45	11.5
Often	79	20.2
Very Often	145	37.1
Not Very Often	87	22.3
Total	390	100

Source: Field work, 2018

Table 4 shows how frequently Uyo residents read newspapers. 145 representing 37.1% said they read newspapers very often, 87 representing 22.3% said they read newspapers not very often, 79 representing 20.2% often read newspapers while 45 (11.5%) and 35 (8.9%) read newspapers very occasionally and occasionally respectively. Thus shows that majority of respondents read newspaper on a regular basis.

**Table 5: Frequency of Coverage of Gender-based Violence Issues by Daily Sun and Vanguard Newspapers**

Frequency of Coverage	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Occasionally	150	38
Very occasionally	140	36
Often	-	-
very Often	50	13
Not very often	50	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2018

Results in Table 5 shows that more than half (74%) of the total respondents said *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspapers do not occasionally and very occasionally cover Gender-based violence issues. However, the least percentage (26%) went for those who said GBV issues are frequently covered by the papers. This implies that majority of respondents are of the opinion that *Daily Sun* and *Vanguard* Newspapers do not frequently cover GBV issues in Nigeria.

**Table 6 Type of Gender-based Violence Issues Frequently Covered by Daily Sun or Vanguard Newspaper**

Types of GBV Issues	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sexual Harassment	49	12.6
Female Genital Mutilation	81	20.8
Rape	84	21.5
Physical violence	110	28.2
Others	66	16.9
Total	390	100

Source: Field work, 2018

Table 6 shows that majority of the respondents being 110 representing 28.2% of the total respondents said the type of Gender-based violence issues frequently covered by *Daily sun* or *Vanguard* newspaper is Physical violence, followed by Rape stories by 84 (21.5%) of the respondents. Others were Sexual Harassment, Female Genital Mutilation and other specified GBV stories (Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, Early Marriage, and Commercial Sex Exploitation etc.) at 12.6%, 20.8% and 16.9% respectively. This implies that majority of respondents are of the view that GBV issues frequently covered by Daily Sun and Vanguard Newspaper is physical violence.

**Table 7: Respondents' Perception of Daily Sun or Vanguard Newspaper Coverage of Gender-based Violence Issues in Nigeria**

Extent of Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very satisfied	60	16
Satisfactory	70	18
Undecided or neutral	5	1
Unsatisfactory	100	26
Very unsatisfactory	155	39
<b>Total</b>	390	100

Source: Field work, 2018

Table 7 reveals the level of satisfaction with *Daily sun* or *Vanguard* newspaper's coverage of Gender-based violence issues in Nigeria. From the result, a greater percentage (65%) of the respondents were not satisfied at all, (34%) were very satisfied while (1%) were undecided. This implies that majority of respondents were not satisfied with the newspaper coverage of GBV issues in Nigeria.

**Table 8: Stories of Gender-based Violence on Daily Sun and Vanguard Newspaper has Changed Respondents' Behaviour Positively**

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	150	38.5
Strongly Agree	69	17.7
Disagree	101	25.9
Strongly Disagree	50	12.8
Undecided	20	5.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work, 2018

Results in Table 8 shows that 150 (38.5%) of the respondents agree that the few Gender-based violence stories they have read in *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspapers have changed their behaviours positively. This is closely followed by 101 (25.9%) who disagreed to this. 69 (17.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 50 (12.8%) strongly disagreed while 20 (5.1%) were undecided. With these results, newspapers have a better chance of positively influencing the behaviours of Uyo residents through frequent reportage of GBV issues.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study are hereby discussed in line with the research research

### **Research Question 1: To what extent do newspapers cover gender- based violence in Nigeria?**

Table 5 shows respondents' opinion on the extent to which *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspapers cover Gender-based violence (GBV) issues in Nigeria. Therefore, findings from the collated data in the table shows that more than half (51.3%) of the respondents were of the opinion that *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspapers which they have read do not frequently cover Gender-based violence issues. a total number of 122 (31.3%) respondents were undecided while 68 (17.4%) were of the opinion that the papers do not cover Gender-based violence issues at all.

Table 6 shows respondents' view on the type of Gender-based violence issues frequently covered by *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspaper. 12.6% of the respondents said both newspapers frequently cover stories of Sexual Harassment, 20.8% of the respondents chose Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), 21.5% chose Rape, 28.2% chose physical violence while 16.9% chose other types of GBV issues like Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, Early Marriage, Commercial Sex Exploitation etc.

Interestingly, the finding that 28.2% adult residents chose physical violence as the most frequent type of GBV issue covered by both papers corresponds with the findings of Yusuf et al (2011) who also found that violence among men and women is a universal problem in many countries and physical violence in particular is very common among intimate

partners in both developed and developing countries. They also found out that more females experienced physical violence than males, due to the obvious notion that men are stronger than women. In addition, studies in Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania reported much higher rates in women (WHO, 2005).

**Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of Uyo residents towards newspaper coverage of Gender-based violence in Nigeria?**

Table 7 and 8 shows respondents' level of satisfaction with *Daily sun* or *Vanguard* newspaper's coverage of Gender-based violence in Nigeria.

255 (65%) of respondents were not satisfied at all 130 (34%) of the respondents said they were satisfied while 5 (1%) were undecided with *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspapers' reportage of Gender-based violence issues in Nigeria. This means that majority of respondents were not satisfied with the coverage of GBV issues in Nigeria. Also, the degree of objectivity exhibited by these newspapers.

Generally, the findings of this study allow for better understanding of the two theories (Agenda setting and individual differences theories) as used in this work. According to Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso (2008), Agenda setting theory gives insight on how media report news. It brings to the understanding of the public how mass media play the role of shaping attitudes, perceptions and knowledge for their audience. The attitudes, perceptions and knowledge all shape people's understanding of social problems and their responses to them, such as violence against men, women and children. On the other hand, Individual differences theory as stated by Waju cited in Okechukwu (2012:41) holds that "each member of the audience possesses unique qualities which accounts for the differences in behaviour." Therefore, since individuals have their own unique qualities, it accounted for the different reactions or feelings they had towards *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspaper coverage of Gender-based violence issues in Nigeria.

**Research Question 3: How does newspaper coverage of Gender-based violence influence Uyo residents?**

Table 8 shows how *Daily sun* and *Vanguard* newspaper coverage of Gender-based violence issues have influenced the respondents. 150 (38.5%) of the total respondents agreed that their behaviour have been positively influenced through reading of GBV issues on both papers, 12.8% strongly disagreed, 25.9% disagreed, 17.7% strongly disagreed while 5.1% were undecided if their behaviours were positively changed by the papers' reportage of GBV issues or not.

**CONCLUSION**

The prominence given to the reportage of Gender-based violence issues by *Daily Sun* and *Vanguard* newspapers cannot help in ameliorating the trend, thus the print media need to dedicate enough print space for the coverage of GBV issues in Nigeria. Many years ago, gender issues drew little or no attention from scholars, researchers, the mass media and even the society at large, but with industrial revolution and explosion in population, gender-

based realities have dawned on humanity and have crept into every facet of human life, thus the need for greater newspaper coverage of GBV issues in Nigeria.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher made the following recommendations:

1. Nigerian newspapers should dedicate more spaces to Gender-based violence issues just as they do to political issues, and stories of Gender-based violence should be made prominent rather than inconsequential (for instance, putting a GBV story on the centre spread or on the front page of a newspaper.)
2. There is an urgent need for stakeholders like the universities that train journalists to establish education and training strategies for journalists on GBV issues to enhance their reporting.

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