Newspaper Coverage of Intimate Partner Violence Against Men in Nigeria

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Abstract

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a pervasive and deadly occurrence, with millions of men, being assaulted by their partners during their lifespan. Despite its prevalence in Nigeria, this phenomenon appears largely underreported in the media, a situation that may undermine its public visibility. Against this backdrop, this study examined newspaper coverage of IPV against men in Nigeria, exploring the frequency, dominant themes, prominence, and framing in the coverage. The study was situated within the framework of the Agenda Setting and Framing theories. Adopting the content analysis method, the researcher selected 164 editions of *Vanguard* and *The Guardian* newspapers. A coding sheet was designed for data collection while data analysis was done employing descriptive statistics (simple percentages). Findings revealed a significant lack of coverage of IPV against men within the study period. However, IPV against men received prominent coverage within the period based on page placement. In reporting IPV against men, the newspapers paid most attention to "victim blame" "stereotyping", and "stigmatization". Results also showed that the most common types of IPV suffered by men as reported in the two newspapers were "physical violence'' and "sexual violence'' as against "emotional violence". The study concluded that the newspapers' lack of adequate coverage of IPV against men may have the effect of perpetuating the current practice where societal discourse and policy response regarding IPV lay emphasis almost solely on female victims to the exclusion of their male counterparts. The study recommended among others that newspaper should adopt gender-inclusive reporting practices that recognize IPV against men as a significant social problem.
Keywords: intimate partner, newspaper, violence, coverage

Introduction

Violence against intimate partners knows no bounds and transcends all racial, ethnic, class, age, economic, religious, and cultural distinctions. It occurs in all societal contexts. (Onyebuchi, Alaekwe, Umoren, Emetumah, & Etumnu 2023). The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (UNDEVW) as cited in Onyebuchi et al. (2023) sees violence as "one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men and an expression of historically uneven power relations between men and women, which have resulted in

men's dominance over and discrimination against women as well as the impediment of women's full advancement.".

According to Dienye and Gbeneol (2008) reports of intimate partner violence against men are rare in Nigeria but that does not mean that Nigerian men do not face domestic violence from their intimate partners. In February 2016, for instance, it was reported in different Nigerian media outlets that a female lawyer Yewande Oyediran allegedly stabbed her husband to death; There are other cases in Nigeria as documented by Tygal (2015) and Olufunmilayo, Adedibu, and Adeniran (2005) where male victims of domestic violence are being poured hot water by their spouses out of anger or annoyance. It was also reported by (Vanguard news) that Bukola Odeyemi an Ekiti State University student in 2019 stabbed her boyfriend; John Iju to death due to the latter's failure to give her N2500 for her hairdo. Also, there was case a of Ataga Osifo the super TV CEO murder in 2021 by a 21-year-old UNILAG student, Chidinma as reported by (Punch news).

Intimate partner's violence against men is also becoming a global issue and over the last couple of years, recognition of its scope and significance has increased (Obarisiagbon, & Omage, 2019). According to Fink (2006) as cited in Obarisiagbon, and Omage, (2019)) in the USA, domestic violence has affected 7.6% of males, while in South Africa, 4 victims in every reported 10 domestic violence cases, are men (WHO, 2002). This further attested to by Barber (2008) when he pointed out that every 14.6 seconds; a male is assaulted by his female companion.

Thus, this study seeks to highlight the burden of men as victims of intimate partner violence. It will explore whether male victims have similar risk factors of IPV as females to increase awareness of intimate partner violence against men in Nigeria. To better understand the context and factors that contribute to intimate partner violence against men in Nigeria, it will identify gaps in the current knowledge about the issue and to suggest areas for future research to provide recommendations for stakeholders on how to prevent and respond to intimate partner's violence against men in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of intimate partner violence (IPV) has gained global attention, with its severity likened to that of major societal threats such as cancer and warfare. Traditionally, IPV discourse and media coverage seemed to have primarily focused on women as victims,

reinforcing gender norms that frame men as the primary perpetrators. However, emerging evidence indicates that men are increasingly becoming victims of IPV, yet their experiences often appear to be unrecognized or underreported due to stigmatization. Despite recent shifts in media coverage that challenge these traditional narratives, male victimization seems to continue to be underrepresented in both scholarly literature and media portrayals. This perceived lack of adequate recognition and media representation of male IPV victims may perpetuate societal silence, thereby inhibiting male victims from seeking help and contributing to misconception of IPV against men in Nigeria.

In Nigeria, this gender bias appears to be more pronounced in the media, with the dominant view positioning women as the primary victims of domestic abuse. Recent studies, however, reveal that men seem to be equally vulnerable to IPV, yet their experiences are rarely highlighted in the media.

The perceived limited visibility of male IPV victims in Nigerian media thus represents a critical gap in the discourse on intimate partner violence. This study sought to address this gap by examining the extent of Nigerian newspaper coverage of IPV against men. The research aims to explore how media representations shape societal perceptions of IPV and the implications of such representations for policy formulation and support systems for male victims.

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the frequency of coverage given to intimate partner violence against men by Nigerian newspapers

2. To determine the dominant themes in the newspaper coverage of IPV against men in Nigerian newspapers.

3. To determine the extent of prominence given to the coverage of IPV against men in Nigerian newspapers.

4. To ascertain the dominant frames used in the coverage of IPV against men in Nigerian newspapers.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Violence

According to World Health Organization (WHO 1996b) cited in Burelomoua, Gulina, and Tikhomandristskaya, (2018) violence is the deliberate use of physical force or power, whether actual or threatened, against oneself, another individual, or a group or community, with the goal to cause suffering, injury, death, psychological distress, mal-development, or deprivation. The American Psychological Association (APA) website's Violence page states unequivocally that "violence is an extreme form of aggression, such as assault, rape, or murder." To include violence that does not necessarily result in injury or death, but that nonetheless poses a substantial burden on individuals, families, communities, and health care systems worldwide" is reflected in this definition (Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg & Zwi., 2002, p. 5). An intricate "typology of violence" that characterizes many categories and forms of violence as well as the connections between them has been constructed based on the WHO's definition of violence as cited in Krug et al. (2002), which suggest that violence can be generally divided into three main categories according to characteristics of those committing the violent act: self-directed, interpersonal, and collective. Each of the proposed categories of violence is divided into subcategories according to the nature of the violent acts (physical, sexual, psychological, deprivation, or neglect).

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Worldwide, intimate partner violence (IPV) continues to be a major concern for human rights and public health. In recent times, it is gradually becoming more evident that any demographic can be impacted by and contribute to intimate partner violence (IPV). (Esther, Nneoma & Ifeoma 2020). Scholars over the years deem it necessary to have a clear definition of the concept of intimate partner violence, also called domestic abuse. Domestic violence and domestic abuse are two of the most used terms (Donovan & Hester, 2010). However, critics argue that the term 'domestic violence' emphasizes physical violence, precluding wider forms of abuse including financial, sexual, and emotional control. The term remains popular on account of encompassing physical violence as well as alternative forms of violence including financial, sexual, and emotional control (Donovan & Hester,

2010). Intimate partner violence takes different forms but the most common shape it takes includes verbal abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological abuse, economic abuse, and technological abuse.

Conceptual Overview of Newspaper Coverage of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

Peace, (2018) opines that Newspaper coverage is the degree to which print media deliberately covers current events of public interest in a way that is more engrossing and educational. Newspaper coverage criteria include, but are not limited to: frequency, which measures how frequently a story is covered by the media; direction, which describes the report's slant regarding the issues be it favorable, unfavorable, or neutral; prominence, which measures the importance of a story as indicated by the newspaper as it appears on the front page, inside page, or back page; genre, which describes the type of story straight news, opinion, advertisement, editorial, or cartoon; and the kind of framing employed, among other factors (Peace, 2018)

Asemah **(**2011) defines newspaper coverage as the attention given to a particular event by newspapers. Olijo (2016) lists common indicators of measuring newspaper coverage are frequency, which is the number of times newspapers report a particular event, volume or depth of coverage usually determined with regards to whether the issues are of full page, half page of quarter page. Stories on full page are normally considered to have received more volume/depth than those on half page while those on half page are usually considered to have received more volume/depth than those on quarter page.

Empirical Review

Ezenwoko, Abubakar, Inoh, Abubakar, Azees, Ekanem and Udofia, (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study on IPV during the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. The study found that the overall prevalence of IPV was higher in men (44.8%) compared to women (37.6%). Sexual violence was the most reported form of IPV among men, whereas emotional violence was more prevalent among women. This study underscores the need for systemic interventions to protect individuals in relationships from IPV. Naeemzadah and Najibullah (2023) examined Canadian news coverage of IPV and its link to advocacy and policy development. Their critical content analysis of 366 news articles identified seven themes,

including the reinforcement of stigma and the portrayal of IPV during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study found that media coverage significantly influenced policy decisions by framing IPV as a social problem requiring systemic response. Hanson and Lysova (2023) analyzed the portrayal of male victims of intimate partner homicide (IPH) in news media. Their thematic analysis of 203 news articles revealed that male victims were often doubted and blamed for their victimization, indicating a bias in media representation.

Wugunda, Oluoch, and Ogenga (2020) explored the representation of IPV in Kenyan newspapers. Their findings indicated that reports often framed IPV as isolated incidents, with little contextualization and a tendency to blame victims, highlighting the need for more comprehensive and informed reporting. Nkwam-Uwaoma, Ojiakor-Umenze, and Nwamadu (2020) assessed the coverage of female domestic violence in Nigerian newspapers. They found that while stories received favorable coverage, they lacked depth and follow-up, suggesting a need for more in-depth and consistent reporting. Helen and Omowumi (2020) examined social media framing of domestic violence against men. Their study revealed that social media often led to name-calling and blaming of male victims, underscoring the influence of framing on public response. Lutgendorf (2019) provided a comprehensive review of the effects of IPV on women's health, and found out that intimate partner violence comprises physical and sexual assault as well as psychological abuse and controlling behaviors such as reproductive coercion or stalking, emphasizing the need for routine screening and vigilance among healthcare providers. Daniel, Aniekeme and Nnamdie (2019) examined Uyo Residents' Perception of Selected Newspaper Coverage of Gender-based violence in Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research method investigating the perception of newspaper coverage of domestic violence among 400 respondents. The findings reveal that majority of the respondents (51.3%) thought that Daily Sun and Vanguard newspapers do not cover Gender-based violence issues frequently. The researchers recommend that there is need to strategize ways that will facilitate the prominence of Gender-Based Violence stories in the newspapers (like putting GBV stories on the centre spread or front pages) where all genders are well covered and given prominence to aid readers in understanding the issues of GBV. Talabi, (2016) examined the dominant frames adopted by the print media in reporting abuses against homemakers. The study adopted the manifest content analysis research method with stories, features

articles, opinion articles, editorials and cartoon/graphics as the units of analysis in this study. The findings showed that newspapers actively reported homemakers' abuse incidence, but the tone of editorial bias in most abuse stories portrayed in the newspapers was not given. The study recommends that the newspaper should do more than just creating awareness about homemakers' abuses by mere reportage, but a mediatory and change-stimulating coverage of homemakers' abuse should be done. Rollè, Abbà, Fazzino, Marino, and Brustia (2014) employed content analysis research method to examine how IPV is represented   in two (2) Italian newspapers in the years 2002/2012. The study found that there is a preference to generally explain the phenomenon of domestic violence rather than discuss the problem to the society.

Similarly, Adebayo (2014) investigated Domestic Violence against Men: Balancing the Gender Issues in Nigeria. Domestic violence is a reality in many parts of the world. However, domestic violence is mostly seen as synonymous with violence against women. Women only, are often perceived to be the victims of domestic violence, and men as the perpetrators, while most men victims continued to suffer in silence from their intimate partners. This paper studied the phenomenon of domestic violence against men, with the women as the perpetrators or aggressors, with a view towards gender balancing. The paper investigated the causes of domestic violence against men and proffered solution to its eradication. Yusuf, Arulogun, Oladepo, and Olowokeere (2011) examined gender- based violence with emphasis on physical violence among men and women in an intimate relationship. The study adopted the survey research method in reviewing a total of 989 respondents sampled through multi-stage cluster sampling procedure and conducted around the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. The researchers found that more females experienced physical violence than males. The study recommended that strategies should be put in place, and all major stakeholders should help to curb this menace.

The empirical review indicates that while there is substantial coverage of IPV against women in Nigeria, research on violence against men remains sparse. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of how Nigerian newspapers cover IPV against men. Additionally, this research seeks to establish a robust theoretical framework for understanding the media's role in shaping public perceptions of IPV against men, thereby contributing to a more balanced and inclusive discourse on the issue.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within Agenda Setting Theory and Framing Theory. The idea of agenda setting can be traced back in the 1920s when Lippmann Walter (1992), journalist and social commentator, argued in his Public Opinion that people were not capable of directly experiencing the bigger world, thus had to rely on the images and messages constructed by news media to form perceptions. Bernard Cohen (1963) refined Lippmann's ideas by pointing out that the media do not tell people what to think, but what to think about. Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) first put this idea to empirical test by comparing news media agenda and public agenda during the 1968 US presidential election. Their study found strong correlations between the prominent issues of the news media and the leading public issues.

This theory suggests that media has the power to influence the salience of issues in the public agenda by highlighting certain topics and downplaying others. How long a news story spends on a topic, the details it presents, and the viewpoint it takes all play a role in how much the reader learns and how much weight is given to the topic. According to McCombs and Shaw's agenda-setting hypothesis, the media shapes and chooses the subjects that are important by reflecting on people's opinions on various issues.

There are two fundamental presumptions to take into account while examining the agenda setting:

1. Rather than reflecting reality, the media and press alter and filter it.

2. The public tends to view issues as more important when the media concentrates on a small number of topics and issues.

Agenda-setting theory helped the researcher understand which aspects of the issue receive the most attention in the media, how frequently it is covered, and whether there are disparities in coverage compared to violence against women. It also shed light on the role of media in shaping public awareness and policy priorities related to intimate partner violence against men.

Framing Theory

Framing theory, developed by Erving Goffman in 1974, serves as an extension of the agenda-setting theory. Unlike the first level of agenda-setting, which focuses on the

prominence of issues, framing theory emphasizes how issues are presented and interpreted (Baran & Davis, 2011). The theory suggests that media shapes public perception by highlighting certain aspects of events and placing them within a specific context, thus influencing the public's understanding and attitudes towards these events (Mass Communication Theory, 2017).

Framing theory has been criticized to be difficult to measure and quantify how framing influences audience perceptions. Another criticism is that framing theory may oversimplify complex issues and fail to account for individual differences. It suggests that people tend to interpret information through the lens of their own experiences, values, and beliefs. This means that the same information can be interpreted very differently by different people.

Additionally, framing theory does not sufficiently account for the role of emotion in how audiences perceive and react to frames. The assumption of the theory was synthesized in relation to the paper score variables, specifically media framing, newspaper coverage of intimate partner violence which have to do with how newspaper cover and interpret intimate violence thereby making sense of these stories.

Framing theory, being the second level of agenda-setting theory, framing theory makes provision for a systematic account of how audience uses expectations to make sense of everyday life situations and the people in them as it influences the mindset (perception) of people and impacts their decision making on the topic which is changed by media (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

In the context of intimate partner violence (IPV) against men in Nigeria, framing theory is crucial. Media coverage can either highlight the severity and prevalence of IPV against men or minimize and marginalize these issues by focusing predominantly on violence against women. The portrayal of IPV in the media can affect public attitudes, policy decisions, and the societal understanding of the problem. By analyzing how Nigerian newspapers frame IPV against men, researchers can assess whether the media perpetuates stereotypes and stigma or fosters a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of the issue.

Method

Quantitative content analysis was employed in this study to determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within the given qualitative data (i.e. text and to explore the characteristics, frequency, prominence, framing and themes unique to Nigerian

newspapers if any. The dailies were and *Vanguard* and *The Guardian* being among the most top-rated newspaper in Nigeria according to web ranking.

Study Period

This study covered the period of one (1) year, January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023. This is given that the researcher intended to use full calendar year in order to cover a considerable number of times, also as at the time of this study, the year 2023 was most recent calendar year that has run to its end (January to December). However, choosing the current year helped the researcher to capture the current status of IPV against men in Nigeria.

Population of the Study

The population of this study was determined by the time frame of the study which is one (1) year period. The population of the study includes all editions of *Vanguard* and *The Guardian* newspapers published in Nigeria within this one (1) year period from January 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023, which amounted to 164 editions all together.

Sample Size

The sample size of the study was 164 newspaper editions based on recommendation that selecting one edition per week would be appropriate for a newspaper study extending up to a period of six months and this study extends to a one-year period Wright's (1997 p.312) as cited in Duru, (2014). The "constructed and continuous" week method sampling was used to determine the specific editions to be studied within the specified period of study. The justification for the continuous week was that the week selected was period when a notable event of IPV against men happened.

 Hence, for each of the two newspapers used hence, forty-seven (47) editions were selected for the constructed weeks (one from each of the 47 weeks that make up the one year, January 1, 2023 to December 31st 2023, and five (5) weeks were selected for the continues weeks (7 days from each of the five weeks). These, overall, would amount to 164 editions.

The units of analysis were news, features, editorials, pictorials, and cartoons. This means that all news stories, feature reports, editorials, pictures, and cartoons that depict IPV against men in Nigerian newspapers became the focus of data collection and subsequent analysis.

Instrument of Data Collection

The researcher employed coding sheet as the data collection instrument. The coding sheet was designed by looking at the measurable variables above, and from these variables, the subject categories for coding were developed.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The methods for collecting data comprised both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary source of data collection included the use of a coding sheet. The Secondary source of data collection included library materials such as newspaper editions, books, journal articles and internet materials used for the literature review.

 Data was generated from the selected newspapers by searching thoroughly through the newspapers within the study period and was coded on excel spreadsheet using the prepared coding sheet. This was done to ensure easy, fast and accurate collection of data.

Quantitative method was employed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for data management. Data were presented in statistical tables and figures and measured in simple percentages and mean.

Result

Table 1: Distribution of Reports across Newspaper Titles

	Frequency	**Percentage**
Vanguard	18	56.3%
The Guardian	14	43.8%
TOTAL	**32**	**100%**

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

Table 1 above shows how the reports on IPV against men were distributed across the two newspaper titles studied. *Vanguard* accounted for 56.3% of the reports, while *The Guardian* accounted for 43.8% of the reports indicating a non-regular coverage of IPV against men in Nigeria within the period under review.

Table 2:   Distribution of Content Type

	Vanguard	*The Guardian*
News Story	46.9% (n=15)	37.5% (n=12)
Feature	9.4%	6.3%

	(n=3)	(n=2)
Opinion/comments	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Pictures	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Cartoons	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Editorial	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**
	(n=18)	**(n=14)**

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

Table 2 above reflects the various news types in which reports on IPV against men was presented in the newspapers studied. In *Vanguard* newspaper, 46.9%; of the reports appeared as news stories; while in *The Guardian;* it came down to 37.5%; Similarly, in *Vanguard;* 9.4%, of the reports came as Features; while in *The Guardian;* it also came down to 6.3%; Also, in *Vanguard* no report on IPV appeared as opinion/comments i.e. 0% ; likewise in the *Guardian*, 0%; Also in *Vanguard*, no report on IPV appeared as pictures 0%; likewise in the *Guardian* 0%; In the same vein, no report on IPV appeared as cartoons 0%; in *Vanguard;* likewise in *The Guardian,* 0%; Finally, in *Vanguard* no report on IPV appeared as editorial 0%; likewise The *Guardian* 0%; reports. The forgoing data indicates that reports on IPV against men in Nigeria is limited to only two content type, news story and features which at least is expected to dominant because it is a newspaper. Similarly, other content type that did not appear is also significance evidence that they did not give adequate coverage of the issue within the period under review.

Table 3: Distribution of Frequency of Coverage

	Vanguard	*The Guardian*
Editions with news IPVAM	10.4%	8.5%
	(n=17)	(n=14)
Editions without news on	39.6	41.5%

IPVAM	(n=65)	(n=68)
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%s**
	(n=82)	**(n=82)**

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

Table 3 above shows the frequency at which news on IPV against men appeared in the newspaper editions studied. In *Vanguard* 10.4%; editions have reports on IPV while in *The Guardian* 8.5%; editions have reports on IPV against men. This data indicates that out of 164 editions of newspaper studied only 31 editions of the newspaper published news on IPV against men   in Nigeria within the study period under review; hence it shows a poor coverage of the issue.

Table 4: Distribution of Content Placement

	Vanguard	*The Guardian*
Front Page	6.3%	0.0%
	(n=2)	(n=0)
Back Page	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Centre Page	50.0%	43.8%
	(n=16)	(n=14)
Editorial Page	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Others	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**
	(n=18)	**(n=14)**

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

Table 4 above shows the patterns of placement of news across various categories of pages. It indicates that 6.3%; of the news in *Vanguard newspaper* were placed on the front page; while in *The Guardian,* no IPV stories featured in the front page 0%; in *Vanguard* no story on IPV appeared in the back page 0%; also in The Guardian no story on IPV appeared in the back page 0%; similarly in *Vanguard* 50.0%; of news on IPV against men were placed on

the   centre page while in *The Guardian* it came down to 43.8%; Similarly in *Vanguard*, report on IPV against men did not feature at all in the editorial page 0%; likewise in *The Guardian*, 0%. Finally, in *Vanguard*, no reports on IPV against men appeared on other pages of the newspaper, 0%; likewise in *the Guardian,* 0%; reports.

Table 5: Distribution of Page Rating of News

	Vanguard	*The Guardian*
Page Led Story	53.1% (n=17)	37.5% (n=12)
Non-Page Lead Story	3.1% (n=1)	6.3% (n=2)
TOTAL	**100% (n=18)**	**100% (n=14)**

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

Table 5 shows the frequency at which IPV stories appeared as page lead story and vice versa. For *Vanguard* 53.1%; of the stories were page lead stories; while for *The Guardian,* the figure came down to 37.5%; On the other hand, 3.1% of the stories in *Vanguard* appeared as non-lead; for *The Guardian,* it went up to 6.3%. The forgoing data indicates that the few stories published by the two newspapers appeared as page lead story.

Table 6: Distribution of Type of Violence Reported

	The Vanguard	*The Guardian*
Physical Violence	43.8% (n=14)	34.4% (n=11)
Sexual Violence	9.4% (n=3)	6.3% (n=2)
Emotional Violence	3.1% (n=1)	3.1% (n=1)
Others	0.0% (n=0)	0.0% (n=0)
TOTAL	**100% (n=18)**	**100% (n=14)**

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

The table 6 above shows the contents of story as appeared in the newspaper studied, the type of violence is the level of violence that occurred. In *Vanguard* 43.8% appeared as Physical violence; while in *The Guardian* it came down to 34.4%; in *Vanguard* 9.4% appeared as Sexual Violence; while in *The Guardian* it came down to 6.3%; similarly in *Vanguard* 3.1% appeared as Emotional Violence; in *The Guardian* 3.1% appeared also as Emotional Violence finally in both *Vanguard* and *The Guardian* no other type of Violence appeared 0%. The forging data indicates that physical violence and sexual violence are the most type of violence mostly experienced by men in an intimate relationship.

Table 7: Distribution of News Theme

	Vanguard	*The Guardian*
Victim -blaming	28.1%	18.8%
	(n=9)	(n=6)
Stigmatization	9.4%	12.5%
	(n=3)	(n=4)
Silence	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Stereotypes	18.8%	12.5%
	(n=6)	(n=4)
Others	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Total	**100%**	**100%**
	(n=18)	(n=14)

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

Table 7 above shows how news reports on IPV against men were spread across various themes. In *Vanguard* 28.1%; of the reports blamed victims; while in *The Guardian,* the victim blaming stood at 18.8%; in *Vanguard* 9.4%; were on Stigmatization while in *Guardian* it came down to 12.5%; meanwhile in *Vanguard* the theme of Silence did not feature 0%; also in *The Guardian* the theme of Silence did not feature at all 0%; similarly in *Vanguard* 18.8%; stood as stereotypes while in *The Guardian* it stood as 12.5%; and finally

in *Vanguard* no other theme appeared 0%; likewise in *Guardian* 0%. The forgoing data implies that in reporting IPV against men, the two newspapers reviewed attributed their report to victim blaming, attributed their report to gender characteristic and stigmatization.

Table 8: Distribution of News Frames

	Vanguard	*The Guardian*
Gender Frame	12.5%	9.4%
	(n=4)	(n=3)
Criminal Justice Frame	25.0%	12.5%
	(n=8)	(n=4)
Moral Frame	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Human Right Frame	12.5%	6.3%
	(n=4)	(n=2)
Health Frame	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
Economic Frame	6.3%	15.6%
	(n=2)	(n=5)
Others	0.0%	0.0%
	(n=0)	(n=0)
TOTAL	**100%**	**100%**
	(n=18)	**(n=14)**

Source: Content Analysis, 2024

Table 8 above shows how news reports on IPV against men were framed by the newspaper studied. In *Vanguard,* 12.5%; of the reports were framed as Gender frame; in *The Guardian,* the Gender frame stood at 9.4.%; meanwhile in *Vanguard,* Criminal justice stood at 25.5%; while in *The Guardian* it stood at 12.5%; Moral frame stood at 0%; in *Vanguard* and in *The Guardian* respectively, in the same vein Human right frame stood 12.5% in the *Vanguard* while in *The Guardian* it came down to 6.3%; also Health frame in *Vanguard* stood at 0%; so also in *Guardian* 0%; then Economic frame stood at 6.3%; in *Vanguard* while in *The*

Guardian, it went up to 15.6%; and finally other frames did not appear in both *Vanguard* and *The Guardian* respectively (0%). The forging data implies that the two newspapers under review framed IPV against men as a criminal act, with a specific emphasis on the consequences and responsibility. It further implies that legal measures, such as apprehension and legal action, to tackle intimate partner violence. Similarly, their framing of IPV from gender perspective suggest gender-based power inequalities.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate a significant lack of proper coverage of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) against men in Nigerian newspapers. With a low mean score of 1.44, the coverage is inadequate compared to the attention given to IPV against women. This finding aligns with prior research by Daniel, Aniekeme, and Nnamdie (2019), which highlights insufficient coverage of gender-based violence against men in the Nigerian press. While there is some coverage, it is not comprehensive enough to create widespread awareness. The distribution of coverage remains poor, further supporting Daramola (2003) and Baran (2010), who suggest that the frequency and prominence of an issue in the media reflect its perceived importance.

The second finding concerns the themes of victimization, stigmatization, and stereotyping in reports on IPV against men, with a mean score of 4.34. This reflects the limited focus on broader societal factors, instead emphasizing individual actions as the cause of violence. This approach reinforces traditional gender roles and contributes to the stigma surrounding male victims. Studies by Wugunda, Oluoch, and Ogenga (2020) and Adebayo (2014) support this, showing that male victims often suffer in silence due to inadequate media representation. The media's focus on individual blame rather than broader societal issues limits a nuanced understanding of IPV against men, perpetuating patriarchal norms that portray men as stronger and less likely to be victims.

Despite this, the third finding reveals some improvement in the prominence of IPV stories in Nigerian dailies, with a mean page placement score of 4.63. These stories, while not often featured on front pages, do receive visibility on center pages, contributing to their overall impact. This is consistent with Daniel, Aniekeme, and Nnamdie's (2019) advocacy for more prominent placement of IPV stories to enhance visibility. However, the low mean score for

page rating (1.97) suggests that while some visibility is achieved, it is still insufficient for creating widespread awareness.

The fourth finding explores how Nigerian newspapers frame IPV against men, with a focus on criminal justice, gender, and human rights frames, achieving a mean score of 6.9. The framing of IPV as a criminal act emphasizes legal consequences, reinforcing the perception of IPV as a serious issue. This aligns with Agbese (2021), who found that episodic framing often blames victims and exonerates perpetrators. The criminal justice frame suggests that legal measures, such as arrests and court cases, are central to addressing IPV. Similarly, the gender frame highlights power imbalances within relationships, where men's inability to provide, financial support can lead to violence. This supports the findings of O'Connor (2023) and Pratto and Walker (2004), who argue that gendered power dynamics contribute to relationship violence.

The economic perspective emphasizes the role of financial dependency in abusive relationships. Studies by Laura, Yafan, Amanda, and Alexanda (2022) show that economic abuse, which controls a partner's access to resources, can trap victims in violent relationships. Financial empowerment and economic independence are crucial in helping victims escape IPV, highlighting the need for resources to support victims' recovery and stability.

These findings relate closely to the agenda-setting theory of mass communication. According to McCombs and Shaw (1972), the media influences public perception by highlighting certain issues and downplaying others. In the case of IPV against men, the limited frequency and prominence in Nigerian newspapers affect how society views male victimization. When media outlets emphasize the severity of IPV against men and adopt an educational approach, societal awareness can shift, leading to greater recognition of the issue. The current disparity in coverage between IPV against men and women reflects the media's role in shaping public discourse, often prioritizing women's experiences in discussions of domestic violence.

Framing theory further underscores the media's role in shaping public perceptions of IPV. By framing IPV against men through criminal justice, gender, and economic lenses, Nigerian newspapers provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue. However, as studies like Naeemzadah and Najibullah's (2023) work on Canadian media coverage of

IPV reveal, media framing can either reinforce stigma or promote systemic responses to social problems. In Nigeria, a more balanced and informed media portrayal of IPV against men could influence policy decisions and societal attitudes.

Conclusion

As the news media is vital for influencing the public image of problem in the society and linked to challenging difficulties by stimulating or foiling measures that might solve such issues as whole. This study analyzed how two Nigerian newspapers handled intimate partner against men and provides valuable information on the representations of intimate partner violence against men in Nigerian, hence accomplishing its purpose. The two newspapers, *Vanguard* and *The Guardian* studied did not give sufficient coverage to IPV against men in Nigeria even though there have been several cases of where male victims were even killed by their female partners *Punch newspaper* (2023). However, the study findings also suggest that male victims of IPV are often blamed, directly and indirectly, for their deaths and portrayed as non-social issues. This is in line with that assertion by Scarduzio, Carlyle, Harris, and Savage, (2017) that female victims of male perpetrated IPV tend to be portrayed in more rigid limits of normative gender roles than female victims. If male victims of IPV are represented as actual victims, more men may feel comfortable coming forward with their victimization experiences, potentially decreasing intimate partner violence.

Therefore, this study concluded that the newspapers' lack of adequate coverage of IPV against men may have the effect of perpetuating the current practice where societal discourse and policy response regarding IPV lay emphasis almost solely on female victims to the exclusion of their male counterparts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the coverage and understanding of intimate partner violence (IPV) against men in Nigerian newspapers: News media should adopt gender-inclusive reporting practices that recognize IPV against men as a significant social problem. Training for journalists and editors is needed to frame the reporting of IPV against men with an equal sense of urgency and sensitivity to that given to stories of IPV against women. This means, sensitively

avoiding victim blaming, stereotyping languages, and checking reports to make sure coverage of male victims does not reinforce harmful gender norms.

Newspapers need to do more in publicizing IPV against men, making it especially in front-page news and placing stories about the same in other prominent sections of the publication. This shall really serve to bring the issue to the front for the onlookers so that the lawmakers and general public, upon seeing the issue, may further step in and deal with the challenge more proactively. Media organizations should also engage in regular and consistent publishing on IPV against men to ensure sustained awareness.

Media organizations should liaise with the relevant governments and non-governmental bodies in devising awareness programs that help educate the public on what is really going on in relation to IPV on men. This will try to reduce the stigma that keeps males from reporting and, further, encouraging assistance and a supportive atmosphere toward all the battered populaces.

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