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## **Perception of Intimate Partner Violence by Journalists in Lafia, Nasarawa state**

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### **Abstract**

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a global problem, recently attracting enormous attention, owing to its effects on both perpetrators and victims. Journalists in the media world, are principal players in engineering the needed social change to reverse the tide of this menace. This study aimed to access how journalists practicing in Lafia understand the menace of Intimate Partner Violence. The study applied the use of validated structured questionnaire to collate information from registered, practising journalists in Lafia. Analysis of data was performed with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 using cross-tabulation to obtain frequencies and percentages. A total of 72 (48.3 %) out of 149 registered journalists responded to the questionnaire. Majority of the respondents which formed 70.8 % of the population practised in the electronic media, while the remaining 29.2 % of the population were print media journalists. Of this population, 61.1 % have practised journalism for 7 years and above, while only 6.9 % have been practising journalism for less than a year. Only 12.5 % of respondents had reported IPV stories before, while 70.8 % which formed a majority of the journalists have not reported IPV stories before, and 15.3 % were not sure if they had ever reported any IPV stories before. Of this reported IPV stories by journalists practising in Lafia, 22.2 % were murder and battery cases respectively, while abdication of marital responsibilities, physical abuse by husband, physical abuse by wife, physical abuse and starvation respectively accounted for 11.1 % of reported IPV stories by the practising journalists. The study recommends increased awareness among journalists to enable more impactful reportage of IPV in society, so as to stem the menace.

### **Keywords:**

*Intimate Partner Violence, Journalists, Media Coverage, Lafia, IPV Reportage, Public Awareness.*

### **Introduction**

The concept of violence, according to World Report on Violence and Health (WRVH) published in October 2002, is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in

or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation (Krug et al., 2006). Violence does not mean only physical assault. It encompasses sexual, emotional, physical, mental, and financial abuse. The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against women defined Intimate Partner Violence as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (Mboho & Raphael, 2018). In this regard, some reports have also exposed the threat of violence against men in parts of the world (Kolbe & Büttner, 2020; Malik & Nadda, 2017). The World Health Organization (2012) defines Intimate Partner Violence as “behaviour by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours”.

In a WHO multi-country study, the prevalence of injury among women who had ever been physically abused by their partners ranged from 19% in Ethiopia to 55% in Peru. Abused women were also twice as likely as non-abused women to report poor health and physical and mental health problems, even if the violence occurred years before. Aside of the physical injuries, several evidence suggest that women who are abused by their partners suffer higher levels of depression, anxiety and phobia than non-abused women, which has given rise to emotional depression, and attempted suicide than those who have not experienced physical or sexual violence. Intimate Partner Violence may lead to several negative sexual and reproductive health consequences for partners like unintended and unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases including HIV, pregnancy complications, urinary tract infections and pelvic inflammatory disease through forceful sexual intercourse. Studies have shown that in several countries, 40-70% of female murder victims were killed by their intimate partners in the context of abusive relationship. Several studies have shown that exposure to Intimate Partner Violence and abuse can have a negative impact on infant and child health on a broad range of health and wellbeing outcomes, in comparison to those children who had not witnessed abuse. In a study of 15-month-old infants born to 72 mothers, exposure to IPV by the mothers was reported to be significantly associated with insecure attachment pattern in 48 infants (Levendosky *et al.*, 2011). Another study by Saltzman et al. (2010) reported increased heart rate and salivary cortisol levels in children who witnessed IPV in their infancy than in those who did not, suggesting the development of physiological trauma in the children. Suppressed intellectual quotient (IQ) in children has also been associated with exposure to IPV. The research also linked lower score in verbal ability with preschool children to IPV exposure, when compared with children of same age who had no such exposures (Graham-Bermann *et al.*, 2010).

The media have the power to influence human behaviours that could lead to social change. Some of the mass media are television, radio, newspapers, and magazines, as well as the new media such as mobile phones, the internet and other forms of social media. The media should play a vital role in society as primary preventers of IPV because of its potential to influence public understanding and opinion (Carl, 2003 in Sutherland *et al.*, 2015). The media is a crucial factor in shaping public discourse because they report on current events and provide a framework for their interpretation. Audiences of the news media are not merely passive recipients of information, but the attitudes, behaviours and beliefs of people are profoundly influenced by the personalities and contents selected as news and how the individuals and events are presented. Most research investigations point to the fact that media audiences are

influenced by what they see, read and hear in the news. Media influence refers to a complex process which involves sources and multiple players such as journalists, editors, and audiences. Without question, the way information is structured can increase public understanding of Intimate Partner Violence, and more importantly, challenge its place in society (Easteal et al., 2015 in Sutherland *et al.*, 2015). The media have been known over time to serve as a tool for creating awareness and perhaps, contributing solutions to several complex issues that affect development in the society such as terrorism, corruption, and family planning.

However, the media is saddled with the responsibility to bring up issues of great importance to the society for public discourse and proffering solutions as the events unfold. Intimate Partner Violence is one of those issues confronting the contemporary Nigerian society. As such, this study examined journalists' perception of IPV as regards whether their knowledge of the incidence affects the pattern of coverage given to the issue.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Agenda setting theory**

This work is based on the agenda setting theory of the mass media. Agenda setting theory is premised on the idea that what the public thinks about is set by the media. The agenda-setting theory was first introduced by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972. This theory states that the mass media news plays an integral part in the shaping of social realities. The amount of time spent on an issue and the information relayed in a news story, along with the story's position, determines how much a reader learns and the amount of importance placed on the issue. Agenda setting theory of McCombs and Shaw states that when the media reflect on the views of people in any issue, they are also shaping and determining the issues of importance. When analysing agenda setting, there are two basic assumptions to be considered, namely that the media and the press filter and shape reality rather than reflect it; and secondly, that when the media focuses on just a few issues and subjects, the public tends to perceive those issues as more important. The questions therefore, are: what issues are important to people? Why are these issues of importance? It is hence, obvious that media coverage not only directs what the society think, but also shapes how society thinks. This influence provides the media with a powerful tool to influence the government and the view of the people. Therefore, when the media starts to focus attention on issues of domestic violence in the society, telling the devastating nature of it and not giving a sensational approach but a holistic, informational and educational approach, then the same will be the way the society will see it and with time, change their attitude towards Intimate Partner Violence in this part of the world. The implication of this statement is that the mass media can make an issue a matter of everyday discourse by focusing attention on the issue. In applying the agenda-setting theory to this research, the authors argue that if the print media focuses or emphasizes Intimate Partner Violence, it will make the society accord importance and understanding to the menace, and eventually engineer the required attitudinal change.

### **Materials and methods**

In this study, questionnaires were administered to journalists to generate numerical data, which were then analyzed using statistical tools to enable the drawing of inferences and generating answers to research questions. Primary data was collected through the use of questionnaire which was administered to Journalist practicing in Lafia, Nasarawa state, to examine their

perception of IPV, with regard to how media coverage has shaped their knowledge of the phenomenon.

### **Sampling technique**

A total of 72 questionnaires was shared using convenience sampling among journalists. Convenience sampling according to Rahi (2017), is a data collection process that enables a researcher to obtain data from a population that is easily accessible. It facilitates quality data collection by a researcher, since more representative samples can be obtained from a population and research findings from such a study can be more generalized (Golzar et al., 2022). This sampling technique is suitable for this study because the journalists were readily available at the state secretariate of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), with the assistance of the State Chairman of the union. Data from the union's register which was provided by the Nasarawa state Chairman of the Union, showed that the NUJ had a total membership of 149 registered journalists practicing in seven chapels within Lafia, Nasarawa state. The questionnaire was administered in a joint meeting of the chapels at the NUJ secretariat in Lafia. The instrument contained information such as the demographic data of the respondents (gender, age range, educational qualification, marital status), their specific role in media practise (editor, reporter), their years of experience in journalism, readership of newspapers and the extent to which IPV reports have influenced their knowledge of the menace. Data obtained from the survey was also coded on a coding sheet and analyzed to answer specific research questions. The structured questionnaire was validated using face validation method. The face validation was used to assess the style formatting, readability, language clarity and feasibility of the survey (Aithal & Aithal, 2020) by a specialist.

### **Data analysis**

Data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The responses obtained from the administered questionnaires, were coded and tabulated using SPSS and further interpreted and presented in charts and tables.

### **Results and discussion**

The use of survey method to evaluate journalists' perception of IPV is based on the fact that survey method is considered as the most appropriate method of gathering data that relates to human demographics, how they perceive issues, the opinions they hold and their most likely reactions to societal issues (Asemah et al., 2014). The choice of journalists as human population for the survey arises from the fact that they are critical in shaping the thoughts and opinions of the society. Hence, it is not impossible that their perception of IPV could also directly influence how the society views the menace. Also, being the watch dog of the society, journalists can be used to gauge the effect of IPV coverage and reportage on the larger society.

A total of 72 responses was received out of a total of 149 registered journalists with the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) practising within Lafia, Nasarawa state. As shown in Table 1, male journalists constituted 61.1 % of responders, while female journalists formed 38.9 % of responders. Furthermore, 62.5 % of the responding journalists were married, while 29.2 % were single and widows/widowers formed the smallest population of responders with 1.4 %. Respondents who have been relating for 6 – 9 years formed the largest population being 27.8 %, while 37.5 % of the respondents were in the age group of 41 – 50 years. Only 1.4 % of

respondents was in the age group of less than 20 years, while 4.2 % did not state their age. Bachelor's degree holders formed the largest group of journalist respondents with 70.8 %, while 20.8 % of the respondents were holders of a Diploma. Majority of the respondents which formed 70.8 % of the population practised in the electronic media, while the remaining 29.2 % of the population were print media journalists. Of this population, 61.1 % have practised journalism for 7 years and above, while only 6.9 % have been practising journalism for less than a year.

**Table 1: Biodata of journalist respondents**

Biodata category	Biodata	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	44	61.1
	Female	28	38.9
Marital status	Single	21	29.2
	Engaged	2	2.8
	Married	45	62.5
	Divorced	3	4.2
	Widow/Widower	1	1.4
Length of relationship	Less than 1 year	12	16.7
	2 - 5 years	12	16.7
	6 - 9 years	20	27.8
	10 years and above	15	20.8
	Not stated	13	18.1
Age of respondent	Not stated	3	4.2
	Less than 20 years	1	1.4
	21 - 30 years	16	22.2
	31 - 40 years	25	34.7
	41 - 50 years	27	37.5
Highest qualification of respondents	Secondary school	1	1.4
	Diploma	15	20.8
	Bachelor's degree	51	70.8
	Master's degree	5	6.9
Aspect of journalism practised	Print Media	21	29.2
	Electronic Media	51	70.8
Length of journalism practise	Less than 1 year	5	6.9
	1 - 3 years	11	15.3
	4 - 6 years	12	16.7
	7 years and above	44	61.1

Acts perceived to be IPV by the responding journalists are listed in Table 2. While some respondents did not pick any of the options, beating, slapping or hitting a partner was the most picked act connoting IPV as indicated by 55.6 % of the respondents, while restriction,

controlling or monitoring a partner was the least picked option indicated as an IPV act by only 37.5 % of the responding journalists. Insulting or threatening a partner was picked by 44.4 % of respondents, followed by denial of partner's right which was picked by 43.1 % of respondents.

**Table 2: Perception of IPV types by respondents**

Actions considered as IPV	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not sure (%)	No option chosen (%)
Beat, slap or hit a partner	40 (55.6)	11 (15.3)	5 (6.9)	16 (22.2)
Insult or threaten a partner	32 (44.4)	14 (19.4)	3 (4.2)	23 (31.9)
Restrict, control or monitor a partner	27 (37.5)	11 (15.3)	7 (9.7)	27 (37.5)
Forced sex with a partner	30 (41.7)	15 (20.8)	2 (2.8)	25 (34.7)
Denial of a partner's rights	31 (43.1)	15 (20.8)	1 (1.1)	25 (34.7)
Causing bodily harm with objects	29 (40.3)	13 (18.1)	5 (6.9)	25 (34.7)

Lack of proper communication between partners and ignorance or illiteracy were indicated as the most causes of IPV by 59.7 % and 56.9 % of journalist respondents respectively (Table 3). Expression of authority and alcohol intoxication were selected by 55.6 % and 54.2 % of respondents respectively, while only 30.6 % agree that religion could cause IPV among couples. Some of the journalists did not pick any of the options among acts perceived to cause IPV among partners.

**Table 3: Perception of IPV causes by journalist respondents**

Causes of IPV	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not sure (%)	No option chosen (%)
Ignorance or illiteracy	41 (56.9)	4 (5.6)	4 (5.6)	23 (31.9)
Poverty and unemployment	35 (48.6)	15 (20.8)	9 (12.5)	26 (36.1)
Religion	22 (30.6)	11 (15.3)	7 (9.7)	27 (37.5)
Traditional beliefs and customs	34 (47.2)	8 (11.1)	5 (6.9)	24 (33.8)
Drinking and alcohol intoxication	39 (54.2)	4 (9.7)	3 (4.2)	23 (31.9)

Expression of authority	40 (55.6)	4 (5.6)	2 (2.8)	26 (36.1)
Unfaithfulness or suspicion of cheating	37 (51.4)	6 (8.3)	3 (4.2)	26 (36.1)
Previous exposure to violence	35 (48.6)	5 (6.9)	6 (8.3)	26 (36.1)
Lack of proper communication between partners	43 (59.7)	4 (5.6)	1 (1.4)	24 (33.3)

Perception of IPV outcomes by journalist respondents was as presented in in Table 4. Most of the respondents constituting 61.1 % of respondents agree that IPV can result in physical injury, while 58.3 % agreed that IPV can result in divorce, health problems and death of a partner. Economic loss and hardship was identified as a possible outcome of IPV by only 48.6 % of respondents, while emotional and psychological problems was identified by 51.4 % of respondents as a possible cause of IPV among partners.

**Table 4: Perception of IPV outcomes/result by journalist respondents**

Outcome of IPV	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not sure (%)	No option chosen (%)
Economic loss and hardship	35 (48.6)	6 (8.3)	6 (8.3)	25 (34.7)
Health problems	42 (58.3)	1 (1.4)	5 (6.9)	24 (33.3)
Emotional and psychological problems	37 (51.4)	5 (6.9)	6 (8.3)	24 (33.3)
Physical injury	44 (61.1)	4 (5.6)	2 (2.8)	22 (30.6)
Divorce	42 (58.3)	5 (6.9)	2 (2.8)	23 (31.9)
Death	42 (58.3)	3 (4.2)	4 (5.6)	23 (31.9)

In Table 5, 69.4 % of the responding journalists attest to having witnessed IPV before. Similarly, while 65.3 % of the responding journalists believed that IPV is prevalent in Lafia, 22.2 % of respondents were not sure if IPV cases were prevalent in Lafia and only 12.5 % disagreed that IPV cases are prevalent in Lafia. Only 12.5 % of respondents had reported IPV stories before, while 70.8 % which formed a majority of the journalists have not reported IPV stories before, and 15.3 % were not sure if they had ever reported any IPV stories before. One journalist constituting 1.4 % of the respondents did not pick any of the options presented.

**Table 5: Perception of IPV prevalence in Lafia by journalist respondents**

Question	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not sure (%)	No option chosen (%)
Have you witnessed any form of abuse between partners before?	50 (69.4)	18 (25.0)	3 (4.2)	1 (1.4)
IPV is prevalent in Lafia	47 (65.3)	9 (12.5)	16 (22.2)	0 (0.0)
Have you ever reported any case of IPV as a journalist?	9 (12.5)	51 (70.8)	11 (15.3)	1 (1.4)

Of the 72 journalists practising in Lafia, only 9 (12.5 %) had reported about IPV (Table 6). Of this reported IPV stories by journalists practising in Lafia, 22.2 % were murder and battery cases respectively, while abdication of marital responsibilities, physical abuse by husband, physical abuse by wife, physical abuse and starvation respectively accounted for 11.1 % of reported IPV stories by the practising journalists.

**Table 6: IPV types previously reported by respondent journalists practising in Lafia**

IPV type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Murder	2	22.2
Abdication of marital responsibilities	1	11.1
Physical abuse of husband by wife	1	11.1
Physical abuse of wife by husband	1	11.1
Physical abuse	1	11.1
Battery	2	22.2
Starvation	1	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100</b>

The perception of newspaper coverage of IPV by journalists in Lafia is presented in Table 7. While 22.2 % of respondents strongly agree that reports of IPV feature prominently in newspaper cover pages, 38.9 % agree and 22.2 % disagree, 2.8 % strongly disagreed, 11.1 %

strongly disagreed and 2.8 % did not pick any of the options. Similarly, 18.1 % respondents strongly agreed and 48.6 % agreed that newspaper reports are crafted to discourage IPV in the society, while 20.8 % disagreed. In relation to how detailed newspaper reports of IPV are, 25.0 % of respondents strongly agreed and 38.9 % agreed while 15.3 % disagreed that such reports are usually detailed. Additionally, 16.7 % strongly agreed and 58.3 % agreed that newspaper reports on Intimate Partner Violence have positively influenced people's perception of the IPV. Only 13.9 % of responding journalists disagreed with this position. In the same vein, while 8.3 % of responding journalists disagreed that Newspapers report on Intimate Partner Violence has positively influenced the perception of journalists about the menace, 20.8 % strongly agreed, and 54.2 % agreed with the position. Questionnaire data gathered in this study from journalists practising in Lafia showed that 9 (12.5 %) have reported stories related to IPV in the course of their practise. Considering that most of the journalists had been practising journalism for 7 years and above in both the print and electronic media, this data indicates that the required attention is not accorded the coverage or reportage of stories bothering on IPV even within the study area of Lafia.

**Table 7: Perception of newspaper coverage of IPV by respondent journalists**

Question	Strongly agree (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)	I don't know (%)	No option chosen (%)
Journalist reports of IPV feature prominently in newspaper cover pages	16 (22.2)	28 (38.9)	16 (22.2)	2 (2.8)	8 (11.1)	2 (2.8)
Newspaper reports are crafted to discourage Intimate Partner Violence	13 (18.1)	35 (48.6)	15 (20.8)	2 (2.8)	4 (5.6)	3 (4.2)
Newspaper reports on Intimate Partner Violence are usually detailed	18 (25.0)	28 (38.9)	11 (15.3)	6 (8.3)	6 (8.3)	3 (4.2)
Newspaper reports on Intimate Partner Violence have positively influenced people's perception of the IPV?	12 (16.7)	42 (58.3)	10 (13.9)	2 (2.8)	3 (4.2)	3 (4.2)
Newspapers report on Intimate Partner Violence has positively influenced the perception of journalists about IPV	15 (20.8)	39 (54.2)	6 (8.3)	1 (1.4)	7 (9.7)	4 (5.6)

Data obtained from the questionnaire administered to practising journalists within the study area tends to suggest that journalists' knowledge and perception influence coverage of IPV stories. The choice and pattern of options picked by the respondents when asked about specific

acts considered as IPV, tends to reveal a shallow knowledge of the menace. For instance, although a larger proportion of them (55.6 %) agreed that an act such as beating slapping or hitting a partner qualified as IPV, a total 44.4 % of them either did not agree (15.3 %), were not sure (6.9 %) or simply did not pick any of the options provided (22.2 %). This data did not show very obvious distinction between the group that flagged this act as IPV, and those who did not. Also, when considered together, the number of respondents who assertively agreed that insulting or threatening a partner (44.4 %), restricting, controlling or monitoring a partner (37.5 %), forced sex with a partner (41.7 %), denial of a partner's right (43.1 %) or causing bodily harm with objects (40.3 %) were acts of IPV, was smaller than those who all together did not assertively agree, when compared. For most of these examples of IPV presented in the questionnaire for respondents, those who did not choose any option between "Yes", "No" or "Not sure" were more than 30.0 %. For acts such as forced sex with a partner, denial of a partner's right, or causing bodily harm with objects which the researcher expected would be undisputedly recognized as acts of IPV by journalists, 34.7 % of the respondents did not pick any option and then taken together, more 50.0 % of them did not assertively agree that these were acts of IPV. This is despite that 69.4 % of respondents had agreed to witnessing some form of abuse between partners.

The foregoing observations may point to journalists practising in Lafia not having enough knowledge of IPV, coupled with inaccurate perception of the menace as surprisingly, only 12.5% of respondents indicated that they had ever reported IPV stories as practising journalists, while 70.8% which formed majority of journalists have never reported IPV stories before. Moreso, 15.3% were not sure if they had ever reported any IPV stories before, while one journalist which constituted 1.4% of the respondents did not pick any option. The authors opine that the pattern of reporting or coverage priority given to IPV cases by these practising journalists could have been influenced by the perception they hold of certain acts considered as IPV or otherwise. Additionally, 15 (20.8 %) of the journalists strongly agree and 39 (54.2 %) agreed that newspaper report on IPV has positively influenced their perception of the menace. These perceptions can influence what they choose to report and how they choose to report it. It was in this regard that Fab-Ukozor (2019) reported how negative perceptions of journalist in Nigeria affected their reportage of Gender Mainstreaming in the media. Although the journalists accessed by Fab-Ukozor (2019) asserted to knowing about gender mainstreaming, which also influenced their reporting of the phenomenon, the journalists were not favourably disposed towards the ideology of gender mainstreaming reporting. Furthermore, the report noted that journalist's perception of gender mainstreaming was influenced by the most dominant form of reportage. This problem of wrong or inaccurate perception is worsened by the issues of cultural leanings and other societal values or practices that also contribute to how journalists in certain localities view gender related issues (Fab-Ukozor, 2019). The case may not be different with these journalists in Lafia, which is still largely influenced by the cultural beliefs of the inhabitants. These findings contradict the social responsibility theory which is one of the theories used in this study. The media has an obligation of doing the needful in getting the evils in the society exposed, and the press has the duty to engage in coverage of issues causing domestic violence in the society.

Data obtained from the questionnaire administered to practising journalists within the study area also tends to agree that newspaper reports on IPV has an influence on the perception of IPV by the society. While 16.7 % of them strongly agreed with this assertion, 58.3 % of them further affirmed that reports in the newspapers positively impacts the perception of society with

regards to IPV. It has been established by the agenda setting theory which is one of the theories on which this study is based, that the media can dictate what the public thinks about an issue. This theory posits that the mass media news plays very vital roles in the shaping of social realities. Consequently, the amount of time spent on an issue and the information relayed in news reports and its perceived position, determines how much a reader learns and the extent of importance placed on the issue. Being the watch dog of the society and a profession that directly interfaces with the people, journalists can feel the pulse and observe trends that are portrayed within a society. Despite the fact that adequate attention and coverage was not given to IPV related stories in the period under study as already established previously in this discussion, it is not out of place to posit that the little effort being put into public enlightenment through newspaper publications of IPV has helped (even if in a little measure) to positively shape the perception of the society about IPV, and improved their knowledge about the menace. This finding is also supported by earlier studies in Nigeria and beyond (Akarika et al., 2019; Carlyle et al., 2008; Davidenko et al., 2023; Ekweonu, 2020).

## Conclusion

The present study evaluated the perception of IPV by registered journalists practising under the umbrella of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) in Lafia, Nasarawa state using structured questionnaire. Only very few of the journalists admitted to publishing IPV related stories in the print or electronic media. This suggested the possibility of shallow knowledge and inaccurate perception of the menace, which could have influenced their reportage and the extent of attention given to the menace by the journalists. The data also suggested high prevalence of IPV in Lafia as highlighted by majority of the journalists. Practising journalists in Lafia failed to demonstrate the required adequate knowledge, perception and commitment to enlightening the society as shown by their pattern of reportage and admittance to rarely publishing IPV related stories in print or electronic media, even though majority of them have practised journalism for over seven years. This means such journalists may be failing in their social responsibility, probably due to their shallow knowledge of the menace. If the menace of IPV and indeed any social ill will be curbed at a faster rate, the media must become intentional in its responsibility of setting the agenda and creating the expected social change through the way important matters like IPV are reported. The study recommends training programmes designed for journalists and tailored towards forming the right knowledge and perception of IPV, in addition to the need for Journalists to be encouraged to give attention to the reportage of IPV stories as a means to achieving public enlightenment in the study area, especially since data harvested from them attest to the prevalence of the menace in Lafia. Additionally, Journalists should be encouraged to properly research on issues they report on.

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