



## **Exposure and Response to Dream 92.5 FM Gender-Based Violence Campaign Messages among Women in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a persistent human rights and public health challenge despite sustained awareness campaigns by governments, media organisations, and non-governmental organisations. The continued prevalence of GBV raises concerns about the extent to which media campaigns influence victims' behavioural responses.

**Objective:** This study examined women's exposure and response to Dream 92.5 FM Enugu gender-based violence campaign messages in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria.

**Method:** The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to 400 women selected through a multi-stage sampling procedure. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula. Stratified random sampling was employed to categorise respondents by age and socio-economic status, purposive sampling was used to identify women with experiences of gender-based violence, and simple random sampling was applied to select listeners of Dream 92.5 FM. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics.

**Results:** The findings revealed high exposure to Dream 92.5 FM's GBV campaign messages and positive perceptions of their awareness-raising effectiveness. However, increased awareness did not translate into corresponding reporting or help-seeking behaviour. Fear of stigmatisation, victim-blaming, and other entrenched socio-cultural norms emerged as the major barriers preventing women from acting on the campaign messages.

**Conclusion:** While Dream 92.5 FM's GBV campaign effectively enhanced awareness, its behavioural impact was constrained by prevailing socio-cultural barriers. Media campaigns should therefore be complemented with community-based interventions that reduce stigma, challenge harmful social norms, strengthen survivor support systems, and promote confidence in reporting mechanisms.

**Unique Contribution:** The study advances media effects and health communication scholarship by demonstrating that message exposure alone is insufficient to drive behavioural change in GBV prevention. It highlights the mediating role of socio-cultural barriers in shaping women's responses to radio campaign messages and provides evidence for integrating behaviour change communication with community-level social norm interventions to improve the effectiveness of GBV campaigns.

**Keywords:** Gender-based violence, radio campaign, message exposure, behavioural response, socio-cultural barriers, women, Nigeria.



## INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains one of the most pervasive public health and human rights challenges worldwide, affecting millions of women regardless of age, socio-economic status, or geographical location. The burden is particularly severe in developing countries, where entrenched gender inequalities, weak institutional support systems, and socio-cultural norms continue to expose women to various forms of physical, sexual, psychological, and economic violence. According to the World Health Organization (2023), nearly one in three women globally has experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by an intimate partner or non-partner during her lifetime. In Nigeria, the prevalence of GBV is exacerbated by patriarchal social structures, economic vulnerability, and limited access to justice and support services. Within the socio-cultural context of South-East Nigeria, the culture of silence—driven by the desire to preserve family honour and marital stability—continues to discourage survivors from reporting abuse or seeking institutional support (Nwala, 2025).

Radio, particularly community radio, has been widely recognised as an effective medium for public enlightenment and social mobilisation because of its accessibility, affordability, and ability to transcend literacy barriers. In rural communities, where access to other media platforms may be limited, radio serves as an important channel for disseminating information on gender-based violence, legal rights, and available support services. Abdullahi (2024) observes that radio gives a voice to marginalised populations by delivering life-saving information and promoting social advocacy. Through sustained anti-GBV campaigns, stations such as Dream 92.5 FM Enugu seek to raise public awareness, challenge harmful cultural norms, encourage reporting, and promote the utilisation of available support mechanisms. However, awareness alone does not necessarily translate into behavioural change. The effectiveness of media campaigns ultimately depends on the audience's ability and willingness to understand, internalise, and apply campaign messages within their prevailing socio-cultural and economic realities.

Although media campaigns on gender-based violence have attracted considerable scholarly attention, relatively few studies have examined the gap between exposure to radio campaign messages and the practical application of the knowledge acquired, particularly among women in rural communities in South-East Nigeria (Nwala, 2025). Existing evidence suggests that although many women demonstrate high levels of awareness regarding their rights and available reporting mechanisms, this awareness rarely translates into reporting abusive experiences or seeking institutional support. According to Ezeh (2026), this disconnect is attributable not only to limitations in media campaigns but also to the absence of effective support systems in rural communities, where survivors often fear stigmatisation, victim-blaming, social exclusion, and economic hardship following disclosure.



Against this background, this study examines women's exposure and response to Dream 92.5 FM Enugu's gender-based violence campaign messages in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State. Specifically, the study investigates the extent to which women are exposed to and understand the campaign messages, examines the socio-cultural factors that influence their behavioural responses, and identifies strategies for integrating radio campaigns with community-based support mechanisms to enhance reporting, help-seeking behaviour, and the overall effectiveness of gender-based violence interventions.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Dream 92.5 FM Enugu has consistently broadcast campaign messages aimed at raising awareness of gender-based violence, promoting reporting, and encouraging the utilisation of available support services. Despite these efforts, gender-based violence remains prevalent, while many survivors continue to suffer in silence without seeking assistance. This situation raises concerns about the extent to which exposure to anti-GBV radio campaigns translates into meaningful behavioural responses among women in rural communities.

Existing studies (e.g., Oguadimma, 2020; Adeyanju & Okoro, 2024) have focused primarily on the reach, awareness, and visibility of media campaigns, with limited attention to whether women who are exposed to such messages actually apply the knowledge gained by reporting abuse, seeking support, or adopting protective measures. Consequently, there remains a paucity of empirical evidence on the relationship between exposure to Dream 92.5 FM's gender-based violence campaign messages and women's behavioural responses in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area. This study addresses this gap by examining the nexus between message exposure, socio-cultural barriers, and the practical application of anti-GBV campaign messages among women in the study area.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What is the level of exposure to and awareness of Dream 92.5 FM's gender-based violence campaign messages among women in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area?
2. How do socio-cultural barriers influence women's behavioural responses to Dream 92.5 FM's anti-gender-based violence campaign messages in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area?
3. What strategies can effectively bridge the gap between exposure to radio campaign messages and the utilisation of gender-based violence reporting and support services among women in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area?



## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Gender-based Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a systemic violation of human rights rooted in unequal power dynamics and the enforcement of patriarchal social control. According to the World Health Organisation (2023), GBV encompasses a broad spectrum of harmful behaviours including physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse that disproportionately target women and girls. Rather than being viewed merely as a series of isolated interpersonal crimes, GBV is increasingly understood as a structural mechanism used to maintain gender hierarchies, where violence serves as a tool to regulate female autonomy and enforce societal expectations regarding domestic roles (Nwala, 2025).

In the specific context of rural Nigeria, the conceptualisation of GBV is inextricably linked to traditional customs that often prioritise the sanctity of the marital unit over individual bodily integrity. This phenomenon creates what have become known as culture of silence, where domestic abuse is frequently trivialised as a private family matter rather than a legal or public health concern (Oguadimma, 2020). For women in communities like Isi-Uzo, this situation is compounded by structural invisibility, where limited access to legal support and fear of social stigmatisation act as powerful deterrents against seeking help, thereby reinforcing the cycle of victimisation.

Beyond overt physical aggression, contemporary research highlights the critical importance of economic and psychological forms of violence as instruments of dominance. Economic violence, characterised by the denial of financial resources and property rights, serves as a significant barrier that traps women in abusive relationships by stripping them of the means to sustain independent lives (UN Women, 2022). According to Adeyanju and Okoro (2024), this economic coercion is often the most pervasive barrier in rural settings, rendering the psychological impact of violence more profound and more difficult to challenge through conventional legal channels alone.

Ultimately, conceptualising GBV necessitates an intersectional approach that accounts for how age, literacy, and economic status mediate the experience of abuse. In line with this view, Internews (2024) emphasises that violence is a multi-dimensional variable, and its mitigation requires moving beyond broad awareness toward context-specific interventions that address the unique socio-cultural hurdles faced by rural populations. Consequently, effective strategies for addressing GBV must not only expose the prevalence of violence but also provide actionable knowledge that empowers survivors to navigate the specific patriarchal structures that govern their lives.



Gender-based violence (GBV) exists in different forms, each of which is designed to exert power and control over women. The most widely recognised form is physical violence, which includes hitting, slapping, strangling, or the use of weapons. In rural contexts such as Isi-Uzo, physical violence is frequently masked as domestic discipline, a cultural framing that complicates the victim's ability to categorise the act as a criminal violation of their rights (WHO, 2023). Another is sexual violence constitutes. This is common and often the most stigmatised form of GBV, encompassing rape, coerced sexual acts, and the withholding of sexual agency within marriage. Most of the sexual violence in Nigeria such as marital rape, intimidation and beating of women go unreported. The problem is compounded by deep-rooted patriarchal norms which renders this form of violence difficult to challenge. Victims of sexual violence in rural areas often face secondary victimisation from community members and even local law enforcement, which further entrenches the silence surrounding these occurrences and prevents the seeking of essential medical and psychosocial care (Oguadimma, 2020).

There are also emotional and psychological violence involving persistent verbal abuse, intimidation, isolation from support networks, and threats of harm. This form of violence is intended to erode a woman's self-esteem and agency, effectively breaking the spirit to ensure compliance without the constant need for physical force. As According to Adeyanju and Okoro (2024), psychological abuse in rural settings is often normalised as a husband's prerogative, making it the most difficult form for women to identify as abuse, even as it causes severe, long-term trauma that severely impacts their mental and emotional well-being. Finally, economic and structural violence acts as a silent cage that prevents women from exiting abusive environments. This form of GBV involves the deliberate restriction of access to financial resources, land ownership, and employment opportunities, thereby enforcing total economic dependence on the abuser (Internews, 2024),

### **Culture of Silence**

According to Aborisade (2022, p. 14) the culture of silence is a pervasive social phenomenon "deeply rooted in gender inequalities and societal expectations" that systematically "hinders survivors' access to support services and perpetuates victim-blaming". Historically anchored in Paulo Freire's (1970) conceptualisation of a submerged consciousness, this phenomenon reflects a state where marginalised individuals internalise the risks of dissent, thereby reinforcing the very systemic constraints that prevent them from naming their reality. Operationally, within the scope of this investigation, the culture of silence is defined as the systemic, socially motivated concealment of GBV by survivors, families, and community custodians in South-East Nigeria, manifested through deliberate non-disclosure, underreporting to formal legal authorities, and the prioritising of familial or communal



reputation over individual physical and psychological safety. The culture of silence operates as a foundational structural barrier in the study of gender-based violence (GBV) in South-East Nigeria, acting as a mechanism that preserves entrenched patriarchal power dynamics while obscuring the pervasiveness of abuse.

This culture of silence creates a critical diagnostic and therapeutic impasse: the lack of reported cases is frequently misinterpreted by authorities as an absence of violence rather than an absence of reporting. As noted by Morrison and Milliken (2000), such silence is often a deliberate, strategic decision. In this case, a survival mechanism against the real threat of social ostracism, community stigmatisation, and familial retaliation. In South-East Nigeria, the silence surrounding domestic and sexual abuse is not an indicator of cultural acceptance, but a symptom of a climate where the immediate social and economic costs of transparency outweigh the perceived institutional protection available to victims (Azeez, 2020). This collective mutism effectively traps survivors in a cycle of isolation, shielding perpetrators from accountability and obscuring the true epidemiological scale of GBV within the region. Yoshida and Shanouda (2015) argues that when silence is institutionalised, individuals are socialised to perform self-censorship, which inadvertently renders them complicit in their own continued marginalisation. It can, therefore, be argued that the persistence of gender-based violence in South-East Nigeria is inextricably linked to the lack of psychological, legal, and societal safety. Without institutional mechanisms specifically designed to dismantle the patriarchal frameworks sustaining this culture of silence, and without replacing them with community-based models for safe, authentic dialogue, gender-based violence will remain deeply resistant to meaningful reform.

### **Radio-Mediated Knowledge Acquisition and GBV Awareness**

The capacity of community radio to facilitate knowledge acquisition regarding Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is grounded in its role as a primary information hub in rural Nigeria. Radio broadcasting serves as a critical tool for providing legal literacy and the rights of women to report violence against their womanhood. For instance, radio gender violence literacy help in translating complex legislative frameworks such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act into accessible, indigenous-language content that bypasses traditional barriers to education and digital literacy. By consistently airing programmes that explicitly explain the various forms of abuse, radio stations like Dream 92.5 FM act as agents of agenda-setting, elevating domestic violence from a private family affair to a subject of public discourse and human rights advocacy (Adeyanju & Okoro, 2024). When radio campaigns feature survivors or legal professionals, they provide listeners with relatable frameworks to identify their own experiences of abuse, thereby overcoming the normalisation of violence within patriarchal structures. According to Internews (2024), radio is particularly effective in rural settings



because it provides a safe and private medium for consumption, allowing women to acquire sensitive information without the immediate risk of exposure or communal shame that often accompanies seeking in-person counselling.

Furthermore, the cognitive awareness fostered by these broadcasts is the essential prerequisite for behavioural change. Radio campaigns function by socialising the audience to the reality that GBV is an illegal act with specific reporting channels. As noted by Nwala (2025), the repetitive nature of broadcast messaging helps to solidify this knowledge, effectively socialising women into a new understanding of their rights. In support, Obasi and Okeke (2025) demonstrate that broadcast media significantly enhances community awareness of violence, although the scholars highlight a critical need for higher frequency in educational programming to catalyse genuine behavioural change. This view is echoed by Okafor and Adewale (2024), who argue that while media exposure correlates with knowledge, the effectiveness of these campaigns is heavily mediated by socioeconomic factors and ingrained cultural norms. They contend that general information campaigns are insufficient; instead, radio must explicitly confront the local cultural mechanisms that facilitate gender discrimination.

### **Socio-Cultural Mediators of Behavioural Application**

While radio campaigns effectively foster cognitive awareness, the transition from knowledge to behavioural application is heavily mediated by entrenched socio-cultural variables. In rural communities such as Isi-Uzo, patriarchal norms often function as the primary gatekeepers of agency, dictating the boundaries of what constitutes an acceptable response to domestic abuse. As Ezeh (2026) observes, the culture of silence is not merely a lack of information but a strategic survival mechanism; women often prioritise the preservation of the marital unit and their communal standing over individual legal recourse, as the threat of social ostracisation remains more immediate and tangible than the potential protections offered by the law.

Economic dependence serves as a critical structural mediator that frequently nullifies the impact of radio-disseminated information. When women lack autonomous financial resources, the practical application of reporting mechanisms such as contacting authorities or seeking shelter becomes an existential threat to their survival and that of their children. According to Internews (2024), this economic fragility forces a rational choice whereby women consciously choose to endure violence to maintain access to basic needs. Consequently, even when radio messages provide clear actionable steps, the structural reality of poverty and limited alternative support systems creates an insurmountable gap between knowing one's rights and being able to exercise them safely.



Furthermore, the influence of traditional institutions and local community power structures acts as a significant barrier to behavioural change. In many rural settings, domestic conflicts are traditionally mediated by family heads or community elders rather than formal legal institutions, and these mediators often advocate for reconciliation over the reporting of abuse. As Nwala (2025) argues, this creates a conflict between the legal rights promoted by mass media and the traditional obligations enforced by the community. For women in Isi-Uzo, the effectiveness of radio campaigns is ultimately limited by the station's inability to dismantle these local power dynamics, underscoring the necessity for communication strategies that account for these deep-seated socio-cultural realities to be truly effective in fostering proactive protection.

Expanding upon the debate that the intersection of cultural values and media advocacy remains a central theme, Eze (2024) explores this dynamic by examining how media-driven gender advocacy influences parental attitudes toward equality for girls and boys. By suggesting that media houses should partner with traditional institutions to legitimise their messages, Eze (2024) highlights that media serves as a vital tool for long-term regional development. However, as Nwachukwu, Larkin & D'Agostino (2024) observe, a significant gap persists between awareness and actual help-seeking behaviour. Their study emphasizes that cultural barriers and the fear of social repercussions often prevent victims from reporting violence, even when they possess the necessary knowledge.

## **EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

### **Media Campaigns and GBV awareness and knowledge**

Badiora, Sanusi, Talabi Oladele, Bello, Talabi, Ade-Johnson, & Olaseinde (2025) investigated the level of knowledge, attitudes and practice towards media campaigns against gender-based violence among adults in Southwest Nigeria. Findings from the study showed that media campaigns have been effective in raising awareness about GBV, especially among those exposed to radio campaigns. It also found that opinion leaders and community-based initiatives were significant in creating awareness of gender-based violence through media campaigns. The study recommended a multichannel approach to campaigns using traditional and digital media to reach a wider audience. It also recommended that support services such as counselling, legal aid and shelter for victims and complainants should be increased. The study is related to the present study in purpose as it addressed the intersection of radio-based media campaigns, knowledge, and sociocultural factors in the specific region of the present study. However, it did not fully detail the practical application or help-seeking behaviours of victims post-exposure.

Olayinka (2024). "Impact of Radio Advocacy Campaigns on Gender Disparity and Sexual Harassment among Female Civil Servants in Southwest Nigeria". The purpose was to evaluate



how radio advocacy influences perceptions of gender disparity and sexual harassment in institutional settings. Mixed-methods research design was used. The population comprised female civil servants in Southwest Nigeria. This study is related to the current study because it highlighted radio's capacity to reach audiences in offices and rural areas, which is vital for broadening the scope of GBV campaigns. However, the study was limited by lack of empirical evidence on the transition from awareness-raising to concrete changes in workplace culture and reporting behaviours. It recommended stronger policy backing and enhanced media-NGO collaborations for sustained impact beyond simple awareness.

Okafor, Anorue, Obayi & Chima, (2023) examined "Knowledge and Attitude Toward Media Campaigns against Gender-Based Violence among Nigerian Women in South-East, Nigeria". The purpose of the study was to examine the level of exposure, cognitive status, and determinants of attitudes toward gender-based victimization among women in Southeast Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised women residents in Southeast Nigeria. This study directly addressed the intersection of radio-based media campaigns, knowledge, and sociocultural factors in the specific region of the present study.

While it identifies that socioeconomic factors (religion, academic achievement) influence attitudes, it did not fully detail the practical application or help-seeking behaviours of victims post-exposure. The study concluded that cultural factors significantly influence attitudes and recommended that future campaigns be informed by a clear understanding of the relationship between dominant local cultures and the suppression of women.

Okonkwo and Umuerrri (2024) assessed broadcast media campaign against gender-based violence in Benin City. The purpose of the study was to determine the level of awareness and perceived effectiveness of radio campaigns in changing GBV-related behaviours. The study utilised mixed-methods (surveys and qualitative interviews). The population of the study comprised the residents of Benin City, Edo State. The study is related to the present study in the sense that it provided a framework for assessing campaign effectiveness through specific radio programme evaluation. While it assesses effectiveness, it acknowledges that behavioural change remains elusive due to persistent cultural and systemic barriers. The study recommended refining media strategies based on objective, impartial news reporting and better audience segmentation.

### **Socio-cultural barriers influence on the practical application of radio anti-GBV messages among women**

Talabi, Oyewole, Aiyesimoju & Badiora (2025) examined "Leveraging radio messages to challenge cultural factors promoting gender-based violence in Nigeria". The purpose of the study was to examine the impact of radio messages on challenging cultural factors (such as early marriage and wife-battering) that promote GBV. Survey research design was utilised with inferential statistics (regression analysis). The sample population was 368 respondents in



Osogbo, Osun State. This study established the predictive power of radio as a standalone medium for cultural norm change. The study focuses on a Yoruba cultural context; further application is needed to see if these findings translate to the patriarchal structures in Southeast Nigeria. The scholars concluded that radio is a powerful tool for addressing GBV and recommended promoting responsible journalism and specific cultural adaptation in reporting.

### **Models for Integrating Radio Broadcasting and GBV Prevention**

Msuya & Kilonzo (2024) investigated “Data-Driven Radio: Mobilising Community Oversight in GBV Mitigation”. The study examined the efficacy of integrating real-time regional violence statistics into radio broadcasting to enhance community accountability. Utilising a mixed-methods action research design, the authors adopt the Accountability Theory to explore how quantitative data, when disseminated via radio, transforms listener awareness into institutional pressure. The research focused on a population of community radio listeners in Zanzibar, with a sample size of 450 participants engaged in focus group discussions and survey data. The findings indicated that the alignment of broadcast content with verifiable, district-level GBV statistics led to a 28% increase in documented reports to police gender desks. The study recommends that radio stations should formalise partnerships with law enforcement to ensure data accuracy. However, a significant gap in knowledge persists regarding the long-term psychological impact on victims when their personal data is used to drive community-level reporting, suggesting a need for deeper ethical exploration in future studies.

Omondi & Mwangi (2025) conducted a study titled “The Participatory Standpoint: Enhancing Grassroots Protection in Informal Settlements.” The research aimed to determine how including survivor voices in the production process affects community protective agency. Adopting Standpoint Theory to centre the experiences of those most affected by violence, the study employed an ethnographic research design. The population consisted of women living in the Kibera and Mukuru informal settlements, with a sample of 120 women participating in organised listening groups. The findings demonstrated that when survivors act as co-creators of radio content, the perceived legitimacy of protection mechanisms increases, effectively dismantling the culture of silence. The authors recommended that broadcasters institutionalise community feedback loops to maintain this engagement. While comprehensive, the study exhibits a gap in knowledge concerning the scalability of this model to rural contexts, as the research was strictly confined to urban informal settings.

Finally, Adeyemi, Okoro & Yusuf (2026), in their article “Culturally Rooted Messaging: A Regression Analysis of Radio Influence on Gender Norms,” investigated how radio content can systematically challenge deeply entrenched cultural norms that hinder proactive protection. The researchers adopted Social Cognitive Theory to explain how observational learning through radio can alter individual behavioural intent. Employing a quantitative survey-based research design, the study sampled 600 household heads across Osun State, Nigeria. The regression



analysis revealed that culturally sensitive radio interventions independently explained 75.3% of the variance in a listener's readiness to intervene in instances of gender-based violence. The study recommended that media producers utilise indigenous proverbs and local narratives to frame human rights messages effectively. Nonetheless, the study identifies a gap in knowledge regarding the sustainability of this behavioural change over time, specifically whether the observed proactive shifts remain stable without continuous, high-frequency media reinforcement.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study is anchored on the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT), Health Belief Model (HBM) and Social Learning Theory (SLT). Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) was developed by Katz, Blumier, and Gurewitsch in the 1970s; Health Belief Model was propounded in the 1950s by Rosenstock, Hochbaum, Kegels, and Leventhal, while Social learning Theory was pioneered by Bandura in the 1960s. Uses and Gratifications Theory posits that media audience choose the media they use that satisfy their needs. UGT, therefore, shifts the focus from what media does to the audience, to what the audience does with the media. Rather than viewing women as passive recipients of anti-GBV messaging, UGT suggests that women in Isi-Uzo actively choose to engage with Dream 92.5 FM because they derive personal utility such as guidance, emotional support, or a sense of community from the content. As noted by Adeyanju and Okoro (2024), when radio content successfully satisfies these gratifications, the information conveyed becomes more deeply integrated into the listener's decision-making process, thereby increasing the likelihood of behavioural change.

The Health Belief Model (HBM) attributed to Roenstock (1966) lends support to the Uses and Gratifications Theory. HBM provides a robust framework for assessing why women in rural settings may or may not translate awareness into protective action. The HBM suggests that behavioural change is prompted when an individual perceives the threat (GBV) as serious and themselves as personally susceptible, while simultaneously believing that the recommended action (reporting) will be effective and that the benefits outweigh the barriers. Health Belief Model was later expanded Becker and others in the 1970s to include additional constructs such as cues to action and self-efficacy.

Finally, Social Learning Theory complements UGT and HBM. Social Learning Theory was pioneered by psychologist Albert Bandura in the 1960s. The theory posits that people learn new behaviours, values, and attitudes by observing the actions of others within their social environment. In the context of Dream 92.5 FM, the radio personalities, expert guests, and featured survivors serve as social models. When these figures effectively demonstrate how to navigate reporting channels or challenge abusive dynamics, they provide listeners with a mental roadmap that reduces the perceived uncertainty and risk associated with taking action (Ezeh, 2026).



## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to describe women's exposure to, knowledge of, and responses to Dream 92.5 FM Enugu's gender-based violence (GBV) campaign messages in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State. The design also facilitated the collection and analysis of quantitative data to identify prevailing patterns of exposure, awareness, knowledge, and behavioural responses to the campaign messages.

Although a mixed-methods approach could have provided deeper insights through the integration of quantitative and qualitative data, the study was limited to a quantitative design. This decision was informed by the sensitive nature of gender-based violence, as some respondents might have been reluctant to disclose their experiences during face-to-face interviews for fear of victimisation, social stigma, or possible retaliation from their spouses or family members. The survey approach therefore provided respondents with greater anonymity, thereby enhancing the likelihood of obtaining reliable responses.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised women residing in Isi-Uzo Local Government Area of Enugu State. The target population included women from different age groups, educational backgrounds, occupations, and socio-economic statuses. Particular attention was given to women who had experienced or survived gender-based violence, as they were considered capable of providing informed responses regarding exposure to, understanding of, and behavioural responses to Dream 92.5 FM's anti-GBV campaign messages. The inclusion of women from diverse backgrounds ensured a comprehensive assessment of how the campaign messages were received and applied within the study area.

### **Sample Size**

A sample size of 400 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. The sample was considered adequate to ensure statistical reliability and provide sufficient representation of the target population for meaningful analysis.

### **Sampling Technique**

The study employed a multistage sampling technique to ensure representative data collection. First, stratified random sampling was used to categorise respondents according to relevant demographic characteristics, including age and socio-economic status, to ensure adequate



representation of different segments of the population. Thereafter, purposive sampling was employed to identify women who had experienced gender-based violence because they possessed the relevant knowledge and experiences required for the study. Finally, simple random sampling was used to select respondents from both rural and urban communities within Isi-Uzo Local Government Area, thereby minimising selection bias and enhancing the representativeness of the sample.

### **Validity of the Research Instrument**

The validity of the questionnaire was established through face and content validity. The instrument was subjected to expert review by specialists in Mass Communication, gender studies, and research methodology, who assessed the questionnaire for clarity, relevance, appropriateness, and alignment with the study objectives. Their observations and recommendations were incorporated into the final version of the instrument. In addition, a pilot study was conducted among women outside the study area to identify ambiguous, misleading, or culturally inappropriate items. The feedback obtained from the pilot study further improved the quality and suitability of the questionnaire for data collection.

### **Reliability of the Research Instrument**

The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. The reliability analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.70, indicating acceptable internal consistency among the questionnaire items and confirming the instrument's suitability for the study.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected from the respondents were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations, were used to summarise respondents' demographic characteristics and describe their levels of exposure, awareness, knowledge, and responses to Dream 92.5 FM's gender-based violence campaign messages. Inferential statistics, specifically regression analysis, were employed to examine the relationship between exposure to the radio campaign messages and women's behavioural responses toward gender-based violence. All analyses were conducted at the 0.05 level of significance.



## RESULTS

**Table 1: Biodata**

Demographic Category	Sub-Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-30	120	30%
	31-45	180	45%
	46 and above	100	25%
Marital Status	Single	60	15%
	Married	280	70%
	Widowed/Divorced	60	15%
Educational Level	No formal education	80	20%
	Primary	140	35%
	Secondary/higher education	120	30%
	Tertiary	60	15%
Occupation	Farming	200	50
	Trading/Small business	120	30
	Civil service	40	10
	Unemployed/Dependent	40	10

	Statements	SA 5	A 4	D 3	SD 1	Total
<b>Table 2</b>	<b>Knowledge of GBV Reporting Mechanisms</b>					
6	Aware of specific helplines/reporting channels	45 (45%)	35 (35%)	15 (15%)	5 (5%)	100
7	Confident in knowing who to contact for help	30 (30%)	40 (40%)	20 (20%)	10 (10%)	100
<b>Table 3</b>	<b>Socio-Cultural Variables Influencing Message Application</b>					100
9	Community would support action against a perpetrator	25 (25%)	35 (35%)	30 (30%)	10 (10%)	100
10	Fear of stigma/blame prevents reporting	50 (50%)	30 (30%)	15 (15%)	15 (15%)	100
11	Culturally acceptable to seek external intervention	20 (20%)	30 (30%)	35 (35%)	15 (15%)	100
<b>Table 4:</b>	<b>Feel safer with radio-community leader partnership</b>	40 (40%)	45 (45%)	10 (10%)	5 (5%)	100
13	Radio-to-Community support system increases safety	35 (35%)	50 (50%)	10 (10%)	5 (5%)	100
14	Radio more effective combined with physical support	55 (55%)	35 (35%)	7 (7%)	3 (3%)	100
<b>Table 5</b>	<b>Evaluation of Proposed Integrated Model (RCL)</b>					
16	Listening-to-Action Groups (LAGs)	40 (40%)	50 (50%)	7 (7%)	3 (3%)	100
17	The "Bridge" Protocol.	35 (35%)	45 (45%)	15 (15%)	5 (5%)	100
	Active Verification	45 (45%)	40 (40%)	10 (10%)	5 (5%)	100
	Feedback Loops	30 (30%)	50 (50%)	15 (15%)	5 (5%)	100



### **Table 2: Knowledge of GBV Reporting Mechanisms**

This distribution measures the gap between information reception and psychological readiness to act. A high frequency of "Strongly Agree" regarding awareness suggests that the medium (Dream 92.5 FM) effectively reaches the target population. The data implies that while informational dissemination is successful, the secondary task is to convert that knowledge into individual agency. If confidence levels are lower than awareness levels, the study must account for psychological barriers specific to the Isi-Uzo community context.

### **Table 3: Socio-Cultural Variables Influencing Message Application**

Table 2 shows a high distribution in "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" regarding the fear of stigmatisation. It highlights the tension between radio-based advocacy and traditional community silence. Implication for Isi-Uzo: The implication is that GBV reporting in Isi-Uzo is not merely a technical issue of knowing where to report but a social issue of "risk to status." The study must conclude that radio messaging alone is insufficient without cultural mediation from local influencers.

**Table 4: Transition from Passive Knowledge to Proactive Protection. Interpretation:** This distribution tests the desire for structural support. High agreement here suggests that listeners perceive the radio station as an inadequate safeguard when acting in isolation. The data implies that the community views the radio station as a potential catalyst but requires physical, local partners such as village advocacy committees to bridge the gap between media exposure and community-level safety.

### **Table 5: Evaluation of Proposed Integrated Model (The "Radio-Community Link" - RCL)**

This table evaluates the perceived utility of specific mechanisms like the "Bridge" protocol and anonymous feedback loops. A positive distribution here would indicate a strong appetite for a more participatory, two-way communication model. The implementation of the RCL model in Isi-Uzo depends on this data. If respondents score the "Bridge" protocol and "Active Verification" as highly effective, it provides the empirical justification for moving from a standard broadcast model to a collaborative, humanised reporting structure.

## **DISCUSSION**

The demographic distribution of the data comprises 70% of married, single and divorced women resident in Isi-Uzo LGA. These data provided reliable and valid evidences of gender-based violence against the women of Isi-Uzo LGA. There were also 65% of women with formal education and 20% without formal education, who however, understood the essence of this research and provided insightful information.



The framework, specifically the "Radio-Community Link" (RCL), addressed the multifaceted barriers to GBV reporting in Isi-Uzo, shifting focus from mere information broadcast to the integration of localised support systems. The frequency data indicates that while listeners possess a baseline of awareness regarding reporting channels, there is a notable disparity between the knowledge of helplines and the confidence to utilise them. This finding was supported by Okafor and Adewale (2024) who argued that while media exposure correlates with knowledge, the effectiveness of these campaigns is heavily mediated by socioeconomic factors and ingrained cultural norms. This suggests that the GBV information disseminated through radio to the women of Isi-Uzo is not usually translated into action. The data in Table 14 showed that 90% of the respondents expressed the view that radio is effective in creating awareness about GBV but the knowledge gained are not applied by women. The remaining 10% who stated that they apply the knowledge gained is insignificant. This finding aligns with established literature suggesting that awareness alone is insufficient for behaviour change when individuals face significant socio-cultural obstacles (Ezeh, 2026)

Specifically, the data reveals that the fear of stigmatisation and blame serves as a primary deterrent for 90% of potential respondents, confirming that social risks often outweigh the benefits of reporting in traditional settings. Furthermore, the limited perception of cultural acceptability for external intervention, reported by only 50% of the sample, underscores the necessity for the "Radio-Community Link" to act as a normative agent that legitimises help-seeking behaviour. In support, Ezeh (2026) observed that radio campaigns effectively foster cognitive awareness, but the transition from knowledge to behavioural application is heavily mediated by entrenched socio-cultural variables. Ezeh (2026) noted that in rural communities such as Isi-Uzo, patriarchal norms often function as the primary gatekeepers of agency, dictating the boundaries of what constitutes an acceptable response to domestic abuse. Victims of GBV remain silent as a strategy for survival and a mechanism protecting the marital status, and avoiding the threat of social ostracisation, which they consider more important than the potential protections offered by the law.

## **CONCLUSION**

The findings from the "Radio-Community Link" framework emphasise that radio can function as a potent catalyst for social change if it evolves from a passive broadcasting entity into an integrated, community-responsive platform. While Dream 92.5 FM has successfully cultivated high levels of awareness regarding GBV reporting, the data clearly illustrates that awareness alone is insufficient to overcome deep-seated socio-cultural barriers such as fear and stigmatization. Consequently, the success of future interventions rests upon the station's ability to bridge the gap between media outreach and physical community action through the proposed RCL model, effectively transforming radio listeners into active participants in a safer, more accountable society.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: to inform future interventions utilising the "Radio-Community Link" (RCL) model.

1. Establishment of Community-Based Support Structures: Given that 80% of respondents identified fear of stigmatisation as a primary barrier to reporting, it is recommended that radio stations actively formalise partnerships with local advocacy committees to provide the physical safety nets necessary to mitigate these social risks.
2. To address the gap between mere awareness of helplines and the actual confidence to report, the "Active Verification" component of the RCL model should be prioritised, ensuring that testimonials from community champions are consistently featured to humanise the reporting process.
3. Targeted Educational Programming: Efforts should be made to increase the current 50% cultural acceptance rate regarding external intervention by incorporating traditional leadership into the dialogue, thereby shifting the perception of reporting from a violation of traditional silence to a necessary community protection strategy. To maintain long-term accountability, radio stations must institutionalise dedicated segments for anonymous listener feedback regarding the effectiveness of advertised support channels.

## Ethical Clearance

Informed consent was sought from all participants, and their confidentiality was ensured throughout the study. The purpose of the study was also explained to them in English and Igbo language before administration of the instrument on them.

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## Conflict of Interest

From the beginning of the research to the end, there was no conflict of interest whatsoever.

## Availability of data and materials

The data set on which on which conclusions were made for tthis study are aavailable on request.

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