GEOPOLITICAL ORIENTATION AND MEDIA COVERAGEOF TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN NIGERIA: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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Abstract
This study examines ethnic orientation on media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria. It studies the following objectives; the placement of stories, the nature of coverage, direction of the stories and frequency of reportage. The hypothesis was also tested to ascertain if there is significant relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of the stories on terrorism. Three national dailies Vanguard, Daily Sun and New Nigerian were studied. A sample of 288 editions of newspapers was selected for the study and it covered a period of eight months. From the findings, the newspapers gave voluminous coverage to terrorist activities in Nigeria and placed the issues on the public agenda. It was also discovered that the coverage was overwhelmingly unfavourable to terrorist activities in Nigeria, But a short coming of the coverage was that most of the items carried by the newspapers were tucked inside their pages and the hypothesis test shows that there is significant relationship between ethnic orientation and placement of stories on terrorism in Nigeria and hypothesis two shows that there is no significant relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of stories on terrorism. The study recommends that wider coverage as regards to feature writings, Opinion article, Cartoons and Editorial writings, which, through their interpretative outlook make the masses to know the true nature of issues and events. The media irrespective of political, regional, religious, ideological and ethnic inclination should treat and observe objectivity as the hallmark of sound and responsible journalism in their coverage of issues.

Introduction
Terrorism in Nigeria was unknown in the early years of Nigeria, before independence in 1960. It became rampant in the late 90s and further assumed in epidemic proportion today. Nigeria never witnessed any form of terrorism since independence, until December 25, 2009 when one Farouk Abdulmutallab dented the image of Nigeria when he was intercepted with an explosive device aboard an American flight 253 airliner jet heading for Detroit.-That singular incident marked a watershed in our nation's history and attracted unsavory global attention.

After that incident, Ivwurie (2010, p.34) observes that "Nigeria was placed on the list of countries whose citizens must be given extra security scrutiny at airports because of the 'Christmas day bomb-in-the pant' act of Nigerian-born Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab'. There was a lot of furor and anger from the Nigerian government when the United States grouped Nigeria with countries like Afghanistan, Algeria, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, Syria, Yemen, Cuba, Lebanon,

Libya, Somalia, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan. It was not until the Federal Government protested vehemently that Nigeria was removed from the list of nations that sponsor terrorism. The situation has assumed a worrisome dimension with the spate of bomb blasts across the country coupled with incessant kidnapping of Nigerians and some foreigners in the country.

Nonetheless, for the purpose of this work, kidnapping is also classified as terrorist activity, thus, both would be used interchangeably in the work. This is because the definition of terrorism has proved controversial. Various legal systems and government agencies use different definitions of terrorism in their national legislation. Moreover, the international community has been slow to formulate a universally acceptable definition of this crime. These difficulties arise from the fact that the term terrorism is politically and emotionally charged in this regard.

Zalman (2010) writes that there is no official definition of terrorism agreed on throughout the world and definitions tend to rely heavily on who is doing the defining and for what purpose. Some definitions focus on terrorist tactics to define the term, while others focus on the actor. Yet, others look at the context and ask if it is military or not.

However, Wilkinson (2007, p.33) defines terrorism as a "systematic use of coercive intimidations usually to serve political ends". Wilkinson further opinesthat terrorism is used to create and exploit a climate of fear among a wider target group than the immediate victims of the violence and to publicize a cause as well as to coerce a target into assenting to aims.

Bockstette (2008) defines terrorism as political violence in an asymmetrical conflict that is designed to induce terror and psychic fear through the violent victimization and destruction of non combatant targets (sometimes iconic symbols). Bockstette further opines that the purpose of terrorism is to exploit the media in order to achieve maximum attainable publicity as an amplifying force multiply in order to influence the targeted audiences in order to reach short and midterm political goals or desired long term end state.

The multiplicity of definitions therefore suggests that a "terrorist" in one context may be regarded as a freedom fighter in another. Regardless of the multiple definitions of terrorism, some analysts contend that two main characteristics are critical for distinguishing terrorism from other forms of violence (Bockstette, 2008). First terrorism is aimed at non-combatants that is, civilians who are not engaged in any form of armed combat. Second, the use of violence is for dramatic purpose. In other words, the objective of instilling fear in the target audience is often more important than the physical result. For the purpose of this study, terrorism may be defined as violent attack by faceless groups, individual or the state in order to push forward their political, primordial and personal objectives.

The media determine what dominates public discussion; the media also determine how the set agenda or topic should be viewed. The function of the press is essentially for a civil society. It is simply impossible to have a civil society without a functional press. The press is of importance in any society in the sense that our understanding of the society and the various issues and problems that confront us come largely from the type of information we get from media. The media do not just expose us to events in the society but largely shape our understanding of social

reality. This is essentially because the media "lie between us and this complex world" (Ndolo, 2005, p.20). The society relies on the mass media to mirror events to it.

It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to find out the nature of coverage given to terrorist activities in Nigeria by selected Nigerian newspapers. It also seeks to ascertain the direction or framing given to the coverage and to determine if there is a significant relationship between the ethnic orientation of the newspapers in terms of ownership and media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria. Ethnic orientation here refers to a person's basic beliefs or feelings about a particular race, group, nation or people that shares a cultural tradition. In this study, itoperationally means possibility of perceptions based on ethnic background of individuals influencing the work of journalists on the coverage of terrorism activities.

The Problem

Nigeria has in recent times been witnessing an upsurge in terrorism related attacks. Terror now has its grip on the Nigerian nation. Every day, tens ofNigerians are kidnapped for various reasons ranging from economic, political and personal grievances. Some are killed before they were rescued by their relatives after paying ransom while bomb blasts have become a common occurrence in the country and *Boko Haram* have claimed responsibilities for the attacks. Kidnapping is seen as Southern affairs, while *Boko Haram* is seen as Northern, although it has not been proved.

It is the role of the media to set agenda on this issue of terrorism. The press is a powerful instrument. The press has been described as a power resource, the location where issues of public life are played out. Thus, this study seeks to ascertain the direction or framing given to the coverage and to determine if there is a significant relationship between the ethnic orientation of the newspapers in terms of ownership and media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives guided the study:

1. To ascertain the dominant positioning of stories on terrorist activities in Nigeria.
2. To determine the direction/framing given to stories on terrorist activities by the selected newspapers.
3. To find out the dominant nature of the stories given on terrorist activities in the selected newspapers.
4. To ascertain the frequency of coverage of terrorism issues in the selected newspapers.
5. To determine if there is a significant relationship between the ethnic orientation of the newspapers in terms of ownership and coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the placement of stories on terrorist activities in Nigeria?
2. What is the nature of framing given to stories on terrorism issues by the selected newspapers?
3. What is the dominant nature of stories on terrorist activities in Nigeria given by the selected newspapers?
4. How frequently did the selected newspapers report the terrorist activities in Nigeria?

5. Was there a significant relationship between the ethnic orientation and media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between ethnic orientation and positioning of stories on terrorism in Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of the stories on terrorism.

Theoretical frame work

This research is anchored around Agenda setting and Social responsibility theories of the media.

Agenda Setting Theory

Agenda setting as a pertinent framework for this study posits that the mass media play dominant role in determining the issues that are perceived and regarded as important and worthy of attention by the public. McCombs and Shaw (1972) cited in Okunna (2002, P.21) point out that "members of the audience not only learn about public issue or topic from the emphasis the mass media place upon it". Folarin (1998, p.75) opines that the mass media have an impact on agenda setting in that they have the ability to choose or emphasize certain topics thereby causing the public to perceive the issues or topics as important. This implies that the mass media pre-determine what issues are considered as important in a given society. Applying this theory to the study, implies that, the press through their news, editorials, features and opinion articles can set agenda for public discussion on terrorists' activities in Nigeria. Strong public opinion can be formed by the people against such aberrant conducts and attitude change can be induced on the part of those involved. As Folarin observes, Agenda setting theory does not ascribe to the media the power to determine what we actually think, but it does ascribe to them the power to determine what we think about.

Social Responsibility Theory

The social responsibility theory is also relevant to this work because of its stance that the press in any society should be responsible in the performance of its function. The theory originated from Hutchins Commission headed by Robert M.

Hutchins. It came into existence as a result of the press irresponsibility practiced in the Libertarian era. Relating this theory to this study, social responsibility demands that the media should act responsibly by realizing that they have certain obligations to the public, by giving accurate, truthful and objective assessment of terrorists' activities in Nigeria. This is to say, the media should reflect all shades of opinions to enable the public reach rational decision.

Terrorist Activities in Nigeria

Nigeria has in recent times been witnessing an upsurge in terror related attacks. The country is not new to attack, but the dimension it has taken and the nature of weapons being used by these terror gangs have created fear in the mind of the Nigerian people. For some time now, the debate as to whether Nigeria is a terrorist state or not has occupied public discourse perhaps due to the various acts of violence perpetrated by individuals or groups at times across the country.

The history of recent bomb blast in Nigeria could be traced to 1986, during the military regime of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, when the ace journalist, Dele Giwa was killed by a mail bomb in his home in Lagos. Till date it is widely believed to have been state-sponsored (Pius, 2011). There was also an isolated case of accidental bomb explosion at the Ikeja cantonment in 2002, which claimed hundreds of lives. On March 15, 2010 there was a bomb blast during an amnesty dialogue in Warri, Delta state. There was also a bomb blast on October 1, 2010, during Nigeria's 50[lii] independence anniversary celebrations in Abuja. It was suspected to be sponsored by the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND). On January 1, 2011 there was a blast at a mammy market in Abuja. Also on April 8, 2011, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) office in Suleja, Niger state was also bombed. Another blast occurred on April 26, 2011, in Maiduguri, the Borno state capital. An army barracks in Bauchi state was hit by bomb blast on May 29, 2011, while the police headquarters in Abuja was bombed on June 16,2011.

Similarly, on August 26, 2011, a suicide bombing at UN Headquarters killed 23 people and wounded more than 80 other individuals. This attack was the first against an international organization. An Islamic sect popularly called *Boko Haram* claimed responsibilities for some of the blasts. According to Nnadozie (2011, p. 1) the Islamic sect also claimed responsibility for November 5,2011 bomb blast and gun attacks in Damaturu, Yobe state capital that claimed more than 150 lives. Although police claimed 53 people died, Suleiman Lawal, police commissioner in Yobe state told *Vanguard* a suicide bomber drove a vehicle apparently ladenwith explosives into a building. Lawal said the attack killed 53 people but he did not disclose how many casualties among the security officials. Also, abduction which used to be associated with Niger-Delta youths against environmental degradation and socio-economic deprivation has become a tool for economic gain. The victims of kidnappings include individuals, families, corporate bodies, government official and medical doctors etc.

The worst scenario was the kidnapping of 15 school children on their way to school in Aba, Abia state on September 27, 2010. These were innocent pupils of Abayi international school in Aba, who became victims probably because their parents are considered rich. In addition, on July 11, 2010, three members of the Nigerian union of journalists who had gone to Uyo for a national executive council meeting of the body were kidnapped in Aba, Abia state. The leadership of the national print media union had visited the governor of Akwa Ibom state, Godswill Akpabio and given him award during the conference. According to Onuoha (2011, p.9) the Lagos state contingent led by its chairman, Wahab Oba, the secretary, Sylva Emeka Okereke, zonal secretary, NUJ Lagos, Adolphus Okoronkwo, Shola Oyeyipo of the Voice of Nigeria (VON), was kidnapped on their way back from Uyo.

Perhaps the first notable kidnapping for ransom, outside the Niger-Delta and in the South East in particular started with the case of Dr Ego Cordelia Uzoezie, Anambra state commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development and her grandson, Kenechukwu, who were abducted by hoodlums at Nsugbe near Nwafor Orizu College of Education on their way from the school on January 27, 2007. The kidnappers later demanded 50 million naira ransom for their release. The rest is now history.

Ijediogor (2010, p.49) reported that on this same day, January 27, an Nnewi business mogul, chief Pius Ogbuawa, was kidnapped and 20 million naira demanded as ransom. While on August

16,2009, bearded and popular Nollywood actor, Pete Edochie, was taken by unknown gunmen in Onitsha, Anambra state, after his bodyguards were over-powered. Another Nollywood actor of the Osuofia fame, Nkem Owoh, was kidnapped along the Enugu Port Harcourt express way, with an initial 5 million naira ransom placed on his head. According to Odoh (2010), another pathetic gory incident was the abduction and killing of Dr Stanley Uche, proprietor of Victory Christian Hospital Aba, who was murdered in spite of the payment of 3 million naira ransom. The story is endless and alarming. Abati (2009), observes that "Nigeria has begun to feature very high in the global survey of terrorism and hostage taking. At a time when the authorities are talking aboutrebranding". While Ekwueme (2009), notes that the problem of hostage taking is "spreading fast like wild fire and it is not a matter that can be left entirely to the security agencies to handle". In November (2010), Clayton Consultants' security group and FBI had ranked Nigeria as among the world's top eighth kidnapping hotspots, alongside war zones and failed states such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia. But, on November 9, 2011, the security group ranked Nigeria as number 4th in the world in terms of hostage taking.

Madunagu (2011) similarly opines that there are five forms of terrorism in Nigeria, namely;

- Niger Delta Insurgency
- The *Boko Haram* Insurgency
- The Middle Belt/Jos killings
- Kidnapping for Ransom
- Armed Robbery

Madunagu observes that each of them has a long history, dating back either to the decade preceding Nigeria's independence in 1960 or immediately after independence. But this study would look at the two major ones that have continued to pose a threat to Nigerians, *Boko haram* and kidnapping.

Media Coverage of Issues in Nigeria

The media in any society plays important roles in shaping public opinion, public policy, political leadership and set agenda on current issues that is of utmost importance to the society, but Nigerian media have not lived up to the expectation of its audience. It is against this backdrop we look at literature on media's coverage of issues in Nigeria because, according to Albert (2002), mass media content attracts greater attention, concern and even reaction during conflict. While Roloff cited in Bashir (2006, P. 163) posits that there is a measure of evidence for the role of the media as both suppressors and instigators of cultural conflict. While the magnitude of their effects is not large and their influence may diminish with direct involvement of their audience with a conflict, the media may highlight societal problems that at times have negative impacts upon cultural cohesiveness but this process is done within a framework that prevents radical conflict and change in the social system.

Newspaper reports equally had a number of news that was not favourable. The *Vanguard* of Monday November 7, 2011 had a banner headline entitled; "More bombings coming"*Boko Haram* - The Islamic sect, *Boko Haram,* which has claimed responsibility for weekend's bomb blast and gun attacks in Damaturu,Yobe state capital, that claimed more than 150 lives so far has threatened to carry out more attacks". While another title on *Vanguard* newspaper of November 23, 2011,page 16, had this "Insecurity: Igbos flees north en-masse: Igbos living in some

Northern states where many Christians had been attacked by members of the *Boko Haram* sect are now returning en-masse to their home states, abandoning most of their belongings". This type of report could increase tension in Nigeria.

The Influence of Geopolitical Affiliations on Mass Media

The mass media in every society are generally expected to report issues, events and happenings the way they occur with less coloration or distortion. Thus, the media in a multi-ethnic society like Nigeria would most likely reflect the views and ideologies of the dominant power elites in the various ethnic formations. It is based on this fact that Ugboajah (1980, p. 16) avers, "Press history in Nigeria also serves as a history of Nigerian nationalism, the editor and the nationalist were one and the same".

However, once independence was assured, a subtle shift began from militant nationalism to internal political struggles among rival regional groups. The tendency to defend sectional interest has more or less continued to be a feature of the press community though in a different garb. Also, Anim (2007, p.3), affirms that "the national and cultural diversity of the country impinges greatly on the operations and performance of the print media as on most areas of national life." Anim believes that like many a national press, the Nigerian press has the desire to guide people, consciously or unconsciously, into seeing national issues from perspectives that are beneficial not only to the nation but also to specific interests within, among them , the interests of the geo-political groups with which the newspapers are associated.

In other words, national newspapers will likely report and present issues and arguments in a way that is favourable to the geopolitical region from which they derive their legitimacy. According to Ugboajah (1980), cited in Etim (2007, p.4), in covering the controversial 1973 national census, "the Nigerian Tribune, representing the southern constituency whose population decreased, manifested antigovernment behavior on the issues" whereas the New Nigerian, representing the northern states whose population increased, was neutral, editorially speaking".

The Concept of Framing

The concept of framing is related to the agenda -setting tradition but expands the research by focusing on the essence of the issue at hand rather than on aparticular topic. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on the certain events and then places them within a field of meaning. The media draws the public attention to certain topics. It decides what people think about, and the journalist selects the topics. This is the original agenda setting, "though", in news, an item occurs more than only bringing up certain topics" (Amos and Daniel, 1981, pp453-458). The way in which the news is brought, the frame in which the news is presented, is also a choice made by journalists. Thus a frame refers to the way media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided (Amos and Daniel, 1981, p.454). Frames are abstract notions that serve to organize social meanings. Frames influence the perception of the newly of the audience. This form of agenda-setting not only tells what to think about, but also how to think about it.

Framing is a quality of communication that leads others to accept one meaning over another. It is a skill with profound effects on how organizational members understand and responds to the world in which they live. According to Fairhurst and Sarr (1996), "framing consists of three elements: language, thought and forethought". Language helps us to remember information and

acts to transform the way in which we view situations. To use language, people must have thought and reflected on their own interpretative frameworks and those of others. Leaders must learn to frame spontaneously in certain circumstance. Being able to do so had to do with having the forethought to predict framing opportunities. In other words, one must plan in order to be spontaneous (Deetz, Tracy and Simpson, 2000).

News framing: Framing, a term used in media studies, sociology and psychology refers to the social construction of a social phenomenon by mass media source or specific political or social movements or organizations. It is an inevitable process of selective influence over the individual's perception of the meanings; it is so effective because it is a heuristic, yield desired result; and is seen as a "rule of thumb" (Deetz, Tracy and Simpson, 2000).

The Method

The researchers adopted content analysis for this work. The method was chosen because the researchers' interest lies on the manifest content of newspapers coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria.

The population of study is all newspapers published in Nigeria. The population of newspapers published in Nigeria is 35 (Corporate Affair Commission 2011).

The *Daily Sun,* Vanguard and the *New Nigerian* newspaper published between July, August, September and December 2010 and also the *Daily Sun, Vanguard* and *New Nigerian* newspaper published in May, June, August and November 2011 were chosen for study. These were the peak period of kidnapping in Nigeria as well as months (2011) when several bomb blasts occurred in Nigeria.

The sample size for this study is 288 editions of the three newspapers. The study days were Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In each month, a sample of 12 editions of each of the newspapers were selected and studied. This amounts to 96 editions of the newspaper that were studied for each newspaper. Thus, the total numbers of editions studied were 288 for the three newspapers.

The sampling technique adopted for this study is purposive sampling technique. Their selection was on the premises of large circulation, availability, consistency of publication, accessibility and frequency of publication.

To obtain the needed information for this study and also bearing in mind that the research design for this study is content analysis, it became apparent that coding sheet and coding guide should be the best method of data collection.

The choice of coding system is because coding has the advantage of converting data generated into easily understandable numerical value or symbol representing specific, attribute of given variables. The major instrument for data collection in the work is coding guide and code sheet. Coding guide helped in developing the coding sheet and the number of content categories in this research.

Units of Analysis

The following were units of analysis used:

1. **Dominant Nature of Story:** It refers to the story types and dominant nature in which they appear in the newspapers. It includes straight news reports, editorials, features, letters, opinion articles and cartoons.
2. **Tone of Story:** This deals with the stories carried on the subject under study by the selected newspapers whether they were favourable, unfavourable or neutral.
   - **(a) Favourable:** for the purpose of this study, a favourable story was the one that support terrorist activities in Nigeria. For instance, Monday November 7, *Daily sun,* front page had this headline: "More Bombings coming" -Boko Haram. June 20, 2011, p.6. It reads: Double trouble: MASSOB to join Boko Haram.
   - **(b)Unfavourable:** An unfavourable story in this study was the one that is against terrorist activities in Nigeria. Example, the Vanguard newspaper of November 23, p. 1, had this headline: *"Boko haram:* Senator Ndume docked".
   - **(c) Neutral:** A neutral story is one which neither supports nor negates the reportage of terrorist activities in Nigeria.
3. **Placement:** This implies the location of a given story about terrorist activities in Daily Sun, Vanguard and New Nigerian Newspaper. This could be on the Front page (FP), Inside Page (IP) and Back page (BP).
4. **Frequency of coverage:** This refers to the number of times story on terrorist activities appeared in the selected newspapers. It could be 1-2 times, 3-4 times and above.
5. **Geopolitical orientation:** This refers to the possibility of perceptions based on geopolitical background of individuals influencing the work of journalists.

Content Categories

This can also be called units of observation. It is the content the coder needs to look out for in the sampled newspaper. For instance, the data item in nature of story, the categories the coders have to check is whether the story is straight news, editorial, cartoon, opinion article or feature.

Inter-Coder Reliability

The inter-coder reliability for this study was calculated using Holsti's formula (in Wimmer and Dominick, 2003, p.137) Reliability $= \frac{2m}{N1+N2}$

Where M = Number of coding decisions on which two coders agree

N1+N2 = Total number of coding decision by the first and second coders respectively. Therefore:

$\frac{2(40)}{50x50} = \frac{80}{100} = 0.8$

For the study, each of the coders identified and categorized 50 themes, but they agreed on only 40 of them. The reliability coefficient is 0.8.

Findings

The three newspapers carried 264 items on ethnic orientation on media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria. Out of the total, *New Nigerian* carried 71 items, *Vanguard* carried 88 items and *Daily Sun* had 105 items.

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question One

What is the position of stories on terrorist activities in Nigeria?

Table 1: The placement of stories on Terrorist activities in Nigeria

Position of stories	New Nigerian	Vanguard	Daily Sun	Total
Front page	21 (30)	27 (31)	26 (25)	74 (28)
Inside page	38 (53)	45 (51)	61 (58)	144 (55)
Back page	12 (17)	16 (18)	18 (17)	46 (17)
Total	**71 (100)**	**88 (100)**	**105 (100)**	**264 (100)**

Source: Content Analysis 2012

Analysis of the data in table 1 reveals that 21(30%) stories were placed on the front page of New Nigerian, 3 8(53%) were on the inside page and 12(17%) stories on the back page, while Vanguard carried 27(31%) stories on the front page, 45(51%) on the inside page and 16(18%) on the back page, whereas Daily Sun carried 26(25%) stories on the front page, 61(58%) on the inside page and 18 (17%) news stories on the back page.

Research Question Two

What is the direction or framing given to the coverage by the selected newspapers?

Table 2: Direction of stories on Ethnic orientation and media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria

Direction of story	New Nigerian	Vanguard	Daily Sun	Total
Favourabe	5 (7)	4 (5)	3 (3)	12 (5)
Unfavourable	51 (72)	65 (74)	84 (80)	200 (75)
Neutral	15 (21)	19 (21)	1 (17)	52 (20)
Total	**71 (100)**	**88 (100)**	**88 (100)**	**264 (100)**

Source: Content Analysis 2012

Table 2 above shows that out of the 264 items that constituted the units of analysis from the three selected newspapers (New Nigerian, Vanguard and Daily Sun), 12(5%) of them were favourable to media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria in 2011. 200 (75%) were unfavourable , while 52 (20%) were neutral.

Research Question Three

What is the nature of stories on terrorist activities in Nigeria?

Table 3: The nature of stories on Ethnic orientation and media coverage ofterrorist activities in Nigeria.

Nature of stories	New Nigerian	Vanguard	Daily Sun	Total
Straight news	40 (56)	52 (59)	61 (58)	153 (59)
Feature/opinion	21 (30)	22 (25)	26 (24)	69 (26)
Editorial	4 (6)	5 (6)	7 (7)	16 (6)
Letters to editor	3 (4)	5 (6)	6 (6)	14 (5)
Cartoons	3 (4)	4 (4)	5 (5)	12 (4)
Total	**71 (100)**	**88 (100)**	**105 (100)**	**264 (100)**

Source: Content Analysis 2012

Analysis of data in table 3 reveals that New Nigerian carried 40 (56%) straight news stories, 21 (30%) features/opinion, 4 (6%) editorials, 3 (4%) letters to editor and 3 (4%) cartoons, while Vanguard carried 52 (59%) straight news, 22 (25%) feature/opinion stories, 5 (6%) editorials, 5 (6%) letters to editor and 4 (%) cartoons. However, *Daily Sun* has 61(58%) straight news items, 26(24%) feature/opinion stories, 7 (7%) editorials, 6 (6%) letters to editor and 5 (5%) cartoons. In all, straight news accounted for 153 (59%) stories, feature/opinion had 69 (26%), Editorial 16 (6%), letters to editor 14 (5%) and cartoons 12 (4%).

Research Question Four

How frequently did the selected newspapers report the terrorist activities in Nigeria? **Table 4: frequency of stories on Ethnic orientation and media coverage of Terrorist activities in Nigeria**

Frequency of story	New Nigerian	Vanguard	Daily Sun	Total
1-2 times	54 (76)	66 (75)	77 (73)	197 (75)
3-4 times	12 (17)	15 (17)	19 (18)	46 (17)
5 and above	5 (7)	7 (8)	9 (9)	21 (8)
Total	**71 (100)**	**88 (100)**	**105 (100)**	**264 (100)**

Source: Content Analysis 2012

Analysis of data in table 4 shows that out of the 264 items that constituted the units of analysis from the three selected national dailies (New Nigerian, Vanguard and Daily Sun), 197 (75%) stories appeared 1-2 times, 46 (17%) stories appeared 3-4 times and 21 (8%) items appeared 5 and above.

Research Question Five

Was there any significant relationship between the ethnic orientation and media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria?

Table 5: Relationship between the ethnic orientation and media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria

Position of stories	New Nigerian	Vanguard	Daily Sun	Total
Category	New Nigerian	Vanguard	Daily Sun	Total
National interest	14 (20)	26 (30)	32 (30)	72 (27)
Regional interest	22 (30)	23 (26)	28 (27)	73 (28)
Religious interest	19 (27)	18 (20)	21 (20)	58 (22)
Political interest	16 (23)	21 (24)	24 (23)	61 (23)
Total	**71 (100)**	**88 (100)**	**105 (100)**	**264 (100)**

Sources; Content Analysis 2012

Table 5 indicates the coverage inclination of the newspapers for all the stories published.. The data show that 72 stories out of all the newspapers studied were "Nationally" inclined. 73 stories were "Regionally" inclined, 58 stories were "Religiously" inclined and 61 were politically inclined.

Test of Hypotheses Hypothesis one

Hoi: There is no significant relationship between ethnic orientation and positioning of stories on terrorism in Nigeria.

Table 6: Chi square analysis to determine the relationship between ethnic orientation and positioning of stories on terrorism in Nigeria

Position Nigerian	**New of Stories**	**Vanguard**	**Daily Sun**	**Df A**	**X^2Cal 7.78**	**X^{2t} 10.5**	**Decision Null**	
Frontpage	21 (30)	27 (31)	26(25)	4 0.05			Hypothesis Rejected	There is significant different
Inside page	38 (53)	45 (51)	61(58)					
Backpage	12 (17)	16 (18)	18(17)					

Source: Content Analysis 2012

Decision Rule

When the calculated value of chi-square is greater than the critical table value of the chi-square, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis retained, but if the calculated value is less than or equal to the critical table, the null hypothesis is retained.

However, since the calculated chi-square (10.5) is greater than the chi-square table value (7.78), the research judgement based on the decision rule stated above is that null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is significant relationship between ethnic orientation and positioning of stories on terrorism in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Two

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of the stories on terrorism.

Table 7: Chi square analysis to determine the relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of the stories on terrorism

TEST	N	D	D^2	A	DF	teal	t.critical	Decision	Remarks
	4	88	1974	0.05	6	1.00	1.943	Null hypothesis accepted	There is no significant relationship

***Source: Content Analysis** 2012*

However, based on the decision rule, since the calculated t.test (1.00) is less than the critical t.value (1.943), the judgment of the researcher is that the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis rejected. Therefore, it could be deduced that in their coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria, there is no significant relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of the stories on terrorism.

Discussion

The findings revealed that the newspaper gave voluminous coverage to terrorist activities in Nigeria and this placed the issues on public agenda. Data obtained from the three selected newspaper revealed that the press did carry the stories, but such stories ended up appearing more in the inside pages, than on the front or back pages (144 stories out of 264 stories were placed in the inside pages). Baran (2004, p.28) asserts that "papers place the stories they think are the most important on the earliest page".

The findings revealed that 12(5%) out of 264 stories were favourable to the issue, 200(75%) stories were overwhelmingly unfavourable to media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria, while 52 (20%) stories were neutral to the issue. This findings corroborate Onyiriuka (2009, p.258) findings on "coverage of Obasanjo's third-Term bid by selected Nigerian newspapers". According to Onyiriuka, "the coverage of the self-succession bid was unfavourably reported by the selected newspapers and the overwhelming number of unfavourable items reported by the newspapers agreed with the nation's mood then". In terms of the nature of stories, it could be deduced that 153 (59%) stories were straight news, 69 (26%) stories were feature/opinion articles, 16 (6%) were editorial items, 14 (5%) letters to editor and 12 (4%) were cartoons. This means that majority of the stories were straight news items.

Similarly, these findings tally with an earlier study by Orhewere (2004, p.46) in which he asserted that "majority of stories in Nigerian newspapers' coverage of the 2001 Tiv-Jukun ethnic conflict were straight news items". Out of 264 stories covered by the three selected newspapers, 197 (75%) stories appeared 1-2 times, 46 (17%) appeared 3-4 times and 21 (8%) issues appeared 5 times and above. Also in terms of ethnic orientation, the three newspapers carried 72 (27%) stories out of 264 as national interest, 73 (28%) stories accounted for regional interest, 58 (22%) issues for religious interest and 61 (23%) stories for political interest.

In the test of hypothesis one, it was observed that there is significant relationship between ethnic orientation and positioning of stories on terrorism in Nigeria. Also hypothesis two showed no significant relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of the stories on terrorism.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of this study, the following conclusions were drawn; The newspapers gave voluminous coverage to media coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria and this placed the issues on public agenda. But most of the stories were placed in the inside pages of the newspapers. The newspapers were unfavourable in their coverage of terrorist activities in Nigeria. Majority of the stories were straight news items. There is no significant relationship between ethnic orientation of newspapers and framing of the stories on terrorism.

Recommendations

From the findings, the following recommendations were therefore made;

1 Proper coverage as regards to placement, frequency and direction of story should be given maximum attention as this will help the public to have an in-depth knowledge of an issue.

2 The press in Nigeria irrespective of Ethnic orientation or ownership should give wider coverage as regards to feature writings, opinion articles, cartoons and editorials which, through their interpretative outlook, enable the masses to know the true nature of issues like terrorist activities in Nigeria.

3 The press through its stakeholders should ensure that news is framed objectively, to reflect the press as a neutral watchdog and to guide the public in understanding the true picture of issues and events in the society.

4 The media, irrespective of Political, Regional, Ideological, Religious or ethnic inclination should treat and observe objectivity as the hallmark of sound and responsible journalism in their coverage of issues.

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