Press Coverage of Insecurity in Zamfara State: A Study of *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* Newspapers

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Abstract

The level at which the security situation in Zamfara State is worsening by the day needs to be given serious attention by the media through frequent reportage and prominence. This study examined the coverage of insecurity in Zamfara State by the Daily Trust and The Punch newspapers within the period of January, 2020 toMarch, 2021. It examined the frequency of reportage, prominence accorded to the stories as well as the causes and treatment recommendations provided by the newspapers. The study adopted the quantitative content analysis method and used systematic sampling technique. This study is in conformity with the Agenda Setting and the Framing theories of Mass Communication. Findings revealed that there was low frequency of coverage, and prominence given to the reports of insecurity in Zamfara State by the newspapers. Cattle rustling, farmers/herders' conflict were identified as some of the causes of insecurity in the State. Thus, the use of military force to bring it to an end was recommended. It, therefore, concluded that based on the findings that the newspapers did not give security issue in Zamfara State the attention it deserves. Based on these findings, the study recommended that the media should consider the issue of insecurity in Zamfara State as a national phenomenon that needs frequent coverage so that people and relevant authorities take it seriously and, consequently, deploy necessary measures to bring it to an end.

Key words: Press, Coverage, Insecurity, Reportage, Prominence

Introduction

Mass media is considered as the Fourth Estate of the realm. It is viewed as the powerful social institutions that have great effects on society (Lanre, Suleiman & Oyinkasola, 2014). Asemah and Edogoh (2012) note that the mass media are known to always set agenda for the public to follow. This they do by raising salient issues, occurrences and events as they happen in the society and bring them to public glare. The media sets agenda of peace, love, unity, etc. Therefore, the media's role in setting peace agenda cannot be over emphasized. McQuail

(2005) posits that the mass media specifically plays important roles in peace building and in the resolution of conflicts through their function of information dissemination. He further explains that the mass media have the social responsibility of mobilizing people towards positive change through setting agenda for peace and implementation of policies of conflict resolution.

One of the inevitable phenomena in the existence of any society is conflict. It both encourages stagnation as well as retrogression of the socio-economic construction of any given society (Okechukwu, 2012). Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, the security of the country has been challenged by the rise of insurgency and criminality in different parts of the country. So much so that there was the emergence of various militant groups in the Niger Delta region, *Boko Haram* in the north east and recently the emergence of armed banditry with its attendant crimes (kidnapping, culpable homicide and cattle rustling) in the Northwest region, which used to be the most peaceful part of the country.

In recent years, Zamfara State has been faced with a deadly conflict that started in 2012 as a result of clashes between farmers and herders. Gradually, the conflict turned into an armed banditry, with the first major attack in YarGaladima in April, 2014, when over 200 people were killed. The level of the armed banditry in the State has escalated to date attracting a lot of attention. Rampaging gangs of armed bandits have engaged in violent acts, attacking, kidnapping, killing and robbing villagers and travellers, and engaging in cattle rustling. The armed bandits raid villages and kidnap for ransom (Nadama, 2019).

Armed banditry has continued to pose a serious threat, not only to the internal security of Zamfara State, but to the national security of Nigeria at large. The level at which the armed bandits operate within the State needs to be given its rightful attention by the media.

Statement of the Research Problem

Over the years, insecurity has become a major problem bedevilling Nigeria and it has since attained an alarming stage. Every region in the country is characterized with one security challenge or another. North-western part of the country is mostly affected by armed banditry with its attendant crime like kidnapping, cattle rustling, culpable homicide, etc. Zamfara State is one of the states majorly affected by armed banditry in Nigeria. Many villages are abandoned by their respective owners due to the increase in bandits' attacks.

The role of the media in resolving crises and curbing insecurity cannot be over emphasized. Okechukwu and Okoro (2012) observed that through adequate, balanced and objective reportage, people who hitherto would have taken arms to express their displeasure are informed, enlightened and, most importantly, convinced to seek the option of dialogue or legal redress.

The level at which the situation worsens by the day needs to be given serious attention by the media. Frequency of reportage and prominence given to the issue by newspapers can go a long way in determining the intensity and duration of the conflict. Newspaper coverage of insecurity in Nigeria may be interrupted by some factors such as regional, ethnic and religious orientation and these factors might affect the success of the media in the fight against insecurity.

Therefore, this study was set to investigate how some Nigerian newspapers cover and report insecurity in Zamfara State. Frequency of reportage, prominence given to the stories, causes as well as the recommendations on how to end the menace by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers will be studied. The research questions of the study are as follows:

Research Questions

RQ1. How frequent do the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers report insecurity in Zamfara State?
RQ2. What is the prominence accorded to the stories of insecurity in Zamfara State by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers?
RQ3.What are the causes of insecurity in Zamfara State as reported by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers?
RQ4.What are the recommendations provided by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers to end insecurity in Zamfara State?

The Concept of Media and Conflict/Crisis

According to Suleiman (2013), conflict is a global phenomenon without a global meaning. Thus, media effect in conflict is not evenly distributed based on space or time, and varies in circumstance. Conflict is sometimes used to mean 'crisis' as Bearddey, Quim, Biswas and Wilkenfeld (2006) outline in providing two depending conditions of an international crisis. Francis (2019) posits that armed conflict is the resort to the use of force and armed violence in the pursuit of incompatible and particular interest and goals. It is the form of conflict that inflicts mass murder or genocide.

According to McQuail (1987), classical roles of informing, educating, enlightening and entertaining the society seems to oversimplify and paint an ingenious picture of the mass media and veil their roles as arena where the affairs of public life are played out. By informing and educating the society on conflict events, the media, as Livingstone (1997) observes, have come to establish themselves as accelerant or impediment to security and are, therefore, increasingly treated as 'actors' within conflicts able to shape and refine opinions (El-Nawawy & Powers, 2008). Therefore, accelerating or impeding security and shaping and refining opinions are similar ways of acknowledging that the mass media can serve as a powerful tool for inflaming disagreements and diffusing conflict or facilitating peace.

However, there is a deep division among experts on the actual role of the press during conflicts like that of armed banditry. Some claim that the press should give the terrorists or, in this case, bandits and kidnappers a total media blackout while focusing on the tolerance and peaceful coexistence amongst Nigerians. While others claim that it is the moral responsibility of the press to cover it no matter how inhumane or dehumanizing they are. Thus, according to Anyanwu (2004), ''will make it possible for the general population to know them and their sponsors" (p. 113). It would not just help to give the background of the conflict but also make those involved call themselves to order or be socially ostracize.

On the other hand, Galadima and Enighe (2001) posit that "Nigeria is a developing country that needs a press that will preoccupy itself with developmental issues rather than with conflict and crisis which are normal happenings within any human setup" (p. 63).

On the contrary, Anyanwu (2004) advanced that "there is no conflict so great that it dominates the freedom of nation and its people which cannot be settled by the media" (p. 113). Therefore, "there can never be consensus on the complex issue of how media should report on conflict and terrorism" (Omebije, 2012, p.108).

Review of Relevant Studies

Abah (2019) conducted a study on the newspaper's coverage of insecurity along Kaduna-Abuja highway, a study of *Daily Trust* and *The Nation* newspapers. The purpose of the study was to determine whether newspapers actually cover cases of insecurity along Kaduna-Abuja highway. The study adopted the content analysis method and agenda setting theory as a theoretical framework. Findings of the

research revealed that *Daily Trust* covered more of insecurity along Kaduna-Abuja highway compared to *The Nation* newspaper. The study concludes that the selected newspapers confirmed that there is a low coverage of insecurity by the press media within the areas of study. It also revealed that *Daily Trust* newspaper gave more prominence to front and inside pages compared to the *Nation* Newspaper. The study concluded that this is due to the regional affiliation that the paper has with the subject of study.

Similarly, a study conducted by Aliyu, Alkali and Eric (2021) on the comparative analysis of the press coverage of kidnappings cases in Nigeria using content analysis method, issue attention cycle theory and framing theory as their theoretical guide. Their major objectives were to look into the frequency and prominence given to kidnappings cases as well as the direction of kidnappings cases in *Daily Trust* and the *Guardian* newspapers from August to October, 2020. Findings of the study revealed that the two newspapers under investigation normally report kidnapping cases more in form of news and they report more stories on conflict compared to kidnapping cases within the study period. They also discovered that the two newspapers report kidnapping cases more on neutral ground than to either positive or negative.

Omebije (2012), in his study on the newspaper coverage of *Boko haram* activities by some newspapers, tried to look at how north-south dichotomy affect newspapers coverage of issues of regional concerns. He adopted the content analysis method and agenda setting theory for his theoretical framework. The findings revealed that, eventhough, the newspaper studied condemned the violence, their geographical and ideological affiliation of 'Arewa Press' and 'Lagos-Ibadan' press took a better part of them as evident in the manner in which they frame reports relating to *Boko haram*. Also, the rivalry among and between the Nigerian press exacerbates instability especially in times of crisis.

In the same vein, the findings of Omebije (2012) corroborate with the findings of Shehu and Suleiman (2013) in their comparative analysis of *Daily Trust* and *Vanguard* Newspapers framing of Boko haram terrorists' identity where they adopted the content analysis method as well as Framing theory as their theoretical guide. Their major finding is that most of the framing offered by the sampled newspapers on the identity of *Boko haram* is motivated by their locations. While *Vanguard* portrays Muslims as *Boko haram* sect, the *Daily Trust* has a contrary view.

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated within the perspectives of the Agenda Setting Theory. The theory was proposed by McCombs & Shaw in 1972. An agenda is an issue or subject of discussion. It is a topical issue which elicits a positive or negative comments from the members of the public. Agenda setting, on the other hand, is the process of reflecting the events in our society. The major assumption of the theory is that most of the pictures we store in our head, most of the things we think or worry about, most of the issues we discuss are based on what we have read, listened to or watched in different mass media. Agenda setting does not ascribe to the media the power to determine what we actually think but does ascribe to them the power to determine what we think about. The elements involved in agenda setting according to Folarin (1998) include:

I. The quality or frequency of reportage
II. Prominence giving to the reports through headlines display, pictures and layouts in newspapers, magazines, films or graphics, or timing on radio and television.
III. The degree of conflict generated in the report
IV. Cumulative media specific effects overtime.

The media are saddled with the responsibility of monitoring events and reporting it to the members of the society. That is to say, the media are the watchdog of the society. It, therefore, behoves on the mass media to pay attention to salient events that happen in our society so that they will reflect such issues. The media should make us think about important issues that bring about national development, issues that promote unity and oneness among different segments of the society (Asemah, 2011).

Miller (2001) explains that the definition of the agenda setting includes three components:

- The media agenda- a set of issues that are addressed by the media sources
- The public agenda-a set of issues that the public believe is important
- The policy agenda-issues that decision makers (legislators and those who influence decisions such as executives and political and executive leaders) priorities.

Miller (2001) adds that the three separate agendas can be viewed as dependent variables in a causal equation. However, despite its criticism and constraints, agenda-setting theory cannot be ignored as the theory has some relevance in the

way and manner in which press covers issues. The agenda setting accessibility implies that the more frequently and prominently the news media cover an issue, the more instances of that issue become accessible in audience's memories.

When people are asked what is the major problem facing the country, they answer with the most accessible news issue in memory, which is typically the issue the news media focused on the most.

The agenda setting theory is relevant to this work in quite a number of ways. First of all, the study found the theory relevant in order to test the major assumption of the theory that whatever issue media regard as important, the public will as well regard the issue as the most important. As Folarin (1998) identified the key elements of agenda setting such as the frequency and the prominence given to the story. Itis also part of the objectives of this study to investigate how frequently the newspapers under review cover and report the issue of insecurity in Zamfara State and what is the level of prominence they accorded to the stories. And this will, in turn, determine the effect of these media reportage on the audience.

The agenda setting theory will also help the researcher explain the influence of media agenda and the public agenda on policy agenda. This means that when the media frequently report the issue (media agenda), the public will begin to perceive the issue as important and begin to discuss about it in public places (public agenda), that will ultimately draw the attention of the relevant authorities to take necessary actions and prioritize the security of their subjects by taking decisive actions to end the prevailing insecurity in the State.

Methodology

The study employs the quantitative content analysis method so as to allow the researcher to content analyze the coverage of insecurity in Zamfara state by the papers under review which will in turn give the researcher a chance to use statistical tools in interpreting and describing the data. Dominick and Wimmer, describes unit of analysis as “the smallest element of a content analysis but also one of the most important. In written content, the unit of analysis might be a single word or symbol, a theme, or an entire article or story”. (2011: p164). For the purpose of this study, the following are identified and selected as the unit of analysis: straight news stories, feature articles, columns, editorials, opinions.

Content Categories

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011), "content category is the heart and precise makeup of any content analysis system used in classifying media content which varies along with the topic under study" (p. 165).

For the purpose of this study, the following content categories have been constructed in order to help the researcher get the desired data from the content:

Frequency: Categories under frequency are: *Daily Trust* and *The Punch*

Prominence: Categories under this are: Front page, inside page, back page and lead headline

Causal definition: Categories: Farmers/herders conflict, illiteracy, marginalization of Fulanis, gold mining

Treatment recommendation: Categories: Amnesty/dialogue, banning of mining, education, use of military force

Sampling and Instrument of data collection

A systematic random sampling is adopted by the study and the number is the 6th edition of both the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers. The study arrives at the sample size of 150 copies of both the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers. Coding sheet as an instrument for data collection was designed from the content categories in order to elicit data in a tally format which was used for the analysis. The sheet was structured in a tabular form to enable clear quantification of the variables being investigated.

Inter-coder reliability test

The service of two coders was engaged to generate the data from the papers. 20 articles were selected as the reliability sub-sample to do a pilot coding as well as test the inter-coder reliability using percentage agreement. The result shows perfect agreement in frequency and prominence but with random level of agreement in causal definition and treatment recommendations.

Results

The result was presented in frequency distribution tables and analysed using simple percentage

Table 1. Frequency of reportage of insecurity in Zamfara State by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers.

Coverage of insecurity	**Daily Trust**		**The Punch**		**Total**	
	frequency	Percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	Percentage
Articles	34	62%	21	38%	55	100%

Table 1 shows the number of stories covered by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers on insecurity in Zamfara State. The daily editions of the two newspapers in all covered 55 stories (out of the 150 sampled editions) for a period of 15 months (January, 2020 to March, 2021). Out of the 55 stories covered by the two newspapers, *Daily trust* newspapers has covered 34 representing (62%) stories while *The Punch* newspaper covered 21 (38%) stories. Thus, the frequency of coverage of insecurity in Zamfara State by the *Daily Trust* is more than that of *The Punch* newspaper. By implication, the newspapers were not frequently reporting the issues. Because, out of the 150 sampled editions of the newspapers, the two newspapers covered only 55 representing (37%) of their daily editions. Also, by the *Daily Trust* reporting more stories than *The Punch*, it implies that there is a regional influence in their coverage of insecurity in Zamfara State.

Table 2. Formats of reports covered by the newspapers on insecurity in Zamfara State.

Unit of analysis	**Daily Trust**		**The Punch**		**Total**	
Categories	frequency	percentage	frequency	percentage	frequency	Percentage
News	28	82%	21	100%	49	89%
Features	6	18%	0	0%	6	11%
Editorials	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Opinions	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Columns	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	34	100%	21	100%	55	100%

Table 2 indicates the formats of stories reported by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers. The Table revealed that out of the 55 stories reported by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers, 49 (89%) are reported as straight news stories and 6 (11%) as feature articles with no single editorial, columns or opinion articles reported by the newspapers. The *Daily Trust* reported 28 (82%) of its stories in a straight news format and 6 (18%) as feature articles while *The Punch*

reported all its 21 stories (100%) as straight news. The implication of the above is that both the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers reported the stories as straight news without going deeper to provide interpretation, analysis and experts' views on the issues. The newspapers also did not say much on the stance of their organization as regards to insecurity in Zamfara State.

Table 3. Prominence given to the stories of insecurity in Zamfara State by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers**.**

Prominence	**Daily Trust**		**The Punch**		**Total**	
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Front Page	10	29%	5	24%	15	27%
Inside page	23	68%	16	76%	39	71%
Back page	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Banner Headline	1	3%	0	0%	1	2%
Total	34	100%	21	100%	55	100%

Table 3 reveals the prominence given to the stories of insecurity in Zamfara State by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers. The data revealed that out of the 55 stories reported by the newspapers, 15 (27%) appeared on the front page, and 39 (71%) as inside page stories. None of the stories appeared on the back page and only 1 (2%) as lead headline. Out of the 34 stories covered by the *Daily Trust*, 10 (29%) appeared on the front page, 23 (68%) were inside page stories, no single story at the back page and 1 (3%) as lead headline. While out of the 21 stories covered by *The Punch* newspaper, 5 (24%) appeared on the front page, 16 (76%) as inside page stories and none for the back page and as lead headline.

The implication of the data is that the two newspapers did not give much prominence to issues of insecurity in Zamfara State because most of the stories appeared as the inside page stories.

Table 4. The causal definition of insecurity in Zamfara State as reported by the newspapers

Causal Definition	**Daily Trust**		**The Punch**		**Total**	
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Farmers/headers Conflict	1	12.5%	1	100%	2	22%
Illiteracy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Marginalization Of Fulani	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Mining	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Others	7	87.5%	0	0	7	78%
Total	8	100%	1	100%	0	100%

Table 4 reveals the causes of insecurity in Zamfara State as reported by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers. It indicated that out of the 55 stories covered by two newspapers, only 14 stories define the causes of insecurity in Zamfara State. Out of the 14 stories covered, 2 (22%) defined farmers/herders' conflict as one of the causes of insecurity in the State. None of the newspapers defined illiteracy, marginalization of Fulani and mining as the causes of insecurity in the State as well. However, 7 (78%) of the stories covered mentioned other factors like cattle rustling, economic reasons, reprisal attacks on communities as the causes of insecurity in Zamfara State. This is due to the fact that the two newspapers did not have editorials, opinions and columns and had few feature articles on insecurity in the State under study that would interpret and analyze the situation thereby providing a clear report on the causes to enable the general public and policy makers have a better understanding of the issues at stake.

Table 5. Treatment recommendations to the insecurity in Zamfara State as reported by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers

Treatment	**Daily Trust**		**The Punch**		**Total**	
Recommendation						
Category	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Dialogue	0	0%	1	17%	1	7%
Education	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Banning Of Mining	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Use of Force	7	87.5%	4	66%	11	79%
Others	1	12.5%	1	17%	2	14%
Total	8	100%	6	100%	14	100%

Table 5 indicates that out of the 55 stories covered by the newspapers, only 14 offered some recommendations on how to end insecurity in Zamfara State. It revealed that 1 (7%) recommended dialogue as a solution to the issue of insecurity in Zamfara State, while 11 (79%) recommended military action (use of force) as a solution to end insecurity in the State and 2 (14%) recommended other factors like declaration of no-fly zone and restricting herders movement as a solution to insecurity in the State. None of the newspapers mentioned education and banning of mining activities as a solution to insecurity in Zamfara State. This is perhaps due to the lack of editorials, columns and opinion articles on insecurity in Zamfara State.

Discussion of Findings

Result from the Table 1 revealed that out of the 150 sampled editions of the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers, only 55 which represents the (37%) of the stories on insecurity in Zamfara State. The findings, therefore, revealed that there is a low frequency of coverage of the issue by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers.

This corroborates the findings of Abah (2019) in his study on the *Daily Trust* and *The Nation* newspapers' coverage of insecurity along Kaduna-Abuja highway. The study concludes that the selected newspapers confirmed low attention given to the coverage of insecurity within the areas of study. The findings, however, contradict the findings of Abdulkarim's (2018) comparative study on the media coverage of farmers/herder's conflict in four selected Nigerian newspapers. The study discovered that the newspapers under review frequently covered the farmers/herders conflict, even though, the coverage is influenced by their regional affiliations.

In line with the findings above, the elements involved in the agenda setting theory, according to Folarin (1998), include, among others, the quality or frequency of reportage. That is the media can influence what people think about a given issue by consistently reporting that issue and that will lead to policy agenda, where the authorities are expected to take necessary actions on the issue. By the number of the articles or stories on the armed banditry and kidnapping in Zamfara reported by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers within the period of 15 months, it indicated that the two newspapers are not frequently reporting the issue. By implication, that will affect the public understanding of the issue and perhaps retard government's intervention in taking the necessary measures to tackle the menace.

Result from Table 3 revealed that most of the stories reported by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers were placed on the inside pages (71%) and very few appeared on the front page (27%) with only 1 (2%) banner headline. Therefore, the finding suggested that the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers did not give much prominence to the stories of insecurity in Zamfara State. The findings also revealed that the *Daily Trust* newspaper accorded prominence to the stories more than *The Punch* newspaper and this may be as a result of their regional background. It also revealed that most of the stories are reported as straight news stories (89%) with no editorials and few feature articles, which also implied a low attention given to the stories.

The findings are in line with the findings of Aliyu et al. (2021) on the comparative analysis of press coverage of kidnapping cases in Nigeria where they found that the newspapers under investigation report kidnapping cases more in form of news stories without interpretation and analysis. This goes with one of the postulations of the agenda setting theory, which states that prominence given to a story through headline displays, placement, layout design etc., can go a long way in influencing people's understanding of that issue and can help in calling the attention of relevant authorities to take drastic actions against the issue in question.

Therefore, the newspapers under study are seen to be giving less prominence to the issue of insecurity in Zamfara State. This equally showed that the newspapers reviewed did not take into cognizance the power of prominence in influencing policy decision particularly when it comes to insecurity.

As the result in Table 4 indicated, out of the 55 articles reported by the two newspapers on insecurity in Zamfara State, only 14 stories defined the causes of the banditry and kidnapping in the State, while most of the articles (78%) reported cattle rustling, economic reasons, reprisal attack to communities as the causes of insecurity in Zamfara state, very few (22%) reported that farmers/herder's conflict as one of the causes. The findings, therefore, revealed that the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers did not clearly report the causes of insecurity in Zamfara State and this is due to the lack of editorials, columns and opinion articles in which the newspapers through the news analysis and interpretation, can explore some of the causes. Even though, the newspapers reported farmers/herders' conflict, cattle rustling, economic reasons, attacks to communities as the causes of banditry and kidnapping in Zamfara, there exist minimal reports on this and it may be due to the lack of editorial and other feature articles. This goes with one of the postulations of the framing theory that the way an issue is presented by the media can have an influence on audience's perception of such issues. Also, the mass media content producers decide where and what to place emphasis on in a story by the choice of phrases, images, positioning as well as content type to be presented. Therefore, the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers did not put emphasis in their stories on the causes of insecurity in Zamfara State, which would have helped in understanding its root causes clearly and, consequently, providing solutions to bring it to an end. As the result in Table 5 indicated, even though, there were few recommendations on how to end banditry and kidnapping in Zamfara by the newspapers, the very few reported recommended the use of military force to end the menace. The findings suggested that there were minimal recommendations offered by the *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers on how to end insecurity in Zamfara State. By implication, the newspapers are not recommending solutions to government and the general public on how to restore peace in the area. This is in line with the findings of Abdulkarim's (2018) study on the media coverage of farmers/herders' conflict by the *Daily Trust*, *The Punch*, *The Guardian* and *Vanguard* newspapers where he revealed that *The Punch* newspaper recommended the deployment of Nigeria's military arsenal to crush the invading armies.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The present study concludes that the newspapers did not frequently report the issue of insecurity in Zamfara State. Also, the newspapers did not give such stories much prominence and that they are motivated by their locations in terms of the prominence they accorded to the stories. The newspapers did not report many

causes of insecurity in Zamfara State due to lack of news interpretation and analysis, editorials and feature articles and the little they reported outlined farmers/herders' conflict, cattle rustling and economic reasons as some of the causes. Similarly, the little recommendations offered by the newspapers recommended military actions to end the insecurity in the State. It is, therefore, safe to conclude that the press did not give the issue of insecurity in Zamfara State the attention it deserves.

Based on these findings, the study offers the following recommendations:

1. The media should consider the issue of insecurity in Zamfara State as a national issue that needs frequent coverage and deserves some level of prominence so that people will take it important, and to draw the attention of the relevant authorities to take necessary action towards bringing it to an end.
2. The mass media must not be interrupted by their regional, ethnic and religious orientation in their coverage of insecurity in Nigeria as it will hinder their success in the campaign against insecurity.

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