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CONTENTS

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GENERIC FRAMING OF BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN THE NIGERIAN PRINT MEDIA

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the patterns of frame adopted by Nigerian newspapers in the coverage of Boko Haram insurgency. It adopted the methodological justifications of content analysis as means of obtaining data. A multistage sampling technique was adopted to select the newspapers. This involved a purposive and systematic random selection of the units of analysis. The study, which is situated within the assumptions, arguments and discussions of framing theory explores newspaper reportage of an on-going crises rooted in spiritual beliefs in a multi-religious setting. A content analysis of two Nigerian newspapers (The Guardian and The Nation), conducted to determine the print media framing of the insurgency, produced 237 news articles during a period of six months in 2014. Findings show that Nigerian newspapers adopt the five generic frames of framing as postulated by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). Hence, they reported the news stories along the responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality and economic consequences frames. The results show that the responsibility frame is the most prevalent frame. These findings demonstrate the role of the press as a builder of consensus and thus ascertain media social responsibility stance for a society in crisis.

Keywords: Boko Haram, Framing, Insurgency, The Guardian, The Nation

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INTRODUCTION

Researchers have long acknowledged the role of the media as major sources of information to the people on a variety of issues and events in the society. This function they perform within the framework of different political, economic and ideological contingencies. As such, the messages they relay are structured along frames that oftentimes challenge objective journalistic reportage. Through news presentation and framing, the media make some issues or aspects of issues more salient than the other. By virtue of emphasizing some elements of a topic above others, a frame provides a way to understand an event or issue in specific ways (de Vreese, 2005; McCombs, 2004).

This differential presentation of facts in the news influences the pictures of reality held by the members of the public (Baran & Davis, 2012; McCombs, 2004, 2005). Based on Cappella and Jamieson's (1997) view, de Vreese (2005: 53) suggests that frames activate knowledge, stimulate 'stocks of cultural morals and values, and create contexts'. In doing so, frames, according to Entman, concern problem definition, identification of possible causes, appropriation of moral judgment and recommendation of appropriate remedies (Baran & Davis, 2012; de Vreese, 2005; Severin & Tankard, 2010). In effect, media content invariably presents a constructed reality that is not at par with objective reality.

Media scholars, according to Strömbäck, Shehata & Dimitrova (2008: 117), "have shown that news can never be a mirror of reality". Instead, news should be perceived as the result of a number of more or less conscious choices, restricted by factors such as journalistic norms, values and newsgathering routines (Schudson, 2003), financial considerations (Hamilton, 2004), technology (Pavlik, 2001) and the need of, and pressure from, news sources" (Manning, 2001). Put together, all these contingencies influence the frame adopted to package the news. Concordantly, Shoemaker and Reese (1996: 24) have submitted that "news is a socially created product, not a reflection of an objective reality", which played a significant role in determining public opinion on social issues.

Differential framing strategies have thus been accorded numerous societal issues coming under the coverage of the media in both developed and developing countries (Callahan, Dubnick & Olshfski, 2006; Lowry, 2008;

Luther & Zhou, 2005). In the coverage of Nigerian Boko Haram insurgency and other crisis situations, for instance, a plethora of studies have documented how the media presented the issues to the public differentially (Nnanyelugo & Okechukwu, 2012; Popoola, 2012; Ekwueme & Obayi, 2012).

Since the lethality of Boko Haram insurgency affects the physical, psychological and reputational stance of Nigeria, it behoves all institutions to provide better appreciation of the situation with a view to avert the calamitous consequences that inhere in such crisis. Hence, media framing of such incident should be geared towards responsible reportage. Although journalistic treatment of any issue cannot be oriented towards a monolithic perspective given many contingencies (Voirol, 1997 cited in Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998), issues can yet be better contextualised to provide common goal. With increasing challenges facing the world, resulting from terroristic acts, activities of Boko Haram place Nigeria on global terrorism map, affecting the nation's image and status and other socio-economic stances. Hence, concern about media coverage and reportage of Boko Haram has blossomed among scholars, media professional, policy makers and members of the public.

While there have been significant studies on the activities of Boko haram (Nnanyelugo & Okechukwu, 2012; Popoola, 2012; Ekwueme & Obayi, 2012) from communication and media studies perspective, few have placed premium the framing of the insurgency from responsible journalism perspective. This study, therefore, applies Semetko and Valkenburg's (2000) generic frames to unpack newspaper treatment of Boko Haram insurgency. By so doing the study aims at exploring the saliency as well as the application of generic frames to the coverage of Boko Haram insurgency in selected Nigerian newspapers.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Framing theory
The concept of framing presents a "scattered conceptualisation" (Entman, 1993: 51). According to Cacciatore, Scheufele and Iyengar (2016: 8), "communication literature is rife with different conceptualizations of frames and framing". Because framing has been accorded various working and operational definitions by scholars, D'Angelo (2002) describes it as a multi-paradigmatic research plan. According to Reese (2001: 11), "frames are organizing principles that are socially shared and persistent over time, that

work symbolically to meaningfully structure the social world". For Gamson and Modigliani (1987: 143), a media frame is a 'central organizing idea or story line that provides meaning to an unfolding strip of events. . . . The frame suggests what the controversy is about, the essence of the issue' (Segvic, 2005). The most operational definition of framing, for scholars within journalism and mass media studies, comes from Entman (1993: 52), who opines that:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

Broadly defined, framing refers to the ways in which mass media organize and present issues and events. Based on Ludwig Wittgenstein's linguistic philosophy, Baran and Davis (2012: 330) aver that sociologist, Erving Goffman (1974), "developed a theory of frame analysis to provide a systematic account of how we use expectations to make sense of everyday life situations and the people in them". In their opinion, this is a microscopic view of framing dealing with individuals as against the macroscopic view of framing which considers the contexts of socio-political consequences of media frames.

In a similar vein, Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) surmised that framing is both a macro-level and micro-level construct, where macro-level frames deal with the routines, norms, and pressures in which news is created, while micro-level frames deal with how the public interprets media messages. Framing and news frames, therefore, assist journalists and the audience to respectively cope with myriad of newsworthy events competing for coverage and public attention.

As a well-established theoretical paradigm, framing has been applied to a number of issues affecting the society, nationally and internationally. Scholars, for instance, have applied framing theory to such issues as politics and political processes (Hanggli & Kriesi, 2012; Lecheler & de Vreese, 2012; Matthes, 2012), international affairs and communication (Camaj, 2010; de Vreese, Boomgaarden & Semetko, 2011; Han & Wang, 2012), war, terrorism and insurgency (Hotchkiss, 2010; Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008; Parry, 2011), economic recession and bail out (Kostadinova & Dimitrova, 2012; Palmer & Tanner, 2012), climate change (Good, 2008; Takahasi, 2011), as well as health

matters (Bleich, 2007; Johnson, Henderson, Pedersen & Stonecipher, 2011). This wide application of framing theory accentuates its importance in journalistic treatment of issues on the one hand and audience comprehension on the other hand. More importantly, framing theory explicates important role of journalist in the choice of content and contexts of news coverage which eventually construct the reality perceived by the mass audience.

Framing as a Construction of Reality

Framing, according to scholars, is rooted in multidisciplinary fields of sociology, psychology and linguistics thus attracting a problematic conceptualisation to a point of 'fallacious reasoning' (Reese, 2001; Scheufele 1999; Scheufele & Iyengar, 1999). Although framing has multi-paradigmatic perspectives, four propositions that undergird its conceptualisation were advanced by D'Angelo's (2002) work as explicated by Matthes (2012). Using D'Angelo's words, Matthes (2012: 873) defines four such hard-core conjectures: First, "frames are themes within news stories that are carried by various framing devices," second, they "are first causes that share various levels of reality," third, they, "interact with the cognitive and social behaviors that they have shaped in the first place," and, fourth, they shape "public dialogues about political issues". Fit to media coverage, frames structure presentation and understanding of issues and events under consideration.

One influential way by which the media may shape public opinion, according to de Vreese (2005), is by framing events and issues in particular ways. He explains that communication is not in a state of inertness, rather it involves the emergence of frames and the relationship between these frames and audience predispositions. Expatiating further, he holds that by placing priority on some fundamentals of an issue over other aspects, a frame provides perspectives that facilitate comprehension of the issue in the media texts. Similarly, Strömbäck, Shehata and Dimitrova (2008: 119), explain that framing a topic is a dynamic process where political actors and media actors engage in unending scuffles. To these scholars, "framing is a way of constructing the surrounding environment that leads to the idea that different media may present different pictures of reality".

Thus, the media performs an intervening role associated to certain interests via the reconstruction of issues using particular structures, parameters, and values

(Takahashi, 2010, citing Carmody, 1995). For Reese (2001), the choice of media frames is a consequence of several factors comprising of journalistic standards and practices, individual schemas of reporters, and political philosophy. Framing is also influenced by the domestic environment in which journalists work (Dimitrova & Strombach, 2005). "Even in countries where there is freedom of expression, there is a form of invisible self-censorship. Journalists, writers, and producers realize what is permissible in media, and they pre-edit their own work to be consistent with those perceived norms-all in the interest of remaining employed in the media companies (Bourdieu, 1998 cited in Saleem, 2007).

As purveyors of information, the media also have the capability of influencing and shaping opinions, thus constructing and presenting some certain versions of the reality. They play a vital role in the exposure of messages of all kind, including those of violence and terror. Given this role, all parties, including terrorists and the authorities, struggle to engage the media as they are perceived as a singular system of information dissemination and awareness inculcation about vital subjects in the society (Yusof, Hassan, Hassan & Osman, 2013). Media application of frames to violence-ridden situations like that of insurgency and terrorism outbreaks, therefore, may help the audience and political authorities to recognise the problem, identify the causative agents, make ethical judgments and provide appropriate recommendations (Papacharissi & Oliveira, 2008).

Media and Terrorism

The rate and recurrence of events and level of importance accorded the events by the media defines the opinions of the audience and their responses to the event (Tiung & Hasim, 2009). This, perhaps, is known to terrorists who seek opportunity to be in the news always. Nigeria's political history is abound with acts of apprehension and terror executed by local or foreign persons, groups or parties (Okumu & Botha, 2007). Therefore, it is not a remarkable development exclusive to the northern part of Nigeria, because attainment of religious and political ends utilises violence and killings in other parts of Nigeria (Nnanyelugo & Okechukwu, 2012).

Despite Nigerian cataclysmic crises of ethno-religious hues, none has the impact generated by the diffused Islamic sect, Boko Haram. The group, which

was bequeathed with this sobriquet due to its frequent preaching against formal education in Nigeria and western culture globally, has not only threatened the corporate existence of the country, but secured a slot for her in the comity of nations battling with terrorism. Its effect, especially in the north eastern part, hitherto a Nigeria's languid sub-region, has attracted attention within and without the shores of the country and substantial media coverage and reportage, locally and internationally, along different news frames.

Terrorism and Terrorists

Conceptualising terrorism has become problematic among the scholars. "The difficulty in defining terrorism has led to the cliché that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" (Yoroms, 2006: 3). According to Obi (2005: 90), terrorism is an extremely queried term. In his words, terrorism can be conceptualised based on its raison d'etre or using pejorative stereotype:

With its origins in revolutionary political violence, it is now associated with an illegal unconventional war against a society or against an established, but resented order. Thus, while terrorism could be intended to attract attention to a cause through acts of extreme violence/threat of violence and spreading grief and fear, it could also be used as a label by status quo forces to excoriate and demonise their opponents or those struggling against domination and exploitation.

However, Norris, Kern and Just (2003: 3) advised against "maximalist definitions, which include theoretically irrelevant attributes, or minimalist conceptualizations, which exclude theoretically relevant attributes". Consequently, Nacos (2002) pointed out the evolution of the term "terrorism," from its original connotation of violence perpetrated by the state, to its current meaning of political violence perpetrated by non-state actors against civilians with the expressed intention of gaining publicity. For Papacharissi and Oliveira (2008: 55), terrorist acts unfortunately possess elements sympathetic with news values, such as drama, visuals, sound bites, relevance, and general newsworthiness. These scholars submit that present day terrorist groups acquaint themselves with news standards and principles thus exploiting media reportage to advance their plans.

Robert (1993), as cited in Hamada (2003), explains that the interest expressed by communication scholars towards investigating the communicative effects of terrorism is because it is regarded as a violent communication strategy. He states that, initiators of the degree of influence of the message include the kind of terrorist act performed characterised by its level of inhumaneness, the location and the targeted personalities.

The numerous terrorist acts which have received tremendous media coverage cuts across continents including Africa. These acts consist of kidnapping of top officials (indigenous and foreign), bombings and mass killings. Because terrorist acts are fitted into the media routine, they command prime positions in both print and electronic media and are amenable to varying frames that satisfy patronage intention fuelled by media political economy. The mediatisation of terrorism thus "impact on global and regional perceptions of Africa, as either an ally of those at the forefront of the War on Terrorism or as enemy nations that provide refuge and comfort for terrorists and their operatives" (Alali, 2003: 93).

By playing domicile to various terrorist groups, Africa has come under attack as safe heaven for terrorists. According to Ekwueme and Obayi (2012) terrorist groups like the notorious Al-Shabab in Somalia have developed into a continent threat having flourished over the years. These scholars also bemoan Nigeria lethal Islamic group, Jama'atuAhlis Sunna Lidda'awatiwal-Jihad (people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teachings and Jihad, popularly known as Boko Haram or Western education is sin), for creating pandemonium and bedlam on the loose in the country since 2009, supposedly due to the murder of its frontrunner in that year Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf by the police. According to these scholars, the horrid attacks of the sect, which at the outset were targeted at officers of government security agents, now extend to places of devotion, media houses and markets.

The significance of this paper is to illuminate how media framing increases or decreases the understanding of the societal issues in Nigeria. Consequently, the study adds to the existing literature of communication studies in the emerging democracies and Africa that is at the throes of religious terrorism in particular. Besides, the study attempts visualise media coverage of Boko Haram insurgency from responsible frame prism. World over, media have been acting

responsibly in the coverage of issues in general and sensitive issues in particular, using framing mechanisms. Ibrahim, Kee and Kuik (2012), for example, empiricised the role of ethnic media in nation building in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious state of Malaysia. These scholars documented how responsible framing of issues contributes to peaceful and harmonious co-existence among disparate groups. In a study examining visual framing of 2003 Iraq war in British newspapers, Parry (2011) submitted that the visual framing of the war as humanitarian intervention bolstered the UK pro-war stance and public support for the government. Hotchkiss (2011) also found traces of responsible framing in a longitudinal and cross-national framing of national security in France and the US from Cold War through terrorism era. This scholar concludes that Le Monde and the New York Times, respectively, framed national security using civic solidarity and individualistic approaches in support of cultural differences of the two nations. By applying framing theory to an on-going crises rooted in spiritual beliefs in a multi-religious setting, this study would demonstrate the role of media as either equivocator or builder of consensus, thus ascertaining their social responsibility stance.

METHODOLOGY

News framing analysis has often been examined from two types: media frames and individual frames. While media frames are embodied in words as part of the media discourse, individual frames are processed as internal structures of the mind of the audience (Yang, 2008). This study however, is limited to the media frame which is frequently observed from the content analysis approach. As such, it serves as a stepping stone for framing effects study on the impact of media frames on audience cognitive and behavioural dispositions.

Using quantitative content analysis, this study explores the news items in two newspapers (The Guardian and the Nation) via the five generic frames postulated by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). Quantitative content analysis simplifies data into a reductionist state, with sampling and operational or measurement procedures that reduce communication phenomena to manageable data from which inferences may be drawn about the phenomena themselves. The content analysis in this study was done to gauge the patterns of print media coverage in terms of level of news saliency and frame preferences. The study examined closely the positioning of news and the allocation of photos to understand the saliency of news. The duration of study

was six months, from June 1, 2014, to November, 2014. This period was purposively selected to provide an avenue for a better observation of a body of the recent activities of Boko Haram group like the Kano bombing, annexation of certain villages, rabid killing, and increasing threats of violence which could offer substantive supports on the significant role of the media.

The frame preferences, on the other hand, are based on the five major news frames (responsibility frame, conflict frame, economic consequences frame, human interest frame and morality frame) identified by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000).

In this study, The Responsibility Frame highlights the government's responsibility or the people's responsibility in fighting the Boko Haram insurgency. Conflict Frame highlights friction regardless of whether it is between Boko Haram and government or Boko Haram and the media. The Economic Consequences Frame highlights the effect of the Boko Haram activities on the economy (gains or losses). For Human Interest Frame, issues are highlighted in such a way to evoke emotions, be it sympathy, anger or empathy while Morality Frame involves news that emphasizes moral judgment or values to solve the Boko Haram issue (see, for example, Semetko and Valkenburg, 2000).

Due to the difficulty in examining the whole editions of the six months for the two newspapers, a Constructed-week sampling method was adopted to select the weeks of the year. This study follows the procedures outlined by Riffe, Aust, and Lacy (1993) are specifically designed for quantitative newspaper content analysis. These scholars submit that constructed week sampling is the most efficient sampling method (compared with simple random sampling and consecutive day sampling). Unlike simple random sampling constructed week sampling, according to Riffe, Aust, and Lacy (1993: 134), assumes that newspaper content will be cyclical on different days of the week. Thus, each day of the week must be represented in a constructed week sample.

The above process was done simultaneously for the selected newspapers for each of the systematically selected weeks until 6weeks were produced for each newspaper which were later content-analysed. Thereafter, Boko Haram

reportage was examined in terms of prominence (position of stories) and the number of photos used as well as frame preferences along five generic frames.

Consequently, the process produced a total of six weeks that made 42 editions per title. This was multiplied by two (number of the sampled newspapers) to produce a total of 84 editions of the two selected newspapers which were later content-analysed. In identifying the potential news stories relating to Boko Haram insurgency attention was paid to their (a) headlines, (b) sub-headlines, (c) first three paragraphs including the lead, (d) photos and their captions and (e) illustrations. In order to maintain objectivity and reliability of the coding sheet, systematic reliability tests were conducted by two coders of the study including one of the researchers. These reliability tests were conducted using the counter-checking method among the researchers within and between the two newspapers. For, example two coders were assigned the newspapers of the same date. Then, the similarities of the items coded and the analysis by both coders checked. High level of similarities indicates the objectivity and reliability among the coders. Cronbach's Alpha statistics for all the variable exceed the minimum benchmark of 0.70. Hence, coding scheme was adjudge a reliable mean of generating content analysed in this study.

RESULTS

In this section, the results of the measured variables are presented, consisting of number of news stories in the newspapers studied and salience of news about Boko Haram, which includes the use of photo in Boko Haram stories, length of headlines, and patterns of news frames. The results presented in this section are basically descriptive, since no test of significance is factored into the design.

Number of News Stories

The number of news stories on Boko Haram from June, 2014 to November, 2014 yielded a total of 237 news stories (Table 1) from the two newspapers. It is evident that The Nation newspaper reported six in ten (61.6%) Boko Haram stories in the two selected newspaper during the period of this study, leaving the Guardian to trail behind with almost four in ten stories (38.4%). The differential may be explained by age and orientation of the newspapers. Being the oldest and having the elite class as its main target, the Guardian may have

reduced its coverage of Boko Haram insurgency, which has become object of sensationalised reporting, particularly among the upcoming newspapers.

Table 1
Number of news stories on Boko Haram Insurgency in Newspapers Studied

Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
The Guardian	91	38.40
The Nation	146	61.60
Total	237	100.0

SALIENCE OF NEWS IN THE NEWSPAPERS

Salience of news provides the means of determining the importance of the object of news coverage. The results of the salience of the news is presented along sub-themes consisting news story location, the use of photos and length of headlines dealing with coverage of Boko Haram Insurgency.

News Story Location

Table 2 shows that most of the news stories (82.7%) were positioned in the inside pages of the newspapers content analysed. Few of the news stories (17.3%) were located on the front page. This shows that reportage of Boko Haram insurgency was not hyped in the newspapers selected. This might be due to consciousness of the newspapers to refuse the insurgent group access to undue publicity, either as a result of influences within or without the newspapers organisations.

Table 2: Salience of news in the newspapers content analysed

Salience of News in the Online Newspapers	The Guardian		The Nation		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Location of News						
Front page stories	26	28.57	15	10.27	41	17.30
Inside page stories	65	71.43	131	89.73	196	82.70
Total	91	100.00	146	100.00	237	100.00

Photo Usage

Table 3 indicates that 164 news stories (69.2%) were without photos while those with photos were 73 (30.8). Also, noteworthy is the fact that of the entire 73 news stories, with photos, 98 different pictures were used out of which 72 (73.47%) were coloured and 26 (26.53%) were in black and white. The Nation reported more stories with photo and has more colour pictures than the Guardian. This differential is presaged in the number of stories reported by each paper. The limited use of photos may also be explained by gory nature of Boko Haram attack, which coverage may violate morality, good taste and decency.

Table 3: Photo Usage

Photos Used	The Guardian		The Nation		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Photo						
Stories with photos	29	31.87	44	30.14	73	30.80
Stories without photo	62	68.13	102	69.86	164	69.20
Total	91	100.00	146	100.00	237	100.00
Photos Colour						
Coloured	33	97.06	39	60.94	72	73.47
Black and White	1	2.94	25	39.06	26	26.53
Total	34	100.00	64	100.00	98	100.00

Length of Headlines

Table 4 indicates that a total of 153 (64.56%) news stories out of the entire 237 news stories had headlines greater than two columns while 129 (84.31%) of the 153 news stories had headlines with length greater than half of the newspaper analysed. This reveals the hyping of Boko Haram stories covered by the selected newspapers.

Table 4: Length of Headlines

Length of headlines (a)	The Guardian		The Nation		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Greater than 2 columns	62	68.13	91	62.33	153	64.56
Less than 2 columns	29	31.87	55	37.67	84	35.44
Total	91	100.00	146	100.00	237	100
Length of headlines (b)						
Greater than half of the newspaper	59	95.16	70	76.92	129	84.31
Less than half of the newspaper	3	4.84	21	23.08	24	15.69
Total	62	100	91	100	153	100.00

The use of bogus headline may be aimed at catching the attention of readers, giving the fact that most of the stories on Boko Haram were buried in the inner pages of the selected newspapers.

News Frames

Table 5 presents the patterns of news frames of Boko Haram activities in Nigerian newspapers. The most prevalent frame is the responsibility frame. The results show that both newspapers prioritised the responsibility and human interest frames. The Guardian reported 60 news stories each (35.09%) using the Responsibility frame and Human interest frame while The Nation reported 105 news stories (37.10%) using the Responsibility frame and 102 news stories (36.04%) using the Human interest frame. The two newspapers ranked the Morality frame third, though The Nation gave it more coverage with The Guardian and The Nation having 25 news stories (14.62%) and 43 (15.19%) respectively. The conflict frame was ranked fourth with The Guardian reporting 21 news stories (12.28%) and The Nation 27 news stories (9.54%). The Economic Consequences frame was given the least attention with The Guardian covering 5 news stories (2.92%) and The Nation covering 6 news stories (2.12%). The seeming consensus seen in hierarchy of frames used by

the two selected newspapers may be explained by the popular belief that news organisations tend to wait on others in order to be relevant on the main issues being covered by the media system as theorised by the inter-media agenda-setting theory (McCombs, 2004; 2005).

Table 5: Patterns of news frames of Boko Haram activities in Nigerian newspapers

Frames	The Guardian		The Nation	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Responsibility	60	35.09	105	37.10
Human Interest	60	35.09	102	36.04
Conflict	21	12.28	27	9.54
Morality	25	14.62	43	15.19
Economic Consequences	5	2.92	6	2.12
Total	171	100.00	283	100.00

DISCUSSION

This study sets out to identify and examine the patterns of frames adopted by Nigerian Newspapers in the coverage of Boko Haram insurgency. It adopted content analysis as means of obtaining data. The study, which is situated within the assumptions, arguments and discussions of framing, applies framing theory to an on-going crises rooted in spiritual beliefs in a multi-religious setting. It demonstrates the role of media as builder of consensus and thus ascertains their social responsibility stance. The content analysis which was conducted on two Nigerian newspapers (The Guardian and The Nation) to determine the print media framing of the insurgency produced 237 news articles during a period of six months in 2014.

From the study, it was discovered that both newspapers adopted all the frames identified by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) i.e. the responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality and economic consequences frames in the coverage of Boko Haram news in the year 2014. The Guardian and The Nation emphasized the responsibility frame the most. This finding is in agreement with the study conducted by Ibrahim, Kee and Kuik (2012) on Ethnic Media and Nation-Building in Malaysia where content analysis of Chinese and Malay

newspapers revealed preference of responsibility frames in the political news coverage of the two papers.

The research showed that the human interest frame was closely behind the responsibility frame. This may be informed by the significant impact of the insurgency on human causalities. The Economic consequences frame received the least attention from the two newspapers, perhaps due to within or extra-media influence that bothers on the need to protect the nation's economy from vagaries that insecurity may inflict on the nation's businesses.

An overall view of the findings show that The Nation newspaper used more frames than the The Guardian newspaper. This result, according to Gan, Teo and Detenber (2005: 460), appears to support the argument of Hackett and Zhao (1998) that "although frames can coexist with practices of objective journalism, objectivity markers such as counterbalancing quotations and attribution of opinion help disguise or render unseen the dominant frame." Another contributory factor to this finding may be the fact that the news stories in The Nation newspaper are more than that of The Guardian newspaper.

Furthermore, The Nation used more of the conflict frame than the Guardian. This could be partly due to the fact that at the time of conducting this study, the Jonathan administration received no sympathy from the paper in view of its ownership by an opposition leader. Notwithstanding the differentials, the congruence in the hierarchy of frames used by the two newspapers demonstrates, to certain degree, consensus building function of the newspaper system. Similarly, a socially responsible reportage can be inferred from the results of this study, giving limited sensational reportage of the insurgency.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the quantitative data, this study concludes that Nigerian newspapers adopt the 5 generic frames of framing as postulated by Semetko and Valkenburg (2000). Hence, they reported the news stories along the responsibility, human interest, conflict, morality and economic consequences frames. With few news stories using the morality and economic consequences frame. This is in compliance with Tuchman (1978) assertion that while there could be more than one frame per news story, one frame usually emerges as dominant, which is consistent with the journalistic shorthand of

using one predetermined frame or angle to cover a particular type of story. Also, given that news frames are employed to help readers make sense of complex web of events, competing frames may result in an unclear presentation of the news, when there is actually a greater need for unambiguous reporting and explanation during such unprecedented occurrences (Gan, Teo & Detenber, 2005).

Being exploratory in nature, this study adds to understanding news management from a highly sensitive issue. Admittedly, this study is not without its limitations. Future research can replicate this study using more newspapers to obtain robust result that surpasses the focus on two newspapers employed here. This will assist in obtaining more information for greater comparison and understanding. Considering the time period of 6 months, a similar study can be conducted over a longer period of time, thus adding to the bank of longitudinal studies to gain a better understanding of media frame. It is also suggested that future studies can employ other genres of news as this study only took into consideration news articles for its content analysis. These include editorials, letters to the editors, opinion and feature articles. Other features of newspaper contents like cartoons could also be examined to enhance the findings.

The replication of this study in other media genre such as broadcast, new and social media could also contribute to elaboration of frame function of news. Considering the ongoing reconceptualization of frames and framing, future study should also test the emerging dimensions evolving from the changing theoretical contours as treatise by Cacciatore, Scheufele and Iyengar (2016). All these will help to account for theoretically-sound effects of media treatment of issues via framing mechanisms and how audience utilise media frames to unpack news stories as distinguished from other cognitive, affective and behavioural effects theories.

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