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NEWSPAPER FRAMING OF NIGERIA'S 2011-2015 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

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Abstract

The study examines newspaper framing of Nigeria's 2011-2015 presidential elections, in Daily Trust and The Punch Newspapers, with the aim to unpacking the implicit meaning in news frames, using headlines in the front pages of these newspapers. A total of 158 messages were analysed in both newspapers published 30 days to the elections, between March 17, and April 15, 2011, and between February 26, and March 27, 2015. The study employed content analysis and critical discourse analysis. The findings revealed among others that, Daily Trust utilised more “collective action” frames most times in its coverage, while The Punch tends to be tilted more towards the adoption of “conflict frames”, hence, some of the front page headlines were rather partisan, conflict insensitive out-rightly irresponsible, where language was used as a strategy for ideological projection and mind control. The study concludes that the newspapers coverage of the presidential candidates is reflective of the influence of two strong propaganda model filters: ownership (and profit maximization) played a major role in framing messages. The recommends among others that further studies on politics and elections should be undertaken in TV, radio and social media, to draw similarities and differences in message framing.

Keywords: Newspaper, framing, propaganda model, election, framing

Introduction

The mass media have an array of affective and material roles to play in how one relates to others, how one imagines their lives and how one get things done in the world (Carah & Louw, 2015). It is therefore anticipated that “those entrusted with the production of 'media meal' must prepare and present it in such a style that whets the appetite of the media consumer” (Udoh & Obot, 2013, p. 4), by caring for the deepest information need of the consumer, devoid of manipulation, communication, and by extension access to communication media, has become a central component in the equation of politics regardless whether one is talking about political rallies, campaigns, debates or any of the political processes (Maarek & Wolfsfeld, 2003). In Nigeria, the media are commonly referred to as the fourth tier of government (after the federal, state and local

governments) whose role is to oversee the first three, and whose power is perceived to be more than the three combined. While Willis (2007), perceives the media as the “fourth estate” to mean the media are the defenders of democracy, a task they undertake when they assume the role of a society's watchdog.

There are substantial differences in the way the media generally frame political messages. Chong and Druckman (2007) opine that frames can be construed in both positive and negative terms. Tiung and Hasim (2009) maintain that by deciding selectively to do coverage on one side of certain issues, journalists and editors draw the internal map of interpretation for readers, and this process of mapping is known as “framing”. The Nigerian media plays a significant role in drawing this internal map during electioneering period in such a

way that these messages are framed in certain ways, as determined by various factors which Herman and Chomsky (1988) termed propaganda model filters through strategic use of language. Language is a powerful weapon in getting across the thoughts and ideologies of politicians (Hashim, 2015). Oni (2015) asserts that no usage of language by politicians in this period is neutral, and the term language is not limited to 'spoken word' alone. It encompasses a combination of speech acts. Hashim (2015) explains that political discourse is not only about stating public propositions. It is about politics. It is about doing things with words so that everyone that hears a speech has different interpretations that can influence the success of the candidates. The study objective are (i) to compare and contrast the frames used before Nigeria's 2011 and 2015 presidential election, (ii) to identify the major propaganda model filters that were on the front pages of newspapers in 2011 and 2015 and (iii) to investigate the latent meaning of selected presidential pre-election headlines in 2011 and 2015.

Several literatures abound (Moeller, 2008; de Vreese, 2005) that deal with media frames on coverage of election campaigns, however, not many researchers have written on the comparison of media pre-election frames across two or more electoral years in Nigeria especially with particular reference to Herman and Chomsky's (1988) model filters as determinants of political frames. Hence, this study attempts to fill the gap by examining the place of the propaganda model filters in presidential pre-election messages through the use of analytical tools.

Literature Review

Nigerian Media and Political Communication

According to Imoh (2013), the mass media in most African countries are mostly government owned; hence, the owners perform some gatekeeping functions that are conditioned by political, parochial and economic interests. Imoh (2013) further says that as a result, the media serve the interests of elites or the government in power at the expense of the majority; consequently, the impact of the socialization and democratization function of the mass media is limited. Aro (2011) explains that this is so because most of the proprietors' newspapers who were politicians themselves saw the presence of the Press as an instrument of acquiring their different aspired office to the extent that those who did not have any

print media were motivated to establish their own. This explains the seeming differences in media reportage. Differences in media reportage are explained by Edwards (2011) who *draws attention to* three kinds of things the media do in elections: the media transmit campaign propaganda to large numbers of people; transmit propaganda selectively. They also exercise discretion when they sell time and space to political groups, however; they can refuse, and have refused, to accept advertising by minor parties and even major party groups. More than anything else, it is this ability of media personnel to determine media content that makes them political actors in their own right; and media transmit propaganda in certain conventional formats that are not just different ways to present the same things, but also a way of leading politicians to say things differently and to say different things. *Owing to this*, newspapers' front page are very popular in reporting news pertaining to the candidates and where they stand on the polls; their pictures, performances and utterances become news headlines every day of the week (Willis, 2007; Nwokeafor & Okunoye, 2013).

Freedom of the Press

The Nigerian constitution of 1999, section 39 (1) states that "every Nigerian holds the right to receive and impart ideas and information", and, "every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions" section (39(2), hence, the establishment of different mass media in Nigeria. Section 22 of the constitution also states that the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold Nigeria's fundamental objectives and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people. Although the press was intended to be a "watchdog" for the country, however, fulfilling this role could be difficult due to request from various quarters competing for special interest (pressreference.com). The press must avoid being manipulated by the power of incumbency or the powerful to the detriment of the entire society.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on Framing Theory and Propaganda Model. Framing refers to the ability of the media to present aspects of issues in a way that suggests a particular interpretation. Anyadike (2015) argues that the media choose what aspects

to highlight or draw attention to, and what parts to leave out, and that “some frames are more effective because of what they ask, and more importantly, because of what they do *not* ask” (Dardis et al., 2006, p. 15). Some analysts such as Saleem (2007) have attempted to highlight fine indices of framing : (1) Media frames can play a vital role in stimulating opposition to or support for an event or issue. (2) Media frames provide moral judgment, causal interpretation and remedy/solution for media-focused problems. (3) Media frames generally represent specific ideology. (4) Media frames including attractive words, metaphors and phrases help to determine the “tone” of media coverage of an event or issue. So, to Saleem (2007), these four pointers, which are by no means exclusive, reduces to the bare bones the process of frame identification.

Strategies of Political Framing

According to Baran and Davis (2010) Frank Luntz was the first professional pollster to systematically use the concept of framing as a campaign tool. Luntz's message was simple: "It's not what you say, it's how you say it". This view is supported by Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007) who argue that the effect of the messages was not a function of content differences but of differences in the modes of presentation, “even the most sublime acts of restraint or withdrawals are loud messages conveying readable meaning to the receiver” (Brown & Udomisor, 2015, p. 11), herein referred to as framing by omission. Tiungand Hasim (2009) believe that government officials are more dependent on the media to communicate effectively because frames not only enhance understanding; they influence opinions.

The Political Power of News Media through Framing

According to Entman (1993), framing is ultimately “an exercise or imprint of power”. Mcmenamin, Flynn, O'Malley and Rafter (2013) lend a scholarly thought to media potency that the framing of elections represents the most overt instance of the media's power to influence politics. Broadly speaking, Louw (2005) states that power emerges from three sources: Access to resources (to implement one's will and buy others); the occupation of certain social positions (which enhance one's capacity to get one's will complied with, and/or constrain the capacity of others to act); language as a relation-structuring agent. The three

sources identified by Louw (2005) above are possessed by the media (houses), hence, their power. Having delved into an explication of framing, it is crucial and worthy of note that framing doesn't just happen, there are triggers.

On the other hand, Propaganda model states that all individuals play a role in making, remaking and circulating meaning; some individuals and groups, however, have more power than others within the communicative process (Carah & Louw, 2014). According to Carah and Louw (2014) argue that if controlling discourse is a first major form of power, controlling people's minds is the other fundamental way to reproduce dominance and hegemony. It is argued that there is inherent hegemony over ideas and power rests in the hands of a small elite group, a 'specialised class' whose primary objective is to retain power (Lilleker, 2006). Media should not be a vehicle, or used as an advocate for any political party or ideology, sadly, this seems to be the case. Herman and Chomsky (1988), the propounders of this model postulate that elite media, to fulfill the role of informing and educating require systematic propaganda.

According to the scholars, explains that by propaganda, it is meant that most of the news content is oriented toward the continuation of the capitalist class system where information is usually framed within the parameters of elite interests, and that certain topics and ideas tend to be excluded. In the new global economy therefore, propaganda has become a central issue for harmonising political and economic power, and this, through the media. Herman and Chomsky (1988) extensively explained the process by which propaganda takes place in the media, by stating that the raw material of news must pass through successive filters, leaving only the cleansed residue fit to print. The five propaganda model filters identified by Herman and Chomsky (1988) are: 1. Size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms. 2. Advertising as the primary income source of the mass media. 3. The reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and 'experts' funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power. 4. 'Flak' as a means of disciplining the media. 5. 'Anti-communism' as a national religion and control mechanism (which has been replaced by ideology).

By size, concentrated Okwechime (2015),

ownership and profit orientation, news companies and journalists have the ability to dictate what stories are considered newsworthy and how much prominence and space they are allocated (Cissel, 2012). The media rely so much on advertising for revenue that keeps them in business. According to advertising is big business for media organizations, the printing houses, consultants and advertising agencies. Most framing studies assume that the communicators are elite actors such as politicians, the media, scientific experts, and other opinion leaders; frames are therefore chosen with audience in mind, so the preferences of the audience will have a bearing on the position taking of elites (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Method

Data Presentation

Table 1: Population and Sample Size for Daily Trust and the Punch

Daily Trust		The Punch		Total	
2011	2015	2011	2015		
Population	30	30	30	30	120
Sample	24	24	18	25	91
Irrelevant	3	6	12	5	26
Un-retrieved	3	-	-	-	3

Selection criteria for *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers was therefore wider circulation and readership, that is, those newspapers with the highest circulation in Nigeria (Aliagan, 2011). This study considered front page following the observation by *Mustapha and Wok (2015)* that one of the means by which the media raise the salience of issues in the public agenda is to display them prominently, mostly on the front page of the

The method adopted for this investigation was the qualitative method, using content analysis and critical discourse analysis. The population of the study was all newspaper editions (front page) published 30 days to the election period of 2011 and 2015 of *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* Newspapers, which gives a total of 120 editions. The sample size was therefore 91 editions. These newspaper publications were only included based on the content of pre-election related messages dealing with presidential aspirants. This implies that a total of 158 headlines were identified and examined in the 91 editions. Table 1 provides broad information.

newspapers, a part which has been hailed as a cue-laden portion that prompts the reader to certain reactions. The instrument used for data collection was the coding guide and coding sheet. This study used front page headlines and sub-heads of the newspapers as the units of analysis. Using the Holists' (1968) reliability formula, the inter-coder reliability test result for this study was 0.78, hence, considered reliable enough.

1. Compare and contrast the frames used before Nigeria's 2011 and 2015 presidential election

Table 2: Differences between *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* Reportage

DAILY TRUST

THE PUNCH

29th March 2011: Northern leaders meet today on alternatives to Jonathan

13th March 2011: Yakassai, Na'Abba lead Northern group to Jonathan

13th April 2011: Buhari, Tinubu close to a deal

4th March 2015: Lagos PDP cautions Jonathan on Obanikoro

Blank

Blank

13th March 2015: Our objective is to revive Nigeria – Buhari

29th March 2011: presidential debate: Jonathan denies asking for questions in advance

13th March 2011: ACN, CPC planned alliance under threat

13th April 2011: Parties reluctant to make concessions (We're not worried-PDP)

4th March 2015: Buhari too old to lead- Patient Jonathan

4th March, 2015: I'll return to Otuoke if I lose- President Jonathan

4th March 2015: Some people bent on scuttling elections- Tambuwal

13th March 2015: I REJECTED Jonathan's VP offer

While daily Trust reported on a particular issue, the Punch newspaper bothered itself with another news item. These differences in reportage are not limited to 2011 alone, quite a number of differences were observed in 2015 as well, as seen in the table. In other instances, one newspaper simply refrained from reporting any news that had to do with the presidential candidates/parties while the other did. For example; on the 20th of March 2011, Daily Trust reported up to 3 stories while The Punch reported none as seen below:

Daily Trust 2011, 20th March

Why Jonathan's meeting with Atiku, IBB, Gusau ended in deadlock

2011 Power Struggle: presidential campaigns cost hits the roof (major headline)

Jonathan hires each helicopter at \$10,000 per hour

Shekarau gives out free N1, 500 GSM recharge cards to woo voters

Buhari: why we can't afford expensive campaigns
ACN bankrolls Ribadu's campaigns
PDP/CPC supporters clash in Kebbi, houses burnt

The Punch 2011, 20th March: None

Also on the 7th March 2015, The Punch reported the following political news story while Daily Trust simply ignored such.

APC holds mega rally in Lagos as Jonathan, others jog for PDP in Abuja

PDP lays fresh ambush against March 28 poll
Buhari arrives Nigeria from UK (picture attached).

Another important difference must be mentioned at this point. This has to do with the prominence attached to the same story. For instance, in 2015 the following story was on the front page of both Daily

Trust and The Punch:

Daily Trust 20th March 2015: *Don't be scared of prison, Buhari's wife tells Patience (lead headline)*

Punch 20th March 2015: *Don't be afraid of jail, Buhari's wife tells Patience Jonathan (small space)*

This indicates that Daily Trust gave prominence and importance to the news story while the Punch though it also reported the story didn't consider it of greater importance as to be the major headline. The position of the frame, as well as the size is of paramount importance in this study. Though there were more differences than similarities in the reportage/frames, tone and prominence of the two newspapers, quite a few stories were found to be almost similar, which can also pass for differences. For example:

Daily Trust 14th April 2011: *Buhari weeps for Nigeria (picture)*

Every man for himself (CPC, ACN, alliance talks fail) (major headline)

Nigerians have spoken loud and clear (Advert)

Punch 14th April 2011: *How ACN, CPC alliance talks collapsed (major headline)*

The IBB, Atiku, Gusau factor

This is my last shot at presidency-Buhari

Nigerians have spoken loud and clear (Advert)

Daily Trust 10th March 2015: *Mbeki, Abdulsalam meet Buhari (picture)*

Punch 2015 10th March 2015: *Mbeki, Abdulsalami meet Buhari*

2. Major propaganda model filters that were on the front pages of newspapers in 2011 and 2015

Table 3: News Filters for *Daily Trust* (2011 and 2015)

Filters	Frequency	Percentage
Ownership	26	56.5
Advertisers	5	10.9
Sources	12	26.1
Flak	0	0
Ideology	3	6.5
Total	46	100.0
Daily Trust (2015)		
Ownership	19	32.8
Advertisers	6	10.3
Sources	21	36.2
Flak	0	0
Ideology	12	20.7
Total	58	100.0

Regarding the news filters observed on the front pages, in 2011, the most dominant filter was ownership with a little over half (56.5%), followed by news sources (26.1%), advertisement seen accounted for 10.9 % while Nigeria's dominant ideology had 6.5%. It was observed that flak, which refers to negative criticisms received by the media house was not evident at all as it did not appear on the front pages. In 2015, the news filters are as follows: News sources was 36.2%, ownership 32.8%, ideology 20.7 The least news filter evident was the advertiser as it was observed only 6 times (10%) with no sign of flak at all.

Table 4: News Filters for The Punch (2011 and 2015)

Filters	Frequency	Percentage
Ownership	9	36.0
Advertisers	1	4.0
Sources	12	48.0
Flak	0	0
Ideology	3	12.0
Total	25	100.0
The Punch (2015)		
Ownership	24	38.7
Advertisers	2	3.2
Sources	2	43.5
Flak	0	0
Ideology	9	14.5
Total	62	100.0

As for the news filters seen on front pages in this newspaper, a story was noticed to have more than one filter some of the times, hence, the filters were identified 25 times in the 30 days. The highest ranking filter was news sources (48%), evident in the newspaper's quotation of one elite personality or the other, followed by ownership 36%. ideology was 12% and advertiser was 4%. It was observed

that flak, which refers to negative criticisms received by the media house, was not coded as it did not appear on the front pages. Two of the most apparent news filters in the Punch 2015 were news sources (43.5%) and ownership (38.7%). There were only 2 advertisements and 9 stories that bothered on the dominant ideology in Nigeria, with no flak.

Critical Discourse Analysis of Daily Trust and The Punch in 2011 And 2015

3. Latent meaning of selected presidential pre-election headlines in 2011 and 2015.

Daily Trust 7th April 2011: Power Struggle: presidential campaigns cost hits the roof {lead}

Jonathan hires each helicopter at \$10,000 per hour Shekarau gives out free N1, 500 GSM recharge cards to woo voters Buhari: why we can't afford expensive campaigns ACN bankrolls Ribadu's campaigns

The title of this headline says a lot, especially with the use of the metaphor “campaign cost *hits the roof*” coupled with the fact that it is the major headline in the publication. For the three presidential candidates of PDP, ACN and ANPP,

the frame of this message is negative exposing how much they spend on campaigns, insinuating their desperation to win at all cost. The reader of this message would think these people are being extravagant because if they win they will definitely reimburse their purses. Somewhere buried within those frames was the utterance of the CPC's candidate Muhammadu Buhari claiming the party cannot afford expensive campaigns. These reportage portray the newspaper as taking sides by exonerating the person of Muhammadu Buhari

who happens to be the only candidate that is not extravagant or desperate to win the elections. Daily Trust propagates the ideology of anti-corruption to favour the candidature of Buhari and discredit the other three. Though this might appear to be not a conscious effort at manipulation, however it is a clear example of how media messages draw on and reproduce hegemonic ideology drawing on the strength of ownership.

Daily Trust 22nd March 2011: Jonathan to Buhari: don't malign my wife

In this story, the two major presidential candidates Jonathan and Buhari address themselves. Jonathan issues a stern warning to Buhari not to make defamatory statements that will tarnish the image of his wife. It is common practice in Nigeria that politicians go to any length to discredit an opponent such that the family members are not spared. It is on this not that Jonathan likely issues his word of caution to his opponent.

Punch 23rd March 2011: Jonathan tackles crises in South West PDP (major head)

The south Western part of Nigeria is predictably a stronghold for Jonathan. Having being in the news that all is not well within the party in that region, it is pertinent for the leader to appear to douse the tension on everyone's mind concerning the unity of the party as a whole and the success of the elections. This reportage seems clear that Jonathan has efficiently dealt with the situation. This in turn gives hope back to the supporters of PDP that there is unity of purpose.

Punch 12th April 2011: ACN, CPC plan alliance against Jonathan (main head)

Earlier it was reported that Jonathan had a meeting with 30 parties and excluded ACN and CPC. Now the two parties have taken the challenge to form an alliance against Jonathan, after all he started it. So, the battle line has been drawn. ***Punch 13th April 2011: ACN, CPC planned alliance under threat (main head); Parties reluctant to make concessions; we're not worried- PDP.*** The planned alliance by the ACN and CPC might probably not see the light of day and PDP is not worried, in fact, it is happy. The two parties that want to be merged into one in order to overthrow PDP are not willing to accept the new terms and conditions of service. This to PDP is a welcome development because it would mean it will

continue to wax stronger in the face of opposition.

Daily Trust 14th April 2011: Buhari weeps for Nigeria (picture)

The picture of Buhari weeping for Nigeria could mean different things. It's likely that he has seen the decay in the Nigerian system and has been gripped with pity for Nigerians. On the other hand, it could be as a result of the humiliation he has received from various political actors since he started his presidential ambition, since 2011 would be the third time he would attempt to contest.

Punch 14th April 2011: Advertisement: Nigerians have spoken loud and clear

Fact: in the senate, PDP has won 58 out of the 91 seats so far declared. The next party has 13 seats.

Fact: in the Federal House of Representatives, PDP has won 140 out of the 263 seats so far declared. The next party has 52 seats.

Fact: PDP has won in 22 states (plus the FCT) and tied in 2 out of the 34 states across ALL geopolitical zones.

The next party won in 5 states.

Clearly, we know the national direction Nigerians are going this Saturday. Operation One Nigeria.

You are cordially invited to vote for the man Nigerians love. Vote for Jonathan.

Even though this came out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy, it is quite unusual to have advertisements on the front pages of newspapers. No wonder, advertisers are made to pay hugely to advertise on front page, monies that would otherwise have been used for developmental projects. One Nigeria Coalition placed this advertisement immediately after the gubernatorial and National Assembly elections as a way of setting the national tone for voters. It had great faith that PDP will win the presidency since "Nigerians have spoken loud and clear", while inviting them to continue what they have started by voting for "the man Nigerians love, Goodluck Jonathan".

Daily Trust: 1st March 2015:-Election Intrigues: Jonathan plots to cripple Buhari's campaign- APC (main head)-Opposition alleges that president plans to freeze accounts of Tinubu, Amaechi, ground campaign aircraft-It is not true-PDP

In this story, the choice of the word "intrigue" by the media house suggests a form of complication or scheming by the parties involved. APC and PDP

engage in exchange of words and accusations of each other. APC insinuates a form of distraction of its candidate's and staunch supporters' campaign so that if there are any hitches with regards to the campaign, all fingers will point to PDP. In its defense, PDP says "it's not true" so as to exonerate itself. Meanwhile, all of these is meant to catch the attention of the reader and is very critical in opinion formation. **Daily Trust 6th March 2015: My re-election will be difficult, Jonathan says:** This story breeds a kind of loss of confidence on Jonathan's supporters. If the leader himself is neither confident nor hopeful, what then will the supporters hold on to? Therefore for such statement to come from such a man leaves the supporters heartbroken and confused. It only leaves the reader wanting to know details surrounding this statement. **Daily Trust 12th March 2015: No more corruption from May 29, Buhari says:** Most times Buhari is seen to make calculated, carefully-thought out statements. It is not news that scholars have established that the number one problem of Nigeria is corruption. Muhammadu Buhari who is perceived as a no-nonsense man recognises this and states categorically that there'll be no more corruption. **Daily Trust 21st March 2015: Picture of Jonathan and Buhari hugging themselves after signing peace pact:** A picture is said to be worth more than a thousand words. This is one picture that is deeply ideological-positively. One of the things Nigerians are clamouring for is PEACE. This picture in particular douses the hatred, attack and rivalry between the two major parties PDP and APC. The two leaders sign a peace pact to take responsibility for their supporters and to accept the outcome of the elections as credible. On the part of Daily Trust, this a positive step towards fulfilling its corporate social responsibility to the people. This news story was reported consecutive for seven days until a day to the D-day.

Discussion of Findings

Noticeable differences have been identified in the reportage of Daily Trust and The Punch with regards to the type of frame used, tone, frequency of coverage and the prominence (placement of the story on the front page, considering font size and space allotted). *Findings revealed that Daily Trust is subtly pro-Buhari. This is associated with the prominence attached to the headline as against that by The Punch, following Akinwalere's (2013) position that Daily Trust is more prominent in the*

Northern part of the country and "pursues northern agenda". This inference was made considering the fact that Buhari/wife are from the North while Jonathan/wife are from the South. According to the scholar, **the** personal biases of the media houses and their frames often favours some candidates at least to a degree, adding that the pictures used, the questions asked and the stories chosen for reporting all play a role in affecting the way a candidate looks to the public since most people do not get the opportunity to talk to a candidate, so what they know about him is what they hear or read in the media. It was discovered that the newspapers reported different news items on the same day, and where these reportage were similar, it was not so in every respect. This is perhaps due to Haselmayer, Wagner and Meyer's (2016) account of media reportage on partisan bias, positing that the media are therefore more likely to deemphasize negative stories or scandals about political actors they favor and overemphasize the faults of disliked ones.

Another striking discovery is that news filters showed elites' quote (news sources) dominating to a large extent especially in The Punch (2011 and 2015). Politicians are very much aware that media like to quote sources. Hence, they make utterances in order to be quoted; and as discovered, source selection is one of the key determinants of most of the frames followed by the inclination to maximize profit by the media owners. The findings further revealed that, ownership factor consistently got a higher percentage among all the filters in Daily Trust. European Union Election Observation Mission (2007) discovers that in Nigeria's 2003 elections, federally owned media were found to favour the party in power. Also, Brown and Udomisor (2015) argue that stories were mostly presented in favour of the ruling government. Also, it was discovered that hardly did any filter stand on its own. Largely, it was the interaction of more than one, which helps to reinforce another. Furthermore, the study, however, found that all of the advertisements placed by Ayo Fayose were harmful to some elites; it did not favour all of the ruling class at all. This, however, contradicts EU's and Borown and Odomisor' arguments on media favouring the ruling class, and quite supports the position of Croteau, Hoynee and Milan (2012) who state that hegemony operates at the level of common sense in the assumptions we make about social life.

Conclusion

This study was undertaken to compare and contrast newspaper headlines and to investigate the hidden meanings of such while looking out for specific news filters. The findings of this study revealed that there was divergent use of frames through space allocation and use of pictures even where the newspapers cover similar stories, and there were cases where same stories were reported at different dates by the two newspapers. The major propaganda model filters were ownership and news sources, with little presence of advertisers and the dominant ideology in Nigeria which is anti-corruption and anti-terrorism. Generally, this research concludes that the newspapers coverage of the presidential candidates is reflective of the influence of two strong propaganda model filters: ownership (and profit maximization), and news sources because the messages that newspapers provide are framed to meet the goals of the providing source. The study therefore concludes that ownership and news sources are certainly at play in the media's coverage, and these in turn determine the social responsibility and conflict sensitivity of media houses. Though the media may not have control over what political sources say, they certainly do have control over what they report and how they report it. Despite the fact that some of the newspapers reported on similar stories, it is observed that apart from few instances where their dates coincide, there is remarkable variation in the date which they cover identical stories just as their choice of frames vary. The headlines were found to be partisan and biased.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study advanced the following recommendations:

1. Further studies on newspaper framing of elections should be conducted more elaborately to other parts of the newspapers, to expand the scope of the study.
2. Further studies on politics and elections should be undertaken in other types of media such as TV, radio and social media in order to track similarities and differences across all media outlets.
3. This study should be replicated using survey or interview to determine how media messages affect voters' perception about these messages.
4. Finally, it is important to understand other elements that make up the frame-building process, such as journalistic bias, socio-political factors or national culture. Further work is required to establish the place of these elements of political communication.

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