THE ROLE OF GOOD GOVERNANCE AND MASS MEDIA IN ADDRESSING INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

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Good Governance; Mass Media; Insecurity; Conventional Media and Nigeria.

Abstract

Research Problem: *Insecurity in Nigeria is driven by alot of factors, part of which includes terrorism, banditry, and other forms of crime, has become a significant challenge, affecting social stability and economic growth. This issue has led to public distrust in government efforts and created a tense atmosphere, particularly in rural areas.*
Methodology: *The paper utilizes a qualitative research design, drawing on secondary data from academic books, journals, periodicals, and media sources. A content analysis method was employed to examine how conventional and new media portray insecurity and its effects on society.*
Results: *The paper findings reveals that both conventional media (newspapers, radio, television) and new media (social media platforms) play a crucial role in shaping public perception of insecurity. While traditional media sets the agenda on national security concerns, new media has been used by terrorist groups and the public, often spreading misinformation and exacerbating insecurity.*
Conclusion: *The paper concludes that both types of media significantly impact public perceptions of insecurity and influence governance decisions. The media's agenda-setting function has the power to shape national discourse on security, but its role in perpetuating fear through sensationalized coverage cannot be ignored.*
Key Contribution: *The paper underscores the interconnectedness of media, governance, and insecurity in Nigeria, demonstrating how media influence governance decisions, which in turn affect national security and development.*
Recommendation: *The paper however recommends the strengthening of media regulation, enhancing media literacy, fostering collaboration between the government and media outlets, implementing comprehensive security sector reforms, and leveraging new media for positive social*

change to combat insecurity in Nigeria.

Introduction

Over the last few years, insecurity has become one of the most pertinent issues in Nigeria. It is a problem that is constantly echoed in the traditional media of the country and does not appear to have an ending since there is not a day that goes without security incidents being reported. The increase in ritual killings, abduction of citizens and expatriates, farmers/ herders related conflicts, or the emergence of banditry and armed robbery, the media is full of reports of insecurity in the country. Although the media is full of stories concerning various successes and action by the security agencies, the recurrence of the same threats come out to render the argument that the actual contributors of insecurity are not being established hence the efforts to fight insecurity are not sufficient.

The insecurity situation in Nigeria has changed and transformed to a very deep-rooted national problem. According to Uche, Chukwuemeka, and Odogwu (2023), the phenomenon of insecurity in Nigeria has never been so high, and it is particularly so since the political independence of the country. Everyday, Nigerian people are assaulted with reports of all kinds of violence and criminal activities including kidnappings, terrorism, armed robbery, and ritual killings. Dare, Bamidele, and Oluwasanmi (2020) explain that this crisis is not a temporary issue, but an ongoing problem that still haunts the nation and compromises the safety of the population and the stability of the state as a whole. With the increasing levels of insecurity in the country, the citizens are left in a fearful and uncertain state with the actions taken by the government to curb the situation being inadequate.

Insecurity in Nigeria has experienced a dramatic change since the restoration of democracy in the year 1999. abandoned cases targeting crimes like armed robbery, inter-ethnic violence and localized social unrest have tend to become complex in the security crisis cutting across the country. The present crisis is based on a number of social-economic and political reasons that can be attributed to unequal resources distribution, political marginalization, and corruption in the system (Omemma, 2017; Aning, as cited in Yagboyaju & Akinola, 2019). Not only do these contribute to the worsening of a sense of injustice and disenfranchisement by citizens but it is also the breeding ground of the criminal elements. Increasing departure of the haves and the have-nots particularly between the north and the south as well as the high level of unemployed and underdevelopment has helped to influence young Nigerians to join criminal gangs who further consolidate on insecurity.

The security issues in Nigeria cannot be solved by just having the traditional security agencies such as the police and army to solve them since it is a more complex issue. According to Ogu and Oyerinde (2014), a more accommodative and cooperative approach is necessary, involving all arms of the society such as government institutions, civil society, as well as the media. Good governance is central in this equation since it determines how well the state can tackle the root causes of insecurity to put in place policies that can ensure peace and stability. Government that gives transparency, accountability, and inclusivity will facilitate reducing the factor contributing to insecurity as well as give people a more secure and just society where everyone is treated on an equal level.

In this regard, traditional media is invaluable. The media holds sway therefore in the mind of the masses that constitute the majority of Nigerians and this can affect the way the government reacts to the issues of security in the country. It is not only the role of media that needs to be reported, but it includes educating an informed citizenry, against misinformation as well as offering a platform where critical issues about the security of the nation are discussed (Nwankwo et al., 2022). Additionally, the media can help the government to answer to the citizens by ensuring that good or bad policies are pointed out regarding security as well as given voice to the marginalized communities who could face the brunt of insecurity out of proportion to others.

As Dare et al. (2020) note, the role of media has never been as essential in providing the proper and timely information and as objective as possible in this particular age of digital revolution where the flow of information is clear and fast. The media would be applied as an instrument of empowering security agencies to work not only effectively but also as a watchdog that makes sure that the government fulfils its mandate of protecting the citizens. Okeke and Oji (2014) also state that media and security places additional requirements because it requires combating of negative narratives that cause conflicts therefore advancing quieter and peaceful domestic space. In case of Nigeria where ethnic, religious, and regional identities prevail, the role of media in creating the national spirit and blocking the divisive speech will be vital in long-term terms of maintaining the security.

Besides informing and educating the people, the media also has the role of impacting on the wider discussion on good governance. A good country is that which has transparently operating institutions of the people, fair implementation of policies by the government and the government taking care of its people. In the case of Nigeria, good governance is part and parcel of developing the required institutional frameworks that the country needs to clearly address the issue of its security. It is any basis where trust has to be based between the citizens and the state which is critical in an effort to pull in a collective fight against insecurity.

This paper therefore attempts to discuss how good governance, conventional media, and insecurity have an intricate relationship in Nigeria. It seeks to explore the impact of governance arrangement in making the media instrumental in solving the issue of insecurity and also to discuss the value of the media in fostering transparency, accountability and involving the communities in the battle against insecurity. This paper seeking to provide an insightful look at the manner in which the media and governance can work together in a bid to battle the increasing insecurity in Nigeria in an attempt to create a safer, fairer, and more stable society examines these enmeshed factors.

Statement of the Problem

Insecurity has continued to be one of the most vexing factors on the existence of the unity of Nigeria, and its overall development. As mentioned by Momoh et al. (2021), the fact that insecurity persists weakens the social and economic potential of the country, challenging governance, safety of people, and stability of the nation. This wide spread insecurity has been widely covered both in the print and electronic media with these media being overwhelmed with reports of violence, crime and insecurity. Factors such as armed robberies, and kidnappings, terrorists, as well as bandits, are part of the daily security conversation and thus they are seen as ongoing and never-ending crisis.

This reality of the high frequency of such reports elicits an alarming question: Are both

modern and conventional media giving accurate portrayal of the extent and kind of insecurity in Nigeria? Although the media is necessary in making people aware of security concerns, the construct of the security matters may imply significant consequences on the perception of the population of these issues. The visual consistency of the security related stories as many as it may be might be causing a feeling of insecurity and fear amongst the Nigerians even in locations that are not directly affected. Moreover, the manner in which the issue of security is provided to the media might influence the opinion of people concerning the efficiency of government measures and the concept of security.

The other major issue that has been raised is how the traditional media has been influencing how Nigerians develop a certain memory about insecurity. Are there still Nigerians who use the conventional sources of media like newspapers, radio and television as a source of accurate and timely information on security threats? As much as digital media has gained prominence, the traditional media continues to supply information to a large number of citizens especially those in the countryside. As such, it is pivotal to evaluate the effectiveness of traditional media to circulate the information concerning security and whether citizens consider security reports and advisories aAdditionally, frequency of security breaches especially in some region or even town has made many wonder whether the coverage by the media is enough. The repetition of stories about the attacks and the security disasters, which causes a lot of anxiety and insecurity, is it a real problem and a representation of the actual scenario on the ground, or is it a false alarm? The question of whether the above framing of the issue of security by the media has any effect on how people think of government interventions and of the effectiveness of security agencies should also be investigated.

To give an example, how do the Nigerians in particular respond to the issues like constant reports filling the media about the attacks on particular communities and how it influences their trust in the capabilities of the government to defend them? This is one of the major challenges which this study aims to present. through a study of the relationship between the conventional media, people perception on insecurity, and the application of good governance in proving security, accessible and more importantly believe in and adhere to them.

Research Objective

1. To examine how conventional and new media shape public perceptions of insecurity in Nigeria and influence government accountability and security policy responses.

2. To assess the role of good governance in leveraging media platforms to promote national security, social cohesion, and sustainable development.

Review of Literature

Insecurity

Insecurity is basically explained as a prevailing feeling of weakness, meaning the fear of injury to lives and properties of human beings (Uche & Obiora, 2023). It implies an anxious state, an alarming feeling of an unwillingness to have no sufficient protection, an anxiety of being in danger and risks, and a fear of panic (Beland, 2015; Achumba et al., 2013). Insecurity is, fundamentally, an absence of security both in terms of physical and moral aggression, accidents, theft, and the further degradation of his or her surroundings (Eme & Anyadike, 2013). When people are safe by being insulated against these different dangers, it brings a feeling of confidence and security that they have in their lives on a day to day basis.

The notion of insecurity is complex and it can take place at different levels, which are personal, community, state, societal and national insecurity. Insecurity, as was mentioned by Ezirim and Onuoha (cited in Ikeanyibe & Osadebe, 2013), could be articulated at these multiple levels and each of them had a varying effect on the individual, community and the nation as a whole. Causes of insecurity are very broad and some of the main factors are poor security systems, religious and ethnic intolerance, failure of governance, economic disparity, and decay of morality in the society (Ozoigbo, 2019; Nadama, 2019; Uzorma & Nwanegbo-Ben, 2014). Generally, insecurity is defined as the condition under which a state of safety and confidence and feel of protection is missing or highly degraded (Ikeanyibe & Osadebe, 2013).

Modern insecurity is not the same as before, there is a shift towards more non-conventional threats, as opposed to the conventional forms of conflict, the wars among the states. Terrorism, organized crime, insurgencies and the spread of militias have actually resulted in a dynamic change in the interpretation of insecurity and the security measures to counter them. According to Ikeanyibe and Osadebe (2013), rising instances of security in Nigeria have become mostly non-state in nature making the traditional ways of the state agents tackling the vice futile.

The resultant effect of insecurity is immense. Thesecases ranges from deaths and destruction of property, insecurity causes drastic socio-economic consequences, including poverty, underdevelopment, hunger and social conflict (Ozoigbo, 2019). The financial cost of insecurity is also witnessed, as it detracts business and investments and affects business operations, and the government incurs a lot of extra cost in security provision (Ewetan & Urhie, 2014). Moreover, insecurity is one of the factors contributing to the loss of the traditional welfare systems that had previously been working to protect and sustain individuals, especially within the extended family systems in Nigeria (Ibeanu in Ikeanyibe & Osadebe, 2013; Odinkalu, 2018; Ngwu et al., 2012). Practically, the widespread insecurity compromises the social stability and social cohesion in the society.

Contributing factors to the insecurity of the nation of Nigeria are as numerous as the forms of the same. These are various social-political-related problems like ethnicity, nepotism, religious sentiments, corruption, and bad leadership identified by Uche, Azeez, Aliu, and Abdulquadir (2021) as some of the causes of insecurity in the country. In accordance to Zubairu (2020), poverty, unemployment, insufficient security infrastructure, and porous borders were also confirmed as contributing factors to worsening the security situation of the country. The historical background of insecurity in Nigeria which enegulfs the militant movements in the Niger Delta, insurgency activities such as Boko Haram in the North and new armed movements in the Southeast showing that there is complexity in this security.

The security issues which have persisted have also led to the loss of life besides hampering socio-economic growth leading to an ambience of fear and mistrust among the population. Insecurity related activities like kidnapping, ritual killings, assassinations as well as armed robbery and organ harvesting have also destabilized the country, besides leaving the people to experience a panic attitude (Ewetan & Urhie, 2014). The inefficiency of the government and lack of institutional response to those threats has only made the crisis even worse and insecurity is a mark of current Nigeria.

Since solutions to insecurity are multifaceted and complex, the paper aims at discussing how good governance and

conventional media can contribute to overcome one of its main challenges. This paper seeks to offer insights into how a more targeted and unified strategy can be implemented to alleviate the insecurity crisis in Nigeria by examining the interaction between governance systems with the media in shaping the minds of the people about insecurity.

Conventional Media

Traditional media, also known as conventional media can also be described as the established mass media that have remained the main source of information through out the past decades, until the advent of digital technologies into wide scale presence. These conventional media sources are characterized by a one-to-many form of communicating whereby a few such as publishers, broadcasters or production houses dominate the creation of content which is then dispersed or disseminated to a mass and varied market. Traditional media has different categories of media including print media, electronic media, outdoor media, and direct mail and each one plays a substantial role in shaping the discourse of the populace and giving out education to them and releasing entertainment. Traditional media remains central in the communication system in Nigeria, especially concerning informing and shaping the views of the people about issues deemed important, one of which is the security issue despite the advent of digital and social media platforms.

I. Newspapers

Other common media are the newspapers that present constant and stable flow of news, articles and advertisements. According to Sandman et al. (in Okunna & Omenugha, 2012), newspapers are unbound printed publications that generally give out news using written articles and pictures. Newspapers are published and are targeted at the mass audience and they focus not only on news, but also offer opinions, features and advertisements too on any subject of societal interest. Newspapers are an important means of making the masses aware of the country happenings and political affairs as well as security issues. In relation to the insecurity in Nigeria, the newspapers have played a significant role in highlighting breaches of security, failure of policies and the government reaction to the situation and have therefore created the perception among people as to the security status in the country (Okunna, 1994).

II. Magazines

Magazines are a more specific type of the print media, vital in terms of its colorful, usually very stimulating designs. Whetmore (1985) and Okunna & Omenugha (2012) define the magazines as some kind of gathering publication where they have a set of different subjects followed by in-depth discussions of the issue related to the lifestyle, politics, business, and health. Although both the newspapers and the magazines embrace news and current events, the latter have greater depth of analysis and feature stories that tend to demonstrate a rather narrow or select interest of the audience. Magazines are the ones still gaining importance as sources of information and learning that are published weekly, monthly, or annually. They give a space they can use to have debates with the population and in the case of insecurity, this might include issues of governance, security policy critique, but also the social impacts of violence in Nigeria.

III. Television (TV)

Television is a combination of both sound and vision and thus it is one of the most influential conventional forms of media. Nigerian TV does not only broadcast news programmes but also covers a vast range of other subjects such as entertainment shows, documentaries, sports, and even educational programmes (Amafili, 1993; Okunna &

Omenugha, 2012). The peculiar feature of TV is that it is a visual means that establishes the visual contact with the audience, and presents information (in addition to visual) by using sound, therefore TV is effective to reach extended audience even those with low literacy. Television shows about security matters such as news broadcasting, documentaries and interviews by government and security officials about the issue of insecurity in the country are important in educating the citizens on the state of insecurity in the country. The television too takes the stage to face the insecurity problem in Nigeria by presenting government policies, security updates, and public service advertisements to the people directly related to the topic of public safety.)

IV. Radio

Radio is one of the classical yet easily reached media which is still in existence especially in the less developed countries like the Nigerian one. Radio, in contrast to television, is largely an audio mechanism that can be effective in reaching out to the large populations that are not highly literate and those in the rural settings where some means of communication may not be readily available (Okunna & Omenugha, 2012). In Nigeria, radio has music, news, talk show and public service. It has specific powers in resolving a number of social problems, such as illiteracy and poverty as it is able to reach a large number of audiences, independent of educational levels. It has been demonstrated that radio is particularly effective in information dissemination about the insecurity issue since it is cheap, requires no electricity, and has a large geographical scope making it an irreplaceable resource in instructing populations on ways to stay safe and the efforts made by the government to deal with the problem as well as the current security status (Okunna & Omenugha, 2012).

The Relevance of Conventional Media in Contemporary Nigeria

Though it is undisputed that the digital world and social media are the most prevailing platforms of communication in the past few years, the conventional media still remains highly relevant concerning Nigeria. Newspapers, magazines, TV, radio, and other conventional media types have been a source of reliable information to a big percentage of the population, particularly in the rural setting where use of internet can be constrained or highly unreliable. Even though the internet is gaining momentum so fast, the traditional media continues to help in disseminating information, influencing the opinion of the populace and keeping the nation talking besides the matters of national security.

When it comes to the issue of insecurity in Nigeria, traditional media plays a crucial role in making the population aware of existing risks, how the government reacts to these risks and what can be done about them locally. That the traditional media has credibility and large reach as well as the reputation makes it a very vital pillar in the war against insecurity, since the media can do consistent reporting, updating and releasing information about the safety of the populace. Additionally, the traditional media offers a platform through which the government can be held accountable and accountable, which follows up on the success of security policies and interventions. By so doing, conventional media is not just a vehicle of informing the citizens but also an excellent avenue in bringing the government and security agencies to accountability in its deeds towards national safety.

Methodology

The research design of this study is that it is qualitative because it will be used to examine the way terrorism together with insecurity have affected sustainable development in Nigeria. The investigation is mainly based on

secondary data which is obtained through academic books, journals, newspapers, periodicals and reliability of online sources. The target is to get a complete picture of the socio-political, economic and governance issues that insecurity presents in Nigeria.

The study uses the content analysis as its main method. The content analysis is the scientific process to inspect the media content based on the recognition of the recurring themes and patterns in the coverage of the insecurity. Such an approach will assist in realizing the role of media attention on security matters and how it impacts on the society and shaping up the policy.

Content analysis brings out such main themes like terrorism and the reaction of the government, the construction of insecurity in the media, and their impact on the opinion of the masses. The method is vital in finding out the influence in setting the national agenda through the conventional media on insecurity and the consequences to the governance and development process.

Theoretical Framework

Agenda Setting Theory

Agenda Setting Theory is the theory used as the framework of studying this research paper and in general how mass media influences mass discourse regarding insecurity in Nigeria. The main assumption with which the agenda-setting theory relates to, as explained by Folarin in Momoh et al. (2021), implies that the mass media plays a considerable part in defining what the society considers important, instead of its direct potential in shaping the thoughts of people. This is to say the media may not dictate to the audience what to think, but can easily inform the citizens on what to focus and deem important. This is one of the abilities that the media has of guiding people into focusing on certain issues and in the case of insecurity, it has become an important tool in shaping perceptions and being used in political and social action.

Agenda-Setting Function of the Mass Media is a term coined by Maxwell and Donald in 1972 (which was published in Public Opinion Quarterly) that stresses the fact that the media can construct the political reality of a society by its choice and the configurations of the news. Although the media does not necessarily predetermine the opinions or behaviour, it shapes the discussion in society by modelling particular issues and by providing a paradigm according to which the population is supposed to think about them. Media outlets are able to strengthen or downplay the relevance of matters in society by regulating the flow of information as well as the ability to direct attention to certain subjects. An example is keeping the issue of insecurity in Nigeria (terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, etc.) on the agenda all the time that may affect how people perceive the extent of these crises.

The applicability of the agenda setting theory to the current research is the functionality of the traditional media to dictate what is said about insecurity nationally. The media does not only bring awareness to the people on security breaches but they also create a context in which security concerns are viewed. As an example, the extent to which certain incidents receive coverage as well as the emotional appeal of the coverage, and the manner in which media frames security related policies all contribute to the level of concern amongst the people concerning insecurity. One of the ways the media has been able to establish a public agenda that demands response is by prioritising security issues that pose the greatest concern and making insecurity an important issue in politics. This is dynamic that highlights the strength of media as being able to influence the establishment of a particular agenda by the

people and also to shape decisions concerning national security and politics.

Systems Theory

Another very crucial theory that is very important in conceiving the complex relationship between insecurity and societal development is the Systems Theory especially as put forward by Ludwig von Bertalanffy. This theory proposes that the society is made up with systems and what is done in one system may have implication that cuts across other systems. To apply the systems theory to the scenario of insecurity, it asserts that the social system of a whole collapses due to the occurrence of insecurity in any area of a society i.e. in violent crimes, insurgency, kidnapping, or armed conflicts. Consequences of insecurity have not been a vacuum situation; they engulf many sectors of society such as governance, economy, social stability and even national development.

Insecurity in a society leads to fear and so much anxiety, meaning the entire social setup of a society would be unstable, like that of Nigeria. With increased insecurity, the impacts are extreme in regard to national growth. Security interferes with the major activities like industrialization, technological advancement, and economic growth that are very important in the development of a nation. These disturbances also form a loop of feedback, which according to the systems theory put forward by Bertalanffy, negatively affects the development of the country and essentially results in stagnation in such situations. Development is the accomplishment of a wide variety of activities interacting in the overall functioning of the societies hence it can only be effectual when an atmosphere of security and stability is created.

Insecurity is one of the main factors that have had a debacle effect in terms of economic investment. Safety conditions are a requirement when it comes to enticing both local and foreign investments. Insecurity however has been rampant thereby adding up to the business risks, escalating business cost and an overall unwillingness by businessmen to invest in Nigerian economy. This insecurity has led to the discouragement of new investments; closure of businesses already established and blocked the growth of industries and employment opportunities. The economic activities have also been affected by the menace of groups like Boko Haram, Fulani herdsmen and bandits posing threats to economic activities, mostly in the zones where agricultural activities and oil explorations are mainly located. Additional to compromising the economy, insecurity in such regions also plays a role in escalating levels of unemployment, poverty and social inequality thereby, fuelling further instability.

Thus, systems theory allows providing the security crisis with a background concerning the whole social-political and economic situation in Nigeria. It demonstrates the failures of both insecurity to governance and development and, therefore, proves how these mechanisms are related and how a holistic effort resolving the matter is necessary. In the case of Nigeria, it is only after a rather safe and peaceful environment that sustainable development can occur. This problem of insecurity leads to development of an uncertain atmosphere, which makes investment and general economic activity riskier and hence halts the pace of development and the growth of the country.

The Role of New Media in Escalating Security Challenges

New Media are the online-based resources that provide interaction and communication through the internet. Social and political interactions have grown exponentially in these platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms (Chukwuere

& Onyebukwa, 2017). Nevertheless, they have been used as the means of terrorism groups to propagate, to recruit followers, to raise funds, and to commit cybercrime (Nsudu & Onwe, 2017). New media can be used by terrorist organizations, both local and international when they want to organize attacks, and also when they want to increase their presence in order to manipulate opinions in the society thus making it insecure.

The abstract quality of the new media due to the little regulation further enables its users to create and share materials without restrictions. This has made a situation where misinformation and fake news will exist and hence promoting further aggravation of insecurity. In Nigeria, the outbreak of unauthenticated data, more so on security-based incidents usually results in panic, fear as well as violence. Such platforms encourage terrorist organizations not only but also lead to social disturbances as they encourage fear and misinformation.

Even as new media has been embraced to combat terrorism and crime, it has contributed to the insecurity in the country as it has also led to committal of crimes like kidnapping, robbery and violent attacks where an assailant is likely to go free without apprehension. New media, especially on the basis of social liberty, and non-existence of far-reaching cyberspace legislation render the regulation and control of new media contents a continuous struggle in the fight against insecurity (Nsudu & Onwe, 2017).

The Role of Media in Combating the Upsurge of Crime in Nigeria

Media which includes the traditional (television, radio, newspapers) and new media platforms (social media, online publications) is an essential aspect in the process of informing, educating and influencing the opinion of the people in security matters. Media does more than just providing information; it can be used as a platform of agenda setting, endearment, and even as a force behind policy formulation on the issue of national security (Market Business News, n.d.; IGI Global, n.d.).

In Nigeria, media has turned out to be an important source of information, more especially in regard to the rising security issues like terrorism, ritual killings, kidnappings and armed robbery. According to Nwabueze and Ebeze (2013), the fact that a majority of the members of the perpetrators of these crimes are the young Nigerians exposes a very ugly trend requiring strong intervention by the media in ensuring that these crimes are halted and further producing a better atmosphere. It is imperative that the media informs and mobilises the society on ways that will help counter the vices of insecurity that are high in places such as the North and Southeast which is heavily invaded by insurgencies and kidnappings.

Traditionally, the Nigerian media has been instrumental in promoting the release of social change starting with the fight to obtain self rule during the colonial period through to the restoration of democracy. Recently, the investigative component of the media has been used to expose corruption in the highest offices of the land thus reinforcing the media watchdog role in the society. The possibilities of the media in the fight against crime are bigger than what is accomplished in media reporting; it has to work on education, mobilization, and advocacy. As media becomes a more available platform through privatization and the growth of mobile communication (GSM), so the media stands now a new chance to take on the role of causing aggressive campaigns aimed at preventing crime and creating awareness among the community.

Also as argued by Dowler (2003), media reporting of crime may infect more people with fear of crime and have punitive attitudes. But this can be used positively by utilizing the

media to minimize crime by way of enlightened discussion, educational and announcements by the public.

Discussion of Findings

Thispaperstudies the role of media, both conventional and new, in shaping public perceptions of insecurity and its impact on governance and sustainable development in Nigeria. The findings reflect the complexities of how media, particularly in the context of terrorism and insecurity, both exacerbates and mitigates the security challenges in the country. Drawing on the Agenda Setting Theory and Systems Theory, as well as insights from the Methodology of content analysis, several key observations emerge from the research.

The Role of Conventional Media in Shaping Public Perception

The results show that the traditional media has retained influence in establishing the national agenda about insecurity. As Agenda Setting Theory posits, media especially newspapers, television, and radio can instil the spotlight in certain matters of security. The regular reporting of cases of terrorism, kidnapping and other security lapses assist in shaping the concern of people and the policy debates. The scale of the problem is also featured by media which in turn gives a platform to the government to answer and respond to the problem. This can be traced to the fact that although the media itself does not determine the opinions that one holds, it focuses the attention of the population on the most burning problem.

Nevertheless, the results also reveal that traditional media in certain cases contributes to stimulation of fear and anxiety of the society in case of such excessive coverage of insecurity the cases of repetition and sensationalization that is being reported. This only contributes to the notion of overall disorder and it builds an atmosphere in which citizens become defenceless, even in an environment that is not otherwise directly involved. The Systems Theory provides explanations that the inter-relationship of different sectors in the society means that how the media has positioned insecurity in the society has a bearing with governance, social stability and development in the country. Insecurity affects other areas and this expression is economic bouts of instability, diminished investments, and decelerated advancements which, eventually lead to the gradual downfall of the ideals of the society.

The Role of New Media in Escalating Security Challenges

New media has become an effective weapon of the terror groups as well as the masses in Nigeria. The study results demonstrate the fact that local and international terrorists spread propaganda, recruit new members, and coordinate attacks via such platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp (Nsudu & Onwe, 2017). This is in line with the Agenda Setting Theory in the context that even though new media channel is more decentralized it still has a major influence on framing insecurity. They may lack the editorial room of traditional media, but they are capable of changing the focus of the audience since they offer a means of expressing themselves freely.

These platforms promptly spread unconfirmed information, such as fake news and sensational information about the attacks, among others; this spreading of unconfirmed information makes people even more fearful and creates tensions in the communities. The researchers discovered that misinformation especially about ethnic and religious differences is one of the drivers of insecurity especially in areas like the North and Southeast. The phenomenon raises the concern that there is a necessity of taking more control

over the new media in order to prevent the proliferation of fake news that misleads and contributes to violence and panic.

Impact of Media on Public Perception and Governance

The results further highlight the two sides of media in Nigerian war on insecurity. On one hand, media act as a crucial mechanism of governance, with a platform of insight provision, education and reporting to the society. Systems Theory supports the idea of the media with its translational power influencing the governance systems directly because it can influence the opinion of the people and it may compel the policymakers to respond to the security issues. The reports of security breaches and government actions to deal with the situation provided by media contribute to educating citizens about their rights and safety procedures.

Conversely, the evidence shows that media can also confront governance through keeping the government responsible. Nigerian investigative journalism has been able to expose corruption, shortcomings in the security policies and the incompetency of government agencies. Such media activities are correlated with the history of the Nigerian press as a watchdog we see in the society as this press played a role during the political transitions of the country, since the colonial times, even now. The findings however indicate that successful efforts to deal with media coverage of insecurity by the government are quite poor hence demonstrating a governance system that has not effectively dealt with the causes of insecurity.

The Role of Media in Combating Crime

The role of the media in curbing crime, the study revealed that the media is essential in creation of awareness, delivery of informative content as well as the empowerment of citizen to contribute to crime deterrence. Television, radio and the newly developed media have been efficient in creating awareness concerning different issues such as human trafficking, sexual violence and corruption. Nonetheless, the research also discovered that the sensationalism of the media reporting on crimes particularly those crimes that touch on ethnic or religious violence tends to create a gap in the Nigerian society that results in creating an atmosphere of panic, prejudice and revenge.

The content analysis of traditional and emerging media sources depicts an overbearing of crime and violence, which Dowler (2003) mentioned in Carli (2008), helps create a concept in the world that causes fear and punitive attitude among people. These research findings are an indication that although the media contributes so much to the fight against crime, the issue of its concentration on sensationalized news has unanticipated side effects such as the increase of fear among people and encouragement of violence as the norm.

Conclusion

This paper showcases the correlation between the media, insecurity, and governance in Nigeria. Conventional and new media have been playing a vital role in building up how populations perceive threats to their security and this funds how governments are responding to the perceived threats, and how the country talks about insecurity. The media, as Agenda Setting Theory implies, can ensure people focus on issues that are important but can also craft a discourse around such issues. Systems Theory also points out that insecurity is not a stand-alone problem but it affects other societal sectors such as governance, the economy as well as social development.

The results support the call of a more aligned and more responsible media coverage of insecurity especially in the new media.

Although the new media gives room to making free communication, transfer of misinformation can also increase insecurity. Traditional and digital media have a responsibility of being cognizant of their role in the development of the opinion of the people and therefore they need to ensure that through their platforms they encourage transparency and accountability and social cohesion. In addition to this is the fact that governance framework is moving towards coping with the effects of new media so that it is capable of regulating content without infringing on freedom of expression.

To sum it up, good governance, with a proper media etiquette should be used in solving the increasing insecurity in Nigeria and create an atmosphere that supports sustainable development.

Recommendations

I. Strengthening Media Regulation and Accountability

Taking into consideration the impact that the conventional and the new media have in the ability to influence the population towards a certain idea of insecurity, it is essential that Nigeria introduces a harsher regulation to control the flow of misinformation and fake news. There should also be the creation of a regulatory body that will be used to regulate the media, particularly internet-based media channels, on the contents of what they post. This would play a role in not allowing fear and panic to increase because of the unverified reports, as well, to make sure the content in media met the journalistic standards of accuracy and fairness in content disseminated. Also the media should play an even stronger role of countering hate speech, ethnic and religious differences that worsen insecurity.

II. Promoting Media Literacy and Public Awareness Campaigns

The education of the population in terms of media literacy should be emphasized as a means of limiting the effects of fake news and sensationalism. The way to deal with this problem is to educated Nigerians, particularly in the rural setting, on how they can critically evaluate the information and which sources of information are credible and which are not. There are media literacy programs that can be incorporated in the school curriculum as well as human outreach programs to educate the citizens about the strength of media and knowing how to utilize it. Moreover, campaigns to enlighten the citizens on security strategies, government action against insecurity and support mechanisms must be embraced in that, the citizens are well informed and prepared to act in response to security threats.

III. Enhancing Collaboration Between Government and Media in Security Reporting

To achieve optimal governance system in general, there should be collaboration between the government and the media so that there is a united and open style of reporting insecurity. The government must cooperate fully with the media so that they can give correct and updated information on the state of security, how the government is combating terrorism as well as any other development in security operations going on. This will not just enhance the knowledge of the people concerning the problem of security but it will also aid in terms of managing the narrative about this problem. Also, engaging media in government briefings will create the element of confidence between the people and the government, which will lead to individuals adhering to the security measures and comply with law enforcement.

IV. Implementing Comprehensive Security Sector Reforms

It is essential to lance the boil through security sector reform that incorporates the perspectives of all the stakeholders affecting security in the country. The state must also focus on updating of the security organs such as the police, the military and the intelligence services, which must be well armed, trained and motivated in order to deal with the security challenges in the contemporary society. Moreover, the community policing programs must be intensified so as to make law enforcement cooperate with the local people. By giving the local populations the power to get directly involved in their security provision, it will be more likely that the rift between citizens and security services will be overcome and crimes and conflicts will be prevented more easily.

V. Leveraging New Media for Positive Change and Crime Prevention

Although the new media has been applied to enhance human insecurity, new media can be a means to positive social development. The Nigerian civil society and the government ought to tap in the potentiality of the new media to foster peace, security and social cohesion. The social media can be utilized in the public service campaigns, educative programs as well as channel through which the citizens can report the security concerns. In addition, the government agencies must establish formal social media platforms to connect with people in order to respond to misinformation, and to issue real-time information on security matters. However, by exploiting the new media in the manner, it could create a healthy influence to prevent crimes, community management as well as promote unity within a particular country.

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