

Chapter 11

Human Rights Abuses Against Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria: Investigating Media Reportage

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ABSTRACT

This chapter investigates media reportage of human right abuses and sexual violence against internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Nigeria. Using the social responsibility theory, it analyses how the media frames, prominence, slant and whether the Nigeria media employed investigative reports in its reportage of human rights abuses against IDPs. The chapter through a quantitative content analysis of 157 editions of two purposely selected newspapers (the Vanguard NG and the Daily Trust), found that the media failed to contextualise the stories in relation to its causes, solutions and in identifying perpetrators for justice to be served, similarly, the media took sides with victims of the violations. It also failed to accord the required prominence and necessary investigative touch to such stories. It is recommended that there should be frequent trainings for journalists so as to safeguard professionalism in the industry.

INTRODUCTION

The media has often been described with such names as ‘fourth estate and watchdog’. This implies that as a distinct organ with the power of information, the media keeps watch on the activities of government (and its agencies), while at the same, it protects the underprivileged, that is, the voiceless in the society.

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Salawu (2016) reiterates that the media stands as the defenders of the social values or put differently, they serve as the conscience of the society. He says that one of the attributes of the different media is that like the sun, they illuminate the crevices in the society. They expose hidden things and bring every conduct and misconduct to public glare for scrutiny (Salawu, 2016). On his own part, McQuail (2000) cited in Tejumaiye and Adelabu (2011) says that the media is the arbiter of right and wrong, the roving eye of daily judgment.

Meanwhile, Asemah, Edegoh, and Ogwo (2013) say that the media have a very crucial role to play in the promotion of human rights in any country. The media, according to Asemah et al. (2013), are champions of human rights. They act as the eyes, ears and voices of the public, drawing attention to abuses of power and human rights, often at considerable personal risk. Through their work, they can encourage governments and civil society organisations to effect changes that will improve the quality of people's lives (Asemah et al., 2013). In addition, Pate (2011) notes that the task of the press in the process of safeguarding and advancing human rights is enormous.

Meanwhile, Oyero (2010) notes that though journalists have expanded coverage of human rights into new areas, many human rights issues, are under-reported by the media (ICHRP, 2002 cited in Oyero, 2010). He notes that much reporting focuses on violations of rights during conflicts; human rights-issues that are less visible, or have slow processes, are rarely covered. Oyero (2010) and Farra'u (2017) agree that the news media in Nigeria follow the traditional focus on human rights by centering attention primarily on civil and political rights and this demonstrates that human rights coverage focuses on a very limited definition of human rights. This therefore brings to the fore, the need to investigate human rights abuses against victims of conflicts in post conflict situations, and victims of manmade and natural disasters, like the IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons), which is the focus of this research.

Furthermore, Hussain (2016, p. 3) cited in Apuke and Tunca (2018) notes that "the literature published on the displacement of people has not found too much rich or theoretically exact". This is because the humanitarian community focuses more on the delivery of aid than on the documentation of research (Apuke, & Tunca, 2018). Ibrahim and Gujbawu (2017) say the situations of IDPs need to be presented to the world through various media in order for the general public to provide the aid they require. The news media are meant to demonstrate important roles (agenda-setting and framing of issues) so as to solicit aid for the Internally Displaced Persons through continuous and objective covering of the actual situation of IDPs (Ibrahim & Gujbawu, 2017). And when the case of IDPs has been of research concern, the focus has often been on coverage given to IDPs in terms of number of stories and prominence allotted to IDPs in newspapers as evidenced in the research conducted by Apuke et al. (2018), leaving out what they face in the Internally Displaced Camps (IDP), that is, research on IDPs have left out the coverage of human rights violations against IDPs.

Sahu and Ahmad (2018) say in the reportage of human rights issues, media organisations focus on mere reportage of facts without focusing on the context of reportage. News stories and their headlines seem to be written in matter of fact manner without necessary emphasis and adequate background about the issue (Sahu & Rao, 2013). Further, Sahu and Alam (2016) say the media do not follow up in reporting human rights violations. They say that newspapers mostly report events of violence rather than ascertaining the root cause of such events and solutions to such menace in the society. Farra'u (2017) also notes that Nigerian newspapers provide supplemental but inadequate information about systematic human rights abuse in Nigeria, and human rights stories rarely receive detailed treatment and prominent placement.

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The foregoing therefore prompts an investigation into human rights abuses against IDPs, a shift from the traditional focus on civil and political rights. Similarly, the study will examine how the violations are reported in the media and see if the pattern of reportage is different from what scholars have noted about the reportage of human rights abuses.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study investigates the following:

1. How did the selected newspapers frame human right abuses against the IDPs?
2. What prominence and slant of coverage did the selected newspapers give human right abuses perpetrated against the IDPs?
3. How did the selected newspapers engage investigative reporting in their coverage of the stories?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was based on the following objectives:

1. To examine how the selected newspapers framed human rights abuses against IDPs.
2. To investigate the prominence and the slant of coverage accorded to the stories of human right abuses against IDPs.
3. To evaluate how the selected newspapers engaged investigative reporting in their reportage of the stories of the IDPs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework: The Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Situation in Nigeria

Internally displacement according to Mooney (2005) simply describes the factual situation of a person being displaced within one's country of habitual residence. The term does not connote or confer a special legal status in the same way that recognition as a "refugee" does. This is not necessary for IDPs, Kälin (2008) explains, because whereas refugees having lost the protection of their own country and being outside of their own state therefore require a special legal status, 'the rights and guarantees to which IDPs are entitled stem from the fact that they are human beings and citizens or habitual residents of a particular state.' Mooney (2005) says another important distinction with the "refugee" concept is that not all situations of internal displacement will necessarily be of concern to the international community. If the needs of internally displaced populations are met effectively by their own government, the international community need not become involved, unless of course the government requests assistance. If, on the

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other hand, internally displaced persons are denied the protection and assistance of their government, they are of legitimate concern to the international community.

Alobo and Obaji (2016) are of the view that internal displacement describes situations in which individuals and groups are compelled or obliged to leave and remain away from their homes, but remain within the borders of their own countries. The latter element differentiates them from refugees, who are also compulsorily evacuated but across internationally recognized state borders. Internal displacement occurs characteristically in reaction to armed conflict, oppression, situations of widespread violence, natural and human-made tragedies, and others. Olanrewaju, Omotoso, and Alabi (2018) see internal displacement as a definitive illustration of global crisis with negative experiences and devastating effects on its victims. Oyefara, and Alabi (2016) as cited by Olanrewaju, Omotoso, and Alabi (2018) outline the effect of internal displacement to include human rights violations, loss of livelihood, loss of shelter, family disintegration, insecurity, looting of property, social disintegration, loss of status, exposure to forced labour and conscription into militia groups (Ferris & Winthrop, 2010). Alobo, et al. (2016) say while the act of displacement itself often may violate the human rights of those affected, the subsequent loss of access to homes, lands, livelihoods, personal documentation, family members, and social networks can deleteriously affect the ability of IDPs to assert and relish an entire range of fundamental rights.

Alobo, et al. (2016) add that IDPs become reliant on others for basic needs such as shelter, food and water. At the same time, their susceptibility may be amplified by barriers to accessing health care, education, employment, economic activities, and electoral politics in their areas of displacement. Moreover, the longer displacement continues, the greater is the risk that traditional family and social structures break down, leaving IDPs dependent on outside aid and vulnerable to economic and sexual exploitation. Such dependency, in turn, reduces the chances of durable solutions and sustainable reintegration into society once political and security conditions have changed to enable such solutions to take place. On their own part, United Nations High Commission for Refugees [UNCHR] (2007), Durosayo and Ajiboye (2011), Olukolajo et al. (2014) and IDMC (2014) cited in Jelili and Olanrewaju (2016) say IDPs are the largest group of vulnerable people in the world because they are subjected to situation of extreme poverty, human right abuses, they are dependent and usually lack choice. This is usually coupled with threat to physical safety and restrictions on freedom of movement. They also suffer emotional problems characterised with fearful events and nightmare.

In addition, Azama (2017) cited in Apuke, and Tunca (2018) claims that background evidence has shown that Nigeria's population of over 180 million people, the complexity attached with the 250 ethnic groups and the diversified religion and political fault lines can be adduced to the frequent violence in the country, and this is responsible for the numerous internally displaced individuals since the return of democracy in 1999. *Punch Nigeria* (August 23, 2015) cited in Apuke, and Tunca, (2018) reports that Nigeria is home to the largest IDPs in the world after Syria (6.5 million) and Columbia (5.7 million), with an estimated figure of about 3.3 million IDPs.

Oduwole et al. (2013) cited in Jelili and Olanrewaju (2016) say internal displacement is caused by under development, poverty, unequal distribution of wealth, unemployment, ethnic tensions, political and economic subjugations of minorities, intolerance, absence of democratic procedures, a result of development projects, and urban renewal activities. Osagioduwa, and Oluwakorede (2016) highlight factors that lead to internal displacement in Nigeria to include the hazardous undertakings of Boko Haram insurgency which has generated an upsurge of displacement in the North Eastern part of Nigeria; flooding occasioned by the release of water from Lado dam in Cameroon, community clashes which

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have spawned and continue to cause displacement all across its territory. Others include Herdsmen and Farmers' clashes, ethno-religious crises, flooding and other natural and manmade disasters.

Sambo (2017) in his study of the challenges of residents of IDPs camps in Nigeria face, found out that irregular medical care (95%), lack of accommodation (94%), lack of food (92%), poor living condition (87%), exposure to violence/abuse (86%), corruption (74%), government policies (60%), sexual abuse (50%), among others were the most significant factors inhibiting IDPs in Nigeria. Further, Olagunju (2016) in his ethnographic work on internal displacement in Nigeria, notes that aid diversion by those put in charge of aid distribution, absence of coordination of relief services, use of untrained aid workers, non-existence of IDP camps and IDPs feeling of alienation from their former places of abode due to fear of religious discrimination/persecution, the fact that IDP is not viewed as priority by IGOs and NGOs compared to HIV/AIDS or rights programming inhibit the management of IDPs in Nigeria. Similarly, Olanrewaju, et al. (2018) say feedbacks from their research on the quality of food, shelter, education, effects of empowerment skills on income levels of displaced people have not been overwhelmingly positive. Furthermore, they are of the view that while attempting to protect some aspects of the human rights of displaced persons their other rights are infringed upon. They state specifically that for instance while trying to separate men from women in a bid to prevent sexual violence against women, the separation infringed on their rights to have ties with their family members. In another instance, an attempt to prevent attacks against IDPs denied them the right to free movement.

Gwadabe, Salleh, Ahmad and Jamil (2018) say compounding to the health crisis in IDP camps is the problem of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). They say as a result of the trooping of IDPs in camps, the available water and sanitation facilities and structures became inadequate to cater for the basic needs of the IDPs, which increases the risk of the spread of diseases, dehydration and other related ailments. They note that there is an absence of waste management and the inadequate provision of essential utility such as potable water and electric power in IDP camps.

Furthermore, National Emergency Management Agency cited in Gwadabe, Salleh, Ahmad and Jamil (2018) say there is the existence of an alarming number of children among the IDPs whose education was truncated by their displacement. Moreover, in some camps and communities where the displaced children are accessing education, the quality is poor and far below the standard due to the absence of a conducive environment for teaching and learning and the absence of teaching materials. In most cases, the teaching is done by incompetent volunteer teachers (Abdulazeez, 2016 cited in Gwadabe, Salleh, Ahmad & Jamil, 2018).

Olanrewaju, et al. (2018) reflect that managing internal displacement in Nigeria has reflected the failure of state institution and the lack of political will amongst public officers. Similarly, Olukolajo (2014) cited in Jelili and Olanrewaju (2016) reveal that most IDPs have reportedly preferred to seek shelter with relatives rather than living in camps. This is partly because of their tentative assurance of freedom, care and provision which comparatively is better provided by relatives than in IDPs camps. On his own part, Olagunju (2016) laments that government in Nigeria at local and federal levels do not have the adequate machinery in place to address IDPs issues. He noted that although there are organisations created by government to handle the issue of IDPs but their capacity to handle IDP related problems is minimal. He says after a forty-year history of communal conflict and a major civil war; it is inexcusable that a country the size of Nigeria does not have a blueprint for internal displacement.

Therefore, Apuke, et al. (2018) say it is pertinent for internally displaced persons to raise their voices in order to obtain humanitarian assistance for survival, since they have lost their primary means of

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support. For them to receive such assistance, their situations need to be presented to the world through various media in order for the general public to provide the aid they require.

MEDIA COVERAGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN NIGERIA

The basic subject of human rights is the individual, typically conceived of as the human that is inherently equal to others in rights and dignity. Asemah, et al. (2013) say human rights are not subject to withdrawal or to be held at the pleasure of anybody or granted when it pleases the giver, while Bryan (2004) says human rights are freedoms, immunities and benefits that, according to modern values, all human beings should be able to claim as a matter of rights in the society in which they live.

In the same vein, Craston, (1976) sees human rights as something of which no one may be deprived of, without great affront to justice. There are certain deeds, which should never be done, certain freedoms, which should never be invaded; some things which are supremely sacred. From the foregoing, human rights can be seen as all those rights that every citizen of a state ought to have without any deprivation. They are those inalienable rights of every individual, whether old or young, poor or rich, male or female. They are not given to human beings as gifts. Olanrewaju, Omotoso, and Alabi (2018) while describing human rights say human needs go beyond the basic necessities of food, shelter and water. They also include both physical and non-physical essentials, and other needs humans are impulsively driven to achieve. Duruji, and Oviasogie (2013) cited in Olanrewaju, et al. (2018) indict the Nigeria government, when they explain the failure of our government to meet these needs, they say the failure of government to meet the survival needs of its citizens, respond effectively to human or natural disasters, and provide emergency protection and assistance are elements of bad governance, poor management of the affairs of the state and characteristics of failing and failed states.

Meanwhile, Asemah, et al. (2013) say the media as the watchdog of the society have a crucial role to play in promoting and protecting human rights in Nigeria. They explain that the media serve as an effective network for educating and informing the people on human rights and also, making those who often trample on people's rights to know that they are doing the wrong thing. Further, they say, through the media, people can be made aware of their fundamental human rights and the constitutional protection of their rights. Through constant vigilance on infringement of human rights and by exposing police brutality and repression, the media have caused a significant rise in public awareness of these issues (Asemah, et al, 2013).

Pate (2011) opined that the task of the press in the process of safeguarding and advancing human rights is enormous. He said the primary task is the firm anchoring of constitutional foundations for the guarantee or reintroduction of human rights, without which the multi-party system cannot flourish, but this demands for freedom to shape opinions and free speech. Thus, the media play a key role in the reform process. Klee (1994) cited in Pate further asks that:

Who will observe and control the power of the state if an independent legal system as guarantor of democratic freedom does not exist or is still fighting for its independence? Only the media can presently fulfil this watchdog function. Who else can and wishes to inform the public about human rights abuses, corruption scandals and the abuse of power? (p. 163).

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Pate (2011) highlights the role of the press in the protection and advancement of human rights within the context of its social responsibility in the society as:

1. To expose cases of human rights abuse and violation
2. To expose perpetrators of human rights abuse for moral condemnation and legal actions
3. To publicise the plight of victims for people to know or see so that they could wake up, react and demand for justice
4. To discourage human right abuses
5. To help secure redress or compensation for victims
6. To enlighten and sensitize the general public on possible human rights violations
7. To assist law enforcement officials and human right groups to track down cases of human rights abuses
8. To educate the people on how to use appropriate communication channels to articulate their views and give expression to their aspirations

Furthermore, Heinze, and Freedman (2010) say media coverage of human rights entails several tensions which will remain difficult to balance. On one hand, they say, the mass media are derelict when they neglect to report on gross and systemic human rights violations. On the other hand, they say, strongly disproportionate emphasis on one locus of abuse raises questions about why equally or more abusive situations receive less attention, particularly when a noticeable pattern of disproportionate coverage emerges over time. They say if the disproportion arises from concerns related to, yet ultimately distinct from, human rights, as appears when reporting on violations spurred by distinct military, economic or cultural interests, then it cannot be said that a focus on human rights as such is being faithfully pursued.

On their own part, Sahu and Ahmad (2018) say although organisational limitations and pre-determined ideological tone of media organisations lead to the coverage of limited number of issues related to human rights violations, the need to get advertising revenue greatly affects the coverage of human rights issues by media organisations. They say in the reportage of human rights issues, media organisations focus on mere reportage of facts without focusing on the context of reportage. They say the focus on facts related to violations of human rights by newspapers is utter disregard to the values of human rights, which is against the ethics of news reporting.

Furthermore, Sahu and Alam (2016) in a study to assess the coverage of women's issues in the mainstream English and Hindi newspapers, found out that though newspapers cover the stories on exploitation of women, but they did not keep follow up of any issue. They found that newspapers mostly reported the events of violence rather than ascertaining the root cause of such events and solutions to such menace in the society. Sahu and Rao (2013) employed content analysis method to track down the coverage of Telangana issue in two major English dailies of the then undivided Andhra Pradesh—The Deccan Chronicle and The Times of India. They found that most of the stories covered by the newspapers were about the events or statements of the leaders. The news stories and their headlines seem to be written in matter of fact manner without necessary emphasis and adequate background about the issue. The newspapers did not consider the seriousness of the situation in Telengana.

These show that the media in the reportage of stories on human rights violations focus solely on the reportage of facts with regard to following stories through or contextualising them so as to be able to find solution to them.

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Similarly, scholars have examined the performance of the Nigerian media in its coverage of human rights abuses. Salawu (2016) in a study of media narrative construction of human rights abuse in Nigeria found out that the Nigerian media did well by reporting on human rights abuses and have been able to facilitate justice for the victims of such abuses. He however emphasise the need for the Nigerian press to be objective and fair by making sure they follow their stories to a logical conclusion for balanced reporting.

However, Salawu revealed that the media do not explain and contextualise human rights information appropriately. Similarly, media practitioners do not have adequate knowledge of human rights and the relevance to the material they are covering, which inadvertently prompts their episodic coverage of such stories, a view also echoed by The Nation editor interviewed by Salawu (2016) that, "We can do better with proper understanding of the full ramifications of human rights issues" (p. 122). In addition, Oyero (2010) in his study says that media frequently miss the context of human rights stories. He adds that:

These shortcomings diminish the professional quality of reporting and hamper the communication of information that is sometimes essential for understanding. They indicate that the profession should identify or improve reporting and editorial standards in order to enhance the accuracy and consistency of human rights coverage (p. 250).

Pate (2011), in his study of the media coverage of human rights abuses under the General Sanni Abacha administration from 1996 to 1997 in *The Guardian, New Nigerian, The Democrat and Daily Times*, found out that the Nigerian press gave considerable attention to the issues of human rights in the country. However, he found out that some reports appeared justifying some government actions and proposals that violated human rights of Nigerians. He said ideally, human rights are universal values that should apply to every human being irrespective of nationality. But often, this point was deliberately missed by arguments in government publications suggesting that Nigeria's case should be treated exceptionally as peculiar.

Furthermore, Farra'u (2017) analysed human rights coverage in Nigeria by Nigerian newspapers for a fifteen-year period, 2000-2015. He found out that during the period, human rights received fairly consistent level of attention. However, human rights rarely received detailed treatment and prominent placement. Similarly, he notes that lack of attention to human rights legal framework shows evidence of lack of familiarity or investigative depth in human rights reporting. Similarly, he notes that the news media in Nigeria follow the traditional focus on human rights by centering attention primarily on civil and political rights and this demonstrates that human rights coverage in the newspapers focuses on a very limited definition of human rights. Further, he notes that the newspapers provide supplemental but inadequate information about systematic human rights abuse in Nigeria.

Therefore, literature reveals that although the media cover human rights abuses, the coverage is not satisfactory. The media focus on the reportage of the events, as facts, without consideration to the context of the abuses. The focus on the context would have unearth causes, perpetrators and establish solutions to the issues. Similarly, the level of prominence and treatment given to human rights abuses is limited. Also, the media focus more on the violation of civil and political rights and less on the violation of economic and social rights. These revelations propel the need to investigate the reportage of human rights violations against IDPs in Nigeria.

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theoretically, the study rests on the Deprivation Ideology and the Social responsibility theory of the media. Deprivation may be defined as a state of observable and demonstrable disadvantage relative to the local community or the wider society or nation to which an individual, family or group belongs (Townsend, 1979). Brown and Madge (1982) on their own, say deprivations involve a lack of something generally held to be desirable, which could be an adequate income, good health and others. Further, it is a lack which is associated to a greater or lesser extent with some degree of suffering. Townsend (1987) says deprivation takes many different forms in every known society. People can be said to be deprived if they lack the types of diet, clothing, housing, household facilities and fuel and environmental, educational, working and social conditions which are widely encouraged and approved in the societies to which they belong (Townsend, 1979). Similarly, Townsend (1979, 1987) divides deprivation into two parts, material deprivation which is when people are deprived of the normal dietary daily intake, physical and mental health, clothing, housing, household facilities, safe environment, work (conditions, security) and the necessary amenities, while social deprivation is when people are deprived of their rights to employment, family activities, integration into community, formal participation in social institutions, recreation and education.

In relation to the study, the Internally Displaced Persons that have been forced to vacate their homes are left with conditions that are worse off in the IDP camps. The absence of conditions that were present in their homes and lives before the disaster or event that led to their displacement makes them feel like second class citizens. In most of the camps, there is the absence of the basic necessities of food, clothing and shelter. In addition to this, their dignity, freedom of association, right to good health, employment opportunities and other such rights are infringed upon. Importantly, when their rights are violated, they lack access to the avenue to seek redress.

Meanwhile, the Social Responsibility theory advocates that media should be self-regulating and pluralist by avoiding violence, respecting rights of minority groups, allowing divergent views from the masses, and being accountable, not only to their employers and the market, but also to society (McQuail, 2007; Baran, & Davis, 2009 cited in Ojebuyi, & Kolawole, 2016). Owens-Ibie (1994) explains this further that the media is responsible to their audiences, who they owe correct news reportage, analysis and editorialising. The government, who they owe constructive criticism, a relay of popular opinion and adequate feedback from the populace, their proprietor, who they owe the survival of the media organisation as a business venture as well as a veritable source of education, enlightenment and entertainment, and themselves, who they owe fulfilment in their calling, satisfaction and an entire success story.

Middleton (2009) says more specifically, social responsibility entails the necessity for the journalist to keep society's interest as a top priority. Furthermore, the socially responsible media according to Salawu (2016) plays the crusading role, having the conviction that the progress of the society is dependent on the good conduct of individuals and institutions in the society. The truly socially responsible media practitioners deploy everything in their arsenals to question the wrongs in the society, while boldly assisting in moving the polity forward in the face of all odds. Pate (2011) reflects that Nigerians rely on the press for information, guidance and direction, and the only way to remain relevant is to be socially responsible by reflecting the people's problems, realities and aspirations in their coverage under whatever circumstances.

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In relation to the study, the Nigerian media is expected to be the voice of Internally Displaced Persons. The media is expected to reflect their problem and distress, because of their peculiar condition. The media is expected to not only reflect their problems, but is also expected to look at the scenario concerning their displacement, that is the causes, and proffer solutions to overcome their displacement. Also, the media is expected to identify perpetrators and mount pressure on decision makers so that they can bring to book perpetrators of abuse against IDPs.

METHOD

Content analysis was employed as the research method whilst newspapers were selected based on their level of coverage of the issue. Hence, the newspapers were selected based on the fact that they are believed to be far more effective than television in conveying the detailed information necessary to understand complex and detailed issues, and they are a useful reference for historical facts (Ikon, 2016). At first, the criteria that two Nigeria newspapers would be examined based on the North-South divide was first established. Then, two top newspapers within the divide would be purposively selected. Therefore, according to 4International Media and Newspapers (2017) ranking of the top 50 newspapers in Africa, Vanguard (7th) and Daily Trust (44th), the top ranked newspapers within the North-South divide were selected for the study. A total of 1461 editions were purposively selected from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2018, because, during the period, there was increasing focus on the plights of IDPs, and in particular, human right abuses against them by human right lawyers, the civil society and international organisations like Amnesty international (United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees, 2017). Similarly, a broad time frame was selected so as to identify emerging patterns in the way each newspaper reported the study objectives. Only editions that reported news stories, features, letters to the editor, editorials and pictures of human rights abuses against Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) were considered. Consequently, 157 stories were content analysed for the study.

Similarly, news items, features, editorials, letters to the editor and photographs served as the unit of analysis, while content categories was constructed based on the reviewed literature. The categories include selected themes on human rights abuse, frame type, prominence (position, story length, and headline analysis), slant (slant and headline type), and source (source of stories, editorial format, and number of sources).

To determine the validity and reliability of the study, Holsti's (1969) formula for the inter-coder reliability test as presented by Wimmer, and Dominick (2011) was used in the study. It is presented as follows:

$$\text{Reliability} = \frac{2n}{N1 + N2}$$

where N represents the number of coding decisions with which the two coders agree. N1 and N2 are the total number of the coding decisions by the first coder and the second coder respectively. As decided by two independent coders, the test showed 0.82 reliability index. Meanwhile, the inter-coder reliability test was carried out on 10% of the selected stories.

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RESULTS

The number of stories present in each newspaper is broken down in Table 1.

As stated earlier, 157 stories were content-analysed. Table 1 show that in 2015, 19 stories from the newspapers presented cases of sexual abuse and other human rights violations against IDPs, in 2016, 50 stories presented cases of sexual abuse and other human rights violations against IDPs, in 2017, 22 stories were presented cases of abuses against IDPs. Meanwhile, in 2018, 67 stories presented cases of sexual abuse and other human rights violations against IDPs.

THEMES ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF IDPS

The prominent types or themes of human rights violations against Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) include a number of human rights issues got from reviewed literature which are murder of displaced persons, abduction of IDPs, sexual slavery, human and sexual trafficking, rape of IDPs, accidental discharge by security personnel, forced or infant marriage of IDPs, diversion of items donated to IDPs, poor sanitary and health conditions, absence of quality learning opportunities, inability to form family ties, and the absence of free movement by displaced persons.

Table 2 shows that most stories reported more cases of diversion of aids donated to IDPs and the absence of the basic necessities of life necessary for the survival of IDPs as indicated by 49% of stories, while murder, sexual slavery and poor sanitary conditions followed with 14.6%, 12.7% and 10.8% respectively. Similarly, 2.5% of stories reported were cases of human and sexual trafficking, 1.9% of stories were for absence of quality learning opportunities, while 1.3% of stories were for abduction of IDPs.

Frame Type

Table 3 shows that the selected newspapers framed sexual violence and other human right abuses against IDPs as episodic frames with 81.5% of stories, while 18.5% of stories were framed as thematic. Episodic frame is evident when the content focuses on specific events alone, without putting it in any general context. That is, the mere description of a specific case, simple delivery of conflict between interested

Table 1. The number of stories on human rights abuses against IDPs

| Newspaper | Vanguard | | Daily Trust | |
|---------------|-----------|------------|-------------|------------|
| | Frequency | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| 2015 | 14 | 73.7 | 5 | 26.3 |
| 2016 | 27 | 54.0 | 23 | 46.0 |
| 2017 | 14 | 63.6 | 8 | 36.4 |
| 2018 | 38 | 54.7 | 29 | 45.3 |
| Total | 92 | 58.6 | 65 | 41.4 |
| = 157 Stories | | | | |

Source: (Fieldwork, 2019)

Human Rights Abuses Against Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria*Table 2. Themes on Human Rights Violations against IDPs*

| Themes | Frequency | Percentage % |
|---|-----------|--------------|
| Murder of Displaced Persons | 23 | 14.6 |
| Abduction of IDPs | 2 | 1.3 |
| Sexual slavery | 20 | 12.7 |
| Human/sexual trafficking | 4 | 2.5 |
| Rape of IDPs | 7 | 4.5 |
| Accidental discharge by security personnel | 1 | 0.6 |
| Forced marriage/ infant marriage | 1 | 0.6 |
| Diversion of items donated to IDPs/ absence of basic necessities (food, clothing and shelter) | 77 | 49.0 |
| Poor sanitary conditions/health facilities | 17 | 10.8 |
| Absence of quality learning opportunities | 3 | 1.9 |
| Inability to form family ties | 1 | 0.6 |
| Absence of free movement | 1 | 0.6 |
| Total | 157 | 100% |

Source: (Fieldwork, 2019)

parties, and a narrative based on individual perspective, while thematic frames are manifest when content in the selected newspapers presented systemic explanation about human rights violations against IDPs, remedial actions and the extent and scope of the abuse.

Prominence

On the prominence attached to newspapers, Table 4 shows that for the length of stories, 35.7% of stories were reported on a tiny mention, 26.8% on a half-page, while 24.2% were reported on a quarter page. For the position in the newspaper, 44.6% of stories were reported on the inside page, while, 35.0% of stories were on the front page. For headline analysis, 2-column head had 55.4% of stories, Major one column head had 33.8% of stories, while, minor one column had 9.6% of stories.

Table 3. Frame type of the Stories

| Parametre | Attribute | Newspapers | | Total | |
|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|--------|-------|
| | | Vanguard | Daily Trust | | |
| | Episodic | Count | 76 | 52 | 128 |
| | | Percent % | 48.4% | 33.1% | 81.5% |
| | Thematic | Count | 16 | 13 | 29 |
| | | Percent % | 10.2% | 8.3% | 18.5% |
| Total | Count | 92 | 65 | 157 | |
| | Percent % | 58.6% | 41.4% | 100.0% | |

Source: (Fieldwork, 2019)

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Table 4. Prominence newspapers accorded stories of human right abuses against IDPs

| Parametre | Attribute | Newspaper | | | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|----------|-------------|--------|
| | | | Vanguard | Daily Trust | |
| Length of Story | Full Page | Count | 13 | 8 | 21 |
| | | Percent % | 8.3% | 5.1% | 13.4% |
| | Half Page | Count | 32 | 10 | 42 |
| | | Percent % | 20.4% | 6.4% | 26.8% |
| | Quarter page | Count | 20 | 18 | 38 |
| | | Percent % | 12.7% | 11.5% | 24.2% |
| | A Tiny mention | Count | 27 | 29 | 56 |
| | | Percent % | 17.2% | 18.5% | 35.7% |
| | Total | Count | 92 | 65 | 157 |
| | | Percent % | 58.6% | 41.4% | 100% |
| Position in Newspaper | Front Page | Count | 32 | 24 | 55 |
| | | Percent % | 19.7% | 15.3% | 35.0% |
| | Back Page | Count | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | | Percent % | 0.6% | 0.6% | 1.3% |
| | Editorial Page | Count | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| | | Percent % | 5.7% | 3.8% | 9.6% |
| | Inside Page | Count | 43 | 27 | 70 |
| | | Percent % | 27.4% | 17.2% | 44.6% |
| | Opinion | Count | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| | | Percent % | 0.6% | 3.2% | 3.8% |
| | Centre Spread | Count | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| | | Percent % | 4.5% | 1.3% | 5.7% |
| | Total | Count | 92 | 65 | 157 |
| | | Percent % | 58.6% | 41.4% | 100.0% |
| Headline Analysis | Streamer | Count | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | | Percent % | 1.3% | 0.0% | 1.3% |
| | 2-column Head | Count | 55 | 32 | 87 |
| | | Percent % | 35.0% | 20.4% | 55.4% |
| | Major One Column | Count | 26 | 27 | 53 |
| | | Percent % | 16.6% | 17.2% | 33.8% |
| | Minor One Column | Count | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| | | Percent % | 5.7% | 3.8% | 9.6% |
| | Spreadhead | Count | - | - | - |
| | | Percent % | - | - | - |
| Total | Count | 92 | 65 | 157 | |
| | Percent % | 58.6% | 41.4% | 100% | |

Source: (Fieldwork, 2019)

Human Rights Abuses Against Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Nigeria**Slant**

Table 5 shows that most stories were reported with the slant pro-human rights with 99.4%, while 0.6% of the stories were neutral. Similarly, 98.7% of stories had headline which were viewed as logical, accurate and objective reportage of the stories (coherent), 0.6% of the headline were subjective or inaccurate (labelling), while, 0.6% of headline were misleading (sensational).

Investigative Reporting

Table 6 shows that most stories on human right abuses against displaced persons were got from a reporter or it emanated from the media organisation as indicated by 38.5% of the story, 18.5% from aid organisations like W.H.O, Amnesty International, UNCHR, Red Cross, Medicins Sans Frontieres, and local emergency management organisations, 17.3% of the stories emanated from the government, while, 10.3% of the stories emanated from interest groups like ethnic organisations and or groups representing displaced persons.

Table 5. *Slant of Stories*

| Parametre | Attribute | Newspaper | | Total | |
|---------------|------------------|-----------|-------------|-------|-------|
| | | Vanguard | Daily Trust | | |
| Slant | Pro-human Rights | Count | 91 | 65 | 156 |
| | | Percent % | 58.0% | 41.4% | 99.4% |
| | Pro-government | Count | - | - | - |
| | | Percent % | - | - | - |
| | Neutral | Count | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | | Percent % | 0.6% | 0.0% | 0.6% |
| Total | Count | 92 | 65 | 157 | |
| | Percent % | 58.6% | 41.4% | 100% | |
| Headline Type | Labelling | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | | Percent % | 0.0% | 0.6% | 0.6% |
| | Sensationalism | Count | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | | Percent % | 0.6% | 0.0% | 0.6% |
| | Coherence | Count | 91 | 64 | 155 |
| | | Percent % | 58.0% | 40.8% | 98.7% |
| | Disparity | Count | - | - | - |
| | | Percent % | - | - | - |
| | Total | Count | 92 | 65 | 157 |
| | | Percent % | 58.6% | 41.4% | 100 |

Source: (Fieldwork, 2019)

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Table 6. Source to determine the extent of investigative reporting

| Parametre | Variable | Newspaper | | Total | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------|-------|--------|-------|
| | | Vanguard | Daily Trust | | | |
| Source | Government | Count | 16 | 11 | 27 | |
| | | Percent % | 10.3% | 7.1% | 17.3% | |
| | Own Correspondent | Count | 38 | 22 | 60 | |
| | | Percent % | 24.4% | 14.1% | 38.5% | |
| | Foreign Media | Count | 2 | 1 | 3 | |
| | | Percent % | 1.3% | 0.6% | 1.9% | |
| | Local News agency | Count | 6 | 3 | 9 | |
| | | Percent % | 3.8% | 1.9% | 5.8% | |
| | Aid organisation | Count | 16 | 13 | 29 | |
| | | Percent % | 10.3% | 8.3% | 18.6% | |
| | Interest groups | Count | 8 | 8 | 16 | |
| | | Percent % | 5.1% | 5.1% | 10.3% | |
| | Others | Count | 6 | 6 | 12 | |
| | | Percent % | 3.8% | 3.8% | 7.7% | |
| | Total | Count | 92 | 64 | 156 | |
| | | Percent % | 59.0% | 41.0% | 100% | |
| | Format | News | Count | 71 | 50 | 121 |
| | | | Percent % | 77.2 | 78.1 | 77.6 |
| Editorials | | Count | 7 | 1 | 8 | |
| | | Percent % | 7.6 | 1.6 | 5.1 | |
| Features | | Count | 7 | 5 | 12 | |
| | | Percent % | 7.6 | 7.8 | 7.7 | |
| Letters to the editor | | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 | |
| | | Percent % | | 1.6 | 0.6 | |
| Photograph | | Count | 1 | 0 | 1 | |
| | | Percent % | 1.1 | 0 | 0.6 | |
| Adverts/advertorials | | Count | - | - | - | |
| | | Percent % | - | - | - | |
| Investigative reports | | Count | 6 | 7 | 13 | |
| | | Percent % | 6.5 | 10.9 | 8.3 | |
| Total | | Count | 92 | 64 | 156 | |
| | | Percent % | 71 | 50 | 121 | |
| Number of Sources | | One Source | Count | 31 | 33 | 64 |
| | | | Percent % | 20% | 21.3% | 41.3% |
| | Two Sources | Count | 6 | 4 | 10 | |
| | | Percent % | 3.9% | 2.6% | 6.5% | |
| | More than two | Count | 55 | 26 | 81 | |
| | | Percent % | 35.5% | 16.8% | 52.3% | |
| | Total | Count | 92 | 63 | 155 | |
| | | Percent % | 59.4% | 40.6% | 100.0% | |

Source: (Fieldwork, 2019)

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Similarly, most stories reported on human rights abuses against displaced persons were in the form of news items as indicated by 77.6%, features, 7.7% of stories, while, editorials was 5.1% of stories. For the number of sources for each story, most stories had more than two sources as indicated by 52.3%, followed by one source with 41.3% of stories.

DISCUSSION

Findings of the study show that the selected newspaper reported more on the diversion of relief items or funds meant for the welfare of displaced persons and the absence of the basic necessities of life in the IDP camps. Similarly, the death of IDPs from detonated suicide bombs by Boko Haram insurgents and deaths through infectious diseases followed suite, while, sexual slavery; the exchange of money or food items with sex between government officials and vulnerable girls and women were the top human rights violations perpetrated against displaced persons.

Most stories published on the human rights violations of displaced persons were episodic, that is, the focus was more in terms of specific instances of violations of the human rights of displaced persons, a mere illustrations of issues without regard to a robust reportage of the violations of the rights of IDPs and more importantly, not placing those incidents in historical or societal context. Park (2012) says episodic reports include vivid, sensational, or provocative images; they are less likely to require reporters to bother to interpret an issue. Similarly, most of the stories published using the episodic frame, failed to suggest preventive or remedial actions which will prevent such violations in the future. Furthermore, findings of the study agree with that of Sahu and Alam (2016) and Salawu (2016), who say the media do not follow up in reporting human rights violations. They say the media should focus on following stories through. Salawu (2016) and Sahu and Ahmad (2018) say in the reportage of human rights issues, media organisations focus on mere reportage of facts without focusing on the context of reportage. News stories and their headlines seem to be written in matter of fact manner without necessary emphasis and adequate background about the issue (Sahu & Rao, 2013). They added that the media do not explain and contextualise human rights information as well as they should, which Salawu (2016) adduce to inadequate knowledge of human rights and knowledge of the relevance to the material they are covering, which inadvertently prompts their episodic coverage of such stories. This view also aligns with the finding of Oyero (2010) who says that the media frequently miss the context of human rights stories. He adds that these shortcomings diminish the professional quality of reporting and hamper the communication of information that is sometimes essential for understanding. This therefore impedes bringing to book individuals responsible for such violations, and leads ultimately to the reoccurrence of such violations in the future (Pate, 2011).

The performance of the media in giving prominence to human right abuses against IDPs was fair, though the media could do better than this. Importantly, the media failed to understand its important role in the society, that, it is the voice of the voiceless, Apuke, and Tunca's (2018) thoughts falls in line with this that it is pertinent for internally displaced persons to raise their voices in order to obtain humanitarian assistance for survival, since they have lost their primary means of support. For them to receive such assistance, their situations need to be presented to the world through various media in order for the general public to provide the aid they require. Similarly, Elegbe (2017) agrees that the social power of the media is further elaborated as machinery that can attract and direct attention to problems and provide solutions, confer status and confirm legitimacy, be a channel for persuasion and mobilization,

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and that the more attention the media gives to a topic, the greater the importance attributed to it by the news audience, this, the media did marginally. Farra'u (2017) notes that Nigerian newspapers provide supplemental but inadequate information about systematic human rights abuse in Nigeria, and human rights stories rarely receive detailed treatment and prominent placement.

Similarly, the slant was assessed according to what value attitude the stories presented by the newspapers showed to the violations of the human rights of IDPs and the perpetrators of such abuse, in the presentation of their stories. The selected newspapers supported the IDPs by vigorously promoting stories that showcased violations of their human rights, instead of sitting on the fence. Therefore, the media performed the role Salawu (2016) says the socially responsible media must play, which is, the crusading role, having the conviction that the progress of the society is dependent on the good conduct of individuals and institutions in the society. He says the truly socially responsible media practitioners deploy everything in their arsenals to question the wrongs in the society, while boldly assisting in moving the polity forward in the face of all odds.

In examining how the selected newspapers employed investigative reporting in their coverage of human rights violations against displaced persons, it was found out that most reports were news items rather than investigative reports. Therefore, it was very difficult for the newspapers to identify particular individual perpetrators of such acts; instead, the newspapers focused on information from other sources, or as the case were, just identifying instances of violations. And consequently, the media failed in performing the role of exposing cases of human rights abuse and violations, and bringing perpetrators to book (Pate, 2011). To this, Ciboh (2016) is of the view that investigations on sources shed light on the quality of information, the diversity of perspectives and the interpretative frameworks on offer to the news consumer, while Ekeanyanwu (2011) adds that in investigating journalism, you investigate and get true facts because you are not satisfied with what is said. But in interviews, you only get people's views on the cases and these views are most of the time coloured with biases, prejudices, and half-truths and in extreme cases, blatant lies. Therefore, the media failed to engage fairly enough in investigative journalism, an ingredient for successful watchdog journalism.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The media focused on mere coverage of human rights violations against IDPs but failed to identify the causes and the perpetrators, and proffer solutions to prevent future occurrences of such acts. Also, they focused mostly on the views represented by others in its reportage of crimes against IDPs, leaving out its social responsibility as the watchdog, by investigating thoroughly cases of human rights abuses against IDPs. This shows that the media in Nigeria has not come to terms with the fact that a nation can only rise to its heights as a result of a socially responsible press. A socially responsible press will therefore not take with levity hands cases of human rights abuses against the voiceless in the society. Hence, the Nigerian Press Council (NPC) should promote ethics and social responsibility for proper professionalism of journalism practice in Nigeria. The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) should frequently organise workshops and seminars for journalists on human rights reporting, in particular, reportage of stories on human rights violations, moving beyond mere reporting to focusing on critical and informed analysis that will uphold the human rights of the citizenry. Similarly, to encourage more investigative and more socially responsible reportage on human rights violations, awards for excellence in reporting should be instituted.

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For future directions, this study recommends that research should be extended to other media systems, to understand, if the performance of the media in the reportage of human rights violations against IDPs is universal. This will help researchers to be able to make conclusions on the role of the media in the reportage of such violations. Similarly, research could focus on determining if media reportage equates actual situations faced by IDPs. This could be done by asking about their views on human rights violations against them. Finally, research could focus on determining whether there is media bias in coverage of displacement, that is, if the media prefers reporting about victims of a particular type of displacement as against other types.

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Human Rights: This refers to the benefits every human being is entitled to by the reason of the fact that the person in question is of the human race. It cannot be worked for or withdrawn by other persons from them.

Human Rights Abuses: These are infringements on the dignity of other human beings, based on the fact that they are vulnerable.

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IDP Camp: This is usually a safe shelter for displaced persons, where they are protected and taken care of before they eventually move back to their homes.

Internally Displaced Persons: These are people who have left their homes as a result of the effects of conflicts, war, and other human and natural disasters, and now live in makeshift shelters in a safer place, away from their homes.

Media Reportage: This refers to the form of presentation of stories on displaced persons by the media

Sexual Violence: This refers to having unsolicited sex with teenage girls and other women by the reason of the act that they are vulnerable.

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