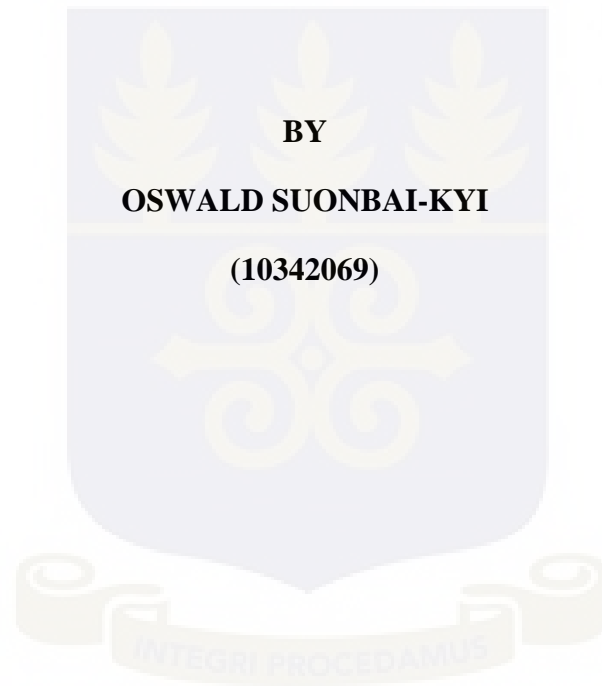


**LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS COVERAGE OF BOKO HARAM: A  
COMPARATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF ONLINE REPORTAGE OF BBC, GBC  
AND NTA**



**BY**

**OSWALD SUONBAI-KYI**

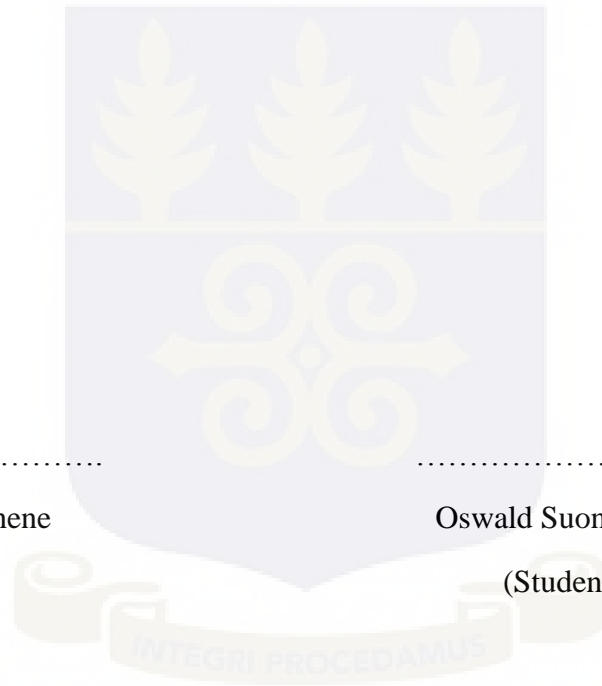
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**THIS LONG ESSAY WAS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON,  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MA  
COMMUNICATION STUDIES DEGREE**

**JULY, 2016**

### **CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that, except for the references to other people's work which have been duly acknowledged, this long essay is the product of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere. This work was supervised by Dr. Margaret I. Amoakohene.



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Oswald Suonbai-kyi  
(Student)

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work, first of all, to the Almighty God whose divine guidance saw me through it successfully. I also dedicate it to family and friends for their prayers and support especially Mr. David Afugani whose generosity and mentorship prepared me to aspire to higher heights.

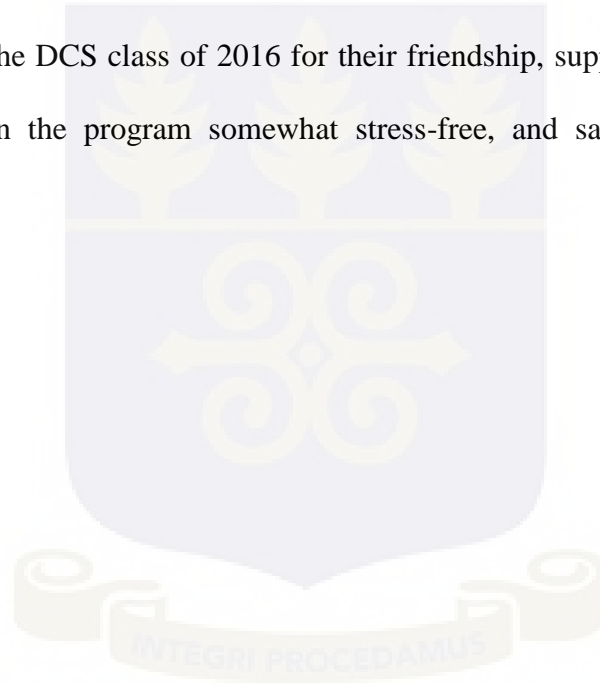


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## ABSTRACT

This study examined coverage of Boko Haram by local and international media between April 2014 and March 2015. Backgrounded in the theories of agenda setting and framing, the study undertook a quantitative content analysis of online news reportage of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC) and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) to ascertain the differences in coverage as well as the sources of news on Boko Haram, and how these determined the coverage frames used in reporting on the group. Results indicated an extensive coverage of Boko Haram by BBC while GBC and NTA had a relative lower coverage. Also, two frames—political and human interest—dominated the news coverage of the group by all media. However, NTA had a little more human interest frames than political frames. Despite the difference in source of news for NTA and BBC, both media still used almost similar frames. While BBC used thematic frames for all of its stories, NTA maintained a balance between episodic and thematic frames. GBC, on the other hand, sourced majority of its stories from BBC, hence, it had very similar coverage as BBC. Generally, therefore, there existed marked differences and similarities in the online news coverage of Boko Haram by local and international media. The research concluded that though local and international media differed in sources of news and prominence in their coverage of Boko Haram, they used similar coverage frames. It was, however, recommended that local media should give more prominence to Boko Haram on their news agenda given the crucial role of the media in mitigating the crisis coupled with the fact that the insurgency poses an immediate security threat to Nigeria in particular and the sub-region in general.



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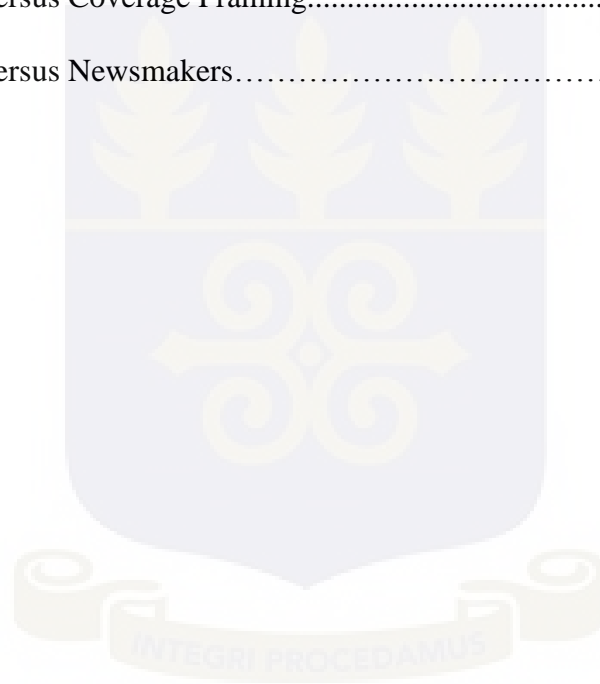
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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, brief descriptions of media selected for the study and justification of media.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

The media, globally, are important and strategic agents of socialization. In most instances they are referred to as the fifth estate of the realm, playing watchdog roles while at the same time shaping people's perceptions about the issues surrounding them. The role of the media, therefore, in helping to construct or deconstruct our understanding of ongoing phenomena cannot be undermined. Consequently, the media, as both content and tools of communication, have been subjects of scholarly interest since time immemorial. For instance, there have been debates, especially on the global media landscape, regarding coverage of people and of nations. These debates could be traced to the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) mainly championed by developing nations in the early 70s following imbalances in the global flow of information coupled with the biased media coverage that so-called third world nations received (Gerbner et al; 1993).

While, generally, both local and international media often stand accused of biases in their editorial priorities on issues, international media often stand more accused especially in their coverage of news on developing nations. Indeed, media scholars have often observed that international media coverage of the African continent is woefully low, and in the few instances

that the continent has been covered, the issues generally represent war, disease, poverty, hunger including all such negative stereotypes that western countries have about Africa (Kalyango and Onyebadi; 2012, Golan; 2008, Domatop; 1994). Nordenstreng (2011) puts it more candidly that not all countries are created equal when it comes to news coverage. The core countries dominate the news flow while the news about the periphery is often more negative noting that the NWICO debate is still relevant in contemporary times. One can then infer that in setting the agenda for global discourse, international media do not take into equal consideration coverage of third world nations and for that matter Africa. As highlighted by Ogunyemi (2011), Africa has been under-represented, misrepresented and misunderstood since time immemorial. Thus, one would expect a varying news agenda from both local and international media on same issues involving developing countries as may be in the case of Boko Haram.

## **1.2 Who are the Boko Haram?**

Boko Haram is an Hausa expression which translates as “Western Education is Forbidden”. Formed in 2003 under the teachings of a radical Islamic cleric, Mohammed Yusuf, in northern Nigeria, the group, however, insists to be called Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati wal-Jihad translated as “People Committed to the Prophet’s Teachings for Propagation and Jihad”. One of their core objectives is to make Nigeria an Islamic State.

It first began as a congregation of young Muslims, isolated in a little town in north-eastern Nigeria, Maiduguri, who found solace in the radical ideological propagation of their cleric, Mohammed Yusuf. The group, however, came under the radar of the public in 2009 when the Nigerian military intervened in their activities leading to the arrest of most of their members, and subsequent killing of their leader, Mohammed Yusuf. This sparked further violence as Abubakar Shekau, assistant to Mohammed Yusuf, emerged as new leader of the group. Their demand,

among others, has been for the release of their members held captive by the military. Consequently, they have increasingly become more violent, and were declared a terrorist group in 2011 by the US following a bloody attack at the UN headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria. There have been a number of video releases in which Abubakar Shekau pledged allegiance to the terrorist group, ISIS (Islamic State) in Iraq and Syria.

Boko Haram has resorted to several terrorist tactics such as drive-by shootings, targeted assassinations, suicide bombings, kidnapping and hostage taking (Perouse, 2014). In April 2014, the group abducted over two hundred teenage school girls from the Nigerian city of Chibok, a tactic which generated a lot of global outcry, and which brought the group to more prominence. The insurgency has gained center stage on the news agenda of the media, both local and international, as there has been continuous news coverage on the group. This coverage calls for attention from the academic community to ascertain the different or similar narrative frames used by different media in their news reportage on the group.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Coverage of the Boko Haram insurgency is particularly crucial in many regards. First of all, it presents us with a conflict situation, thus, of essential news value to the media in general and international media in particular. Secondly, as Naccos (2000) observes, media coverage of conflict is a double-edged sword since terrorists thrive on media attention for publicity. Hence, while the media may be undertaking their core mandate of providing information to the public, that simple call to duty, in conflict situations, could deepen the crisis. To put it more bluntly, they use the media as a theater to stage terror. Thus, the editorial priorities of the media regarding conflict are very crucial (Pudepphat, 2006). Given these realities, news content on

Boko Haram is particularly important to media scholars since that content would inform us of the nature of coverage on the group and the way in which it is framed.

However, the tendency to give undue attention and further exacerbate violence is hardly ever the only challenge that the media face in their coverage of conflict and for that matter Boko Haram. Harris (2004) notes that online news further complicates challenges that the media face in covering conflict because online news can be read anywhere globally. By its very nature, “online news has led to a compression of time and space which means we see news images of demonstrations, riots or coups within minutes of their occurrences. These images not only inform global audiences, but may instigate further campaigns of violence at home” (Harris; 2004, p.1). Notwithstanding this striking reality, most news reports of conflicts are products of “parachute journalism” described as one of those “short notice, short-term assignments that suddenly land a reporter in the thick of a crisis with little time for reflection” (Wooten, 2012, p.4). Consequently, news reports become sensational and inadequate.

Hence, “the media can also complicate attempts to resolve conflicts as their actions can engender resentment due to the editorial priorities of the media organizations” (Puddephat; 2006, p.5). While western media often stand accused for biased and sensational coverage of issues in developing countries, it is taken for granted that local media would give a fairer coverage. However, until we assess local media coverage of Boko Haram vis à vis that of international media, we may be overly critical of international media when in reality local media are no better. Thus, since all media, the BBC, NTA and GBC have provided news reports on the Boko Haram insurgence in Nigeria to a significant global audience, it is important for a holistic approach—an approach that would compare western perspectives versus local perspectives to ascertain the extent, nature, similarities and differences in coverage.

The current research, thus, examines the content of international and local media reportage on Boko Haram. It specifically carries out a comparative content analysis of online news reportage on Boko Haram by GBC, BBC and NTA from April 2014 to March 2015. The month of April 2014 is particularly important for the chosen period of study in that this was the month in which the over 200 teenage girls were abducted by Boko Haram, thus, generating a lot of international outcry and drawing more media attention to activities of the group.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

- To find out how coverage of Boko Haram differs between local and international media
- To ascertain how the sources of news determine the frames used in reporting Boko Haram by the BBC, GBC and NTA

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

- To what extent does coverage of Boko Haram differ between local and international media?
- How do the sources of news determine frames used in the coverage of Boko Haram?

#### **1.6 Justification of Media Selection**

The BBC, GBC and NTA were deemed appropriate for a comparative study because they are public service media corporations that have monitored and covered the Boko Haram insurgency on their online news portals. A comparative content analysis of their news coverage on Boko Haram, thus, offered the researcher an opportunity to compare the variations in local and international media coverage of issues more related to the African context.

The BBC's online news can be accessed in nearly all the world's major languages (over thirty languages) including English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Hausa, and Japanese, to mention but a few. It is estimated to reach millions of users globally as such it is an indispensable information vehicle. Like the BBC, the GBC is also a public-service broadcast media and has a variety of channels including television (GTV which has nationwide coverage), over ten radio stations and an online news channel. Despite competition from local private media, GBC is still an important and a trusted source of information on a variety of subjects. The NTA, on the other hand, is deemed the largest broadcast media in Nigeria and the most authentic voice of the Nigerian government, thus, representing the voice of a major local media inasmuch as the Boko Haram insurgency is concerned. Its strong online presence coupled with its proximity to Boko Haram makes it indispensable in the current study.

For the purposes of this study, local media was operationalized to represent NTA and GBC whereas international media represented western media, BBC. However, while GBC could not be interpreted as a local media the same way as NTA—since NTA was in direct proximity to Boko Haram—GBC was introduced into the study to ascertain the nature and extent of coverage given to the group by media in the sub-region, other than Nigeria. This is especially relevant given that the Boko Haram insurgency poses a security threat to the entire sub-region as the violence is already escalating into neighboring Niger, Cameroon and Chad. It also informed us of how uniquely different GBC's reportage was from NTA and BBC, and how similar it was to NTA or BBC or both.

All media are, therefore, important gatekeepers—NTA representing an inside voice while BBC representing an outside voice. GBC, though neither at the core nor periphery of the conflict, is that “supposed” third party whose narratives should stand alone, corroborate or go contrary to

reportage by NTA and BBC. As consumers of the stories of these media, it is imperative that we ascertain the nature of their narrative discourse on the Boko Haram insurgency, and what the variations could be, if any.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study seeks to generate more scholarly interest in comparative research on international and local media coverage of Boko Haram. Research findings will not only tell us the kinds of issues highlighted by both international and local media with respect to the group, they will inform us of the kind of agenda local and international media gatekeepers set on the group. Given the presence and increasing significance of online news media, a comparative content analysis of media coverage on Boko Haram will provide us an opportunity to actively engage with news stories to ascertain their content given that media content on developing nations have been of particular interest to scholars. Lastly, we would also understand the pattern of global communication flow especially regarding intermedia agenda setting and the influences both local and international media have on one another.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This study is composed of five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction and it discusses the following: background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives and research questions of the study, significance of the study, brief descriptions of selected media for the study, justification of selected media and chapter organization. The second chapter reviews related literature and places the study within two media theories—agenda setting and framing. Chapter three looks at the research methodology presenting the research design, population and sampling procedure, data gathering technique, research instrument, intercoder reliability and analysis. Chapter four presents results and discusses findings relative to the research objectives and

questions while chapter five summarizes discussions, offers recommendations and presents limitations to the study.



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## CHAPTER TWO

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses relevant theories to the study objectives and examines related previous literature.

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

Two theories background this study—agenda setting and framing. “Agenda-setting theory is one of the most applied concepts in communication studies” (Sikanku; 2014). Cissel (2012) notes that “agenda setting looks at the ability of journalists to dictate what stories are considered news worthy and how much prominence and space they receive” (p.67). Consistent with Lipmann (1922) and McCombs (2005) the media draw public attention to issues and invariably shape their perception regarding those issues. What the media highlight and deem as “salient” on their news agenda also receives equal treatment on the public’s agenda (Rosenthal, 2015). Thus, as Lipmann (1922) observed, the media’s reality, over time, becomes the public’s reality. In attempting to ascertain the impact of news coverage on conflict, Reuben (2010) writes that “the media often shape public perception about the issue, its causes and consequences, whether it is important, and how to think about it” (p.2). This follows what many media scholars call second level agenda setting, popularly termed framing.

Entman (1993) aptly captures it as follows:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (p. 52).

The way in which news stories are framed determines the kind of interpretive lenses used in understanding such news stories. Agenda setting and framing are related concepts in media studies though framing goes a step further to look at the conscious efforts by media gatekeepers to present and organize news on issues in such a manner as to project certain perspectives and influence the public's understanding of the issues through those perspectives (Scheufele, 1999). In other words, the media do not only tell us what to think about—agenda setting—they tell us how to think about what we think about—framing—(McCombs, 2005).

Many scholars have, thus, used agenda setting and framing to determine media's coverage of issues especially conflicts. Cissel (2012) used comparative content analysis to understand American mainstream and alternative media's news coverage of Occupy Wall Street. Yusha'u (2013) also adopted a similar approach to content-analyze representation of Boko Haram in the British broadsheets (The Telegraph and The Guardian) as well as CNN and Al Jazeera. This is consistent with the purpose of this study, which seeks to content-analyze the coverage of Boko Haram by the BBC, GBC and NTA.

## **2.2 Literature review**

This study undertakes a comparative content analysis of Boko Haram in the online news reportage of BBC, GBC and NTA between April 2014 and March 2015. In this regard, some previous literature have been discussed in the ensuing paragraphs.

Yusha'u (2012) assessed the online representation of Boko Haram in the British broadsheets—*The telegraph* and *The Guardian*. In terms of political ideology, *The Telegraph* represents the centre-right while *The Guardian* represents the centre-left (Yusha'U, 2012). He, thus, sought to find out if differences in the liberal and conservative ideological orientations of both news media

would reflect in their reportage of Boko Haram. Twenty one stories were covered by both papers—thirteen from The Guardian while eight from The Telegraph. Using critical discourse analysis, Yusha’u focused on the headlines of the stories as well as the first few paragraphs of the stories. The results indicated no difference in the reportage of Boko Haram as both papers reported negatively on the group. He then concluded that western media collectively have a certain negative bias in their representation of Islam and Muslims especially regarding Boko Haram.

Yusha’U (2013) pursued a similar study to examine the credibility of CNN and Al Jazeera’s coverage of Boko Haram consistent with the assertion by media scholars such as Jim Wooten (1994) that international media especially western media often rely on “parachute journalism” to cover news stories on Africa. Parachute journalism, as Wooten defines, is “one of those short-notice, short-term assignments that suddenly land a reporter in the thick of a crisis with little time for reflection” (p.46). This situation promotes sensationalism and does not allow for a verification of facts before news stories are published. In his study, Yusha’U undertook a critical discourse analysis of hundred news items for both media. The findings revealed that both media resorted to presupposition and shallow reporting on the group; that news stories fed on negative stereotypes against the group; and that generally, reporters for both media demonstrated a lack of adequate knowledge on the group. He then concluded that in conflict situations, “using reporters not fully based in the affected areas leads to misunderstanding and misreporting the crisis and misinforming the audience” (p.252).

Okoro and Odoemelam (2013) also carried out a content analytical study of four Nigerian print media—*The Guardian*, *Daily Sun*, *Vanguard* and *Thisday*—to ascertain the pattern and dominant news frames used in their reportage on Boko Haram. They analyzed 36 editions for each of the

four newspapers totaling 144 stories. Among some of the key frames used in coding the news editions included political, economic, religious, human interest, responsibility, ethnic and conspiracy frames.

The findings revealed that *The Guardian*, *Vanguard* and *Thisday* newspapers used positive frames that highlighted the Nigerian government's efforts at combating the group while *Daily Sun* resorted to framing the group as ethnocentric and religiously fanatic. The researchers then recommended that the mass media have a crucial role to play in containing the violent activities of the group, hence, should resort to more positive frames in reporting news events on the group. This, in their estimation, would inspire confidence in both government and key stakeholders including the citizenry to overcome the insurgency.

Nwabueze and Ebeze (2013) undertook a similar study to assess the state of insecurity in Nigeria mainly attributable to Boko Haram, and the critical role of the mass media in addressing the insurgency. Their study was necessitated by growing concerns about the nature of media coverage on the group. Some of the concerns, they noted, amounted to the fact that the media often focus on shallow reportage and negative stereotypes about the group—concerns already raised by Yusha'u (2012), Yusha'U (2013), and Okoro and Odoemelam (2013). Also, the media use inflammatory language, sensational and misleading headlines. Grounding their work in the agenda setting theoretical paradigm, they examined specific programs such as Police Diary including media discussions on the group. It was discovered that generally, the media were guilty as charged. Some of the reasons they deduced from the phenomenon included poor research on the part of journalists, self-censorship for fear of being victimized by the group, poor remuneration and lack of ease of access. Consequently, they recommended peace journalism,

which is consistent with the recommendation by Hamid and Baba (2014) who also sought to find out what role the media could play in complementing efforts at combating the group.

In addition, Asogba et al (2012) assessed general media reportage of Boko Haram, and observed the complexity involved in reporting crime and terrorist acts as the situation is even worsened by the ever increasing presence of online news media which provide a platform to both victims and perpetrators as observed by Haris (2004). Their study was situated in two media theories—Agenda Setting and Uses and Gratifications. They argued that Uses and Gratifications presents an especially difficult situation because while the larger audience may simply use media as information vehicles keeping them up to date on events, terrorists also use such media to showcase their unwholesome activities. The media are then found in a difficult situation where in their call to duty to fulfil the public right to information, they also risk giving undue attention to terrorist activities, thus, promoting and further exacerbating violence.

The researchers further argued that while terrorists may be seen as criminals in the eyes of domestic media, international media may frame them as advocates and freedom fighters. This is very crucial for the current study which seeks to ascertain the coverage of Boko Haram by both international and local media. In their recommendation, they suggested that rather than focus on negative framing of the group, the media should resort to more positive news frames towards reconciliation and peace building.

Ekwueme and Obayi (2012) similarly used framing theory to examine media and Boko Haram and how the former could resort to more effective ways of reporting on the latter. Consistent with recommendations following media reportage on the 2001 September 11 attack, they suggested that news on terrorists should be less blunt; that they should reframe by focusing on

gains rather than loss; that rather than highlighting government's negligence and failed policies, news stories should be framed to highlight government's success and how they are combating the group, and that courage should be preached over fear. Their argument for this latter point is that both fear and courage are contagious. If fear is preached, the group is encouraged to carry on with their activities. However, if courage is preached, it reduces the mood of fatalism, fortifies audience members and disarms the terrorists. Thus, the media should avoid sensationalism and work hand in hand with the relevant stakeholders to counter activities of the group.

Furthermore, Gerhards and Schafer (2014) undertook a comparative framing analysis of CNN, Al Jazeera, BBC and ARD television coverage of four separate terrorist acts in Madrid, London, Amman and Sharm El Sheikh between 2004 and 2005. The study was premised on four main factors influencing global news coverage of terrorist events—country specific patterns, regional patterns, media systems and standardization of news due to globalization. They analyzed 87 news shows and 658 individual news segments and found that there existed similarities as well as differences in reportage. While all four media gave extensive coverage on all four terrorist attacks as well as maintained same style, they differed in the way in which they framed the events. BBC and Al Jazeera focused on news events that portrayed a declaration of global war on terrorism while CNN and ARD saw the attacks as crimes against humanity.

Contrary to the assumption that cross national and cultural variance would lead to a difference in reportage between Al Jazeera on one hand and the other media on the other hand, it was rather ascertained that this variable did not show up strongly. The researchers then explained that globalization aided by rapid growth in technology has led to a standardization of news. This latter postulation is relevant to the current study because it may help to explain why, if for instance there is no difference in coverage on Boko Haram by BBC, GBC and NTA.

Alshathry (2015) also undertook a comparative framing analysis of the online news coverage of the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) by CNN and Al Jazeera. The study investigated thematic and episodic framing including five generic framing variables—conflict, economic consequences, responsibility, morality and human interest. One Hundred and Seventy Four (174) news stories representing 72 for CNN and 82 for Al Jazeera were analyzed to find out the different frames used by both media and how the sources of news varied between both media.

Findings indicated that conflict framing dominated for both media though CNN had more conflict frames than Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera, however, used more responsibility framing than CNN, blaming previous government for the crisis. Also, while Al Jazeera focused on ISIL and its expansion in Syria, CNN explored the connection between ISIL and Al Qaeda. In terms of sourcing, CNN relied more on US sources while Al Jazeera depended on journalists and other media including international officials. The researcher concluded that the results were typical of international news coverage on the group as affirmed by Dimitrova (2006).

Summarily, though there have been studies on media coverage of Boko Haram and other terrorist activities globally, the media often selected for study either are uniformly western or collectively local. Also, western media have often been accused of negative coverage on the group, but we do not know how local media too report on the group. It is therefore important to undertake a comparative study that assesses both local and international media coverage so as to fully comprehend the different and dominant frames used in covering the group and whether there exists some similar or different patterns of coverage. Given these previous studies, the comparative content analysis of this study is, therefore, relevant in providing knowledge on the news variations for both local and international media on Boko Haram.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter explains the method used for the study and it discusses the study design, population and sampling procedure, data gathering techniques, the research instrument, intercoder reliability and methods of data analysis.

#### 3.1 Research Design

Quantitative content analysis was the method employed in this study. Holsti (1969) defines quantitative content analysis as the systematic study of text which involves, generally, empirically coding texts into observable and comparable patterns of data thus allowing for easy assessment of communication messages. Quantitative content analysis has been applied to a wider range of topics including, significantly, media reporting (Rose et al, 2015). This study examined the online news reports of the BBC, GBC and NTA on Boko Haram.

#### 3.2 Population and Sampling Procedure

The population of the study involved online news reports on Boko Haram by BBC, GBC and NTA between April 2014 and March 2015. A total of 199 news stories on Boko Haram were found for all media. One Hundred and Twenty Four stories were sampled for analysis using the constructed week sampling procedure—59 for BBC, 26 for GBC and 39 for NTA. According to Riffe et al (1993), constructed week sampling is a “type of stratified random sampling in which the final sample represents all seven days of the week to account for cyclic variation of news content. It creates maximum sampling efficiency while controlling for cyclic biases” (p. 78). This is consistent with Wimmer and Dominick (2011) who also noted that the constructed week

sampling ensures a balanced distribution across the various months. Thus, it is the best sampling technique especially when dealing with news content (Riffe et al, 1993).

### **3.3 Data Gathering**

Data was obtained from the online news portals of BBC, GBC and NTA within the chosen period of study. The key phrase “Boko Haram” was entered into the search engine of the news portals of these media. All news stories relating to Boko Haram, and that fell within the period chosen for the study were selected and categorized according to the month in which they were reported, April 2014 to March 2015. Stories were then coded accordingly.

### **3.4 Research Instrument**

A coding guide and sheet (Appendix A and B respectively) were developed based on the research objectives and questions to collect and measure data. The units of analysis, which involved online news reports of BBC, GBC and NTA between April 2014 and March 2015, were analyzed in relation to type of story, subject matter of story, tone of story, source of story, enhancement, length, episodic/thematic framing, coverage framing and newsmakers. These are explained below.

1. **Type of story:** It looked at whether a particular story was straight news, feature or editorial.
2. **Subject matter of story:** This examined the central focus of the story whether it was based mainly on creating awareness or cautioning the public with respect to Boko Haram and their activities. It also looked at whether the story was about enhancing the competencies of security forces by giving them special training to fight Boko Haram, whether it centered on donation in cash or kind to the government, military or victims of Boko Haram attacks, whether it focused on violence (destructions, bombings, abductions,

killings etc) or whether it looked at combating Boko Haram, thus, presenting successes of the military against the group.

3. **Tone of Story:** This looked at whether a story was positive (favorable, success of military against Boko Haram), negative (bad news involving either attacks or success of Boko Haram) or neutral.
4. **Source of Story:** This sought to determine which sources the various media relied on for their news reports on Boko Haram.
5. **Story Enhancement:** It examined the prominence and importance attached to a story by looking at whether it used only text or accompanied text with other details such as videos, pictures, audios etc.
6. **Length of Story:** This looked at how long a particular news report was by examining whether it spanned full computer screen page and beyond (very long), whether it was half computer screen page (long) or whether it was quarter computer screen page (short).
7. **Episodic and Thematic Framing:** An episodic frame meant that a particular news report stood in isolation without any linkage to previous related events (no background) while a thematic frame meant it was placed in a context of related events.
8. **Coverage frames:** This looked at political (government leaders, policies and politicians), economic (impact of Boko Haram on the economy, business operations etc), human interest (human disaster, wellbeing etc), criminal (framing the group as criminals) and environmental frames (impact of group on environment etc)
9. **Newsmakers:** This dealt with who the newsmakers were in the news reports whether they were victims of Boko Haram attacks, family relations of victims, Boko Haram members, international bodies, government officials etc.

### **3.5 Analysis**

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in analyzing data. Findings were presented in tables for illustrative purposes.

### **3.6 Intercoder Reliability**

Two coders were trained to assist in coding data for analysis. This was to ensure maximum validity and reliability of research findings. Data was gathered and sampled by the researcher after which code categories were explained to the two coders. The researcher coded sample data together with them to ensure they understood the exercise.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents results and discusses findings from the data. The study assessed the online coverage of Boko Haram by BBC, GBC and NTA to find out how coverage of Boko Haram differed between local and international media and how the sources of news determined the news frames used in reporting Boko Haram by all media.

#### **4.1 RESULTS**

##### **4.1.1 Frequency of Coverage**

Within the twelve-month period chosen for the study, a total of 199 stories were found for all media. BBC had 97 online news publications on Boko Haram while GBC and NTA had 52 and 50 publications respectively. It was observed that while BBC reported news stories on Boko Haram for all the twelve months under study, the case was different for GBC and NTA. GBC had no news reports on Boko Haram for the months of April 2014, May 2014, September 2014 and December 2014.

NTA also had no news reports on the group for the months of April 2014 and August 2014. Hence, for the month of April 2014, NTA and GBC had no coverage. The least coverage for BBC was also in the month of April 2014 (one story). This was a rather surprising finding because part of the reason why the study period began in April 2014 was that it was the month (April 14, 2014) in which Boko Haram abducted over 200 teenage school girls of Chibok, which generated a lot of public outcry and global activism involving renowned individuals. One thus expected extensive media coverage on the group in this month.

A possible explanation to this phenomenon could be that the abduction, though carried out in April, came to media limelight in May as was evidenced by BBC's extensive coverage. In fact, within the entire period for the study, the month of May witnessed the highest coverage for BBC. Interestingly, however, this was in contrast to NTA which had only four news stories, and GBC, which had none.

Overall, for the entire study period, BBC had a more extensive coverage on Boko Haram, giving the group more prominence on its news agenda while, generally, NTA and GBC had low coverage relative to BBC. While BBC and NTA had more coverage in 2014 than in 2015, it was the opposite for GBC. An overwhelming 88% of news stories on the group by GBC represented the short period of 2015 (January to March) while a staggering 12% represented the nine-month period in 2014.

#### **4.1.2 Media versus type of story**

Stories were coded based on three main news formats—straight news, feature and editorial. For all media, results indicated an overwhelming coverage of straight news stories on Boko Haram. Fifty five of the 59 BBC stories were straight news while all 26 stories for GBC were straight news. Similarly, of the 39 NTA news stories, 37 represented straight news while the remaining 3 represented feature stories. While BBC had 3 stories that were editorial pieces, both GBC and NTA had none. Generally, therefore, all media had an overwhelming coverage of straight news on the group. Since the group became increasingly violent and adopted several terrorist tactics following their abduction of the Chibok girls, the media also reported on them as and when there was news.

#### **4.1.3 Media versus Subject Matter of Story**

Five main code categories were identified for subject matter of news story—Caution/awareness creation/education, training, violence, donation and combating Boko Haram. Of the 124 stories analyzed for all media, nearly half of them representing 46% reported on how Boko Haram was being battled thus highlighting successes of the military against the group, coalition of international bodies to fight the group and press releases from government officials indicating government's commitment to fighting the group. However, per individual media reportage, BBC reported more on violence (27 stories) followed by combating the group (21 stories). On the contrary, NTA overwhelmingly reported news stories that focused on combating Boko Haram (22 stories), and reported less on violence (6 stories). Quite similar to NTA, GBC reported more on combating Boko Haram (14 stories) and less on violence (8 stories).

In sum, all media reported more on violence and combating Boko Haram, but less on awareness creation/caution, training and donation. These three subjects collectively represented 12% of the entire study sample of 124 stories. The overwhelming reportage on violence and combating the group is consistent with recommendation by Ekweme and Obayi (2012) who argued that in their coverage of Boko Haram, the media should not only cover violence, albeit that most of the time the news is based on violence, but rather they should also report on the various efforts in combating the group. Thus, the media should as much as possible, offer a balanced reportage between violence, on one hand, and successes of the military against the group. Results are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: **Media versus Subject Matter of Story**

Subject Matter of Story	NAME OF MEDIA			Total
	BBC	GBC	NTA	
Caution/Awareness Creation/Education	4 (6.7%)	1 (3.8%)	6 (15%)	11 (8.8%)
Training	1 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.8%)
Donation	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (7.6%)	3 (2.4%)
Violence	27 (45.7%)	8 (30.7%)	6 (15%)	41 (33%)
Combating Boko Haram	21 (35.5%)	14 (53.8%)	22 (56%)	57 (45.9%)
Other	6 (10%)	3 (11.5%)	2 (5%)	11 (8.8%)
<b>Total</b>	59 (100%)	26 (100%)	39 (100%)	124 (100%)

#### 4.1.4 Media versus Tone of Story

Tone of story was assessed based on the overall voice of the story whether it was negative, positive or neutral. A positive tone is reassuring, indicating success against the group while a negative tone uses an alarming voice, thus, creating fear and panic and a general atmosphere of pessimism towards overcoming the group. A neutral tone is a balance between positive and negative tones. From the results, NTA maintained more neutral (56%) and positive (41%) tones than negative tones (3%). BBC, on the other hand, had more negative (57%) than positive (27%) and neutral tones (15%). Quite like NTA, GBC's coverage used more positive tones (54%) than negative tones (35%). Results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: **Media versus Tone of Story**

MEDIA	TONE OF STORY			Total
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	
BBC	16 (27%)	34 (57.6%)	9 (15.2%)	59 (100%)
GBC	14 (53.8%)	9 (34.6%)	3 (11.5%)	26 (100%)
NTA	21 (53.8%)	3 (7.6%)	15 (38.4%)	39 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	51 (41.1%)	46 (37%)	27 (21.7%)	124 (100%)

#### 4.1.5 Type of Media versus Source of Story

This examined the various sources all three media relied on for their news reportage of Boko Haram. Of the 59 BBC stories, 56 (95%) stories were news reports from BBC journalists in Nigeria while the remaining three were sourced from other wire services. Similarly, NTA sourced a little more than half of its stories from itself representing 51% while 28% was sourced from events, press releases and press conferences. In contrast, GBC relied on wire services including extensively BBC for its news reportage on Boko Haram. This represented 69% (18 stories) while 23% (6 stories) was attributed to GBC itself. Results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: **Media versus Source of Story**

MEDIA	SOURCE OF STORY				Total
	WIRE SERVICE	MEDIA ITSELF/REPORTER	EVENT	INDIVIDUAL /PRIVATE	
BBC	2 (3%)	56 (94.9%)	0 (0%)	1 (1.6%)	59 (100%)
GBC	18 (69%)	6 (23%)	0 (0%)	2 (7.6%)	26 (100%)
NTA	3 (7.6%)	20 (51%)	11 (28%)	5 (12.8%)	39 (100%)
Total	23 (18.5%)	82 (66%)	11 (8.8%)	8 (6.4%)	124 (100%)

#### 4.1.6 Type of Media versus Story Enhancement

Story enhancement looked at the use of extra details to tell the story. It examined whether a particular news report used only text or whether it supported text with pictures and videos. In their online coverage of Boko Haram, all media gave more prominence to their news reports by enhancing their stories with pictures and videos, among others. While NTA and BBC enhanced their stories with either pictures or videos or with both, GBC used only pictures, with just two stories that received no enhancement. It was, however, observed that, BBC, aside from videos and pictures, used other data to illustrate its stories. These included maps normally indicating areas under attack by the group. They also used statistical charts such as bar graphs to illustrate number of deaths and casualties recorded from various attacks launched by Boko Haram. These enhancement mechanisms added more detail to the news reports and placed the group more prominently on BBC's news agenda.

#### 4.1.7 Type of Media versus Length of Story

As part of the prominence given to Boko Haram on the news agenda of all media under study, length of story was used to determine to what extent coverage was given to the group. Length of story looked at whether a particular news story on the group was quarter computer screen page (short), half computer screen page (long) and full computer screen page and beyond (very long). Overwhelmingly, BBC used very long stories in their coverage of the group. This represented 83% of all of its news reports on the group. The remaining 17% was either long or short.

Contrary observation was made for the other media. GBC seemed to have an almost fair distribution for short, long and very long stories representing 31%, 42% and 27% respectively. NTA, on the other hand, had more short stories (54%) than long (13%) and very long (33%) stories. Once again, relative to the other media, BBC gave more prominence to Boko Haram on its online news agenda. GBC and NTA, however, gave quite a minimal prominence to the group in terms of length of stories. These are illustrated in Table 4.

**Table 4: Media versus Length of Story**

NAME OF MEDIA	LENGTH OF STORY			TOTAL
	Full Computer Screen Page	Half Computer Screen Page	Full Computer Screen Page	
BBC	49 (83%)	6 (10%)	4 (7%)	59 (100%)
GBC	7 (26.9%)	11 (42.3%)	8 (30.7%)	26 (100%)
NTA	13 (33.3%)	5 (12.8%)	21 (53.8%)	39 (100%)
TOTAL	69 (55.6%)	22 (17.7%)	33 (26.6%)	124 (100%)

#### 4.1.8 Media versus Thematic/Episodic Framing

Thematic frame places a story in perspective. That is, the story proceeds from a background or context of other related issues or events. Episodic frame, however, reports the news story as an isolated event without situating it in a background or context of related events. From the results, BBC and GBC had a similar coverage in terms of the use of thematic frames. Almost all their stories used this frame—96% for GBC and 92% for BBC. Since GBC sourced most of its stories from BBC, it is not surprising that its framing technique did not differ significantly from that of BBC. For NTA, there was an almost balanced coverage between thematic and episodic frames—46% episodic and 54% thematic. Table 5 illustrates the results.

Table 5: **Media versus Thematic/Episodic Framing**

MEDIA	EPISODIC FRAMING	THEMATIC FRAMING	TOTAL
BBC	5 (8%)	54 (92%)	59 (100%)
GBC	1 (4%)	25 (96%)	26 (100%)
NTA	18 (46%)	21 (54%)	39 (100%)
Total	24 (19%)	100 (81%)	124 (100%)

#### 4.1.9 Media versus Frames used

The study looked at political, economic, human interest, criminal and environmental frames. Results indicated that BBC used no economic frames. It also used less criminal frames. However, it used more political, 59% (35 stories) and human interest frames, 31% (18 stories). Like BBC, GBC also had no economic frames. It rather used more political frames, 58% (15 stories) while focusing less on human interest and criminal frames—15% (4 stories) and 12% (3

stories) respectively. NTA on the other hand used at least all the frames though, like BBC, it used more political, 64% (25 stories) and human interest frames, 28% (11 stories).

All media significantly framed the group as political. The next dominant frame used was human interest. Of the 124 stories sampled for the study, 60% used political frames followed by 27% that used human interest frames. Criminal and economic frames were the least used as both amounted to about just 1% of the entire coverage for all media. However, despite the similarity in coverage framing, GBC had less coverage for human interest frames (15%) while it had more on political frames (58%). Generally, however, all media focused on political frames presenting efforts of the government and military at combating the group as well as human interest stories highlighting attacks, kidnappings and the menace caused on the human populace. Results are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6: Media versus Coverage Framing**

MEDIA	COVERAGE FRAMING					TOTAL
	Political	Economic	Human Interest	Criminal	Others	
BBC	35 (59%)	0 (0%)	18 (31%)	3 (5%)	3 (5%)	59 (100%)
GBC	15 (57.6%)	0 (0%)	4 (15%)	3 (11.5%)	4 (15%)	26 (100%)
NTA	25 (64%)	1 (2.5%)	11 (28%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	39 (100%)
TOTAL	75 (60%)	1 (0.8%)	33 (26.6%)	7 (5.6%)	8 (6.4%)	124 (100%)

#### 4.1.10 Media versus Newsmakers

BBC's stories had three main newsmakers—victims, 39% (23 stories), government officials/military, 34% (20 stories) and Boko Haram militants, 20% (12 stories). GBC's stories cut across all the categories of newsmakers though victims and Boko Haram militants were the main newsmakers. Quite differently, NTA had its newsmakers from advocacy/pressure groups, 31% (12 stories) and government officials/military, 36% (14 stories). Results are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Media versus Newsmakers

THE NEWSMAKERS	NAME OF MEDIA			TOTAL
	BBC	GBC	NTA	
Victims	23 (38.9%)	8 (30.7%)	3 (7.6%)	34 (27%)
Family Relations	1 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.5%)	2 (1.6%)
Boko Haram Militants	12 (20%)	6 (23%)	5 (12.8%)	23 (18.5%)
International bodies	0 (0%)	3 (11.5%)	2 (5%)	5 (4%)
Pressure/Advocacy Group	1 (1.6%)	1 (3.8%)	12 (30.7%)	14 (11%)
Government/Military Officials	20 (33.8%)	3 (11.5%)	14 (35.8%)	37 (29.8%)
Security Expert	1 (1.6%)	5 (19%)	1 (2.5%)	7 (5.6%)
Opinion Leaders	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (2.5%)	2 (1.6%)
Others	1 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.8%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	59 (100%)	26 (100%)	39 (100%)	124 (100%)

## **4.2 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **Differences in coverage between local and international media**

To answer the first research question which sought to find out how coverage of Boko Haram differed between local and international media, the researcher examined how frequently all media, BBC, GBC and NTA, set their news agenda on the group within the period under study. Furthermore, news stories on the group were examined based on type of news stories, subject matter of stories, tone of stories, enhancement of stories, length of stories and coverage framing of stories including episodic, thematic, political, economic, human interest and criminal frames to determine the overall direction of the news reportage. These are discussed below.

#### **4.2.1 Prominence**

From the findings, it is observed that BBC treated Boko Haram more prominently on its news agenda than did NTA and GBC. It covered more stories on the group which were generally very long, and illustrated them with pictures, videos and other data. These accompanying details to the stories are significant to the agenda setting theory within which this study is situated. BBC treated the Boko Haram insurgency as an important item on its news agenda, frequently publishing news on Boko Haram and shaping the agenda of its audience as well. Thus, BBC had a greater potential to shape public perception on the group not only because of the prominence it gave to the group but also because of the global presence of BBC. As Harris (2004) notes, the advent of online news makes it possible to see news in real time and globally.

The prominence of Boko Haram on the news agenda of BBC further supports findings from the study by Kalyango and Onyebadi (2012) that western media generally often tend to report overwhelmingly on western stereotypes against the African continent especially conflict. Thus, the Boko Haram insurgency, as a conflict situation, is more prominent on BBC's news agenda

relative to the other two media. NTA, a local news medium situated in the conflicted area, rather gave a low coverage similar to GBC which also gave a relative low coverage. Indeed, NTA, the mouthpiece of the Nigerian government, may as a matter of editorial priority be heeding to Asogba et al (2012) who advice that the media should exercise restraint in their coverage of terrorist activities. As they observed, while the media may be fulfilling their core mandate as public information vehicles, undue coverage of terrorist activities may sooner or later merit the perpetrators of such activities. In other words, as Naccos (2000) warned, terrorists may use the media as a theater of terror. Given these realities, one could then possibly understand the low coverage by NTA. The same realities could also explain GBC's low coverage on the group.

It is, therefore, interesting to note that the prominence of Boko Haram on the news agenda of BBC nearly exceeds the combined reportage of GBC and NTA. Though this overwhelming reportage by BBC is laudable, Naccos (2000) and Puddephat (2006) observed that the coverage of conflict is a double-edged sword in that while coverage may lead to response from the international community, it could as well lead to an escalation of violence. The extensive coverage by BBC coupled with the relative low coverage by NTA and GBC does not only reveal extremes in the coverage between international and local media, it also presents the dilemma faced by the media in their coverage of terrorist acts—to cover or not to cover—as already noted by Asogba et al (2012) in their study on media reportage of crimes and terrorists activities.

#### **4.2.2 Subject Matter**

As shown in the findings, BBC's stories focused more on violence, thus, corroborating observations by Kalyango and Onyebadi (2012) that international media often tend to report more negatively on issues relating to the African continent. NTA rather focused on reportage that projected the government's efforts at combating the group. GBC's stories also focused more on

violence. Thus, as findings from previous literature indicated, BBC and GBC could risk providing a theatre for the display of terrorist activities as their stories on Boko Haram were largely on violence.

Coverage of BBC and GBC was also inconsistent with the call by Ekwueme and Obayi (2012) who proposed that media coverage of Boko Haram should focus less on violence and more on government's efforts at combating the group. Their coverage on violence superseded coverage on government's efforts at combating the group. GBC's coverage on violence could be explained in the sense that it sourced most of its stories from BBC, thus the similarity in coverage. NTA's stories were almost fairly distributed between violence and combating Boko Haram though with a slant towards violence. Thus, aside from the media setting the agenda on the group, they also determine the way in which the group is perceived by audience members. As indicated, both GBC and BBC framed the group as largely violent creating a mood of fatalism among members while NTA rather highlighted government's efforts at battling the group, reassuring audience members of success.

#### **4.2.3 Tone of Story**

It was observed that a relationship existed between the subject matter and tone of story. Just as the dominant subjects for all media were on violence and combating Boko Haram, these subjects used largely either negative or positive tones. BBC had more coverage on violence which used negative tones. This extensive coverage on violence is consistent with previous findings by Yusha'U (2012) which revealed a similar negative coverage of Boko Haram by Al Jazeera and CNN and the British broadsheets—The Telegraph and The Guardian, thus, further corroborating the claim that western media often resort to negative coverage of Boko Haram.

On the other hand, GBC's coverage reflected a positive tone. This positive tone reflects findings in the study by Okoro and Odoemelam (2013) in their assessment of the news coverage of Boko Haram by four Nigerian print media which principally focused on government's efforts at combating Boko Haram. NTA had a balance between positive and neutral tones though it also reported predominantly on government's efforts at combating Boko Haram similar to previous findings. What was observed for NTA was that even where a particular story was on violence, it was given a neutral voice rather than a negative voice.

Generally, however, online news coverage on Boko Haram by all media used a little more positive (41%) than negative (37%) and neutral (22%) tones. The more positive tone given to the group is consistent with calls made by previous literature especially Asogba et al (2012) that the media should resort to more positive news frames on Boko Haram towards reconciliation and peace building.

#### **4.2.4 Coverage Framing**

There was no difference in the manner in which all media framed the group. Most news stories on the group were thematically framed. Also, the political frame dominated for all media. These findings are consistent with the findings of Gerhard and Schafer (2014) who observed that globalization aided by the rapid expansion in technology has led to a standardization of news. Thus, despite the difference in geographical proximity, BBC, GBC and NTA used similar frames in their news reportage of Boko Haram. This further corroborates observations made by Haris (2004) that the digitization of the news industry has led to a compression in time and space thus allowing for news stories to be seen and read everywhere in the globe minutes within their occurrences.

#### 4.2.5 News Sources and News Frames

To answer the second research question, the researcher looked at the sources of news the various media relied on and how these determined the direction of the stories.

Nearly all of BBC's stories (95%) were products of its reporters in Nigeria while just two were sourced from other wire services. This finding is contrary to concerns raised by Wooten (1994) that international media often rely on "parachute journalism" in their news reportage of conflict where news stories are highly sensational and not verified before they are reported. Significantly, therefore, since BBC produced its own stories, it set its own agenda on Boko Haram and determined what frames to use in covering the group.

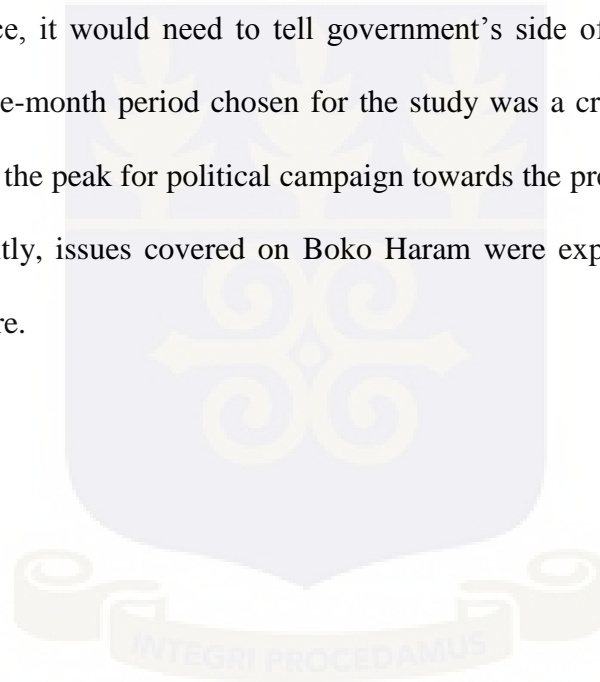
Coverage framing by GBC was similar to BBC because the latter was an important source of news on Boko Haram to the former. Of the 69% of stories GBC sourced from other media, BBC represented a greater chunk, 67% while 39% came from VOA. It was not therefore surprising that GBC used similar coverage frames as BBC.

Taking NTA's coverage, it produced more than half of its stories on its own (51%). These used predominantly political and human interest frames. For the rest of the stories, it sourced them from events, conferences and press releases including individual reports. These other sources also had political frame as the dominant frame. Thus, combining all stories covered by NTA, the political frame dominated.

Thus, the general observation was that all media tended to use more political and human interest frames even if they had different sources of news on the group. For instance, between NTA and BBC, despite the differences in story sourcing, they still used similar news frames, mainly

political and human interest frames. Hence, where one medium relied on the other for news coverage on the group, it merely reinforced the dominant frames used by the original source.

One could probably attempt at explaining this similarity in the sense that human subjects have often being the prime targets of the Boko Haram attacks. Hence, the group generates a lot of human interest stories which attract media coverage. Secondly, while not only focusing on just violence of the group, the media are also interested in how the government and military are fighting back the group. This is especially important for NTA since it is the official mouthpiece of the government, hence, it would need to tell government's side of the story, thus political framing. Also, the twelve-month period chosen for the study was a crucial period for Nigerian politics in that it became the peak for political campaign towards the presidential election held in March 2015. Consequently, issues covered on Boko Haram were expected to be tied into the given political atmosphere.



**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**5.0 Introduction**

The study undertook a comparative content analysis of local and international media reportage of Boko Haram between April 2014 and March 2015. It was organized into various chapters. Chapter one gave a background to the study leading to the problem statement, research objectives and questions. A brief description of the various media as well as a justification for their inclusion in the study was also discussed. Chapter two placed the study in appropriate theory focusing on agenda setting and framing. It also reviewed relevant previous literature, thus, placing the study in perspective. Chapter three presented the research methodology involving data gathering techniques, sampling procedures and data analysis instruments. Finally, chapter four presented results and findings as well as discussions relative to the research objectives. This current chapter concludes and makes recommendation for future research.

**5.1 Summary/Conclusion**

From the results and discussions, there have been differences and similarities between local and international media coverage of Boko Haram. Although all media gave prominence to the group on their news agenda, BBC gave a more extensive prominence to the group than NTA and GBC in that it covered nearly half of the news stories found for all media within the 12-month period. In addition to this extensive coverage, it enhanced the news stories with pictures, videos and other visual aids for a more comprehensive appreciation. NTA also enhanced its stories in like manner though they were limited to pictures and videos. Quite differently, GBC used only pictures to enhance its stories.

A striking similarity was, however, observed for all media as they used predominantly political and human interest frames in their coverage of the group. There was a very minimal use of criminal and economic frames. GBC and BBC also extensively used thematic frames over episodic frames while NTA sought to maintain a balance between the two.

The source of news was also an important determinant of the direction of GBC's stories in that it sourced most of its stories from BBC. Consequently, there was similar reportage between both media. However, despite the difference in sources of news between NTA and BBC, both media still used predominantly political and human interest frames. It is then observed that, generally, all media appeared to have similar coverage, albeit marked differences.

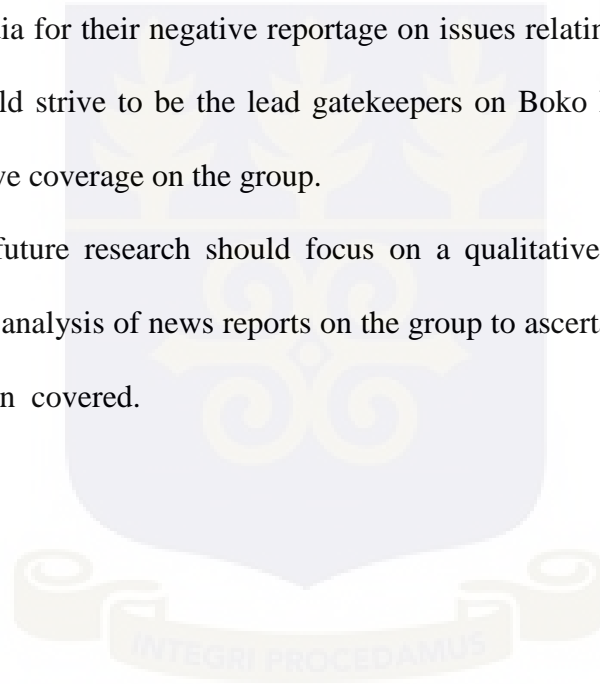
## **5.2 Limitations**

The main limitation of this study was the nature of data gathering. News stories were obtained from the online news portals of the various media through a keyword search. "Boko Haram" was entered into the search engine of the news websites. All stories that contained mentions of Boko Haram, and that occurred within the period of study were copied. This meant that if some stories were archived and had restricted access, they could not be selected. This could affect the sample size for the study. For one reason or the other, some equally relevant stories could also be deleted from the news websites. This would mean that we would not get a total reality of the news coverage on the group by the selected media.. Given this challenge, future researchers could get in touch with online news managers of the various media for direct access to news stories, if possible.

Also, data analysis was limited to texts though most of the stories were enhanced with pictures and videos. Pictures and videos were coded for only story enhancement. No further analysis was done on them beyond that.

### **5.3 Recommendations and Future Research**

- ✓ Local media should give more prominence to Boko Haram on their news agenda and take charge of the way the group is framed. Given that the Boko Haram insurgency is a local issue inasmuch as the NTA and GBC are concerned, coupled with allegations against international media for their negative reportage on issues relating to the African context, local media should strive to be the lead gatekeepers on Boko Haram by giving a more extensive objective coverage on the group.
- ✓ Going forward, future research should focus on a qualitative study by undertaking a critical discourse analysis of news reports on the group to ascertain more holistically how the group has been covered.



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## APPENDIX A

### Coding Guide

1. **Type of Media**

1. BBC ONLINE (www.bbc.co.uk)
2. GBC ONLINE (m.gbcghana.com)
3. NTA ONLINE (www.nta.ng)

2. **Date of Publication**

3. **Story Headline**

4. **Type of Story**

1. Straight news story
2. Feature/Opinion
3. Editorial
4. Other .....

5. **Subject matter of story (Code all that apply)**

1. Caution /Awareness Creation / Education (forecasting and informing public/warning public of possible attacks from the group)
2. Training (empowering military, guiding them with strategies to fight the group)
3. Donation ( individuals, donor agencies, governments, corporate institutions giving relief services to victims of attack)
4. Violence (Destructions, killings, abductions, bombings etc).
5. Combating Boko Haram (government/military efforts at fighting the group, coalition of international forces to fight the group, finding solution to the insurgency)
6. Other (subject categories that do not fit the above)

6. **Tone of Story**

1. Positive (efforts to combat Boko Haram, successes of military, government etc in overcoming the group).
2. Negative (destruction of human lives and property, gloomy picture, success of Boko Haram)
3. Neutral (balance between negative and positive narrative tones)

7. **Source of Story**

1. Other media/Wire Service (Eg. GNA, AP, AFP, Reuters, CNN, BBC,etc)
2. Media itself/reporter
3. Event (includes Press conference, seminars and workshops)
4. Boko Haram
5. Individual/Private

8. **Story Enhancement (Code all that apply)**

1. Story with video
2. Story with audio
3. Story with picture
4. Text only
5. Pictures only (with caption)
6. Others

9. **Length of Story**

1. Full computer screen page and beyond (Very Long)
2. Half computer screen page (Long)
3. Quarter computer screen page (Short)

10. **Episodic or Thematic Framing**

1. Episodic framing
2. Thematic framing (contextual, with background)

11. **Frames Used (Code all that apply)**

1. Political – government leaders and issues, policies and politicians and how these tie in with Boko Haram
2. Economic – economic impact of group, how it impacts on businesses
3. Human interest – human disaster stories, human wellbeing, kidnappings etc
4. Criminal – portraying the group’s members as criminals
5. Environmental –Environmental impact of group, health hazards, damages to the environment and wildlife.
6. Others – coverage frames that do not fit in previous categories.

12. **Boko Haram’s prominence in story**

1. Major
2. Minor

13. **The news makers – (Code all that apply)**

1. Victims
2. Family Relations (parents etc)
3. Boko Haram militants
4. International bodies (ECOWAS, AU, UN etc)
5. Pressure / Advocacy group
6. Government Officials
7. Security Expert
8. Opinion (Religious / Traditional etc) Leaders
9. Others .....

