

**COVERAGE OF CORRUPTION SCANDALS IN THE NIGERIAN
PRESS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF NORTHERN AND
SOUTHERN NEWSPAPERS**

**BY
MUHAMMAD JAMEEL YUSHA'U
(050211416)**

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ABSTRACT

This research is about the coverage of corruption scandals in the Nigerian press. It is a comparative study that develops an intra-national framework for the study of the Nigerian media system using corruption scandals. The scandals studied are the *Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF)* scandal and the *Former Governors Scandal*. The study used both interviews and qualitative content analysis by means of critical discourse analysis. The results of the study suggest that the press in Nigeria is regionally and ethnically divided. These factors influence the way the press report issues including corruption scandals. The study also suggests that factors like clientelism, regionalism, corruption within the press, and lack of training are among the challenges faced by the Nigerian press. It is the position of this study that the press in Nigeria is active in reporting stories about corruption scandals, but has not done enough when it comes to the application of such aspects of journalistic practice like investigative journalism which contributes in the watchdog role of the media. The study concludes by suggesting areas for further research.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents:

Malam Yusha'u Yusuf Abdurra'uf
& Hajiya Sa'adatu Anas Yusha'u

And my beloved wife Hauwa Sarkina Shehu
&
Daughter Asma

Thank you all for your genuine love and support

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your patience, support and endurance

Your smile, cheerfulness and perseverance

Your kindness, grace and tolerance

Your care compassion and diligence

Made my heart to you always a palace

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“Between 1960 and 1999, Nigerian officials had stolen or wasted more than \$440 billion.¹ That is six times the Marshall Plan, the total sum needed to rebuild a devastated Europe in the aftermath of the Second World War” Nuhu Ribadu.²

1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about the coverage of corruption scandals in the Nigerian press. It seeks to compare the northern and the southern newspapers. This is because before the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 by the British Colonial Governor, Frederick Lugard, the protectorates of northern and southern Nigeria were independent of each other (Smith, 1964), yet the establishment of institutions and the political character of the country, including the news media is still influenced by this colonial mindset.³ Nigeria is a complex, multi-ethnic and multi-religious country in West Africa. The issue of corruption as the above quotation indicates is one of the problems bedeviling the country. The media, the press in particular reflects and reports the happenings of a society; in addition, it also serves as a watchdog. Yet despite the purported function of the media as a watchdog, there are little or no studies about

¹ This figure excludes what the country generated between 1999 to 2009, a period which many Nigerians including former Head of State Major General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd) believe that the country received more money than it did since the amalgamation of the country in 1914. This is because of the surge in oil prices globally before it fell as a result of the global economic crisis. He stated this in an interview with the BBC Hausa Service on 25 May, 2009.

² Nuhu Ribadu was the former chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in Nigeria. He was removed from office by President Umaru Musa ‘Yaraduwa through the Inspector General of Police, Mike Okiro. He was sent for a course at the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), and later removed and demoted from Assistant Inspector General of police to Deputy Commissioner of Police. Presently he is a fellow at St Anthony College, Oxford University, UK. He made the quoted statement to the US House Committee on Financial Services on May 19th, 2009. The full report is available at: http://www.saharareporters.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2780:capital-loss-and-corruption-the-example-of-nigeria-&catid=42:exclusive&Itemid=160 downloaded 21/05/09.

³ See the section on the history of Nigeria in this chapter, and chapter two for more elaborate explanation on the regional outlook of the Nigerian press.

the way the press reports allegations of corruption scandals in Nigeria. Therefore there is the need for research that will explore the nature of corruption scandals in Nigeria, and develop a framework that will contribute in guiding further research in the area of scandal reporting.

The thesis therefore has the following aims and objectives:

1. To explore the nature of the Nigerian press, its history, location, regional dichotomy and operational mindset.
2. To develop a framework based on the specificity of the Nigerian press and the society in general that can be used in studying the nature of the media system in Nigeria; so that scholars and researchers can develop a thesis that will explain the nature of the Nigerian media environment with a view to explaining the complexity of the Nigerian media.
3. Explore how Nigerian journalists understand core journalistic values like the fourth estate role of the media and investigative journalism.
4. To find out the nature of reporting corruption scandals in Nigeria and how the newspapers frame such stories and the kind of language they use in their headlines.
5. To identify the challenges faced by Nigerian journalists in reporting corruption scandals.

In order to achieve these aims and objectives, the research will answer the following questions.

RQ.1a- Do Nigerian newspapers give prominence to news about corruption scandals?

RQ. 1b- What are the differences in the reporting of corruption scandals between northern and southern newspapers?

RQ. 2a- Does the reporting of corruption scandals in the northern and southern newspapers involve investigative journalism?

RQ. 2b- What are the constraints faced by Nigerian journalists in reporting corruption scandals?

RQ. 3- Do the northern and southern Nigerian journalists consider their role as that of the fourth estate role of the media?

To answer these questions, a contextual background will be set for the research, apart from the literature that will be reviewed; a qualitative approach by means of interviews and critical discourse analysis will be used as the methodology. This is because a qualitative approach takes into consideration the social, historical, political and environmental factors in analysing a social phenomenon.⁴

The purpose of this chapter is to set the context for the research, and assist in framing the aims and objectives of the research, as well as answering the questions raised. This will be done by giving a brief history of Nigeria, its historical evolution, system of government and the challenges faced by the country. The concept of corruption will be defined based on the works of different scholars. The chapter will also explain the notion of political culture and how it is developed. Subsequent sections in the chapter will explain such aspects of journalistic practice like the fourth estate role of the media and investigative journalism. The chapter will also discuss how corruption becomes scandal once it is reported by the media. Finally a framework will be developed for studying the nature of Nigerian newspapers. This is important because history and culture are important in order to understand how the society functions.

Chapter two will concentrate on the historical landscape of Nigerian newspapers. The emergence of the newspapers as a result of missionary activities, the establishment of newspapers by colonial administrators, the emergence of nationalist press, the transformation

⁴ See chapter four for broad explanation of the methodology used in the research.

of the newspapers into regional mouthpieces and the role of the military in shaping the media industry.

Chapter three will provide an overview of the state of media in Africa. This is important because it will give a broader picture of the African media which Nigeria is part of. The chapter will explore the issues that were similar in almost all African countries such as the issue of development journalism in the early days of independence, the control of the media by the government especially the broadcast media, and the private ownership of the media. Specific examples will be drawn from countries like Kenya, Ghana and South Africa whose media landscape are as diverse and complex as Nigeria's. The chapter will also review some studies about scandals.

In chapter four, the methodology used in the whole research will be discussed. The chapter will explain the qualitative approach used and the uses of qualitative interviews, content analysis by means of critical discourse analysis and how the collection of data was conducted. The chapter also will explain how the pilot study was conducted and the changes needed to be made to the methods as a result of the pilot study.

The fifth chapter will look at the stories on corruption scandals, specifically the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) scandal, and the Former Governors Scandal, as covered by two newspapers, *Daily Trust* from the north, and the *Punch* from the south. The headlines of these newspapers and their text will be examined by means of critical discourse analysis.

In chapter six the results of the interviews conducted with journalists in Nigeria will be presented. Using phenomenography which explains the experiences and conceptions of the issues raised in the interviews, the results will be categorised according themes, developed from the pilot of the research.

Chapter seven will provide an analysis of the results presented in chapter six; it will provide an in-depth discussion of the results. The chapter will give detailed analysis on such issues peculiar to the Nigerian press which contributes in shaping how corruption scandals are reported, such as regional parallelism, clientelism, investigative journalism, journalistic culture, challenges faced by the journalists, and the solutions proffered by the journalists themselves. Chapter eight will be the conclusion in which the entire issues discussed in the thesis will be revisited, further areas of research suggested, and conclude the entire thesis.

This research will therefore make an important contribution on how the Nigerian media operates, and the complexities as well as the challenges it faces in the 21st century using corruption scandal as a case study. Equally, it is hoped that the research will open a wider debate on how to explore and make sense of the Nigerian media system, but also to borrow from Hallin and Mancini (2004), give a “decent burial” to the four theories of the press,⁵ and other theories that could not capture the internal complexity of the media landscape in other countries.

⁵ Hallin and Mancini (2004) were talking about the domination by the four theories of the press in trying to understand how political environments contribute to our understanding of the media. Their position is that research should move forward since societies have differences in cultures and political systems, and that effort should be towards understanding how those cultures and political systems shape media landscapes of other countries, rather than relying on theories that were introduced more than half a century ago. Hallin and Mancini questioned the universality of the four theories. The four theories of the press also called Siebert’s theories are (a) the authoritarian theory (b) the libertarian theory (c) the social responsibility theory (d) the soviet theory. They are also called normative theories of the press. For more discussion on these theories see Skjerdal (1993).

1.1 BACKGROUND

The changing nature of the society at the end of the 20th and the 21st century has necessitated the need for different countries to evaluate their progress and position themselves in the struggle for development. The revolution in information and communication technology, the challenges of globalisation, the emergence of free market economies, the merger between international corporate organisations have all combined together made it easier for many countries to look inward and find out some of the reasons hindering their progress (See Sardan, 1999 for more on corruption in Africa).⁶

One of the key problems identified is the phenomenon of corruption, particularly in African countries (Commission for Africa Report, 2005). The phenomenon of corruption manifests itself in different forms ranging from accepting bribes, violation of procedure to enhance private benefit, intervention by political leaders in the judicial process, false claims or lack of execution of contracts and so on (Doig & Theobald, 2000).

However, to understand the phenomenon of corruption, we need to consider other factors in our contemporary setting that might affect the way the act of governance is conducted, such as the transformations the society is undergoing, in politics, media, culture and technology (Tumber and Waisbord, 2004a, 2004b).

The report of the Commission for Africa⁷ has discussed some of the reasons why corruption retards the progress of a country. The report identified the problems of good governance,

⁶ In his research entitled *A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa*, Sardan also suggested six theses which he thinks will explain corruption in Africa. They are (1) corruption complex (2) a common routine (3) stigmatisation of corruption (4) cumulative and expansionist (5) absence of correlation on the extent of corruption (6) considered legitimate by perpetrators.

⁷ The Commission for Africa was established by the British Government to study the problems bedeviling African countries and how to find solution to them.

transparency and accountability as a result of the massive corruption which is nearly becoming the identity of many African countries. Section 4.5 of the report states:

Corruption is a by-product of weak governance. It manifests itself in many ways...Much of it takes place at the grassroots level and affects people's daily lives, for example through bribes paid to bureaucrats, or non delivery of services to poor people. The corrosive effect of corruption undermines all effort to improve governance and foster development (Commission for Africa Report; 2005: p. 142).

Nigeria being one of the most influential African countries is also in the fore front among the countries that suffer from endemic corruption, which according to the 2005 corruption perception index of the Transparency International; Nigeria is at the bottom ranking number 152 together with Cote D'Ivoire and Equatorial Guinea, and only ahead of Chad, Bangladesh, Turkmenistan, Myanmar and Haiti (Transparency International, 2005).⁸ The survey covered 159 countries.

This research therefore intends to study the coverage of corruption in Nigeria as covered by both southern and northern newspapers. In this chapter, following the background section there are five additional sections which discussed various issues related to the research. These sections include a brief history of Nigeria in which the history of the country from pre-colonial, colonial and post colonial times was outlined. This was followed by a section on political culture which is essential in comparative research because scholars of comparative study see it as an integral part of cultural studies. The section following that reviewed various literatures on the definition of corruption and the way other academic fields like sociology, political science, law and organisational communication view it. After that, the section that follows look at the meaning of scandal, which is the communication perspective of

⁸ In the 2009 corruption perception index of transparency International, Nigeria ranked number 130 out of 180 countries. See http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2009/cpi_2009_table downloaded 17/01/2010.

corruption, the fourth estate role of the media and investigative journalism. The final section reviewed different approaches used by media scholars who use comparative research to understand various media systems, these approaches were discussed, modified, and a comparative methodology based on the specificity of the Nigerian media landscape is proposed for the purpose on an intra-national comparative research.

1.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF NIGERIA

Nigeria is a diverse country whose contemporary name is traced to the colonial era. Prior to colonialism the regions that constitute the present day Nigeria already exist with different culture and civilisation. The northern part of the country came into contact with Islam earlier about one thousand years ago which later expanded to the south-western part of the country (Library of Congress Country Studies, 2006).⁹ Around 1800 there was an Islamic reformation led by Uthman Dan Fodio which saw the establishment of an Islamic Caliphate that lasted until the British forces conquered the region in 1903. The slave trade which occurred from the 1650s to the 1860s was also an integral part of Nigerian history. There was a political structure, with each city having an emir or king in the north and southwest, and the sultan as the head of the entire caliphate also in the north, while in the south-eastern part of the country leadership style was by gerontocracy.

The creation of today's Nigeria can be linked to the 1884-1885 Berlin Conference in which the present day Nigeria fell under British Control. In 1914 the Governor General, Frederick Lugard amalgamated the southern and northern protectorates to form what is now called

⁹ The Library of Congress Country Study is available online at: <http://rs6.loc.gov/frd/cs/ngtoc.html> . However some of the details at the Library Congress Study are not accurate, for instance the study claimed that the population of Kano which is one of the major cities in Nigeria is 1 million, while according to the 1991 census; the population of Kano was 5.6 million (see www.kanoonline.com). The next census after 1991 was conducted in March 2006 and the result shows that Kano has the highest population in Nigeria with almost 9.4 million. Census results are always followed by controversies. But the result which states that Kano has the highest population is consistent with the previous census in 1991, and even other statistics like that of the National Identity Card which also places Kano as the highest.

Nigeria. In the southern part of Nigeria Lugard did not meet much resistance, while in the north there was a lot of resistance, and Lugard introduced indirect rule in the northern region which left the Emirs to maintain their position as long as they would follow the instruction of the colonial government.

Nigeria received independence from Britain on October 1, 1960 with Dr Nnamdi Azikwe as the ceremonial Governor General and Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the prime minister. The major political parties at independence were Northern People's Congress which established government in the northern region under the leadership of Sir Ahmadu Bello, Action Group which was predominant in the western region and led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo (now called south west), and the National Consensus for Nigerian Citizens was predominant in the eastern part of the country (now called south east and south south) under the leadership of Dr Nnamdi Azikwe.

It is important to note that during the period of the struggle for independence, and the years after independence, the relationship between these regions was characterised by strong rivalry and competition. Each of the regions tried to assert its relevance and hegemony over the other, which contributed in shaping the country's political culture as we shall discuss later. The northern region was predominantly Muslim, and the premier of the region Ahmadu Bello was a descendent of Uthman Dan Fodio who established the Sokoto Caliphate. Even though there are Christians especially among the minority ethnic groups, many of whom held ministerial appointments, the influence of Islam cannot be divorced from the political decisions of the region. The western region on the other hand, has a significant population of both Muslims and Christians, and so the premier of the region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo chose to emphasise the politics of ethnicity and regionalism rather than religion. On the other hand, Dr

Nnamdi Azikwe of the east started his movement as a nationalist struggle, and his party had been accepted in many parts of the country until the emergence of Awolowo made him also to return to the politics of regionalism and ethnicity.

The first republic was aborted in a military coup by some young officers of the Nigeria army on January 15, 1966, majority of whom were Igbo,¹⁰ during the coup major politicians from the north including the prime minister, Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and the premier of the northern region, Sir Ahmadu Bello were assassinated. Later the senior members of the Nigerian army led by Lt General Aguiyi Ironsi took over the mantle of leadership, but his style of leadership was seen to be favouring the Igbo, and in July 1966 there was a counter coup by young officers of northern extraction which saw the assassination of General Ironsi, and Lt Colonel Yakubu Gowon became the Head of State, since then the story has been that of coups and counter coups.

After Gowon took over in 1966, the military governor of the eastern region, Colonel Odemegwu Ojukwu announced his intention to break away from Nigeria and establish the Republic of Biafra, and that resulted in a thirty months civil war that ended in 1970. General Gowon was over thrown by General Murtala Muhammad in July 1975, on February 13 1976, General Murtala was assassinated and his deputy Lt General Olusegun Obasanjo took over and continued with the transition programme started by Murtala. On October 1st, 1979 General Obasanjo handed over to Alhaji Shehu Shagari who was later overthrown by Major General Muhammadu Buhari on December 31st, 1983 few months after winning a second term. Buhari was overthrown in a palace coup on August 27th, 1985 by General Ibrahim Babangida.

¹⁰ Igbo is one of the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria. The remaining two are Hausa and Yoruba. It is estimated that there more than 250 different ethnic groups in Nigeria across the country some of which include Kanuri, Efik, Fulani, Ijaw, Tiv etc.

General Babangida continued ruling until August 26, 1993 when he established an Interim National Government headed by Chief Earnest Shonekan due to the annulment of the June 12 presidential election by General Babangida. After three months General Sani Abacha in a broadcast to the nation announced the resignation of Chief Shonekan and his appointment (Abacha) as the new Head of State. General Abacha died on June 8, 1998, and the Chief of Defence Staff, General Abdussalam Abubakar was sworn in as the new Head of State. General Abubakar started a transition to civilian administration, and on May 29th, 1999 Chief Olusegun Obasanjo who was Head of State between 1976 and 1979, and who was just released from prison for his alleged involvement in a coup to overthrow General Abacha was sworn in as the new president. After two terms in office Obasanjo was succeeded by Umaru Musa 'Yaraduwa on May 29th 2007. ¹¹

Prior to independence, Agriculture was the main source of revenue, but with the discovery of oil in commercial quantity, oil is now the main source of revenue. According to the 2006 census, Nigeria has a population of 147 million. The predominant religions are Islam and Christianity with few indigenous religious practices.

1.3 POLITICAL CULTURE

The concept of political culture was introduced in the 1950s (Laitin, 1978) and received further attention in the 1960s especially in the political science literature with the works of Almond, Verba, Coleman and other political scientists who want to explore the patterns of behaviour that determines political action (See Mamadouh, 1997; Mudambi & Navarra, 2003; Canel & Sanders 2006).

¹¹ The election that brought 'Yaraduwa to power was marred by controversy because of the allegation of rigging and violence.

Importance of meaning is crucial in the discourse on political culture, and is mostly applied nationally because the state plays an important role in driving the political process. Understanding cultural differences is important in fashioning out ways of ensuring a healthy political atmosphere because those differences contribute in comprehending the national political culture (Mamadouh, 1999).

According to Mamadouh (1997), “the main advantage of the concept ‘political culture’ is to point out that political behaviour has to be seen in cultural context. Political behaviour is directed by *interpretations* and *preferences*, not by bare facts and interests”. Mamadouh further states that “the concept political culture is generally used to refer to specific cultural patterns in a specific state. Doing politics-participating in the political decision-making process-is not the same everywhere”, “the concept of ‘political culture’ reminds us that in each state there is a specific way of doing politics and that it is related to its cultural background”. (1997, pp. 17-18 emphasis original).

Other works on political culture like Wegener (2000), Sharkansky (1969), Werlin & Eckstein (1990) have discussed the phenomenon of political culture from individual attitude to its reflection on the state, how relation between leaders and followers affects culture and the patterns of people’s orientation when it comes to political action. It includes the understanding of values and the perception of history in political life.

It is the variation of culture in different constituencies of a given country that is fused to produce the national political culture, which is defined “as the pattern of successive alliances embedded in a specific cultural context, it can be seen as a dialogue or conversation between

rationalities (and alliances): some cultural biases are loudly voiced, others are muted. Differences are rooted partly in the cultural context” (Mamadouh, 1999; p. 479).

The political culture in Nigeria is an integral part of the evolution of the Nigerian state. People tend to judge things from ethnic and regional perspectives as influenced by their religious belief. It can be argued that the Nigerian political culture is a juxtaposition of scepticism, ethnic, regional and religious loyalty. The scepticism comes is in the lack of hope on political office holders. The citizens have lost faith in the political leaders doing the right thing especially from the mid 1980s. Political leaders, military or civilians are seen as opportunists who use the state as a means of enriching themselves. This behaviour is also reflected in the media coverage of issues in Nigeria as editorials and comments from columnists tend to doubt the sincerity of government actions. One of the reasons for the issues stated above as identified by Aluko (2002) is corruption. Therefore according to him “the institutionalisation of corruption in Nigeria is not without its telling effects on the emerging political culture and behaviour” (p.396).

Though people are in many instances sceptical about government actions, they tend to see things from regional and ethnic perspectives. This has always been the case since pre-colonial Nigeria. For instance the electorates in the south western part of Nigeria did not vote for any presidential candidate or party outside their region, until 2003. Even that, the election was rigged and that was what gave the chance for another party outside the region to have an impact. The June 12 1993 presidential election assumed to be won by Chief MKO Abiola who came from the south west, but whose main support came from the north was given an ethnic interpretation after the annulment of the election, and when the country was returning to civilian rule in 1999, all the political parties fielded candidates from the south west zone in

order to appease the region on the annulment of the June 12, 1993 presidential election. That was how President Olusegun Obasanjo was elected.

The northern region which held political power through military rule more than any of the regions in the country is agitating for the return of power to the region in 2007.¹² The argument forwarded by the politicians is that the north agreed for the purpose of national consensus to hand over power voluntarily to the south, now after the president served two terms, ending on May 29th 2007, it is the turn of the north to take over the political power.

“Power shift” which is the phrase used by politicians and journalists to describe the transfer of power from one region to the other has become a common language in Nigeria. The oil producing area of the country called the “Niger-Delta” is also clamouring for the presidency to come to their region, because the main source of revenue for Nigeria comes from their region, and that even during military rule, there was no head of state from their region. The southeast is also advancing the same argument.

It is important to note that despite some of the differences between people, there are areas of cultural interaction, and even where cultures overlap. The political behaviour of the politicians interrelates with each other. A politician from the north seeking for votes in the south wouldn't mind dressing to look like someone from the south. A politician from the south seeking for votes in the north will be happy to receive a traditional title in the north.

Politicians from different parts of the country would like to portray themselves as godly

¹² The election of Umaru Musa 'Yaraduwa in 2007 means power has returned to the north for another 8 years. But Umaru Musa 'Yaraduwa is very sick, and there is a debate whether he will be able to finish his first term. Some analysts believe former president Olusegun Obasanjo chose 'Yaraduwa to succeed him because he is aware of his medical condition, and if he couldn't finish his term, the vice president, Goodluck Jonathan will take over, and thereby returning political power to the south. This is also one of the weaknesses of the power shift arrangement, because it is not recognised by the constitution. It is simply an arrangement by the elite in People's Democratic Party, which has been in power since 1999.

people, Christians seeking the blessing of the church and Muslims from the mosque. When accused of wrong doing, such as corruption, people do seek for prayers from religious leaders and their local community.

1.4 DEFINING CORRUPTION

Corruption is increasingly becoming a subject of academic discourse partly because of the impact it is having on the economy by reducing the incentive for investment, the cost of transaction (Seligson, 2002), and providing an environment dictated by a questionable approach to issues of economic and political magnitude. The complex nature of corruption has also made it difficult for scholars to agree on a single definition of corruption, because of the differences in culture, attitude and environment. What is seen as a corrupt act in one society may be normal in another society. The attitude in culture and behaviour could include the shift in attitude or ideology from good to bad (Nye, 1967). Researchers also tend to look at corruption as an indication of the failure of the system in a given society (Hansen, 1998).

Bayley (1966) looks at some of these differences in his discussion of the effect of corruption in a developing nation. Bayley differentiates between western and non western conception of what may be a corrupt act. Using the definition by Webster's dictionary which defines corruption as "inducement [as of public official] by means of improper consideration [as bribery] to commit a violation of duty" as a reference point, he states that these improper considerations could include nepotism and misappropriation, but according to him, these could pose a dilemma to somebody from a non-western background from India or an African country to whom using ones position to get job for friends, kinsmen or region may signify an act of loyalty to the community which should be appreciated rather than condemned (pp.720-721).¹³ Bayley therefore sees corruption as culturally conditioned.

¹³ The position of Bayley may still be relevant in many developing countries, but the explanation may go beyond behaviour and culture, perhaps due to the fragile nature of the economies of these countries where equal

The study by Sandholtz and Koetzle (2000) also agree with Bayley on the cultural context of corruption. Their study questions the criteria to be used by a researcher in determining which action is corrupt. They suggested the three approaches used by political scientists in studying corruption. These approaches are the public interest, public opinion and legal norm. The public interest approach to defining corruption looks at the behaviour of the public official in discharging his responsibility and the extent to which he violates public interest. The public opinion approach defines corruption by weighing it against public opinion, so corruption is what the public consider as corrupt. The legal approach explains corruption in terms of the violation of rules on how to observe public duties. The difficult thing with the three approaches to understanding corruption would be in defining what a public interest is, and who should define the public interest, is it the elite, the media or the ordinary members of the public? Also how can the public opinion be sufficiently weighted to represent the view of the majority?

Discussing corruption in a democratic society, Jain (2001) also states that the first problem with the issue of corruption is defining it. He identifies three types of corruption which can help in understanding the phenomenon of corruption. They are grand corruption, bureaucratic corruption and legislative corruption (pp.73-75). Grand corruption refers to the use of political power by the elites in creating economic policies that favour their interest. They do this by channelling resources to those sectors where it is easier to make personal gain. Jain explained further by saying that it is difficult to identify this kind of corruption unless bribe is exchanged; because the resources were channelled in the name of public service.

opportunity may not be provided to citizens. Thus people use their positions to secure employment for those that are closer to them tribally or geographically.

Bureaucratic corruption is corruption by the civil servants who interact both with political elites and members of the public, in bureaucratic corruption members of the public could be coerced to give bribe in order to speed the process of administering an official task, or it could take the form of paying bribes to members of the judiciary so as to lessen a legal penalty or reduce its cost for private gain. Legislative corruption according to Jain involves influencing the voting pattern of legislators to serve the interest of some groups, or the members of the executive who are desperate to get some legislation through.

A different approach to the understanding of corruption was provided by Luo (2004) by looking at corruption from an organisational perspective. According to Luo “the disciplines that deal with corruption each have fundamental paradigms, which they bring into the analysis of the phenomenon. Sociologists hold that the roots of corruption are social and cultural, and that corruption hinders public welfare and social development. Political scientists maintain that non-transparent institutions, low paid public servants and a shortage of independent and well functioning market mechanisms are antecedent of corruption. Legal scholars focus on the type of legal system and its enforcement. Macroeconomists focus on weak economic institutions and lack of transparent institutions as root causes” (pp.119-120).

Luo believes that to understand corruption we need to look at organisations and the corrupt practices they are indulged in, especially profit driven organisations who are willing to give bribe either to public servants, legislators or other government officials. Luo further argued that unless the issue of organisational corruption is addressed, it would be difficult to eradicate corruption, because unlike individuals, organisations cannot be arrested, they can only face legal sanction. Luo therefore defines corruption as “an illegitimate exchange of resources involving the use or abuse of public responsibility for private ends” (p.121).

But the definition by Luo does not differ much from other definitions of corruption apart from the emphasis given on organisations as indicated earlier. It seems there is consensus among scholars that corruption is simply the use of public office for private gain (See Jain, 2001; Anderson & Tverdova, 2003; Bohara, Mitchell & Mittendorf, 2004; Golden & Picci, 2005; Wu, 2005; Chang, 2005; Luo, 2004). Most of the differences are in the arrangement and re-arrangement of words, but the meaning remains the same.

Broadly speaking, the classifications discussed above fall within the theory of political corruption (Philip, 1997; 2002). Though the political corruption thesis indicates the difficulty in defining political corruption, it however suggests that such forms of corruption like the public interest, public office and market definitions of corruption fall within the category of political corruption. This is important because as will be discussed later, the cases of corruption scandals that will be studied revolve round the typologies discussed above.

While political corruption “involves substituting rule in the interests of an individual or group for those publicly endorsed practices which affect an ordered resolution to conflicting individual or group interests” (Philip, 1997 p.458), other schools of thought may see this as a simplistic approach to understanding corruption. Critics like those who belong to the Marxist school of thought will see it differently. They will rather look at the whole phenomenon of corruption as a struggle between classes. The ruling class, who are the elites, and the working class or the masses. In his discussion on Marx and Engels on the State, Sanderson (1963) states that “the state was for Marx essentially coercive. It was, he held in the first volume of *Capital*, “the concentrated and organised force of society.” (p. 947, emphasis original). Therefore, from Marxist perspective, corruption can be seen as a means by which the

managers of the state exploit resources in the process of accumulation in order to maintain their hold on the working class. In his view this trend will continue until the working class destroy the state and replace it “with their own dictatorship” (Sanderson, 1963, p. 953).

However, there are scholars who express concern over the Marxist approach to understanding corruption. According to Hollander (1982):

It was the great historic promise of Marxism to inspire societies that would not only eliminate economic exploitation and inequality but also create such social harmony that the necessity of maintaining social order by force will disappear, allowing the state to “wither away.” Not only Marx and Engels, but even Lenin believed (up to a point, at any rate) that this was a realistic prospect...it is one of the great ironies of history that the attempt to translate Marxism-Leninism into reality provoked far more resistance and consequently far more political violence and coercion than had been foreseen (p. 327).

Other scholars like Jowitt (1983) in his work on *Soviet Neotraditionalism: The Political Corruption of a Leninist Regime*, and White (1996) in his work on *Corruption and the Transition from Socialism in China*, have expressed similar reservation about the ability of states run on Marxist philosophy, dealing effectively with the exploitation of resources, or to say it more explicitly, corruption in their societies.

An important point to note is that scholars influenced by Marxist approach in analysing media discourses have used different approaches in studying media contents. Key among these approaches is the application of the political economy theory. According to Golding and Murdock (2000) “critical political economists follow Marx in shifting attention from the realm of exchange to the organisation of property and production, both within the cultural industries and more generally. They do not deny that cultural producers and consumers are continually making choices, but point out that they do so within wider structures” (p.73).

The political economy approach is built on a premise that uses a critical approach in studying the dynamic nature of the economic structure, the ideological content of the media, and the nature of the operation of the media industry. It is interested in the ownership and control of the media, and pays attention to the linkage of the media industry with the economic and political system (McQuail, 2005).

Golding and Murdock have made an important distinction between “mainstream economics” and political economy. According to them these differences can be categorised into four. “First, it is holistic; second, it is historical; third, it is centrally concerned with the balance between capitalist enterprise and public intervention; and finally-and perhaps most importantly of all-it goes beyond technical issues of efficiency to engage with basic moral questions of justice, equity and the public good” (pp72-73).

In essence, the political economy approach studies communication content, by not simply concentrating on the nature of ownership of the media, or the interest of the elites who own these media organisations, but it is also interested in looking at the interplay between journalism as a practice, and the forces within the society, whether they are political or economic that shape the way media content is produced. Different studies have used this approach in studying media content. One such study is the work of Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky on propaganda model (1988). The study proposed what it calls news filters such as the (a) the size and nature of ownership of the media (b) advertising as a means of income generation for the media (c) the reliance of the media on such sources like the government and business owners as credible means generating stories (d) flak (e) anticommunism (Herman and Chomsky,1988).

What the political economy approach in studying media and communication does, is to empirically study how media content reflect such journalistic values like honesty, impartiality, objectivity etc in comparison to such other determinants like ownership of the media, elite interest, corporate interests and other socio-economic factors that directly or indirectly influence the work of the journalist.

This is important for this research in the sense that the study is interested in such factors that shape journalism practice in Nigeria like regionalism, clientelism etc. While the political economy approach claims to be holistic as stated by Golding and Murdock (2000), there is need for a fresh approach to the study of journalism by looking at the media in terms of the internal complexities within the society especially in non western societies, where the nature of the economy and the challenges faced by the news media may vary. It is also important to identify new approaches to the study of journalism beyond the conventional theories like the political economy or the normative theories of the press that have been used in the study of journalism for decades. This is one of the reasons why this research will take a different theoretical approach in studying the coverage of corruption scandals in the Nigerian press, even though some elements of the political economy approach might be relevant in the analysis.

What this suggests is that corruption should be seen as a social, political, economic and governance problem and each society can be vulnerable to it, irrespective of ideology, political or economic system. The extent of corruption may differ depending on the system, but theoretical assumptions may not fully provide effective solution.

While corruption normally takes place between individuals and or social groups, once the media sets an eye on it, and the allegation of corruption generates public attention (as would be explained in the next section), then it has become a scandal, which is the subject of this research within a Nigerian context.

1.5 CORRUPTION, SCANDAL, THE FOURTH ESTATE AND INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

With the definition of corruption provided by scholars, coupled with the interest of the media in revealing to the public the acts of corruption. It is now necessary to focus on why the media consider it a duty to explore and inform the people about what is considered to be corrupt and scandalous.

Scandal is a word which refers to the acts of corruption that have become public knowledge through the news media. It is “the publication of information about corruption (Tumber and Waisbord, 2004a, p. 1032). It is also used when reporting acts of transgression and violation of moral codes. These transgressions could be corrupt practices which public officials are trying to hide, excessive use of power to maintain political relevance or in some cases involving extra-marital relationships.

The word scandal has a religious connotation as “the word was first used in a religious context in the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Old Testament” (Thompson, 2000, p.12). According to Thompson the word scandal, which appeared in English language in the sixteenth century, is used to describe a religious person who discredited the religion or the action of the followers of the religion who begin to doubt their belief in the Creator, to any defamatory action or an abominable behaviour that is frowned at by the people (Thompson, 2000). Thus scandal “involved a transgression of moral codes which could be, but did not

have to be, religious in character, and with reference to which the action or the event was denounced” (Thompson, 1997, p. 39). It is a behaviour that is “in conflict with society’s moral standards” (Funk, 1996, p.2).

Thompson offered a working definition of scandal which he defined as “*actions or events involving certain kinds of transgressions which become known to others and are sufficiently serious to elicit public response*” (Thompson, 2000, p.13 emphasis original). As such scandal is not hidden. Many corrupt practices and actions that violate the norms of the society are conducted in secret but they may not qualify as scandals until they have been exposed to the public.

Once the cover of secrecy is removed, that’s when scandal sets in, and in the words of Lull and Hinerman (1997) that is when “the secrets of desire are unlocked, the curtains of privacy are pulled back. The unspoken is articulated, observed and pondered” (p.3). Jimenez (2004) states that “the word *scandal* in colloquial language is used in two different senses. On one hand it is used to qualify certain behaviour that deviates from norm. In this sense, we call certain behaviour scandalous before it brings about social reprobation at all. *Scandalous* is, in this usage, synonymous with *deviate*. On the other hand, by the word scandal we also refer to the social reaction brought about by the public knowledge of behaviour qualified as deviate” (p.1100, emphasis original).

Scandal is also about calling to order the representatives of the people when they deviate from the trust given to them by the people. If the response received from them as a result of the scandal is convincing to the public, they may regain public confidence, otherwise, they will elicit public disapproval which will make them lose both the trust of the people and the

position they are holding (Jimenez, 2004), in the words of Tiffen (2004) “the accused must often either suffer no tangible punishment or else suffer the political equivalent of capital punishment, having their public career terminated by resignation” (p. 1172).

Lull and Hinerman (1997) have identified ten criteria that constitute a scandal. The criteria include violation of social norms, some people have to be identified as the perpetrators of the scandal, their actions should clearly aim at satisfying their personal desires, there should be individuals who committed the acts, the actions should be done deliberately, they must take responsibility for their action, the events should have an effect on the persons involved, such actions have to be widely reported in the mass media, they should be structured and narrativised as stories, and finally the stories must illicit public responses by attracting public attention and wide discussion.

In this age of communication and information revolution where the citizens have access to information through the news media, the activities of public officials are easily placed under public scrutiny. According to Canel and Sanders (2006) “in this atmosphere the reputation of the leaders becomes vulnerable. Here lies the scope for scandal” (p.50).

The news media therefore take on this vulnerability of the political leaders and turn the scandals into issues of national discussion. According to Thompson (2000, pp78-83), the media does that for a number of reasons including their commercial interest, the desire of some individuals to use scandal stories in order to satisfy some political objectives, the professional ethics of journalism which seek to promote factuality and entertainment, and finally the competitive rivalry that exists between the media organisations.

Looking at each of these factors within the Nigerian context, it can be stated that the majority of the newspapers are privately owned, and any scandalous story that might promote the paper and attract more audience is likely to make the front page. It is also likely that some politicians within and outside government might plant some stories in the newspapers in order to settle political scores, as reported in various newspapers that the former National Security Adviser to President Obasanjo was relieved of his appointment because he was accused of planting stories in some national dailies, depicting the government in an unfavourable manner so that the ambition of the president to have the constitution amended so that the President could stand for another election might be obstructed by the National Assembly.¹⁴ The role of the newspapers in ensuring a return to civilian administration in 1999 and the watchdog role they have played in a number of national issues has positioned the Nigerian newspapers as custodians of professional journalism, and may likely treat any scandalous story with vigour in order to justify that position. The competition between these papers might as well be another reason why the newspapers may be interested in such stories.

Esser and Hartung (2004) look at the phenomenon of scandal from a communication perspective. They see “*scandal* as the intense public communication about real or imagined defect that is by consensus condemned, and that meets universal indignation and outrage” (p.1041, emphasis original). Esser and Hartung’s view is that for scandal to be worth its name, it has to be made public by someone who views the action as scandalous. Esser and Hartung call those who reveal the story to the public as “denouncers”, that is those “who contradict defenders” (p.1044), and according to them, these denouncers can be categorised into four:

¹⁴ For the story on dropping the National Security Adviser see, <http://www.leadershipnigeria.com/archive/May%2031/Obasanjo%20drops%20National%20Security%20Adviser%20Gusau.htm>

The first group is composed of the opposition to the political system who may hope to undermine the legitimacy of the system by continuously stressing its shortcomings ...A second group of denouncers is composed of politicians from other parties or companies in competition ...A third group at first glance less obvious, is composed of rivals in one's own party, company, or organisation...The fourth group of denouncers is composed of journalists in the mass media. Aside from political motives, this group also has a professional inclination to suggest scandal, for the control of government and the exposure of deficiencies are among the most important functions of the mass media (pp. 1044-1045).

Therefore these four groups aid the news media in its search for scandal stories either through interviews or leaks or both so that the transgression can be brought to the attention of the public. This is because no matter how grave an offence or the violation of moral code is, once it is ignored by the mass media, such violation cannot be termed scandal "especially in times when publicity is synonymous with mediated publicity, the media wield unmatched power in converting secret acts of wrongdoing into scandalous actions. If it is hard to imagine a scandal without media attention, it is because of the capacity of the media to produce and distribute information that reaches mass audiences" (Waisbord 2004, p.1077), hence the ability of the media to put before the electorates "the scandal of politics" (Schudson 2004, pp. 1236-1237) which might perhaps explain why "news about official wrongdoing enjoys substantial advantage over other news about wrongdoing because it fits standard journalistic principles about the newsworthiness of official actions" (Waisbord 2004, p. 1087).

Even though publicity is what counts in media scandals, and lack of attention by the media might symbolise the death of the scandal, beyond that Waisbord suggests that "Scandals might also illustrate views that we live in a postmodern world in which mediated signs have replaced (political) reality and that politics has moved from traditional to mediated agoras" (p.1078).

But some scholars are critical of the news media which they see as dependent on news sources rather than the initiator of stories. For example Liebes and Blum-Kulka (2004)

suggest that scandals are revealed through “whistle blowing”, “entrapment”, and “spotlighting or mainstreaming”; “whistle blowing is when an insider for idealistic or political or personal motives, volunteers information about a carefully hidden dark secret, damaging to the perpetrator”, “entrapment is when a reporter, for professional or political or personal motives, break a tacit or explicit agreement with a source”, and “Spotlighting or mainstreaming” occurs “when a source or a reporter spotlights information that may even be widely known) to prove the violation of a norm, the abuse of which is ignored”. Liebes and Blum-Kulka also sees live broadcasting as another form of whistle blowing which “disintermediates the reporter by addressing the public directly” (p. 1154).

The argument by Liebes and Blum-Kulka is that the power of the media in reporting scandals might be exaggerated since the sources of news play an active role in revealing the acts of transgression, and in some cases it is the journalist who violates an agreement in order to satisfy either personal motives or the commercial interest of his medium.

Whatever the case, you cannot discuss the issue of scandal in the 21st century without referring to the media. The media has established itself as the trumpet of an information society, and for the world to know the existence of a scandal or any related news; it has to pass through this inevitable medium. This is not to downplay the relevance of other sources or avenues that play a vital role in scandalising stories, but because news about scandals satisfies the criteria news editors would like to see before their table, and beyond that the media see itself as the fourth estate of the realm.

As a result of that, the fourth estate is now a common term used by journalists, politicians and public affairs commentators to refer to the watchdog role of the media in the society. The

media in this case are assumed to be the unelected representative of the people that combined the dual role of profit making and service to the people. This role played by the media varies from one society to another depending on the independence of institutions, culture and style of governance.

A number of journalists who understand the debate about the watchdog role of the media see their role as that of strengthening the fourth estate conception of journalism which is attributed to Edmund Burke who stated in the 18th century during a session of the English Parliament that *“there are three estates in parliament, but in the reporters’ gallery yonder sits a fourth estate more important than they all. It is not a figure of speech or witty saying; it is a literal fact, very momentous to use in these times.* (Carlyle, 1841 cited in Donohue, Tichenor and Olien, 1995; p. 118, emphasis original).

The other three branches referred to by Edmund Burke are the executive, the legislator and the judiciary. These three arms according to the postulations of the fourth estate cannot function properly without the fourth, which is the media. According to Albuquerque (2005), “this division of power system needs communication between the branches, and between the government and the public, and the news media are the main way to accomplish that role. (p. 497).

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However what is not disputable is that for the media to achieve this position it must be critical of the powers that be, investigating and discovering wrongdoings which people’s representatives would wish remain hidden, and as stated by Shultz (1998) the press lives by disclosures and is up-to-date by having the correct information on the happenings in a country, and turns such happenings into the property of the people.

To do that, the press then requires another essential element of the fourth estate, investigation. Investigative journalism is required if the media is to deserve the fourth estate description. For the purpose of this thesis, explaining investigative journalism is important because one of the research questions would like to find out whether Nigerian journalists apply investigative journalism in reporting corruption scandals. Equally important, prominent scandals like Watergate were uncovered by means of investigative journalism.

Even though there are different conceptions on the meaning of investigative journalism, it is worth noting that for news to be investigative it requires a distinctive effort beyond reliance on leaks and the use of other secondary sources of information. But as journalist Bob Green states, investigative journalism requires exploring information as a result of the effort of the journalist and such information must be relevant to the public (Waisbord, 2000).

It involves aggressive follow up as stated by Calvert (1999) that “some stories you make five calls, on some twenty. When you are making a hundred, that’s investigative journalism. The story may land in your lap- it’s the substantiation that makes it an investigative story, because when you realise people are lying to you, blocking you, then you have to find different ways of getting hold of the information and it can take a lot longer. Also you have to be careful when you are making serious allegations against people, then the evidence really matters” (cited in Burgh, 2000:18).

Investigative journalism that satisfy such criteria succeeds in changing the mood of the public, the news horizon and serves as a reference point that will help in deterring erring officials from violating public trust to satisfy personal desires. Such kind of journalism turns

news stories into scandalous issues that will attract the wrath of the public. Therefore it can be argued that investigative journalism as stated by Waisbord (2000) “is one form of journalistic discourse that deals with moral questions”.

Investigative journalism is distinct from routine journalism that relies on press conferences, press releases, interviews and other conventional ways of news making, whose main aim is to convey the messages received through official proceedings. (For more on routine journalism see Harcup and O’Neill, 2001).¹⁵ Investigative “journalists occupy a vital role as educators and keepers of the public conscience, serving as watchdogs forever on the lookout for corruption, incompetence, and abuses of power (Brennen, 2000, pp. 109-110). “To be termed ‘investigative’, journalism usually involves extensive research by one or more journalists to uncover matters which affect the citizenry of the society in which the journalist lives and of which the society generally does not approve but is unaware. (de Burgh, 2003: p. 806).

Investigative journalists are seen as the mirrors of the society who use their conscience in uncovering wrongdoings that would likely remain hidden to the public. Investigative journalists are seen as fearless and courageous, they are disliked by the mighty and the powerful as well as those in position of authority. Journalists involved in investigative journalism are seen as the custodians responsible for depending the values of the society that might be violated by those in authority, one of their aim is to see that wrongdoers are duly punished (de Burgh, 2003) because of the argument that investigative journalism is done to promote the interest of the public (Goddard, 2006). Investigative journalism seeks to discuss and interpret the value of justice and affirm the importance or otherwise of right and wrong,

¹⁵ Tony Harcup and Deirdre O’Neill did a study on the factors that determine what is news in Britain? They did the study by revisiting earlier news values proposed by Galtung and Ruge in the 1960s. The study was interesting, but as explained by scholars on investigative journalism, investigative journalism is different from every day reporting, and that is the position of this research.

innocence and guilt by analysing, criticising and interpreting the case under journalistic investigation. (Ettema & Glasser, 1988).

Citing the criteria provided by Ettema and Glasser (1987), Ekstrom (2002) discussed the steps followed by investigative journalists which serve as evaluative criteria in determining the worthiness of the investigative story. “*First*, they assess various tips and ideas. Are they credible? Can they be turned into a good story? But also: Will the reportage achieve something? In the *second* step, information is collected and evaluated with respect to its value as evidence. There is a hierarchy of evidentiary weight...in the *third* step, pieces of the story are fitted together into a narration...*Fourth*, the journalists make a final evaluation of the story as a whole. Alternative narratives, alternative explanations are tested and the staffs test the story for possible faults. The final result is then a sufficiently justified story. (pp. 271-272 emphasis original).

The political climate in Nigeria from independence to date has not been scandal free especially when we consider the definition that explains scandal as “corruption revealed”(See Tumber and Waisbord, 2004). Various governments both military and civilian faced a number of accusations about corruption. The media on its part has not been silent on this issues, especially the newspapers most of which are privately owned. But unlike many developed countries such as the United States and Britain where the media had to some extent been successful in bringing down public officials, the extent to which that is achieved in Nigeria as a developing country is a subject of debate.

To borrow from the South American continent whose countries may possibly go hand in hand with Nigeria in grappling with leadership challenges where in the words of Waisbord “there

is widespread scepticism about the honesty of public officials and where denunciations of wrongdoing have become regular in recent years, exposes may have less impact than in situation where government officials are expected to obey the law and or are seen as decent and trustworthy persons” (2000: xvii).

The characterisation by Waisbord may serve as an explanatory reason that may hinder the effort of the newspapers even if they expose the wrongdoing of government officials, because of the scepticism from the public to whom doing the right thing by public office holders seems unusual, and doing the wrong thing is the order of the day.

That notwithstanding, the media though itself not free from problems continued to be vigilant of government at different levels whether during the military or civilian administrations, this research will look at some of the scandals covered by the media and study them.

1.6 FRAMEWORK FOR INTRA-NATIONAL COMPARATIVE RESEARCH

Most of the media studies conducted using comparative approaches are cross-national in nature in order to bring out the similarities and differences in the way the media operates in different countries (Blumler & Gurevitch, 1995; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Canel & Sanders, 2006).

One of the problems identified by mass media researchers is the likelihood of employing the theories developed in a different political and socio-cultural setting and then applying them in another setting, thinking they can be applied without any difficulty (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). To depart from this tradition in order to understand vividly the media environment of other countries and the relationship between the media and other institutions, Blumler and

Gurevitch proposed certain criteria for cross national comparative analysis. "Degree of state control over mass media organisations", "degree of mass media partisanship", "degree of media-political elite integration", "the nature of the legitimising creed of media institutions"(p. 62), are the four frameworks proposed by Blumler and Gurevitch which can be used to comparatively study the operation of the media in different countries.

Hallin and Mancini strengthened the approach in comparative research by refining the work of Blumler & Gurevitch in their study of media systems in Western Europe and North America. They identified the ethnocentric nature of previous media researches and their assumption of universality, and they suggested four criteria for comparative research which they think can be applied in other settings with modification. The proposed framework by Hallin & Mancini include (1) the development of media markets, with particular emphasis on the strong or weak development of mass circulation press; (2) political parellism; that is the degree and nature of links between the media and political parties or, more broadly, the extent to which the media systems reflects the major political divisions in the society; (3) the development of journalistic professionalism; and (4) the degree and nature of state intervention in the media system (p. 21).

While the examples cited above have been conducted cross-nationally in parts of Europe and America, the point of departure with this research is that it is within an intra-national setting, hence the need for further modification of the framework to be used. Looking at the historical peculiarities of Africa and Nigeria in particular, it can be stated that many African countries are nations within nations, comprising of different tribes, religious affiliations and other ethno-regional differences. For example, countries like Sudan, Cameron, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria and many other countries in Africa, they are countries comprising of north and south

dichotomies, each region with a different political and cultural pre-colonial history, but united under one umbrella colonially and post colonially.

The internal divisions within these countries suggests that they have not gone beyond the political convenience created at independence in order to hand over political power to indigenous citizens, but the struggle for self assertion continued. The media which according to Hallin & Mancini no “analyst would argue that journalism anywhere in the world is literally neutral” (p. 26), is likely to reflect on this division. Hence the likelihood for the emergence of distinct journalism cultures that may need to be explored using a comparative approach.

In Nigeria this struggle is reflected among the various regions of the country, even though some of the regions are ahead of others in establishing media organisations, but the rivalry among the regions results in each region establishing any institution brought by the other. Though the military have abolished the old regional structure and created states, the operational mindset of the media is still influenced by that rivalry and struggle for self assertion.

Because of the stated reasons, a framework for comparative study is proposed, modified on the works of Hallin and Mancini, but created on the historical and political peculiarities of Nigeria. The proposed framework includes:

(a) The emergence of nationalist press and the search for political independence; this is about the emergence of nationalist newspapers which contributed in the struggle for independence and the mobilisation of the public on various issues affecting their well being.

(b) The development of regional media to enhance post independence competition among the regions; this explains the establishment of regional media organisations before and immediately after independence to protect the interest of various regions.

(c) Regional parallelism and clientelism; this explains how the media develops a regional identity, and also established a clientelist relationship with politicians or people with a particular socio-political interest. Sometimes the clientelist relationship overrides the regional interest. This is a modification of Hallin and Mancini's political parallelism.

This framework will guide this research from the onset. The first and second, that is the development of nationalist press, and the emergence of regional media will be discussed from a review of the literature by drawing from the works of scholars who worked on the Nigerian media, its history, politics etc. The third category, regional parallelism and clientelism will be explored by using primary data. This will be done by conducting in-depth interviews with Nigerian journalists, as well as an analysis of some of the newspapers.¹⁶

1.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter set the context of this research. It has identified the aims and objectives, the research questions and briefly explained what each chapter of the entire thesis entails. The essence of the chapter is to set the context of the research by providing the aims and objectives and research questions, and explain what is expected from the entire thesis. The context of this chapter is crucial to this research in that whatever follows in the thesis is developed from the issues raised here. It is evident that corruption scandal is an area that deserves special attention since Nigeria is still experimenting with a civilian leadership after a prolong period of military rule. Therefore studying how the news media covers allegations of

¹⁶ See chapter four for detailed discussion of the methodology.

corruption against senior politicians will highlight the level of press freedom, journalistic independence and other issues associated with liberal democracy. It is hoped that this thesis will contribute to the literature on corruption scandal and provide insight for areas of further research.

1.8 SUMMARY

This chapter has provided the needed context for this research. In the background section, the need for research on corruption has been highlighted citing examples from the report of Commission for Africa and the Transparency International. The chapter also provided the historical background of Nigeria as a country, how it was amalgamated by the former Governor General Frederick Lugard, the politicians who took over the mantle of leadership from Britain. Political corruption and its classification, political culture and what it entails have also been explained. Other sections of the chapter explained aspects of journalistic practice like investigative journalism and fourth estate role of the media. The chapter concluded by proposing a framework for an intra-national comparative research, modified on the work of Hallin and Mancini (2004). The next chapter therefore will focus on the historical landscape of the press in Nigeria.

CHAPTER TWO

NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER LANDSCAPE

2. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explain the landscape of Nigerian newspapers. This is important because this study is about the coverage of corruption scandals in the Nigerian press. As stated in chapter one, one of the aims and objectives of this research is to find out the nature of the press and the way it operates in Nigeria. An exploration of its landscape will also help in the analysis of the results, as it will be clear whether the historical trend and the character of the press have been consistent or whether there are differences, and if so why that is the case. The chapter is therefore divided into the following sections. The first section will pay attention to the emergence of newspapers in Nigeria, from the arrival of the missionaries to the struggle for independence and what follows thereafter.

The second section will discuss the role of the Nigerian press during the struggle for the independence of the country from Britain. It will explain how newspaper editorials and stories shaped the discourses of the national struggle; and in fact some of the early editors ended up in politics and taking over the leadership of the country from Britain.

The next section will look at the concept of press freedom in Nigeria. This is important because scandal is an issue that those on authority will not take easy, and as will be explained in the results and analysis section of the thesis; journalists face a lot of challenges in reporting scandals. Therefore the level of press freedom will contribute greatly on how journalists perform their responsibilities. The chapter closes with a conclusion and summary.

2.1 BACKGROUND

A study on the Nigerian newspaper landscape would require a recollection of some of the factors that contributed in shaping the country's political, economic and other institutional structures; and this involves looking at the historical process of African continent colonially and post-colonially, a process that is integral to the emergence of the press and the way it operates today.

Writers, journalists and commentators on African history have studied the emergence of contemporary Africa. These writers like Nnamdi Azikwe see contemporary Africa as a child of both colonial rule and the desire of man to dominate others. This desire culminated in making stronger societies to rule over weaker ones for a number of reasons, these reasons include the availability of resources needed by the strong societies, which are available in the weaker societies, or to extend the control of an empire in the struggle for the control of territories; this and other reasons have "aided in giving impetus to imperialism which culminated in the acquisition of colonial empires" (Azikwe, 1931 p. 288), and majority of African States became part of the colonial empires.

Yet the acquisition of these African States by the colonial powers results in a clash of interest between the colonialists and the natives. The colonialists wanted to ensure control of the territories they occupy, while the natives see the effort of the colonialists as an infringement on their freedom, and therefore agitated for the right to self rule. Many Africans experienced forced labour without compensation especially in South Africa. In Congo people were asked to work and give a fifth of their time and land free for the benefit of the Dutch government. In Algeria people were enslaved and their labour made for the benefit of the French Government. In countries like Kenya, up to 300, 000 to 600, 000 acres of land were taken and

leased to the British citizens only. So also in Nigeria, the natives of Lagos were not allowed to live or come near the areas where the British settled (Azikwe, 1931).

Many of the colonies were conquered through violence, and any attempt by the people to be resistant was followed with serious consequences, such as the one in Satiru village where the people attempted to resist the British forces, and lots of lives were lost including the head of the Caliphate. In some areas taxes that took away almost 50% of the farmers output were imposed. "In French Africa until 1946, all Africans but a few citizens were under a regime of administrative law whereby they were subject to summary justice with no right of appeal. In 1914 Lugard specifically outlawed the representation of defendants by lawyers in the magistrate's courts of the South where a British model judiciary had been installed, albeit with massive problems and defects. In the Congo and the Portuguese territories, too, the Africans have no access to metropolitan style legal institutions. These existed only for European inhabitants or in the case of the Portuguese territories the handful of *assimilados*. They were made available to Africans only on the eve of independence or immediately afterwards" (Crowder, 1987 p. 16, emphasis original).

The relationship between colonial governments and the native inhabitants therefore became antithetical. People were simply looking for the ways to assert their independence and govern themselves in their own way. It was in these tough times that some educated Africans saw the need to invest in the press and use it as an avenue to fight for their rights and struggle for independence. It was in these difficult moments that nationalists like Herbert Macaulay and Nnamdi Azikwe emerged in Nigeria and complemented the effort of other newspapers that originally began as missionary platforms but later also became part of the struggle for self assertion. Another important point to note also is that it is some of the nationalists who fought

for independence that took over the mantle of leadership in Africa, but instead of changing the system, they continued with the legacy of their colonial predecessors, so instead of having a relief, the struggle by the press started afresh, this time between two groups that were hitherto together struggling for independence. As stated by Crowder (1987) “the colonial state was not only conceived in violence, but it was maintained by the free use of it”. Some of the African governments continued with this legacy, the kind of violence used by African leaders may not necessarily be bloody; it may take the form of imprisonment and other means of prosecution which resulted in silencing many journalists and in some cases even death. The emergence of military rule in many African countries few years after political independence also did not help matters. It is by reflecting on these historical realities that we can understand the challenges the press is facing, not only in Nigeria but in Africa and many other developing nations. (See Ado-Kurawa, 2005 for a discussion on the historical evolution of Nigeria).

2.2 THE EMERGENCE OF NEWSPAPERS IN NIGERIA

Most discussions of media practice and ownership in Nigeria starts from colonial times which as stated by Olayiwola (1991) “was dominated by missionaries, colonial administrators, nationalists, political parties, politicians and private foreign organisations. During the colonial period, the press served as a medium of sustained public debate and political protest, an uncompromising advocate of administrative and political reforms, and a seething critic of the excesses of the colonial order. By its political activities, the press not only stimulated the emergence of nationalist movements but also played a prominent role in the constitutional development of modern Nigeria” (p. 35).

A reflection on the history of Nigerian media reveals that the establishment of Newspapers began in 1859 with the establishment of “*Iwe Iroyin fun Awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba*” (The Newspaper for the Egbas and Yorubas), by Reverend Henry Townsend in Abeokuta.¹⁷ (Babalola, 2002, p.405). *Iwe Iroyin* as the paper was normally called publishes in both Yoruba and English languages. In 1863 another newspaper called *The Anglo African* edited by Robert Campbell was established. *Iwe Iroyin* focused its attention in fighting slavery while *The Anglo African* was more interested in news about the problems of that time (Babalola, 2002).

According to Babalola, “the blossoming of the Nigeria Press started 17 years later in the exigencies of socio-political and economic activities. The first newspaper of this period was by Andrew Thomas, who came out with the ‘*The Lagos Times*’ on 10th November 1880. This bi-monthly newspaper was used to aggregate public opinion on topical issues. Fifteen months later after Blackall Benjamin began the publication of *The Lagos Observer*. This was followed closely by *The Eagle*, which made its debut on March 31, 1887 when Adolphus Mark started *The Mirror* (Babalola, 2002, p. 405 emphasis original). In 1908 another newspaper called *The Nigerian Chronicle* was established followed by *The Nigerian Pioneer*, then *Nigerian Daily Times* in 1926 established by Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company edited by Earnest Ekoli, The government took over *The African Messenger*, and Dr Nnamdi Azikwe who later became the first ceremonial President of Nigeria established *The West African Pilot* in 1936, the colonial government established *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* in 1939, and Chief Obafemi Awolowo pioneered the Publishing of *The Nigerian Tribune* in 1946. (Babalola, 2002, Ado-Kurawa , 2006).

¹⁷ Abeokuta is the Capital of Ogun State in Nigeria

Several newspapers have emerged between the 1950s and 1970s, though many of them did not survive. They include *Nigerian Outlook*, *Nigerian Citizen*, *The Herald*, *Afriscope*, the *Times International* (Ado-Kurawa, 2006). The late 1970s and early 1980s saw the establishment of commercially inclined newspapers such as the *Guardian*, *vanguard*, the *Punch*, *Triumph*¹⁸ and the *Concord*. Most of these newspapers exist to date except the *Concord*. From the late 1980s to late 1990s more newspapers joined the market such as *Democrat*, *Reporter*, *Thisday*, and *Weekly Trust*.¹⁹ Both *Democrat* and *Reporter* did not survive.²⁰ With the return of Nigeria to civilian rule in 1999, many newspapers were established.

One characteristic of those who established the early newspapers in Nigeria was that they were people who having studied in Europe and America, they returned home to help fight for the independence of the country, and some of them like Dr Nnamdi Azikwe have received their training in journalism. According to Jones (1979):

Here we have a small body of men...who became successful and professional business men, others with a flair for journalism (but in most cases with no head in business) were able to establish their own newspapers and presses. Their financial resources were minimal, their circulation figures were reckoned in hundreds rather than thousands and few of their papers survived more than a few years until after the First World War. But their influence was out of all proportion to their size (p.562-563).

This process that saw Nigerians who individually established their own newspapers to struggle for independence, might have set the precedence for individual ownership of newspapers and later commercial ownership which is more prevalent in Nigeria today, as

¹⁸ *Triumph* was owned by Kano State Government, it was very popular in the 1980s, and it is still being published.

¹⁹ The *Weekly Trust* is the first private newspaper from northern Nigeria that survived from the 1980s to date. It has since developed into a daily newspaper, *Daily Trust*. See chapter five for the reasons why some journalist think the newspaper was able to survive despite the fact that it is based in the north.

²⁰ See chapter six for discussion on the reasons for the death of newspapers in Nigeria. *Democrat* and *Reporter* were established in the north. Some of the respondents interviewed suggested why they think newspapers do not survive in the north. Also for a table of the surviving newspapers in Nigeria see chapter four.

most of the newspapers are privately owned. Oso (1991) traced the historical root of the commercial interest in the newspaper industry in Nigeria and according to him, “the capitalisation of the Nigerian press and its subsequent commercialisation started with the arrival of *Daily Times* in 1926. The paper was established by European financial interests represented in the Lagos Chamber of Commerce in alliance with some wealthy Nigerians. A wealthy and influential Nigerian Lawyer, Sir Adeyemo Alakija, who was opposed to the radical wing of the nationalist movement as embodied in Herbert Macaulay and his outspoken paper the *Daily Service*, was made the chairman. Before the arrival of the *Daily Times*, most of the earlier newspapers were owned and managed as one-man businesses, the owner being the editor, reporter and, in most cases, the printer” (p. 43). Another factor identified by Oso which helped in tilting the newspaper ownership towards private management, is the issue of professionalism which makes journalists to work based on certain principles and values in producing news.

Even though the ownership of the press in Nigeria was largely in private hands, there were some changes especially after the involvement of the military in politics. In 1975, the Federal Military Government took over two major national dailies, *New Nigerian* and the *Daily Times*. These takeovers gave other state governments the resolve to establish their own newspapers, and coupled with military decrees and other government sanctions, the press suffered from attaining journalistic independence (Ette, 2000).

Two things can be identified with Nigerian Newspapers, one positive and the other negative. Perhaps due to the influence of Nigerian newspapers in fighting for independence, the industry one can argue is to a large extent united on issues of national importance. This can be seen in the stand of the newspapers on many issues of national debate such as the

International Monetary Fund (IMF) debate, government sensitisation programmes like Operation Feed the Nation, Green Revolution and War Against Indiscipline (Olayiwola, 1991). Other issues include their role in returning to civilian rule, ensuring the defeat of political leaders who want to elongate their tenure in office etc. this can be seen as a positive development (see also Shettima, 1993).

On the other hand as identified by Oso (1991), the newspapers are divided by ethnic, political and regional influences. This has in some situations contributed in dividing the people along ethnic and regional affiliations which in many instances does not help the stability of the country especially in times of ethnic or religious crises. The way the newspapers report some crisis results in retaliatory attacks on innocent individuals as exemplified during the Isioma Daniel's article in *Thisday* newspaper, the ethnic crises in involving various ethnic groups in Lagos, Kano, Kaduna, Ogun, Onitha, Maiduguri etc. whatever the case the Nigerian newspaper industry is an influential force in the discourse and deliberation on the Nigerian nation state.²¹

2.3 NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS AND THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE

One of the important landmarks of the Nigerian newspapers is their role in the struggle for independence. Any serious study on the attainment of Nigeria's independence must acknowledge this fact, because of the role the papers play in serving as the mouthpiece of Nigerian nationalists. When the struggle for independence became stronger and the Nigerian elite became part and parcel of the struggle, it was the newspapers that took a frontline position and gave itself the role of an anti-colonial mouthpiece which later resulted in the detention and maltreatment of a number of journalists. The earlier role of the newspapers

²¹ There are many newspapers at the moment in Nigeria most of them privately owned.

which took the form of religious proselytisation changed and became a nationalist struggle that criticises the legitimacy of colonial rule (Oyovbaire, 2001).

As stated earlier, the Nigerian press was created under colonial circumstances, and the nature of newspapers and their content was a reflection of that circumstance. According to Malaolu (2004), colonial rule started with the arrival of missionaries, later European traders came into the African continent, and found it as a potential area for commerce because of the abundant natural resources the African continent is endowed with. By the middle of the 19th century direct rule by colonialists has already taken shape; the use of law enforcement agencies to ensure compliance to colonial rule especially the payment of taxes has become common place. In Nigeria, the inhabitants of the colonised areas were angered by these policies, because they were created and enforced without consulting them. Any attempt by the people to organise themselves into pressure groups was curtailed, and the Nigerian press emerged in this circumstance.

Therefore from inception Nigerian press “was a militant press: bellicose in temperament, belligerent in posturing and adversarial in language and perception. Where the police force was supportive of the authority, the press pitched its tent with people. It was resolute in its determination for political emancipation for the people. It was passionate in its demand for self-government. It was unrelenting in its battle against all vestiges of oppression, both local and foreign, it was, and still largely is, fearless, vibrant and nationalistic press” (Malaolu, 2004, p. 5).

Even the first newspaper, *Iwe Irohin* established by Reverend Henry Townsend in 1859 in Abeokuta for evangelical purposes faced some challenges that made the paper to take a

radical stand on some issues such as the slave trade whose abolishment was popular at that time. *Iwe Irohin* did so through powerful editorial and opinion writings, a fact that was acknowledged by Dr Nnamdi Azikwe, editor of the *West African Pilot*. The paper later became the centre of attention [for various interest groups looking for the independence Nigerian] and the medium for airing the viewpoint of the Nigerian intelligentsia (Malaolu, 2004).

Idemili (1978) studied the role of Nigerian newspapers in the struggle for independence with an emphasis on the *West African Pilot*. Idemili states that when *the West African Pilot* made its debut in 1937, there were newspapers on the ground, like *Nigerian Daily Times* and the *Daily Service*, but the most critical of them was the *West African Pilot* partly because Azikwe founded the paper in order to serve two purposes, first to concentrate on the struggle for independence, and second to serve as a business outfit.

The contribution made by the *West African Pilot* went beyond the struggle for independence; the paper also changed the face of Nigerian journalism by introducing new approach in its production, such as the use of large photographs and sourcing news from wire services like Reuters. It also introduced other initiatives that transformed the use of language and made Nigerian journalism to follow the footsteps of American journalism. *The West African Pilot* carried a number of editorials that questioned some of the policies of the colonial government after World War two on issues that have to do with the liberty and general wellbeing of the citizens of the British Empire because of their contribution to the war, also because members of the colonies have lost their lives in order to bring peace to various localities. For instance *The West African Pilot* according to Idemili carried an editorial in the 1940s entitled 'Even Mr Churchill' in which it states:

When in the House of Commons, Mr Winston Churchill explained application of the Atlantic Charter, in words like these: “At the Atlantic meeting, we had in mind primarily restoration of sovereignty, self government and national life of the States and nations of Europe...That is quite a separate problem from the evolution of self-government institutions in regions and people’s which owe allegiance to the British Crown”. Our Prime Minister made us wonder whether the Atlantic Charter is, after all to use the phrase of the “London Chronicle” a symbol of hypocrisy.

That a British Prime Minister could utter such a statement during an unparalleled destructive war which has cost colonial peoples their material resources and manpower is, indeed, a revelation. What, now, must we expect to be our fate after the war? Must we believe in platitudes? Indeed the four freedoms must be said to be good enough for “the States and nations of Europe” but when the interpretation and application of this principle are applied to us, “that is a quite separate problem.

One of the most significant contributions made by the press that earned it respect and a special position in the history of newspaper journalism was how it successfully pioneered the birth of the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC), with Herbert Macaulay as the leader and Nnamdi Azikwe the editor of *The West African Pilot* as Secretary General, an effort that was seen as the beginning of the struggle for independence from Britain (Idemili, 1978).

Beyond struggling for independence, the emergence of a political party whose original base was a newspaper could also mean the beginning of what Hallin and Mancini (2004) would call “political parallelism”, a situation where the ideological inclination of a media organisation corresponds with the stand of a political party, as obtained in many European countries.

However, as pointed out by Idemili, when the *West African Pilot* made some success in the struggle for independence, new powerful politicians emerged in other regions, namely Chief Obafemi Awolowo²² in the Western Region and Sir Ahmadu Bello²³ in the Northern Region.

²² Chief Obafemi Awolowo was the Premier of the defunct Western Region.

The emergence of these two powerful politicians changed the focus of *The West African Pilot* from attacking the colonial government into attacking opposition politicians and their party platforms. An attempt that can be interpreted as the beginning of tribal politics on the pages of newspapers in Nigeria based on regional divide. Nigerian newspapers in the struggle for independence also engaged themselves not only with self governance from Britain, but on issues relating to internal politics whether initiated by the colonial government, or in the struggle to ensure the supremacy of one region or the other in pre-colonial Nigeria.

Adebanwi (2004) discussed one of such issues that drew the attention of the newspapers, and according to him the status of Lagos which was made to be the capital of Nigeria after the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 became the centre of attention. Two leading newspapers, *The West African Pilot* led by Nnamdi Azikwe and the mouthpiece of National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon (NCNC), and the *Daily Service* supporting Earnest Ikoli and Obafemi Awolowo, and equally the mouthpiece of Action Group (AG) engaged each other. *The West African Pilot* used its influence to write editorials and news stories demanding that every part of Nigeria should have a share of the capital, while the *Daily Service* wants Lagos to be part of the Western Region. According to the *Daily Service* “to submit to the severance of Lagos from the West would amount to economic and fiscal suicide on the part of the people and Government of the Western Region”, it therefore criticised the Colonial Secretary Mr Lyttleton for favouring the idea of making Lagos an independent entity. *Daily Service* argued that “Lagos, an indisputable Yoruba City owned by the West, is to remain a lone star...And in arriving at his decision, Mr Lyttleton disregards all historical facts and constitutional precedent” (Adebanwi, p.87-88).

²³ Alhaji Sir Ahmadu Bello was the Premier of the defunct Northern Region.

The West African Pilot disagreed with the position of *Daily Service*, *Pilot* states in its 10th September 1953 editorial that Lagos has a special position in the mind of every Nigerian, because the *Binis*²⁴ consider it part of their ancient empire, and people from the Northern Region consider Lagos as a place developed using their resources, particularly groundnut and cotton that were booming then in the international market. For the members of the Eastern region according to the *Pilot*, Lagos was not only built with their revenue, but with their blood as well; while the attachment of the people of the Western region to Lagos stems from historical and geographical ties, and therefore Lagos is considered a home for the entire sections of the country (Adebanwi, 2004).

Though Adebanwi criticised the position of the *West African Pilot* on the position of Lagos, particularly the assertion of the paper that the northern region contributed to the development of Lagos through the resources of the region like cotton and groundnut. According to Adebanwi the northern region was amalgamated with other regions because of lack of resources of the region. The position of Adebanwi is flawed in two fronts. First, it may be a denial of history to think that the north had no resources when indeed it was the groundnut, cotton and other agricultural outputs of the region together with those of other regions that was used to build Lagos. At a point when the colonial government was starved of funds, it borrows money from the northern business men who prior to independence were engaged in trade across various parts of Africa. Secondly Adebanwi's argument failed to understand the reason why Britain amalgamated the regions that later became the present day Nigeria. According to Arnold (2005) "in 1914 there was no historical basis for Nigerian unity except British imperial convenience" (p.189).

²⁴ Is an ethnic group in Nigeria.

The debate about the position of Lagos²⁵ which was then the seat of political power reflects as well the nature of media location which later comes to make an impact on the worldview of Nigerian media. According Oyovbaire (2001) the Nigerian press inherited a legacy after independence which is adversarial and in constant opposition to the political class, and the opposition continued after independence when Nigerians took over from the colonialists. For this reason a section of the Nigerian political elite began to dislike the nature of reportage of the Nigerian media and it was later given the name “Lagos press”. Oyovbaire concludes that “there was also the fact the origins and dominant location of the media created for it an instrument for the propagation of a role, which was nationalistic yet geo-politically partisan. This is the inheritance at independence in the relationship between the media and the political process” (p.2).

The concentration of the media in a particular geo-political location has created a complex image that combined so many features which are integral part of the historical formation of Nigeria, yet might be seen to be alienating other interests that are also part of the historical formation and the realities of today’s Nigeria. This complex nature was captured by Oyovbaire (2001) where he categorically states that “the south-west of the country is the materialist location of the Nigerian media which coincides with the Yoruba nationality, early evangelisation of Christianity, propagation of western education and establishment of seat of colonial and post-colonial government together with the large and flourishing market forces and patronage which aided the locational stimuli of the media”. Oyovbaire therefore look at this situation as shaping the material strength and readership of the Nigerian media and according to him therefore, “the readership audience for marketing its role, mandate and

²⁵ The capital of Nigeria has been shifted from Lagos to Abuja after the recommendation of a committee established by General Murtala Muhammad to advice for a new capital acceptable to all Nigerians, and Abuja was selected being at centre of the country. In 1991 Abuja took over as the nation’s news capital, and Lagos still maintains its position as the commercial centre of the Nigeria.

products was the southwest initially, and even when in contemporary times other audiences could be located outside the southwest, this historical location continued to provide the arrowhead for opinion formation, legitimisation of media contents, agitation and agenda-setting. From this perspective...the media is highly rooted in south-western Nigeria or in the famous Lagos-Ibadan axis...provides the materialist base for the worldview of the media” (p.7).

This, however, does not mean that every newspaper or other media organisations are owned by people from the southwest geo-political zone, rather, a number of the influential newspapers like the *Guardian* and *Thisday* are owned by Alex Ibru from the South-South and Nduka Obaigbena from the southeast (See chapter six for discussion on the complexity of Nigerian newspapers). None of them is Yoruba by ethnicity, but the location of the newspapers is Lagos, as such they become influenced by the factors identified by Oyovbaire. However gradual changes are occurring in the newspaper industry after the capital of Nigeria relocated to Abuja. Some newspapers owned by those from the northern region like *Leadership* and *Daily Trust* are currently gaining ground. In the past a lot of privately owned newspapers emerged in the north but they couldn't survive.

2.4 THE MEDIA AND PRESS FREEDOM IN NIGERIA

The concept of press freedom has been discussed by many scholars and media practitioners.

It is a concept that is still relevant in media discourse because of the role information dissemination is playing in the political life of many countries. The media has become the vehicle responsible for informing and educating the citizenry. It is the mediator between citizens and those holding political authority, and the ability of the media to discharge this responsibility without hindrance depends on how free it is to operate in any given society.

The media therefore upholds freedom of expression which “is the right of the individual and the entire community to engage in active, challenging and robust debate about all issues pertaining to the ‘normal and harmonious functioning of society’. The sort of political debate encouraged by the right to free expression will inevitably generate a speech that is critical of, and even offensive to those who hold public office or are intimately involved in the formation of public policy. A law that is targeting speech that is considered critical of the public administration by virtue of the individual who is the subject of the expression, strikes at the very essence and content of freedom of expression. Such limitations on speech may affect not only those directly silenced, but society as a whole (Inter-American Commission, 1994 cited in Perkins, 2002 p.11).

Gunaratne (2002) reviewed various scholarly works on the meaning of press freedom, such scholarly works traced the discussion on press freedom to the libertarian theory of the press by Siebert, others look at press freedom as the freedom to express opinion without interference and challenging the various branches of government by making them accountable to their actions, those who have those views essentially see the role of the press as that of the fourth estate of the realm.

Gunaratne (2002) further looks at press freedom beyond the ability of the media or the individual to express themselves, but as a role that carries some responsibilities. It carries some responsibilities because societies are different, and these differences must be taken into consideration in producing media outputs. Others even do not accept the notion of press freedom, but the freedom of the individual to freely express himself, hence the need to differentiate between press freedom and individual freedom.

This position might be apt because the process of development between one society to another might not be the same. Equally important is the fact that societies that lived under authoritarian regimes, military dictatorship or have minimal level of civic education, therefore their understanding of press freedom may not be the same. For instance the kind of freedom enjoyed by the press in the economically developed countries may perhaps be detrimental in some developing countries that are looking for direction, and what they need is a press that would complement their development effort.

According to Nossek and Rannawi (2003) applying the western model of the relationship between media and society may not be applicable in non western societies because of the gradual phase of development, and it will therefore take time before the media catches up, and if the crises in Africa, Asia and South America are anything to go by, it makes it more difficult for the press in developing countries to work on the footsteps of their western counterparts. The only problem with this position is that sometimes political authorities take advantage of this situation to interfere in the activities of the media in order to cover some corrupt practices.

Once the political authorities succeed in completely silencing the media, there is the likelihood of higher level of corruption as supported by a study conducted in about 130 countries by Ahrend (2002). The study shows the likelihood of having high level of corruption where there is low level of press freedom. The study stated further “there is strong evidence that more press freedom leads to less corruption, and no evidence that more corruption leads to less press freedom. Increasing press freedom is thus an important indirect mechanism for fighting corruption” (p. 17).

Some scholars see as a sign of press freedom a press that is critical of the politicians, state agencies and corporate bodies. To them the press should question them when they see evidence of corruption, incompetence or non delivery of service to the people they claim to represent. Criticising questionable behaviour is not a sign of disrespect because there is difference between personalities and the office they hold, if they behave well, the media should cooperate and where they go wrong, their misdeeds must be voiced out (Tomaselli, 2003)

There are several ways in which the extent of the freedom enjoyed by the media can be evaluated. Wu (2003) discussed the criteria provided by Freedom House in his study of systematic determinants of international news flow between developed and developing countries, the criteria include “(1) whether laws or administrative decisions influence the content of news media; (2) the degree of political influence or control over content; (3) economic influences on the media by government or private entrepreneurs ; and (4) the degree of oppression, ranging from the murder of journalists to censorship” (p.15).

Tettey (2006) balanced the argument by looking at the role of the media from public interest perspective. His position is that there are certain values in the society which must be protected, and the role of the media here is to act with a high degree of responsibility, being critical where the society foresees a problem, and tactical in discussing issues that might cause hostilities. From this perspective therefore freedom of the press is a duty that makes the media accountable, first to the people and second it should hold itself responsible where it is wrong.

It is therefore the responsibility of the media to ensure that “those who occupy positions of responsibility in the state are made to respect those provisions and freedoms” (Tettey, 2006 p. 232), and on the other hand media should be made accountable to its mistakes.

The struggle for press freedom and independence of the media in Nigeria is a historical process which dates back to colonial administrations. Nationalism and the struggle for independence was what gave Nigerian newspapers the ability to seek for freedom of the press. This effort transformed into a confrontation between the colonial government on one hand and the Nigerian elite who felt alienated by the colonial government. Nationalism therefore became the backbone of the struggle for the autonomy of the press, the search for independence and the base for political communications processes that became the vehicle to independence. It was at this period that people like Nnamdi Azikwe joined the journalism profession and began to emerge as national leaders whose writings attract attention and commands the respect of the people. It can therefore be stated that the nationalist struggle in Nigeria was a symbol of the strength of the Nigerian media (Nnaemeka, 1990).

This, however, does not mean that the press had its affairs conducted smoothly without any interference from the colonial administration. According to Omu (1968) “the relations between the newspaper press and the government in British West Africa up to the end of the First World War exemplify the press freedom dilemma. In Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast,²⁶ and Nigeria, where popular newspapers were started in the 1850s and 1860s, Africans, the Colonial Governments and the Colonial Office were participants in what was probably the most momentous drama in early pre-independence history of the territories” (p. 281).

²⁶ Gold Coast was the former name of Ghana.

A number of journalists in British West Africa faced press prosecution such as Charles Bannerman founder of the *West African Herald* in Gold Coast in 1862. He was accused for contempt of court after criticising a judicial ruling. Colonial officers at various times seek for permission to establish taxes when they hear about the establishment of newspapers in Lagos which some of them described as “dangerous instruments in hands of semi-civilised Negroes” (Omu, 1968 p.288).

According to Omu, other editors like J.B. Benjamin of the *Lagos Observer* were jailed even before the case they are accused of has been ascertained before the judiciary. The emergence of more newspapers in Lagos, and the way they opposed the colonial government led to the establishment of press laws. In 1908 after an article by Herbert Macaulay which was critical of the government, a new law of sedition was established which called for reasonable discussion of government policies by the press, yet allows for the punishment of those who write articles that may likely steer public discontent. “The new bill covered familiar clauses about exciting hatred towards the Queen of Britain [England] and the government of Southern Nigeria; but it also provided by implication that no black man should show hostility to a white man: ‘Whoever...promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of ...Nigeria, shall be punished’ (p. 293).

Other bills introduced then include the one that prohibits criticism against government officials. The penalty for anyone who contravenes the provisions of the two bills is two years imprisonment. This angered a lot of people including some traditional holders who ordered for the translation of the document in Yoruba Language. At a meeting of the Legislative Council, about three members who were known hitherto for their pro-government stand had to work out of the chamber in protest for the introduction of the bill. The bill however was

passed on November 9, 1909. But the rejection of the bill by a cross section of the population reduced its impact; as such there was only one prosecution from the time the bill was passed into law to the departure of the colonial governor. Therefore when Lord Lugard became the Governor-General he faced a lot of criticism from the Nigerian press, at a time he even complained about the kind of freedom Nigerian newspapers enjoy. Lugard said he could not tolerate the kind of liberty the press is enjoying; he stated this in a letter he wrote to his wife on October 16, 1913 (Omu, 1968).²⁷

During the post-independence era, Nigerian newspapers continued with the struggle, what changes however was that a number of the former political actors prior to independence are the ones occupying the spaces left by the colonialists. This created some tension and even affected the credibility of the press, because those who remained in opposition transferred their hostility from the previous colonial governments to the new government run by Nigerians. They depicted the government as evil and one in which the principal actors promote their personal interest (Nnaemeka, 1990).

In order to challenge the critical nature of the Nigerian press, government decided to invest heavily in the media by establishing newspapers and radio stations to compete with the privately owned press. But “despite the government’[s] substantial investment in capital and human resources to promote and sustain pro- establishment newspapers and radio and television programming, the nationalists’ tradition of a virile, independent and privately owned press continued as a distinguishing characteristics of the post independent, political communication structure in Nigeria” (Nnaemeka, 1990 p. 317).

²⁷ The critical stand against the media by the colonial government was also reflected by various military governments who were jittery of the press in Nigeria. See Ogbondah (2003) for a detailed discussion on the relationship between the military and the Nigerian press.

Another challenge faced by the press in Nigeria is on the constitutional provisions of the various constitutions in Nigeria which has been a subject of debate for a long time. Though many scholars and writers claim that Nigerian press is one of the freest in Africa, still many journalists are not satisfied with the protection provided to the press by the Nigerian constitution. One of the heated debates took place in 1976 during the process of drafting a new constitution for the country when the military decided to hand over to civilians, the constitution drafting committee decided that journalists should not be superior to other Nigerians, therefore the provision for freedom of expression suffices the requirement to uphold and maintain the independence of the press. Therefore the post independent constitutions of Nigeria, 1963 and 1979 constitutions did not go beyond the normal provisions for freedom of expression (Agbaje, 1990).

Ogbondah (2004) conducted a comparative study on the constitutional provisions of press freedom between Nigeria and Ghana. His study showed that in the case of Ghana there has always been a provision for press freedom in the constitution which stated clearly that people should be free to express their opinion and establish media organisations. The constitution went further to provide provisions that discouraged censorship, or the need to have a licence when establishing private media organisations. The Constitution of Ghana also provides clauses that prohibit interference against the decisions of editors, nor should they be questioned or harassed for the opinion they have expressed or be subjugated for the content of their publication (Ogbondah, 2004).

The 1999 constitution in Nigeria also made provisions for press freedom in section 39 (1) which stated that Nigerians have the right to freedom of expression and the freedom to have an opinion and even impart their ideas on others without any interference. Subsection 2 of the

section also provides Nigerian with the freedom to establish media organisations and disseminate their messages without influence from others. What however differs between the constitutions of Nigeria and that of Ghana is that subsection 3 of the Nigerian constitution made provisions for the non-disclosure of information which is “reasonably justifiable in a democratic society. Ogbondah therefore concludes that:

Comparatively, I conclude that Ghana’s effort at ensuring press freedom and protection of fundamental human rights in their constitution is more substantive than Nigeria’s. For example, while the constitution of Ghana, like that of Nigeria, guarantees press freedom, the Ghanaian constitution goes further to outlaw press censorship. Beyond that, it emphatically states that government-owned media are obligated to provide fair opportunities to all political parties to present their views. In addition, the constitution of Ghana, unlike that of Nigeria, makes specific provisions guaranteeing editorial independence in the press. And unlike the Nigerian constitution, Ghana’s states that it is an offence for the state to control or interfere with editorial content as it is also an offence for journalists to be harassed (p. 25).

Ogbondah’s study has clearly depicted some of the weaknesses of the Nigerian Constitution concerning press freedom. Of interest here is the provision by the Ghanaian constitution for fair coverage by government owned media. This is one area where the Nigerian media is yet to come on board, because the government owned media, whether print or broadcast end up being the mouth piece of the government in power. Where editors take a position that differs from that of the government, they may be sacked, and in the case of private media, the media organisation might be raided by security agents or the journalists who carried the reports might face detention or prosecution.

In 2006 during the controversial debate for the extension of the tenure of the executives from two terms of four years each as provided in the 1999 constitution to three terms of four years, the editor of the government owned *New Nigerian*, Mahmoud Jega was sacked immediately because of a headline by the *New Nigerian* celebrating the defeat of the constitution

amendment bill in the national assembly.²⁸ Africa Independent Television (AIT) was also raided on May 14, 2006 by security agents for giving live coverage of the debate on the constitutional amendment, which many analysts believed was responsible for defeating the amendment bill. Reporters without Borders even issued a press release condemning the security raid and urging Nigerian officials to restrain themselves from making “attacks on journalists critical of a proposed constitutional amendment to allow President Olusegun Obasanjo to run for a third term”.²⁹ The situation is the same in many states of Nigeria where members of the opposition have no say in the government owned media.

However, there is more to it when it comes to discussion on press freedom in African countries, while government interference is one of the major impediments against independent journalism; there are also internal problems within the media that need to be tackled. Such problems as discussed by Alhaji Babatunde Jose, one of the former leading Nigerian journalists, include self control and lack of professional training (See chapter five and six for analysis and discussion on the lack of professional training among Nigerian journalists). According to him “self control by the press, whether in London, New York, Cairo, Rome, Bonn or Lagos is an important factor in the maintenance of press freedom. It is especially important where society is still largely traditional and where the democratic process as you know it... is still foreign” (Jose, 1975, p.260). The second problem faced by journalists in Africa according to Jose is that they don’t have enough professional training and equipments to carry their duties, yet you see African journalists carrying on in their front pages serious allegations of sleaze and corrupt practices against senior government officials, while they don’t have the required training to carryout investigations in order to prove such

²⁸ See a story by the BBC on the third term debate which was defeated by the national assembly on May 16, 2006 at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/4986904.stm> .

²⁹ The press release by Reporters without borders is available at http://www.rsf.org/article.php?id_article=17715 .

allegations (Jose, 1975). That's why according to Jose his paper took the slogan of "Militancy without hostility" (p. 260).

So the challenges faced by the press in Nigeria should be seen from two perspectives, internal and external. The internal challenges faced by the Nigerian media are essential requirements of what it means to be in the business of journalism. Without proper equipment, proper working condition, good incentive and professional training, it would take time before the media acquire the desired freedom and independence. There are also other challenges that have to do with culture and the diversity of African society in which the press needs to exhibit maturity in order not to subject the society in turmoil like the case of Isioma Daniel in Nigeria during the beauty pageant when on November 12, 2002 a report was carried by *This Day* that was insensitive to Muslims which results in the loss of lives (Tettey, 2006).

The external challenge involves restrictions and interference by the government and its security apparatus when the press carry reports unfavourable to the government. Here the press need to be more engaging to the public and work towards economic independence. By and large journalists and media organisations will address some of the challenges they face when they accept the fact that they are responsible for their actions, and also realise their role in responding to the needs of the public. This can be done when media organisations think and engage other institutions, economic political, educational and make them part of the communication process that is desired in any developing society (M'Bayo, Nwokeafor and Onwumechilli, 1995; Pratt, 1998).

In terms of the degree of freedom, it is difficult to say that the Nigerian press is free, because it did not completely pass the criteria proposed by Freedom House which can be used to

assess the extent of media freedom as discussed above; nor is it easy to declare it as restricted press because to a large extent the press in Nigeria especially the private ones, still maintain the tempo which was acquired even before independence by being critical and nationalistic in nature.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the circumstances that gave birth to the Nigerian newspapers, and how the content of the newspapers respond to specific challenges have been discussed. The historical origin of the newspapers, the nature of ownership and the transformations undergone by the newspapers both during colonialism and after independence have been reviewed. The chapter also looked at the concept of press freedom, the various approaches to understanding the concept, the criteria for evaluating press freedom the kind of freedom enjoyed by the press in Nigeria, as well as the constitutional provisions of press freedom in the Nigerian constitution.

It is therefore clear that the newspapers in Nigeria have been part of the history of Nigeria as a sovereign state, and the newspaper landscape shows there is still need for improvement. The challenges before the media at the moment requires a lot of restructuring that will make it economically independent, professionally qualified enough to meet the basic standards of the requirements in the practice of journalism, but also to realise and understand that the circumstances of its birth, and the challenges it has undergone would help in creating a media environment that would provide a platform for all Nigerians to discuss and have an input in the future direction of their country. Just as the Nigerian press met many challenges from colonial times to present, another challenge now is how the newspapers will play a role in the reporting of corruption scandals, which is another issue the country has to deal with. The next chapter will provide a general overview of the state of media in Africa. This is important

because of the similarities and differences in terms of history; politics as well as the challenges faced by the media in Africa.

2.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has provided the historical landscape of the Nigerian press. As stated in the aims and objective earlier in chapter one, this thesis is interested in finding out the nature of the press in Nigeria, which will help in the analysis of the data on corruption scandal. This chapter has aided this process by explaining the historical root of the press in Nigeria, and how it developed gradually from an instrument of missionary activities to a mouthpiece of colonial government, and then utilised by indigenous Nigerians to fight for the independence of the country. The factors associated with the press in Nigeria suggests that the press in Nigeria as opposed to the broadcast media has been dominated by the private sector right from inception, as such, it is justified for this study to focus on the press which is relatively more independent compared to the broadcast media which is largely under government control. The next chapter will review the relevant literature on the state of media in Africa as well as studies on corruption scandals.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

AN OVERVIEW OF THE STATE OF MEDIA IN AFRICA

3. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will review the literature on the state of media in Africa. This is useful in this research because the literature review will help in the analysis of the results used in the research. The chapter will also contribute in addressing some of the aims and objectives of the research and the research questions. The chapter is therefore divided into six sections. The first section will discuss the issue of traditional communication in Africa before the advent of the current methods of mass communication. This is useful because no system develops in a vacuum, before the emergence of newspapers and other media that report scandals, there were traditional means of sending across messages, until they were overtaken by the modern ones. The second section will explore the issue of media and national development. The idea of national development was one of the methods adopted after independence by many African countries so as to foster development. But the same approach was used to suppress the media. This is particularly useful in this research because it is about corruption scandals, and those who believe in development communication might argue that paying attention to scandals might shift attention away from development issues.

The third section will highlight a number of examples from a number of other African countries like Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, in order to show the similarities and differences

between them since they share some historical and cultural ties. In the fourth section, literature will be reviewed on some specific studies about scandals, from Watergate to other studies about corruption in Africa; this is particularly useful because this helps frame scandal as an area of serious academic enquiry. The last two sections will be the conclusion and a summary of the entire chapter.

3.1 TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION IN AFRICA.

Prior to the emergence of newspapers, radio, television and now the internet, there has always been a method of traditional communication in Africa. According to Wilson (1987), these methods of traditional communication in Africa were neglected with the intervention of colonial rule, while researchers interested in the nature of communication in Africa seldom pay attention to this significant area of study.

One of the ways of transmitting messages in African societies is through the town crier who performs various roles that can today be likened to what contemporary media professionals such as correspondents, spokesmen, newsagents, postmen and press secretaries do. Wilson categorised the forms of communication used by the town crier in the Calabar province of southern Nigeria into idiophones, membranophones, aerophone, symbology, signals, signs, objectification, colour music, extra mundane communication, symbology and symbolic displays (Wilson, 1987).

In northern Nigeria also the use of the town crier is common, but he doesn't have to use some instruments in many instances, rather he utilises his voice to send across messages, usually at night in various corners of the town, the responsibility is usually given to those with high tone in their voice. Other methods employed in some African settings include the use of smoke drums to signify the commencement or expiration of an event.

However there are variations among African societies on how the traditional means of communication are utilised due to differences in culture, religion, ethnicity and environment. Wilson argued that one of the problems faced by the traditional method of communication includes “lack of standard technical vocabulary in the description, analysis and conceptualisation of the media/channels and processes of the traditional communication system” (Wilson, 1987 p.98).

Other factors identified by Wilson which militates against the advancement of the traditional system of communication in Africa comprises of the difficulty in using a single code to identify the communication channels due to linguistic problems coupled with the mixture of foreign languages with indigenous ones. He however suggested some solutions open to scholars interested in exploring the traditional system of communication. These options according to him are “(i) retaining and using indigenous names along with descriptive labels in one of the international languages especially the one spoken in the researcher’s country. (ii) using only descriptive labels in the former colonial language spoken in the country of the researcher, and (iii) inventing or coining alternative words, perhaps based on known models of related media/channels and then validating these coinages at international conferences through promulgation” (Wilson, 1987 p.98).

In his study on *communication and national development in Africa*, Blake (1979) is of the opinion that the problem with communication studies in Africa is due to the colonial legacy inherited in African countries which concentrates more on the electronic medium of communication, in particular radio and television. This according to Blake has made African countries to neglect the study of African traditional communication which has been in

existence pre-colonially, and he thinks with research new methods of communication can be created.

Blake suggested that among the strategies that need to be employed in order to develop the traditional system of communication is to have a pedagogical structure that will focus on the development of this important area, an initiative which he thinks countries like Ghana, Nigeria and some other African countries have embarked upon by establishing communication departments in their universities.

It can be said that Blake is to a large extent right in suggesting for a pedagogical approach, but at the moment there are various communication departments, not only in the countries he has mentioned but in many other African countries, yet there is little improvement in the development of these traditional means of communication. This may partly be due to other social problems affecting the continent like economic retrogression, corruption and bad leadership. These problems may contribute in undermining the efforts of the institutions of learning who are supposed to invent new ideas for the refinement and reconstruction of these communication tools.

3.2 AFRICAN MEDIA AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Many scholars believe that the media plays an important role in national development, and this could be seen from the attention African countries pay to the use of the media in various national development initiatives despite the little resources available to them(Boadu, 1981).

This has therefore created a debate about the role of the media in the development of Africa. This debate attracts attention partly because the excuse given by many African leaders is that the media should be a tool for development, and therefore excessive criticism might render this noble goal impotent. But some scholars argued that this is not possible because “the continent has relied on a notion of development and development agendas that are foreign to the bulk of its people both in origin and objectives, and that have not always addressed the right issues or done so in the right manner. The second reason is that development communication researchers have adopted research techniques designed to answer to the needs of western societies and which do not always suit African cultures or societies that are in the main rural and non literate”(Nyamnjoh, undated, p.2).

Nyamnjoh’s research studied the nature of African media using a critique of the modernisation theory; a thesis which he asserts does not fit into the African system. He therefore calls for a participatory method of communication that will look at the nature of communication in Africa before the emergence of contemporary mass media. Such method of participatory communication according to Nyamnjoh will involve the less privileged Africans in whose name development communication proposals are suggested, and they can therefore communicate and present their problems in the language they understand.

This position was taken by Nyamnjoh because of a research conducted by UNESCO in some developing countries which include Columbia, Brazil, India, Senegal, Peru, India, Iran, Tanzania Canada Tobago and the Philippines. The outcome of the research suggested that in none of the ten countries mentioned did the idea of rural communication originate from the local population. The idea is usually decided by the government or development agencies after which the method of communication is decided using the media of their choice.

Tettey (2001) looked at the role of the media in Africa from a different perspective. His study focuses on the role the media play in the democratisation process, in particular the role of the private press. According to Tettey, he chose to use the term private press rather than independent press in Africa because a number of the press serve the interest of their proprietors or ethnic groups rather than the larger public interest. This problem is compounded by the state ownership of radio, television and newspapers which claim to practice development journalism, an idea which gives various governments in Africa the freedom to interfere in the activities of the media despite constitutional provisions guaranteeing the freedom of the press.

The proponents of this school of thought use the modernisation thesis to advance their argument. To them, since African countries are seeking to find a solution to their political and economic problems, so that they can be in the position to compete with the more economically advantaged countries many of whom were previously their colonial masters, one of the tasks before them is to modernise. However the criticism against the scholars who champion this idea is that they overlook the extent of the role the government should play in national development, and this uncritical position gave many African countries the opportunity to control the media in Africa without room for criticism and policy assessment. This does not mean that the situation is the same everywhere in Africa. Rather there are some variations among countries; especially countries like Nigeria and Kenya where the media is a bit more critical of African leaders during the early days of independence. But the general picture of reporting especially in the print media was more of propaganda than a genuine desire to inform and educate the people (Hyden and Leslie, 2002).

While the government owned media serve as the mouthpiece of the authorities, the private media, despite its allegiance to its proprietors and ethnic loyalty, it contributes in checking the excesses of those in authority. This has in turn resulted in a conflicting relationship between the private press and the various governments in Africa. In terms of the contribution made by the press, studies have shown that it was newspapers that spearheaded the debate against one party state in countries like Tanzania, and uncovered various cases of corruption in Cameroon. As pointed out by Tettey “the media have been very active in exposing activities within the state that would otherwise have been unknown to the citizenry. Through these kinds of information, the populace is able to measure the pronouncement of politicians against their deeds, and hence make informed judgements about the political future of those individuals. The likelihood of exposure is also instrumental in, at least, making government officials more circumspect in their activities. What we see therefore, is a certain measure of imposed accountability on the part of these officials which they did not have to worry about in the past” (Tettey 2001, p. 10).

In their study on *the media and two waves of democracy* in Africa, Hyden and Okigbo (2002) reviewed the role of the media in Africa, in particular the media contribution towards democratisation. They divided the wave³⁰ into first and second wave. The characteristics of the first wave was determined by internal power struggle in search of independence, yet determined by the colonial rule; in the first wave the print media was effective, but radio was less effective because it was not common. Hyden and Okigbo discussed the first web from two fronts, first as “as mouthpieces of nationalist cause” and two “as creators of discursive realm” (p.32).

³⁰ Quoting Huntington (1991:15), Hyden and Okigbo defined wave as a group of transitions from one type of regime to another that occur within specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that period of time (Hyden and Okigbo 2002, p.31).

The media especially the print served as a mouthpiece of nationalism because a number of the principal actors involved in the nationalist struggle have some connection with the print media either as proprietors themselves, or they share some form of ideological semblance, and according to Hyden and Okigbo, there are about three models that can explain this. The first model looks at the emergence of newspapers in the indigenous languages of African people because of the absence of coverage on issues that matter most to the African population in the newspapers controlled by colonial governments. Examples on this include the relationship between former Nationalist Jomo Kenyata with *Muigwithania* (the reconciler) journal, which became the mouthpiece of the nationalist movement in Kenya with its monthly publication. In Uganda also there were such indigenous newspapers like *Munno*, *Taifa Empya* and *Kizito*. In Tanzania also the newspaper *Mfanyakazi* (the worker), played a prominent role in the nationalist struggle. These indigenous newspapers became popular especially where the press in the colonial language ignores the needs of the indigenous population. However these kinds of newspapers were more available in east and southern Africa than in West Africa.

The second model discussed by Hyden and Okigbo under the media as mouthpiece of nationalism looks at the use of the colonial language by Africans to satisfy their needs. This was made possible because in other parts of Africa like Nigeria and Ghana, there were no European settlers as the case was in southern Africa. Therefore the newspapers became sympathetic to nationalist struggle especially in the English speaking Africa. The French policy of assimilation in francophone Africa also helped the indigenous populations to exploit the French language for indigenous purposes, but not as much as the newspapers were able to achieve in English speaking Africa.

The third model according to Hyden and Okigbo was the contribution of the metropolitan press in the struggle for independence. But this was more effective in the French speaking countries. Because elected representatives from Africa, but serving in France had access to the editors of these metropolitan newspapers, coupled with the divided public opinion within France itself. Those on the right want the colonies to remain under colonial control, while the socialists' movement wanted independence for African countries.

This was the climate under which many African countries gained their independence, a climate in which the effort of the emerging African elite to ensure self rule was supported by the emergence of newspapers; citing Hachten (1993), Bourgault (1995) looked at the development of the press from the mid 1950's to late 1980s, in which from "1956 just few years before most nations became independent, Helen Kitchen reported the presence of 100 daily African newspapers. The number of dailies increased during the 1960s, the decade of African independence. The USIA reported 150 dailies in 1966, and Hachten reported 160 in 1969. The 1970's with its high number of military coups, was a poor decade for African newspaper survival. According to Burton, there were 116 dailies in 1975-76. But by the 1980s, newspapers were again on the upswing. The *World Press Encyclopaedia* counted 124 dailies. And by the end of the 1980s, the press appeared to be bouncing back from its low point in the 1970s. The UNESCO statistical Handbook reported 200 dailies on the African continent" (p. 153).

The beginning of the 1990s saw a transformation in the in nature of journalism in many African countries due to the deregulation of media ownership in many African countries. Independent media organisations began to emerge. This created a competitive media environment in both the print and electronic media and a platform for political pluralism

flourishes gradually. This was happening at a time when there was serious economic decline in many African countries. But many of the media organisations managed to survive, and those that couldn't succeed were replaced by new ones. These privately owned newspapers played a significant role in the political development of many African countries by questioning government policies believed to be detrimental to the stability of these countries, and the process of reversing the old trend where many African governments thought their decision is beyond any form of scrutiny was set (Hyden and Leslie, 2002). The role of the private media became like an indirect reconsideration of the notion of national development, which may be useful in its essence, but misused by many African elites for egoistic reasons.

As discussed by Hyden and Leslie, another factor that contributed in the emergence of private and to some extent independent press in Africa was facilitated by new technologies, more sophisticated printing machines and computers have become available, and the spread of satellite communication was making access to information much easier. This access to information showcases the happenings around the world, a factor that might have contributed in accelerating the growth of more private media institutions in many African countries.

3.3 THE PRESS IN SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES

The development of the press in Africa differs across countries, in some parts of Africa, the government, both colonial and post colonial has total monopoly over the press. In some countries, the nature of media ownership was shared, with the government having total control over the broadcast media, and the press privately owned. Still the media is more active in some countries than others, and Ghana, South Africa and Kenya can serve as a representative example of media ownership that combines government monopoly, private ownership, and various challenges that faces the media in Africa in particular during colonial

struggle, military rule, and the liberalisation of media ownership (See Hyden and Leslie, 2002; Hyden and Okigbo, 2002; Ochilo, 1993). These three countries are relevant because they share certain features with Nigeria. Apart from being English speaking countries, they both shared a colonial past, with South Africa breaking away from apartheid in 1994. All the countries are multi-ethnic, multi-regional or even multi-racial.

As in Nigeria, newspapers in Ghana were a colonial creation. In a study on the *media of mass communication and the third republic constitution in Ghana*, Twumasi (1981) traced the history of newspapers in Ghana to 1822, this was when the British colonial governor, Charles McCarthy established an official paper called *The Royal Gold Coast³¹ Gazette*. But the paper lasted for only two years. And the next newspaper to emerge was in 1857, the paper also ceased to exist between 1873-1874. But in the same year James Huton Brew founded *The Gold Coast Times* which appears every two weeks but went out of circulation in 1885, though it was replaced by another paper called *Western Echo*. Dr J.B. Danqua established the first daily newspaper, *The Times of West Africa*, and from that period onward newspapers continue to flourish throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There was an increase in ownership by indigenous Africans, though the colonial government continued to monitor the nature of news coverage in the newspapers.

However, this trend in private ownership of the press could not last, government control and ownership was about to set in, principally for three reasons that occurred during colonial rule and just after independence, as identified by Twumasi (1981). These three developments gave birth to the idea of state ownership and political control of the media. The first was the introduction of radio broadcasting by the then colonial governor, Arnold Hodson, who wants

³¹ Gold Coast was the former name of Ghana.

the retransmission of BBC programmes in Accra. Hodson's plan was to have a radio transmission that would counter the emerging influence of the nationalist press which was becoming more radical in its reporting. But this effort ended up serving as groundwork for government monopoly on broadcasting by successive governments.

The second reason was the establishment of newspapers by British newspaper proprietors in Ghana in the 1950s, in particular by Cecil King, of the London Mirror group. At that time there were two leading nationalist parties, The United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), and Convention People's Party (CPP). The papers established by the London Mirror Group were *Daily Graphic* and *Sunday Mirror*, the two papers tried to ensure an even reporting between the two parties, but at the eve of independence, the CPP perceived the two papers as being critical of their party and also undermining the independence movement.

The third development was the emergence of new elites who had various professional backgrounds, some as teachers, market women and the larger members of the society. These emerging elite, were socialists in orientation, and were part of the CPP, and led by Kwame Nkrumah who himself was a journalist and founder of the *Accra Evening News*. These new elite and their newspapers like *Morning Telegraph* and *Daily Mail* were opposed by the Mirror Group and members of the UGCC who already publish newspapers like *National Times*, *Talking Drums* and the *Ashanti Pioneer*. And after independence, some of the papers were purchased by the Nkrumah led government, and others were banned (see Twumasi, 1981). Hence laying the foundation for total control of the media by indigenous Africans in Ghana.

Like many African countries, Ghana was affected by successive military regimes, who by their nature ensured the retention of government control of the media. Various military administrations in Ghana tried to come up with community oriented newspapers so that the information gap between rural and urban areas could be bridged. As confirmed by Boafo (1987) “content analytical studies have indicated that news and information about events from urban centres, especially news concerning the political leadership and other socio-economic elite, occupy disproportionately more space in the press and more air time in the broadcast media in Ghana than news and information about events in the rural communities” (p. 29). And this situation may not be peculiar to Ghana, because in many African countries, literacy rate is higher in urban areas, and because economic opportunities are concentrated in the urban areas, rural urban migration could also affect the success of community newspapers because of the possibility of rural dwellers who have some skills or higher literacy level migrating to the metropolitan areas of the country.

These community newspapers as discussed by Boafo (1987), like *The Densu New Times* and *The Akora New Era* were published by the University of Ghana School of Communication. One of the aims of these newspapers was to promote adult literacy and community integration. However the community newspapers could not last due to inadequate funding and other problems associated with newspaper publishing in Africa.

This trend continued until the late 1980s and early 1990s when the deregulation and liberalisation especially of the broadcasting industry started gaining ground. As discussed by Heath (1993), the issue of broadcasting policy in Ghana was not in the public Agenda before 1993. For more than 60 years, broadcasting was owned and controlled by the government using the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC). Broadcasting was seen as a means of

ensuring national cohesion, promoting development and ascertaining national stability. An approach that is common in many African countries.

With the promulgation of a new constitution in 1993, which clearly states that “there shall be no impediments to the establishment of private press or media; and in particular there shall be no law requiring any person to obtain licence as a prerequisite for the establishment or operation of a newspaper; journal or other media for mass communication or information; article 162 (3)”, a room was created for public debate, which resulted in series of negotiations between the National Democratic Congress’s government (NDC), whose motive was informed by the desire to deregulate the electronic communication sector, and another section of the elite who believe in the efficacy of public service broadcasting (Heath, 1993 p. 312).

As discussed by Heath, various committees were set up, and conferences were held in order to arrive at an acceptable position on the establishment of private media organisations. The conclusion was to allow for the proliferation of more private media houses. As a result of this, by 1998 more than 45 FM stations have been approved with 29 already on air. Though there are challenges facing the new media organisations like technology and manpower, today the new approach to media ownership is becoming part of the political life of Ghana.

The emergence of the media in Kenya and its landscape is not different from Ghana Nigeria or South Africa. The media was similarly created by the missionaries and upheld by the colonialists. Reverend Robert Stegal was among the first missionaries to establish a newspaper called *Taveta Chronicle* in 1895. Other newspapers that followed were the *Leader* in 1899 owned by the British East Africa Company followed by *Uganda Mail* which was published in Mombasa. The basic objective of these newspapers was to provide information

for the purposes of the missionaries and colonial administrators. Added to this was the emergence of newspapers by the Asian communities that settled in Kenya, but their attempt to establish newspapers was seen by the indigenous Kenyans as an effort to consolidate their grip on the country as done by the colonialists (Ochilo, 1993).

According to Ochilo (1993) three patterns of media ownership emerged in Kenya after receiving political independence. The first pattern of ownership represents the swapping of roles between colonial administrators and their African successors. In this case, ownership and control of the media was maintained by the Africans who took control of political power. Such institutions like the *Kenya Broadcasting Corporations* and newspapers like *Kenya Times* remained under government control. The essence of communication was based on the promotion of national unity, stability and development.

The second type of ownership according to Ochilo was the privately owned newspapers. These newspapers like the *Nation Group* and the *Standard* were financially autonomous, and so they can exercise a degree of control and editorial independence. But they were not totally immuned from government interference since the government provide political representation to the owners, and where that fails, they were threatened with libel laws.

The third pattern of ownership involves “the indigenous magazines and weeklies such as the *Weekly Review, Finance, the Nairobi Law Monthly, Parents and Step*. This category depends on the goodwill of the government of the day as their capital base is weak. They have less circulation confined mainly to most urban centres and consequently do not draw a great deal of commercial advertising from the seemingly saturated small readership in the urban centres of Kenya” (Ochilo, 1993 pp.24-25).

Though Kenya is normally cited as an example when it comes to private ownership of the media because to some extent Jomo Kenyatta who became president at independence, “tolerated, if not valued, a free press” (Hyden and Leslie, 2002 p. 9) which paved the way for the newspapers to ascertain their political independence, the government exercises more control on the broadcast industry especially in the 1990s when the Kenyan African National Union (KANU), was in power, it controls the privately owned television station, while still exercising undue influence over the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) such that the KBC was once accused of siding with the government by the Election Monitoring Unit of the country both in 1992 and 1997 (Van der Veur, 2002).

As for South Africa which is seen today as a leading player not just in Africa but globally; after breaking away from apartheid in 1994, one of the defining moments especially for media ownership, press freedom and the setting of a platform for a vibrant media organisation was the section in the then interim constitution of South Africa which states the following:

Every person shall have the right to freedom of speech and expression, which shall include freedom of the press and other media, and the freedom of artistic creativity and scientific work, and all media financed by or under the control of the state shall be regulated in a manner which insures impartiality and the expression of a diversity of opinion.³²

³² Cited in Giffard, De Beer & Steyn (1997).

As discussed by Giffard et al (1997) South Africa has the history of one of the oldest newspapers in Africa with the first newspapers established in Cape called *Cape Town Gazette* and *Commercial Advertiser* in 1800. Since then many newspapers have been established including the *Eastern Province Herald* (1845), *Natal Witness* (1846), *Natal Mercury* (1852) etc. These are the newspapers published in the English language. There were many newspapers also in the Afrikaans established in the 1800s. These newspapers which were established by “anti-slavery white lieberals” as a reaction to the English press include among others *Die Zuid African* (1828), and *Di Patriot* (1876) (Giffard et al, 1997, pp. 80 -83). Today South Africa has one of the most vibrant media industries in Africa published in different regions and languages.

One distinct feature of the South African press is its political affiliation and “ethnic” loyalty. Though as discussed by Steenveld (2007), the newspapers have a professional approach, but they still maintain their ethnic or regional identity. According to her “although the press was commercialised and a common professional ideology of independence was adopted, each press maintained its ethnicised political identity, which was shaped by its relation to the apartheid state” (p.109).³³ Steenveld’s work is very relevant to this research in that she made reference to Hallin and Mancini’s work about the way the media established a kind of “parallelism” with a particular societal identity. This corresponds with what obtains in Nigeria where the newspapers also develop regional identity despite their national outlook (see chapter five and six for a discussion on *regional parallelism*).

What the issues raised in different countries discussed in this chapter is the complex nature of the media in Africa. While it has a shared history of colonialism and struggle of

³³ For a discussion on the changes in South African media especially due to democratisation and the changing nature of the economy which makes newspapers to pay attention to profit making, see Tomaselli (2002).

independence, different countries have internal peculiarities which may have some semblance with other countries, but may also remain a distinct feature of the country. This is relevant because sometimes there is the tendency, especially for those who have little understanding of Africa to view it as a single country. This is a point that Nyamnjoh (2005) drew attention to, according to him, “we must not fuel the tendency to mistake Africa for a country, or to assume that states and the media on the continent are so alike that a few casual generalisations suffice to capture their characteristics and interactions” (p. 32).

Certainly there are lots of similarities among African media such as the establishment by colonial administrators, the challenges of censorship under colonial, postcolonial, military and civilian administrations. But there are differences politically, regionally, religiously and economically. A country like Senegal that never experienced military coup since independence cannot be the same with a country like Mauritania that suffers continued military intervention. Tunisia, though an Arab country cannot be generalised with Egypt or Sudan despite being predominantly Arab and Muslim. An interesting work that depicts these complexities is the edited collection on *Press Freedom and Communication in Africa* (1997) by Festus Eribo and Willian Jong- Ebot. The work studied press freedom in Africa according to Anglophone, Francophone, Arab Speaking and Lusophone countries, which clearly exposes the similarities and differences in the nature and character of the media in Africa.

In many African countries, the media faces a lot of challenges, key among those challenges is the issue of corruption which pervaded different countries, and the media, whether the press or broadcast is part of that society, yet there are few studies paying attention, on how the media cover the cases of corruption, and whether the media itself is corruption free. One possible exception is the study by Ronning (2009) who looks at the politics of corruption and

the media in Africa. The research discussed the issue of corruption and the role of the media to possibly serve as a deterrent. The research also focused on one of the central issues discussed in this research, that is investigative journalism, which is needed in order to uncover the wrongdoings in order to educate the public. However one shortcoming of the work by Ronning is that it is more of a general overview of corruption and the media in Africa, rather than focussing on a specific case study. But that is understandable in that he is trying to promote a debate so that more researchers will pay attention to the issue, and this is where this research will make additional contribution to the literature on corruption and the media in Africa by specifically focusing on Nigeria, and see how journalists see their role as the conscience of the society, and the way the media frame the stories about corruption.

3.4 STUDIES ON CORRUPTION SCANDALS

Some scholars are of the view that *Watergate*, the scandal that forced the former US president, Richard Nixon to resign was a turning point in the study of scandals because of the role played by the press. Since then within the US there had been series of scandals, and as argued by Schudson, scandals are not peculiar to democracies only, they can be found in other countries that may not be seen as advanced democracies (Schudson, 2004).

As such, scholars paid attention to the coverage of scandals and the nature of corruption in different parts of the world. For instance Richter & Burge (2007) conducted their work on combating corruption by promoting ethics in the United States. Canel & Sanders (2006) studied political scandals in Britain and Spain by paying attention to the nature of coverage in the press of the two countries. Spector (2005) edited work, *Fighting Corruption in Developing Countries*, did a sector by sector analysis on corruption, from justice system, to education, health, political parties, environment, etc. Johnson (2004) did a comparative

analysis of corruption in four countries, India, Russia, United States and Israel. So corruption can be found in different sectors of the society, some of the differences between countries are in what Klitgaard (1988) calls “cultures clash”.

Scholars have shown that many African countries suffer from different forms of corruption. Blundo et al. (2006) conducted a study on corruption in West Africa, The research they conducted in Senegal, Niger and Benin revealed some similarities and differences, because the countries share historical linkages, for being former French colonies, and sharing cultural ties as well. Petty corruption, in which people receive gratification for a job they are paid to do is found in different sectors of the countries studied. This is relevant to this research in that as we shall see corruption within the media is one of the challenges the Nigerian press is facing. Journalists receive bribe for a job they are paid to do.

Doig &Theobald (2000) focus their research on corruption and democratisation. Their study also paid attention to African countries, and although they mentioned Nigeria among corrupt countries in the world going by Transparency International’s rankings, they suggest that lack of data from other West African countries will make generalisation difficult.

Some studies on corruption have focused specifically on Nigeria. Olaleye-Oruene (2007) studied corruption as a cultural phenomenon in Nigeria. He sees corruption as it is today in Nigeria as a colonial legacy. According to him, it was the style of European countries that partitioned Africa at the Berlin conference in 1884-85, that promoted corruption because of the competition among European multinational companies working in Africa. His study also

cited different scandals in Britain involving members of parliament as evidence that corruption is a legacy of colonialism, because Britain was Nigeria's colonial master.³⁴

Chiluwa (2007) conducted a study of how the press in Nigeria frame the discourses of political scandals in their headlines. His study focused specifically on Weekly magazines like *Tell*, *The News* and *Newswatch*. A part from the rhetoric and strategies used in the headlines of these magazines, the study concluded that "news headlines are however influenced by personal bias of the individual journalists as well as the overriding professional and social ethics of the news magazine itself" (p. 70).

The study by Chiluwa is particularly useful to this research because this research will be studying the headlines of some Nigerian newspapers in order to find out how they frame the headlines about the scandals under study. His conclusion on the bias from the side of the journalists is particularly relevant, as this study is also interested as the research questions indicated, to find out the differences between northern and southern newspapers. Chiluwa's study would have been more useful if he had compared the north and the south, but that is understandable since his study focused on weekly magazines, and there are so few of them in the north, and they are on and off from the market.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion the following can be discerned on the media in Africa.

1. African newspapers share a relatively common history, because they emerge as a result of missionary activities or colonisation or both.

³⁴ In 2009, just before the local elections, there were series of reports in the British press led by the *Daily Telegraph* about the expenses of MPs, what is known as the expenses scandal. On 23rd July a George Galloway and Geof Hoon, the former British Defence Secretary exchanged words during BBC's *Question Time* programme, on the allegations of British involvement in the BAE arms scandal between Britain and Saudi Arabia.

2. The immediate leaders of Africa after independence simply carried from where the colonial governments stopped and ensure government monopoly of the media. This can be seen in terms of the laws inherited from colonial governments and continued to be applied by indigenous postcolonial governments. This is further illustrated by Nyamnjoh (2005):

Postcolonial states in Africa have had much more in common with their colonial counterparts than is often acknowledged by those eager to present Africa as a reluctant student of western achievements in democracy---a few examples will illustrate the point. At the time of independence in Francophone Africa, nationalist leaders had a rich repertoire of colonial censorship laws from which to draw inspiration, in the interest of continuity. For example, a highly repressive version of a October 1923 decree regulating the press in France survived independence in much of French Africa---And although the English colonial administrators were usually seen to be relatively less interventionist, they bequeathed to their colonies a legacy of an 'official secrets act',³⁵ which has over the years made it extremely difficult for the media in Anglophone Africa to obtain official information through declarations by or interviews with civil servants (p.35).

3. There is a division in the nature of ownership, in that the newspapers are mostly privately owned, while the government control the broadcast industry.

4. Most African countries share the notion of using the media for national development, and that was what defined the nature of media operation after independence.

5. The 1990s brought a shift in the nature of ownership because of the deregulation and liberalisation of the broadcast industry (See Ogundimu, 2002).

³⁵ In late August 2008 when President Umaru Musa 'Yaraduwa travelled to Saudi Arabia, officially it was stated that he was going for Umrah (lesser pilgrimage), but almost all the newspapers in the country carried reports saying that the President is receiving treatment in hospital in Saudi Arabia. Prior to that, the president normally travels to Germany for treatment. When the president returned in September, 2008, he summoned all the officials working in the presidency to take oath of the official secret act, and this attract a lot of criticism in the Nigerian press.

6. There is a gap in the literature reviewed, in that there is no specific study that adequately explains the nature of media system in Africa as a whole, or in some specific countries. The few studies that came closer to that based their studies on the notion of national development, four theories of the press, or the process of democratisation.

7. There are few studies about corruption/scandal and the press in Africa, while African countries feature prominently in the transparency international's corruption perception index (see chapter one).

The review of the literature has highlighted some of the inadequacies in terms of specific studies that will digest specific issues that internally define media operation in African countries. Also most of the studies on corruption and scandals are conducted outside African countries (for instance Canel and Sanders, 2006, Thompson, 2000, Lull & Hinerman, 1997, Tumber & Waisbord 2004a&b).

This research hopes to make a contribution using Nigeria as a case study, by finding out how the journalists see their work in terms of the reporting of corruption scandals. Whether they wholly agree that the kind of journalism they practice conforms to the "ideal" form of journalism in terms of the use of investigative journalism to uncover the scandals, the watchdog role of the media and whether journalism practice is shaped by the internal dynamics of specific countries.

3.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed the literature on African media, starting from traditional communication in Africa, which many African scholars suggest should be revived. It also discussed the concept of development communication which was influenced by modernisation theory after African countries started receiving independence, but which later became a tool in the hands of African heads of governments to suppress the press. Specific examples have been drawn from countries like Ghana, South Africa, Kenya and Mozambique. What the literature from these countries revealed is that there are shared historical similarities in terms of the origin and challenges faced by the media. The gap identified in the literature is the lack of adequate studies that focused on corruption scandals in African countries. There are a handful of studies, but they are not sufficient to explain the nature of press coverage of scandals in Africa, and this is an area where this research intends to make a contribution. The next chapter therefore explains the methodology to be used in the gathering of the data to be used in the study as well as the analysis to be made.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will explain the process of data collection and the methodological conceptualisation of the research, and give a description and rationale of the data collection technique employed. This chapter is very important to this thesis because methodology is central part of academic research which helps in understanding the research, its originality and contribution to knowledge as well as where it fits into broader debates. As explained briefly in chapter one, this research will use a qualitative approach, because such approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study in that it takes into consideration the social factors that are present in the area of research. Most importantly, the qualitative approach will contribute in addressing the aims and objectives of the thesis and answering the research questions. This research is about the coverage of corruption scandals, and to do that there is a need to look beyond the surface of the argument, but look deeply into the meanings that can be understood from the data, and that is one thing that a qualitative approach will offer.

The chapter therefore will be discussed according to the following sections; first by explaining qualitative research and what it entails. Following that will be an explanation of qualitative interviews which have been used to generate part of the data used in the research. Subsequent sections will discuss the pilot study conducted, the issues identified during the pilot study and how they were incorporated into the research; and qualitative content analysis by means of critical discourse analysis, since part of the data will be from a study of the

headlines and the text of *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* Newspapers. The final sections of the chapter will be the conclusion and the summary.

4.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research is gaining popularity in the social sciences, because it gives the researcher the opportunity to be a participant in gathering data, but also to use the process of social interaction in enriching the data. As pointed out by Humphrey and Lee (2004), qualitative research gives room for using a variety of methods in researching and analysing the data, and also in using different analytical skills when it comes to the interpretation of the data. This is possible because “qualitative researchers seek to preserve the form and content of human behaviour and to analyse its qualities, rather than subject it to mathematical or other formal transformations”, and it has the following characteristics; “theoretical interest in human interpretational interest, concerned with the study of socially situated human action and artefact, use human investigators as the primary research instruments, and rely primarily on narrative forms for coding data and narrating the texts to be presented to audiences” (Lindlof 1995, pp. 21-22).

While in quantitative research mathematical figures can describe the nature of content, it is limited when it comes to driving meaning from the interaction involved in qualitative research. In their discussion of qualitative research and its difference from quantitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) identified five uses of qualitative research that differentiate it from quantitative research, “its uses in positivism and post positivism, acceptance of post modern possibilities, capturing the individuals point of view, examining the constraints of everyday life and securing rich description” (pp. 9-10). The uses mentioned by Denzin and Lincoln make it possible for qualitative research to see the real world,

understand it and bring out issues that may otherwise be impossible to understand. It also allows the researcher as identified by Denzin and Lincoln to interact with social actors and interpret their action based on knowledge and firsthand experience. It also helps in generating data that is rich so that the conclusions arrive at can stand the test of time until disproved by another research. It is a viable research methodology that employs various techniques based on the experience of the researcher and the issues that confront him while in the process of data gathering. It teaches the researcher how to overcome difficulties in research without compromising the standard of his work.

According to Humphrey and Lee (2004), qualitative research serves as an instrument that helps the researcher to understand his area of study and relate it to the reality on the ground and see whether his preconceptions and understanding corresponds with the actual findings.

According to Lindlof (1995), many communication scholars and social scientists have agreed that qualitative method is more effective in understanding issues that border on culture, and its flexibility is useful for the researcher when it comes to interpretation. This therefore makes it popular among many researchers in the social sciences to use as method of social enquiry.

One of the challenges qualitative researchers face is the best philosophical foundation that will fit qualitative work. Schwandt (2000) looks at some of these schools and suggested that many qualitative studies are based on interpretivism, hermeneutics and social constructivism. According to Schwandt, interpretivism is developed from the works of neo-Kantian philosophers and sociologists from Germany. Interpretivists acknowledge that there are differences between human and physical sciences. Positivists on the other hand look at the

relationship between all sciences, human or physical and try to establish the causal relationship between them in order to arrive at a sound conclusion. Social constructivists on the other hand take the view that one of the primary aims of a researcher is the construction of knowledge.

Debate about which school of thought is more appropriate in qualitative study continues to generate attention. This is where the work of Seale (1999) becomes relevant because of his attempt to look at any method of social enquiry as a useful tool for research as long as there is clear explanation and procedure that can withstand the demands of scientific investigation. Seale sees research as a “craft skill” which researchers use in carrying out investigations, and this skill should be “autonomous from the need to resolve philosophical disputes. It can be acquired from exposure to almost any intelligent methodological discussion, whether from positivists, constructivists, or postmodern paradigms, as well as from careful consideration of research studies done by others” (p. 465). Seal therefore suggests that it is time for researchers in the social sciences to work independently and forget unnecessary distractions that might hinder the success of a research, though still mindful of the value provided by philosophical foundations.

By this position, each social researcher can be independent to undertake an investigation based on a sound methodological background, yet not constrained by unnecessary arguments on philosophy in which it is difficult to find a position of consensus. Therefore, for the purpose of this research, the approach provided by Seal (1999) will be used in conducting the interviews because it has the advantage of simplifying the methodological conception on the way the interviews will be conducted without compromising the standard of the work in terms of the rigour of the methodology. The suggestion by Seal also will help in easing the

confusion that might arise between the way an academic work might view things by giving emphasis on the theoretical underpinning, and what might be obtained in reality, while as suggested by Yin (2003) the researcher has no control over the timing of his respondents.

4.2 QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

According to Okely (1994) qualitative study can refer to any study that is conducted using interviews, no matter how small the number of interviews are, and whether they are in a structured or unstructured form. Qualitative interviews as part of qualitative research are used as a method of data collection by many researchers which according to Roulston (2006) accounts for ninety percent of the researches conducted in the social sciences.

Researchers in the social sciences have conducted studies on different interview formats, news interviews, employment interviews, medical interviews, research interviews and many other forms of interviewing that engage one or more people in order to elicit a response that could be useful in the promotion of knowledge (Roulston, 2006), and contribute in explaining the phenomenon under investigation.

According to Fontana and Frey (2000) interviews are conducted in a variety of ways, they can be face to face, by telephone, by mail. Equally, interviews can be used for different purposes; it can be for opinion polls, for marketing a product, or for academic analysis. Because of the frequency at which interviews are used in data gathering, Fontana and Frey quoting Atkinson and Silverman suggest that we are now living in an 'interview society'. The method used in collecting the data by the interviewer can be structured, group or unstructured. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) also identified structured, unstructured and open ended interviews.

In structured interviews, the interviewer has a set of structured questions that remain unchanged throughout the interview process. The interviewer follows the questions, and records the responses according to the criteria he sets. The script always guides the conversation. The group interview, also called focus group, brings together different respondents; the interviewer asks questions and listens to their responses. The group interview can be conducted for different purposes, the interviewer can use a script to guide the conversation, or he can simply stimulate discussion based on the topic under investigation. While unstructured interview is the one that is not guided by a rigid script, but only questions that serve as a guide to the conversation. It is more in-depth, time consuming and involve follow up questions.

Fontana and Frey's study further look at other issues that can help qualitative researchers in order to make their work easy, they include "accessing the setting", "understanding the culture and language of the respondent", "deciding on how to present oneself", "locating an informant", "gaining trust", "establishing rapport" and "collecting empirical materials" (pp.654-656). These considerations can contribute in making a successful interview, or mar the effort of the researcher. This therefore makes it important for the researcher to understand that he is dealing with human beings who can interpret his actions and appearance in different ways, and their perception of him may contribute in determining the kind of response he gets.

It is for these reasons that Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) suggest telephone interview as a substitute for face to face interview, because in their study which compares telephone and face to face interviews, they found that the quality of response is almost the same, and it is easier to handle respondents who are difficult to get, or who would like to hide their identity

using telephone interview³⁶, and the cues in their voice in terms of slow or active breath may serve as a gesture that can suggest willingness, approval or disapproval of a position, though this may not be as effective as in face to face interaction.

Scholars who specialise in qualitative studies see interviews as an encounter that produces a set of negotiations by different parties, the interviewer and the interviewee, and the interaction between these parties can result in some form of agreement over the subject under discussion, and sometimes they may have different views. However what the encounter promotes is the understanding of reality, bringing to light issues that might otherwise remain hidden or unclear. The use of interviews in research is because of the opportunity they provide for gathering information that is credible, and will highlight issues and develop insight into the perspectives that are relevant to those interviewed, so that where necessary those who have exercise institutional authority can use it as a means of improving the well being of the society ((Tanggaard, 2007; Sinding and Aronson, 2003).

Rapley (2001) looks at interviews as social interactions among individuals who rely on each other to establish a meaning, and the result obtained will be determined on how the interviewer and the interviewee managed the interaction. Rapley's view is that interview is not just the product of structured, unstructured or open ended question, but its quality is determined by the ability of the individuals involved to exploit their interaction and come up with a data that is rich. From this perspective, no approach of conducting the interview is better than the other, any method employed, as long as the parties involved are able to interact and understand the context of their interaction, then the interview could achieve its set target.

³⁶ Telephone interviews could be easily handled in countries where telephone connections, especially the landlines are easily accessible and cheaper to use. But in many developing countries, this could create some difficulty for a number of reasons e.g. access to the telephone service, where it is available the connection may not be reliable, and the mobile phone services that are becoming popular in many developing countries may be too expensive for a researcher to manage.

Rapley further stated that “whatever ideals are practised, no single practice will gain ‘better data’ than the other practices. The data obtained are highly dependent on and emerge from specific local interactional context and this local interactional context is produced in and through the talk and concomitant identity work of the interviewer and interviewee” (pp. 316-317).

This can suggest that interviews are simply the products of an interaction that occurs between the interviewer and the interviewee, but the quality of the interview, and the outcome and richness of the data depends on the ability of those involved in the interaction to operate at a level that makes it possible for them to produce data that is rich enough to arrive at a logical conclusion. It is therefore up to the interviewer to set the appropriate parameters of the interview in order to achieve the goals of the interview.

Cawthorne (2001) is more critical of the approaches used in conducting qualitative interviews. She critiques those who think qualitative research is not scientific in nature and tends to compromise research standards by being subjective. But as a researcher who travelled around the world and interviewed people, she realised that one of the problems faced by researchers, is their tendency to theorise everything in their research, but end up interviewing people who have nothing to do with the theories. She therefore decided to be more direct in her approach, and that helped her to get first hand information on what the people she interviewed think, rather than what she thinks is their thought.

Qualitative research can also come with challenges and difficulties, more so if the topic under investigation is a sensitive one as identified by Dickson-Swift et al (2007) in their study that specifically focused on the challenges faced by qualitative researchers. These challenges may

include establishing a good rapport, and ensuring that the respondents understand the subject under investigation.³⁷ The researcher is also expected to understand that he needs to keep to the timing of the interviewee rather than his own, and prepare himself to handle speakers that might not be willing to cooperate and speak to him in the way he assumes. Research involving fieldwork should be well coordinated, and the researcher should be able to foresee some of the challenges he might come across while in the field (Yin, 2003).

4.3 PILOT STUDY

Two pilot studies were conducted for this research; the first was for the qualitative interviews conducted between 2nd August and September 1st, 2007 in Nigeria. A set of questions were proposed to guide the pilot interviews, because qualitative interviews normally “begin with something called an interview schedule (or interview guide) that lists the most important topics to be covered” (Priest, 1996, p.108).

The pilot study is important because it will help in understanding and clearing the way for the actual data collection, first by assessing the suitability of the interview schedule, and the sections that need refining in order to produce a stronger methodology. The pilot study will also make clear the challenges that the researcher might face during the actual data collection, and whether the method employed will help in answering the research questions, hence preparing for the challenges and devising the best approach in order to handle those

³⁷ One of the challenges I faced while conducting interviews was the possibility of spending a whole day not getting an appointment to conduct the interview, and on another day you have too many appointments. There was a day I had an appointment at 10am, and the interviewee sent a text message to me at 5:00am asking me to come at 9:00am, which I did, I had another appointment at 11am but when I went to the venue the person disappointed me and said he was only interested in my area, though he suggested some names, from then the respondents kept calling and confirming the appointments, and so I did interviews at 1:00pm, 2:30pm, 3:00pm, 4:00pm, 5:00pm, and additional two between 6 and 7pm. And the venues are located at different ends of the city, and in one occasion there was less than 30mins difference between two interviews, and I found myself in a dilemma, between pursuing the interview, and missing the other appointment which I spent three consecutively trying to get hold of the interviewee.

challenges, but most importantly to see how the methodology being employed can address the research questions and theoretical postulations that guide this research.

A pre-fieldwork test was conducted before starting the pilot study in order to find out how to go into the field. So the pilot interview schedule was sent to some of the respondents online. I received 3 to 5 responses from those I sent the interview schedule to by email. And the responses I got were disappointing because they ended up giving Yes or No answer, where they managed to give a long response, it does not exceed two to three lines. This created an impression in me that either they did not understand the questions fully, or the way the questions were structured was not strong enough to attract their response. There was also no room for probing them to get additional information. This made me to reconsider the online option, and instead opted for the face to face interview.

The target respondents are newspaper editors, correspondents and some policy makers dealing with the cases of corruption either through reporting or working with the anti-corruption agencies. All the respondents interviewed have worked as editors or correspondents. Only one respondent is working with an anti-corruption agency, and he has a specialised knowledge on the reporting and nature of corruption in Nigeria. Each interviewee recommends other respondents who can also respond to the questions under investigation. This technique of getting respondents by the recommendation of others is called snowball sampling (Wimmer and Dominick, 2006), and that was the process used in the entire qualitative interviews.

As suggested by Yin (2003) on how to get access to the field, all the materials needed for the pilot interviews like notebook and recording devices were taken. An assessment of the first

four interviews was made, and it became clear during these interviews that there was the need to make some refinements as follows:

1. The need to include the issue of corruption within the media itself. Some of the respondents specifically asked me to do so if I want to discuss the issue of covering corruption in Nigeria. There are number of reasons for that, first is the bad working condition of journalists, the second is the greed of some of the proprietors who refuse to pay salaries and allow their employees to survive on the courtesy of their sources.
2. The need to include the Freedom of Information Act as a way of improving investigative journalism in Nigeria. This is because journalists face a lot of constraints in trying to access information.
3. One of the things that was helpful in my interview schedule was the need for the interviewees to nominate somebody he thinks is competent to speak about the research area. This even according to some of the books I read on case study research and qualitative interviews is recommended in collecting useful information during field research. The respondents were willing to do so, and indeed they even contacted the journalists they recommend and made appointments on my behalf. Some even did ask me to stay in their office and invite the contact for me, and that was how I was able to conduct all the 22 interviews.
4. Political atmosphere in Nigeria was important also, because a number of journalists have been appointed as press secretaries and special advisers to the president and state governors, some of them were not willing to speak to me at the time, and appointments and removal of senior governmental officials were going on, and in order to get some of these contacts that are willing to speak at the moment before their position changes, I decided to incorporate the issues I identified during the first four interviews and carried on to conduct more interviews.

Throughout the interview period a Dictaphone digital recorder with capacity to record 135 hours, and a cue and review function recorder were used. And this was helpful, because there were moments when the respondents received important phone calls, and the cue and review recorder had to be stopped for some minutes, and then continue with the interview without pressing the button to continue the recording, and when this mistake was realised, the digital recorder has made up for the missing part because it was running.

The pilot interview schedule was divided into the following sections, corruption/scandal, journalism and political culture, fourth estate, investigative journalism and suggestions and recommendations. The changes made from the beginning of the pilot studies and the categorisation of the questions into categories is consistent with the work of some scholars such as Yin (2003) and Horton et al (2004). A total of 22 interviews were conducted, and following Priest (1996) who suggests that each interview should take no less than half an hour, the ones conducted lasted between 30 mins to 1 hour.

The pilot interviews conducted provided an insight into the following:

1. The existence of the north/south dichotomy in Nigerian journalism.
2. The imbalance in newspaper ownership between northern and southern Nigeria.
3. The influence of culture in the way journalists practice journalism.
4. The unity of newspapers and journalists on issues of national survival e.g. war against corruption.
5. The exploitation of journalists by proprietors.

6. The existence of corruption within the media itself which contributes in shaping stories (brown envelop).
7. Journalists are satisfied with watchdog role but feel more could be done.
8. The respondents don't believe investigative journalism exists in Nigeria.
9. Politicians use their influence to establish friendship with proprietors in order to influence stories or cover their shortcomings.
10. Proprietors establish newspapers to promote their business and political interests.
11. Aggrieved politicians leak information to journalists in order to blackmail political opponents.
12. Journalists use their position to blackmail politicians by investigating the private activities of politicians.
13. Southern journalists and newspapers tilt more towards the Anglo-American model in their practice.
14. Northern journalists tilting towards Islamic-cultural model.
15. Both northern and southern journalists condemn corruption and believe no culture condones corruption, but it is individual based.
16. There are certain stories that could be termed as "taboo areas" and may go unreported in both regions.
17. Even the training received by journalists in universities (depending on the location of the university) differs in some instances which influences the way journalism is practiced.
18. There are newspapers established using money directly looted from the state treasury by politicians.
19. The regional control is more complex than is obvious. For instance there is additional dichotomy among southern newspapers, majority of newspaper owners are from

south-south, the oil producing area, but the newspapers are located in the southwest, the commercial and industrial centre, and so majority of the editors are from the southwest so that they can attract advertising easily.

20. Readership influences newspaper content.

21. It will be difficult for private newspapers to survive without government patronage because government is the main source of advertising.

4.3.1 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The interview schedule was divided according to the following themes.

CORRUPTION/SCANDAL

1. What is your view on how northern and southern newspapers report the cases of corruption in Nigeria?

2. Do you think northern and southern newspapers adequately cover the cases of corruption?

3. Are the northern newspapers biased in reporting corruption cases involving southern politicians?

4. Are the southern newspapers biased in reporting corruption cases involving northern politicians?

JOURNALISM AND POLITICAL CULTURE

5. Do you think northern and southern journalists are influenced by their cultural background in the way they report corruption cases?

6. Do you think ethnic and regional considerations are given more preference than professional ethics in Nigerian newspapers?

7. Are southern and northern journalists different in their political orientation?

FOURTH ESTATE

8. Are you satisfied with the watchdog role of the Nigerian newspapers?

9. Do you think the watchdog role of the Nigerian newspapers contribute in reducing corruption in Nigeria?

10. Do you see Nigerian newspapers being active or soft in their watchdog role?

11. Do you think the nature of ownership; (government or private) determines what is reported in Nigerian newspapers?

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

12. What do you understand by investigative journalism?

13. Do you think Nigerian journalists practice investigative journalism?

14. What are the challenges facing Nigerian journalists in practicing their profession?

15. Can you suggest ways in which journalism practice in Nigeria can be improved?

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

16. Do you have any suggestion or recommendation?

17. Can you recommend someone to be interviewed?

The usefulness of the outcome from the pilot interviews is that it has addressed the research questions proposed in chapter one of the research, which means that the right methodology for the research has been adopted. The research questions bear repeating here so that they can easily be compared with the summary outcome of the pilot study above.

RQ.1a- Do Nigerian newspapers give prominence to news about corruption scandals?

RQ. 1b- What are the differences in the reporting of corruption scandals between northern and southern newspapers?

RQ. 2a- Does the reporting of corruption scandals in the northern and southern newspapers involve investigative journalism?

RQ. 2b- What are the constraints faced by Nigerian journalists in reporting corruption scandals?

RQ. 3- Do the northern and southern Nigerian journalists consider their role as that of the fourth estate role of the media?

Table on respondents, media organisations and portfolios

Newspaper/Ownership/interviewees	Region	Location	The Respondents
<i>Trust newspapers/Private</i>	North	Abuja	Five 1. Editor / <i>Daily</i> 2. Editor / <i>Aminiya</i> 3. Chairman Editorial Board 4. Senate Correspondent 5. Editor/ <i>Sunday</i>
<i>Thisday /Private</i>	South	Lagos	Two 1. Abuja Bureau Chief 2. Senate Correspondent
<i>Guardian/Private</i>	South	Lagos	Two 1. Abuja Bureau Chief 2. Deputy Political Editor
<i>Daily Times/ Government-Private</i>	South	Lagos	One 1. State House Correspondent
<i>Punch/private</i>	South	Lagos	One 1. Correspondent
<i>The Sun/private</i>	South	Lagos	One 1. Abuja Bureau Chief
<i>The Nation/Private</i>	South	Lagos	Two 1. Chairman Editorial Board 2. Abuja Bureau Chief
<i>New Nigerian/ Government</i>	North	Kaduna	One 1. Former editor
<i>Independent Private</i>	South	Lagos	One 1. State House Correspondent
<i>Columnists /former journalists</i>	North		Five 1. Former Managing Director, <i>New Nigerian</i> Newspapers. 2. Former Editor, <i>Triumph</i> Newspapers. 3. Former President, Nigeria Union of Journalists 4. Former Editor, <i>This Era</i> 5. Former Editor, <i>Leadership</i> .
<i>Anti-corruption official</i>		Abuja	One 1. Former Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

The interviews contributed in understanding the inner working of Nigerian journalism, but also the topic under study. The respondents were able to speak, and a good rapport was established. Most of the answers and responses I got may not have been possible if the

questions were too rigid. This is one of the advantages of open ended interviews, because they allow “greater breadth of data than the other types given its qualitative nature” (Fontana and Frey, 2000, p. 652). During the pilot study, almost each interviewee provides a fresh perspective that is unheard from the rest. In particular the factors that influence stories on the pages of newspapers, those things that took place behind the scene have provided fresh perspective and gave a clear picture from what one might think as the normal procedure in gate-keeping. The main fieldwork was guided by the outcome of the pilot study.

4.4. CHALLENGES FACED DURING THE FIELDWORK

Some important issues need to be highlighted concerning the fieldwork. Key among them is the question of my identity as someone from the north, which directly or indirectly influences the conduct of the interview. For example if somebody from the south is conducting similar research he will probably go to Lagos to conduct the interviews first, and later Abuja or Kaduna to find respondents from the north. In my case I went to Abuja. This does not mean that I avoided Lagos completely. But because it was easier for me to find journalists from the north and from the south in Abuja, because almost all the media organisations have a bureau in Abuja.

Another way in which my identity as somebody from the north becomes a challenge in the fieldwork is that when conducting the interviews with journalists from the south, they try to ignore the existence of regional dichotomy in the Nigerian press, because they do not want to be seen to be biased. Until the interview becomes in-depth then both the respondent and I as the researcher come to accept the regional dichotomy. I have tried to go to Lagos to conduct more interviews, I even called Dr Ruben Abati, the Chairman of the Editorial Board of the Guardian Newspaper and one of the leading Nigerian journalists to make an appointment, unfortunately time was against me so I had to come back to the UK.

There are issues that will be relevant to those conducting future research in Nigeria especially if they decide to employ the same methodology, in particular the use of snowball sampling, in which respondents recommend interviewees.

1. It is important to make contacts early before arriving in Nigeria, this is to let them know of your arrival date and the likely time you will call them after your arrival. It will be useful to call two or three times before arriving in Nigeria.
2. When in Nigeria, the fact that you make an appointment with somebody does not mean you will automatically meet him at the same time. The journalists are highly engaged with their work and their personal businesses as well. At the beginning of the fieldwork, I will go to an office and spend the whole day without meeting the respondent. So it will help a lot, if you arrive at the respondent's office, and he is not available, call him and find the likely time he will be back in the office, then try to call another respondent whom you may be lucky to meet before your next appointment. When I used this strategy there was a day I was able to interview five different journalists.
3. Transportation is key to achieving a successful fieldwork in Nigeria. Public transportation is not reliable. So it will be good to hire a taxi if possible for the whole day. Have an agreement on the amount you will pay the driver per day if possible, so that wherever you go for an interview, if the respondent is not available, you can make another appointment and the taxi driver can easily take you to the next destination.
4. Have more than one recording device, especially having an audio tape with extra batteries. This is because of the instability in the supply of electricity.
5. Utilise the experience of each interviewee in terms of recommendations, as the journalists know themselves very well, and they know the best person to speak about a particular area on Nigerian journalism.

4.5 PHENOMENOGRAPHY

All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. In order to find out what the journalists really think based on their experiences, the analysis of the interviews will be done using phenomenography. Phenomenography is mainly used in education as a tool for training in order to identify different experiences among students. It has also been adopted as a method in journalism education in order to find out students experiences in different projects (Steel, et al, 2007). The term was coined by Ference Marton in 1981, and its aim is the description of

people's conception, it is meant to describe "knowledge in terms of the individual's understanding of something in terms of the meaning that something has to the individual, irrespective of the status of the experienced meaning in relation to demands for objectivity and intersubjectivity" (Svenson, 1997 p. 163).

Phenomenography gives the interviewee the opportunity to define his own experience based on his understanding (Dortins, 2002), but it also means that a single concept can be understood differently by different people and according to Booth (1997) this is one of the key aspects of phenomenographic research, because the student or the interviewee can look at a concept or phenomenon using a "deep approach" or by simply looking at the surface meaning that pays attention to the words used to describe a concept (p. 136). This is one of the advantages of qualitative approach to studying texts. The deep approach gives the opportunity to look at a given issue by considering other factors associated with it. They could be historical, political, economic, societal, and other factors in order to establish a sound scholarly position. At the same time views that look at the immediate or surface meaning are also respected.

This according to Svenson (1997) suggests that knowledge as a product of thinking depends on the surrounding environment. Meaning the circumstances surrounding the individual contributes in shaping his/her thinking and the knowledge produced. Thus to understand human thinking in order to produce knowledge, analysis using phenomenographic approach is done using categories of description. This is done by carefully studying the experiences of the respondents, and then come up with different categories that capture the thinking of the individual involved. According to Svenson (1997):

The most significant characteristics of the approach are the aiming at the categories of description, the open explorative form of data collection and the interpretive character of the analysis of data. Although these characteristics might be seen as general recommendations as to how to carry out research, within phenomenography they have mainly been seen as motivated by the specific aim of describing conceptions (p.162).

4.6 CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis as a research technique has been used by different scholars in different fields. It is a research process that involves a rigorous procedure of investigation in order to arrive at a conclusion that is systematic and empirical by using certain categories and coding procedures that are standard and informed by the understanding of the topic or concept under investigation. The researcher using content analysis observes in a systematic way what the manner of communication content symbolises (Janowitz, 1969; Kulbe & Burnett, 1991). As a research technique in the social sciences, content analysis became popular and its application increased in the early 1950s as a result of the work of Berelson who provided an insight into the analysis of communication research using content analysis (Mitchell, 1967). Other studies have shown that content analysis has been used since 1914, this was so because of its ability to use “non-quantified” “verbal material” into a “quantitative data” that can be “manipulated for purposes of description or hypothesis testing” (Winham, 1969 p. 192).

In content analysis, there is broader understanding of communication content, which can involve both manifest (Kaplan, 1943), and latent meanings, and its application includes “the application of historical, cultural, psychological, and legal frames of reference with various levels of meaning, subtitles, and efforts at explication of ambiguities” (Janowitz, 1969 p.648), and as discussed by Kassarian (1977) the focus of content analysis is on the messages itself. According to Janowitz (1969) content analysis seeks to infer on the reasons behind

communication messages, the methods employed by the originator of the message and the aims he wants to achieve.

Kassarjian (1977) looked at various definitions of content analysis proffered by different scholars such as Berelson, Fearing, Barcus, Paisley, Budd et al, Kerlinger and Laswell et al. The definition of content analysis offered by these scholars in the 1950s and 1960s marked the understanding of content analysis today. Drawing from the works of these scholars content analysis can summarily be defined as a study of communication content in a descriptive, systematic, objective and empirical way. It produces both manifest and latent meaning of communication, the emphasis is on the message rather than the disseminator of the message, though it seeks to uncover and observe the intention behind the message by using rigorous coding procedures and identifiable categories.

Carley (1993) states that “the basic idea” in content analysis “is to take a list of concepts and a set of texts and then simply count the number of times each concept occurs in each text. Differences in the distribution of counts across texts provide insight into the similarities and differences in the content of the text” Carley went further by defining a concept as simply an “ideational kernel” irrespective of whether it is a single word or phrase (p. 81). As long as the term used, whether a single word or a combination of words makes meaning and communicate a message, that is a concept, and content analysis is concerned with the frequency at which such idea occurs in a given text.

Kolbe and Burnett (1991) identified some of the benefits provided by content analysis. These benefits include the attempt to provide “unobtrusive appraisal of communication”, “an empirical starting point for generating new research evidence about the nature and effect of

specific communications”, “has potential as a companion research method in multimethod studies”. Kolbe and Burnett also discussed the disadvantages, according to them content analysis is “susceptible to the effects of researcher biases, which, in turn, can affect decisions made in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data”, limited in their “potential in that they often are limited to reporting specific elements in communications” and “although data are rich in descriptive, classificatory, and identification powers, they may be less sensitive to subtleties in communications than are data obtained from higher-order scales or from other research methods” (p. 244).

Content analysis has some distinguishing features. These distinguishing features of content analysis are objectivity, systematisation and quantification, though content analysis can also be qualitative in nature as we shall see in the later section of the chapter where critical discourse analysis, a qualitative approach, will be used in the content analysis.

To be objective means that each process used in the research must be carefully thought through based on rules and procedures. This includes the decision of the researcher on the unit of analysis, the content categories, and the reason why a particular word or category is given preference over the other. One of the ways of identifying the objective nature of content analysis is the process and procedure being subjected to replication, such that if another researcher employs the same techniques, he can arrive at the same or nearly similar conclusion. Being systematic means that procedures followed are done according to established rules without room for bias from the side of the researcher. A systematic procedure that will give room for generalisation is one of the indicators of systematisation. While quantification which is one of the obvious features of content analysis which looks at

the issue frequency and the ability of the data to be subjected to statistical analysis (Kassarjian, 1977).

4.7 QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

Discussions about qualitative content analysis attract attention among media scholars because of the difficulty in deciding which method is more appropriate (Kohlbacher, 2005). As we can see from the definitions of content analysis offered by various scholars, attention has been paid to the quantitative aspect. But according to Priest (1996) content analysis can be studied in both quantitative and qualitative manner. The criticism against qualitative content analysis is on its empirical nature since it does not put emphasis on statistical application of data. But Priest suggests that “qualitative means of assessing content can be just as empirical and just as rigorous as, say, ethnographers’ qualitative methods of studying people” (p. 113). “Qualitative content analysis represents a rule guided method. The analysis of the material follows a step by step and rule guided procedure dividing the material into content analytical units. Thus, the central analytical units are categories. Following the research question, categories are developed based on specific theoretical aspects” (Spannagel, Glaser-Zikuda and Schroeder, 2005 p. 3).

Scholars who give preference to quantitative content analysis do so because apart from being systematic and objective, it also gives emphasis in quantifying the frequency of occurrences of the phenomenon under study. But those who disagree with this position point to the limitation of quantitative content analysis for failing to understand the importance of the hidden meaning that underlies any media text (Gunter, 2002).

According to Jensen (2002) studies conducted in a qualitative way have the advantage of looking at the importance of meaning and what is beneath the obvious manifestation of human action. The nature of text and communication should also be studied “in their naturalistic context”, while the role of the researcher as “an interpretive subject” should not be ignored (p.236). Jensen stated further that “like any scientific enterprise, a qualitative study is committed to carrying out an analysis whose elements, procedures, and stages are explicit, documented and can be argued about. A hallmark of any competent research report is that it delivers a qualified basis for disagreement-for resolving, or specifying differences regarding methodology, theory or epistemology”(p.245). In essence “qualitative content analysis wants to preserve the advantages of quantitative content analysis for a more qualitative text interpretation” (Mayring, 2000 p. 2).

At the initial stage of content analysis it gave more attention to quantitative approach. “But over time it has expanded to also include interpretations of latent content” (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004 p.105). Qualitative content analysis therefore balances the approach to content analysis since quantitative content analysis is more concerned with the manifest content. In the manifest content of communication, attention is given to the obvious meaning, what comes on the surface, and is easier to understand. While the latent aspect looks at the meaning behind the text. The underlying intention that shapes the context of the text, and is more difficult to understand, and finding a position of consensus on the latent meaning comes with controversies. That is why when bringing the latent meaning, there is need for sufficient data and an argument that can withstand the rigour of scholarly criticism (Sumser, 2001). Thus advocates of qualitative content analysis were quick to point out that quantitative studies’ use of numbers and statistics may not be enough in understanding the circumstances that shape the content of a text. As an alternative therefore, they suggested the use of such

qualitative approaches to content analysis like discourse analysis, framing analysis, thematic approach, critical discourse analysis and other interpretive approaches (Jensen, 2002; Altheide, 1996; Richardson, 2007).

Altheide in his study of ethnographic content analysis (1987) and qualitative media analysis (1996) suggested the idea of ethnographic content analysis which is the use of ethnographic research in content analysis.³⁸ The focus of qualitative content analysis is to comprehend the nature of the text by understanding its meaning. “Its distinctive characteristic is the reflexive and highly interactive nature of the investigator, concepts, data collection and analysis”; the influence of other factors like style, format which reflect on the content of the data are used in the analysis (Altheide, 1987). This means that in qualitative content analysis the researcher is not isolated from his work, by relying on theories and abstractions only, rather he is engaged in the formation of the research process at each level because he draws his approach and the techniques of analysis from his interaction with the data.

According to Graneheim and Lundman (2004) the first thing to be done by a qualitative researcher is to decide which angle to take between the manifest and latent aspect in his research, and the unit of analysis to be used. Though both manifest and latent approaches involve some interpretation when it comes to analysis, but the difference is in the depth of analysis. The decision of which aspect to take will help also in guiding the research from the onset.

Morgan’s (1993) study on qualitative content analysis focuses on providing a foundation and the procedure of qualitative content analysis instead of investing so much energy debating

³⁸ Quoting Schwartz and Jacobs (1979) Altheide (1987) defines ethnography as “the description of people and their culture” (p. 66).

which method is more appropriate. According to Morgan, historically qualitative content analysis was part of the study of content analysis; it was simply not given much attention at the early stages of the use of content analysis. According to Morgan what distinguishes quantitative content analysis from the qualitative is that both approaches use coding procedure, including the occurrence of frequencies, however they differ in “the procedure that they use to produce the codes and the uses that they make of the counts” (Morgan, 1993 p. 115). Meaning that in drawing the codes and categories a qualitative researcher familiarises himself with the text first, while his quantitative counterpart uses theories and other abstractions in drawing them. And when it comes to analysis, the quantitative researcher is interested in quantification through frequencies, and uses that to make his analysis. The qualitative researcher goes a step further by looking at the meaning of the text, the language used, and other experiences that might help in understanding the context through which the data is used.

Morgan explains these points further by stating that when generating the codes for analysis, qualitative researchers look at the data first and derive the codes from it, while quantitative researchers look at previous works and the coding system they used and then modify them to suit the existing circumstance making the nature of the codes in qualitative analysis to be broader, but more subjective because of the contact with the data. For Morgan:

The exclusive emphasis on numerical summaries greatly limits what quantitative content analysis can do with qualitative data. At the level of coding procedures, these analysts too often search for words rather than meanings. At the level of interpreting results, they often settle for decontextualised counts rather than seeking a greater understanding within the very data that are the basis of these counts. Qualitative content analysis addresses these deficiencies by using a more qualitative approach in both its coding of the data and its interpretation of counts from these codes (p. 118).

While many of the studies that look at the advantages of qualitative content analysis either focus on the merit of the technique or try to explain its relevance or advantage over quantitative content analysis, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) discussed different typologies of qualitative content analysis. They identified three distinct approaches to qualitative content analysis, conventional, directed and summative.

In conventional qualitative content analysis, the researcher studies the data first and become conversant with its content. Then he makes notes and identifies the key ideas, concepts and other things he considers to be important, and then develops them into codes and categories. According to Hsieh and Shannon, previous studies feature only in the discussion process, but categories and theories used in previous studies are not imposed in the research, the codes emerge from the data itself, and to avoid bias and enhance the credibility its is suggested that the researcher should compare notes with those involved in the research and ensure regular check on the data.

Directed qualitative content analysis on the other hand is more theory based. Its focus is to look at previous researches and the codes they have used, and then try to apply the same techniques in order to ensure their validity or strengthen an already existing conception of such an approach. In the directed approach as discussed by Hsieh and Shannon, codes and categories are preconceived and then applied in the research. Where some of the codes fail to fit into any of the preconceived categories, new ones are created. One of the goals of directed content analysis is to give strength to an existing theory.

Finally, summative qualitative content analysis which is different from the conventional and directed qualitative content analysis begins with quantification by studying some of the words and phrases used in the text in order to understand the context in which they were used. Though it starts with quantification, it extends its frontiers by looking at the latent meaning of the text. Hsieh and Shannon stated that “in summative content analysis, data analysis begins with searches for occurrences of the identified words by hand or by computer. Word frequency counts for each identified term are calculated, with source or speaker also identified [...] it allows for interpretation of the context associated with the use of the word or phrase. Researchers try to discover the range of meanings that a word can have in normal use” (p. 1285).

Therefore this is where the second pilot study was conducted for qualitative content analysis. The newspapers to be studied, *Daily Trust* and the *Punch*, were studied in order to generate themes and categories that will be used. The two papers were selected for the following reasons:

1. They represent the north south dichotomy which the framework of this research would like to explore. *Daily Trust* is representing the north, and the *Punch* representing the south.
2. The two papers share similarities in terms of readership, they both are national newspapers, but are seen to represent the interest of the middle class in both regions, though they are read by a larger strata of the society.
3. Both newspapers were established by professionals who work in different media outfits before coming together to establish them, so they were not formed by a single individual.

4. Generally the two papers are seen to represent the opinion of their respective regions, *Daily Trust* representing the north, and to some extent Muslims, and the *Punch* representing the south (southwest in particular) and to some extent the Christians. There are both Muslims and Christians, northerners and southerners working in both newspapers.
5. Both *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* were consistent in reporting the cases of scandals, and continue to feature the stories in their front page.
6. Most importantly, these two newspapers will help in answering the research questions as well as the aims of the thesis. This is because they represent different sheds of opinion like the north south dichotomy, and an important aspect of the research question which asks whether the newspapers give prominence to news about corruption scandals. This is a question that can be proved through the newspapers rather than interviews only.

The two scandals to be studied in the two papers are the *Petroleum Technology Development Fund* Scandal involving former president Olusegun Obasanjo, and former vice president Atiku Abubakar, who were accused of diverting the money meant for the fund for other purposes.

The second scandal is the former governors' scandal involving some governors who served between 1999-2007, and were accused of corruption by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. These scandals were selected for the following reasons:

1. They qualify for the definition of scandal as identified in chapter one.
2. They involve both northerners and southerners, Christians and Muslims.
3. They represent the kind of politics and the behaviour of the elite in Nigeria.

The scandals took place from late February & March for the PTDF Scandal, while the former governors' scandal in July and December. Therefore the newspapers will be studied within the period that each story runs continuously, that is one month for the PTDF scandal, and approximately three weeks for the former governors' scandal as shown in the table below. Each news story that mentions the scandal under study was identified through a photocopy by a research assistant who was fully briefed about the scandals and the period. The selection includes both week days and the weekends.

Table on the period of study

SCANDAL	FROM	TO
PTDF	February 28, 2007	March 28, 2007
Former Governors	July 12, 2007 & December 13, 2007	July 31, 2007 & December 30 th 2007

The pilot study was helpful in that it guides the modification of the coding frame until categories used in the research were developed. The Content categories and coding frames were developed after a careful study of the qualitative aspects of the research conducted by Canel and Sanders (2006) and Richardson (2007). After studying their approach, the two papers in this research were studied, each news story about the scandals was marked, and the key words and phrases in the headlines were written down, after which they were grouped into themes as they appear in the coding frame.

4.7.1 CATEGORIES AND CODING FRAMES

Date...../...../.....

A. Newspaper

1. Daily Trust []
2. Punch []
3. Guardian []

4. New Nigerian []

B. Type of article

1. News Story []

2. Opinion []

3. Editorial []

4. Other []

C. Prominence

1. Front page []

2. Front Page/Lead []

3. Inside Page []

4. Back Page []

5. Other []

D. Ownership

1. Private []

2. Government []

E. Case

1. Former Governors []

2. PTDF []

3. Other []

F. Reference to the accused

1. James Ibori []

2. Saminu Turaki []
3. Joshua Dariye []
4. Orji Uzo Kalu []
5. Olusegun Obasanjo []
6. Atiku Abubakar []
7. Chimaroke Nnamani []
8. Rev Jolly Nyame []
9. Ayo Fayose []
10. Two or more []
11. None []
12. Other []

G. News source

1. EFCC/Nuhu Ribadu []
2. ICPC []
3. Presidency []
4. Former Governor []
5. Spokesperson []
6. Straight headline/ unidentified []
7. PTDF []
8. Senate/senator []
9. House of Reps/member []
10. Newspaper's investigation []
11. None []
12. Other []

H. Reference to Scandal

- 1. Corruption []
- 2. Scandal []
- 3. Controversy []
- 4. Other []

I. Metaphor and description

- Sacred Cow []
- Divert []
- Bombshell []
- Soft landing []
- Speedy hearing []
- Thumbs down []
- Starve of fund []
- Shift debate []
- Anatomy []
- Fresh attack []
- Trap []
- Sleeping dog []
- Renewed offensive []
- Shielding []
- EFCC's long knives []
- Other []

J. Legal terms

- Charge []
- Probe []
- Remand []
- Trial []
- Arraign []
- Testimony []
- Culprit []
- Bail []

Defer []
Dock []
Court order []
Prosecution []
Other []

K. Sympathy

Exonerate []
Innocence []
Redeem image []
Laud []
Violation []
Save []
Freedom []
Applaud []
Other []

L. Punishment

Resign []
Indict []
Blame []
Detain []
Accuse []
Arrest []
Abuse []
Penalty []
Chide []
Sanction []
Other []

M. Satire

Kuje's VIPs []
Important prisoners []
Cosy life []

Prison accommodation []

Other []

N. Other

Lead []

Split []

Hatchet job []

Quit []

Scam []

Fault []

Fate []

Reject []

O. Title of headline

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4.8 CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Qualitative studies do not stop at simply studying the manifest and latent meaning of communication, but scholars interested in understanding the meaning of the text, and how the news media use language in shaping the mind of the readers developed methodologies that will address how language is used to express a particular world view. Such qualitative approaches to studying communication include discourse analysis, framing analysis, critical linguistic, conversation analysis and critical discourse analysis.

Critical discourse analysis, which will be used in this research, or what was known previously as critical linguistics is a study that focuses on the use of language as a social practice. Critical discourse analysis is particularly interested in the relationship between language and power.

Critical discourse analysis is a method of study that is interested in finding out the structures used in communicating messages whether verbal, textual or conversational. It is a study that is interested in finding out the relationship between dominance, power and ideology. It seeks to uncover how the use of language contributes in understanding social inequality. The aim of discourse analysis is to see how social issues can be understood and studied by means of discourse analysis (Van Dijk, 1993).

In his discussion on the principles of critical discourse analysis, citing Norman Fairclough, Van Dijk (1993) suggested that critical discourse analysis is “a true multidisciplinary, and an account of intricate relationships between text, talk, social cognition, power, society and culture” (p. 253). It is an analysis that looks at the intertextual nature of the text. “The methodological advantage” of critical discourse analysis according to Chouliaraki is the ability to bring together “the discursive with the textual, through a conjunction of analysis of both text and its intertextual context”. Chouliaraki’s view was that critical discourse analysis “not only views the text as intertextual but maintains that linguistic processes in a text encode multiple social functions” (p. 297). This means that in critical discourse analysis, a holistic understanding of the text is sought in order to understand the socio-linguistic meaning of the text.

Critical discourse analysts pay attention to the use of vocabulary and grammar in the text. In particular the pattern taken by the clause in terms of transitivity, modality and theme, which “correspond to, respectively, ideational, interpersonal and textual functions of language” (Oktar, 2001 p. 313). Using critical discourse analysis places a text within a historical framework and the analysis goes beyond the use of language, but extends to other factors that will help in providing proper understanding of the text like culture, society and ideology (Meyer, 2001).

Historically, particularly in the 1970’s, scholars of media and language noticed a shift in the use of language from its formal aspect which pays attention to the use of language and the dexterity shown by speakers in their use of language. The pattern that began to emerge in the 1970s was how language was being utilised in how the relation of power is structured. Prior to 1970s the term that was widely used was critical linguistics, however by the 1990s, the term critical linguistics was gradually substituted with critical discourse analysis (Wodak, 2001).³⁹

Various attempts were made to explain what comprises of critical discourse analysis, and based on the work of Kress, Wodak (2001) stated the following: “language as social phenomenon, not only individuals, but also institutions and social grouping have specific meanings, values, that are expressed in language in systematic ways, texts are relevant units of language in communication, readers/hearers are not passive recipients in their relationship to texts, there are similarities between the language of science and the language of institutions” (Wodak, 2001 p. 6).

³⁹ Wodak (2001) gave a detailed description of how a network of scholars came together in 1991 after a symposium at the University of Amsterdam to discuss issues on discourse analysis, and specifically critical discourse analysis by looking at the theories of language and how it is used in social life. These scholars include Teun Van Dijk, Gunther Kress, Norman Fairclough, Theo Van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak.

As identified by Van Dijk (1993) and Wodak (2001), among the key concerns of critical discourse analysis are the notions of 'critical', 'power' 'dominance', 'ideology', and 'discourse', and how they appear in a text. Wodak summarises the notion of critical thus:

The notion of "critique" which is inherent in CDA' programme is also understood very differently: some adhere to the Frankfurt school, others to a notion of literary criticism, some to Marx's notions...basically 'critical' is to be understood as having distance to the data , embedding the data in the social. Taking a political stance explicitly and a focus on self-reflection as scholars doing research. For all those concerned with CDA, application of the result is important, be it in practical seminars for teachers, doctors and civil servants, or in writing expert opinions or devising school book (p. 9).

Power on the other hand from critical discourse analysis perspective is seen from the relationship among social groups both as groups and as individuals. And this power is determined by having the privilege to have access over certain aspect of social life such as wealth, social status, income, education or any other thing that gives one advantage over others. Therefore the concept of power "involves *control*, namely by (members of) one group over (those of) other groups. Such control may pertain to *action* and *cognition*: that is, a powerful group may limit the freedom of action of others, but also influence their minds. Besides the elementary recourse to force to directly control action (as in police violence against demonstrators, or male violence against women), 'modern' and even more effective power is mostly cognitive, and enacted by persuasion, dissimulation, or manipulation ...it is at this crucial point where discourse and critical discourse analysis come in" for the simple reason that "power is about relations of difference, and particularly about the effects of differences in social structures". Some scholars are of the view that "the constant unity of language and other social matters ensures that language is entwined in social power in a number of ways: language indexes power, expresses power, is involved where there is

contention over and a challenge to power. Power does not derive from language, but language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and long term. Language provides a finely articulated means for differences in power in social hierarchical structures” Van Dijk, 1993 p. 254, Wodak, 2001 p. 11, emphasis original).

Ideology is another component of critical discourse analysis, because critical discourses analysis is interested in finding out how ideas are presented in a text. Richardson (2007) discussed the historical origin of ideology which was coined by Antoine Destutt de Tracy a few years after the French Revolution. Tracy was referring to a science of ideas or ideology, which will provide a platform for other sciences. Many scholars especially those influenced by Marx see ideas being shaped by the economic reality of the society, therefore the press itself, which is controlled by the elites who try to control the ideas presented in the text is a channel for the production of ideology which is used to shape the thinking of the people as designed by the elite (Richardson, 2007).

To buttress the point that the newspapers serve as a means of promoting a particular ideology, Fowler (1991) states that “another economic circumstance which relates to the papers’ ideological roles is the fact that most of them are owned by people and companies which are commercial enterprises, often selling a range of diverse products and services other than newspapers. It stands to reason that a newspaper is likely to project such beliefs as are conducive to the commercial success of its proprietors generally” (p.121). This is perhaps one of the reasons why critical discourse analysts see ideology as a means of maintaining an unequal relation of power (Wodak, 2001), because those who have control over the economy try to control the dissemination of ideas as well, as exemplified by the commercial interests of those who own newspapers and other media of communication. Fowler (1991) therefore

concludes that “newspapers are part of the mass media, and their ideological power stems from their ability to say the same things to millions of people simultaneously. The second factor is qualitative rather than quantitative. The economic and political circumstances of the newspaper industry give it a vested interest in mediating ideas from particular perspectives, varying somewhat from paper to paper” (p. 122).

The nature of ideology, the exercising of power or the interest of the news media can be identified by examining the way its discourse is constructed. Scholars of discourse analysis are of the view that language use is an integral part of social life, and it is interconnected with other aspects of our life such that we can best understand the way life is constructed by analysing the nature of discourse in our day to day interaction. There are various approaches to discourse analysis some of which are interested in the nature of the text, and others more theoretically focused (Fairclough, 2003). “The terms ‘discourse’ and ‘discourse analysis’ (DA) are vigorously contested concepts whose definition , it often seems, are even beyond the scope of discourse studies itself”(Richardson, 2007 p. 21). According to Richardson (2007) the term discourse is one of the common terms used in the academia referring to different things, so the way it is applied in journalism can only be one of such ways. Drawing from the work of Schiffrin (1994), Richardson states that some scholars define discourse as a unit of language above the sentence. This is called ‘formalist or structuralist definition of discourse’ (p. 22).

According to Richardson those who use this form of discourse are interested in the way words are interconnected to produce meaning. The second approach to understanding discourse is the one that looks at language from a functionalist perspective. This approach considers the earlier assertion which defines discourse as language above the sentence to be

inadequate because of the assumption that guesses are made based on our understanding of social knowledge in order to understand how language is used. This perspective therefore looks at discourse as 'language in use'. "Functionalists assume that language is active, and discourse analysis is the analysis of what people do with language" (p. 23).

Fairclough (2003) explained further the nature of the elements of discourse by differentiating it from the formal aspects of language like nouns and sentences; but explains it from three perspectives, genres, discourses and styles, what is called order of discourse. "Orders of discourse are the social organisation and control of linguistic variation, and their elements (discourses, genres, styles) are correspondingly no purely linguistic categories but categories which cut across the division between language and 'non language'"(p.24-25). Fairclough further explained the nature of order of discourse, genres, discourses and style in the following:

One way of acting or interacting is through speaking or writing, so discourse figures first as 'part of action'. We can distinguish different genres as different ways of (inter)acting discursively-interviewing is a genre, for example. Secondly, discourse figures in the representations which are always a part of social practices-representations of the material world, of other social practices, reflexive self-representations of the practice in question. Representation is clearly a discursive matter, and we can distinguish different discourses, which may represent the same area of the world from different perspectives or positions. Notice that here 'discourse' is being used in two senses: abstractly, as an abstract noun, meaning language and other types of semiosis as elements of social life; more concretely, as a count noun, meaning a particular way of representing part of the world---Thirdly and finally, discourse figures alongside bodily behaviour in constituting particular ways of being, particular social or personal identities. I shall call the discursive aspect of this style. An example would be the style of a particular type of manager-his or her way of using language as resource for self identifying (p.26).

In essence what Fairclough is saying is that by understanding discourse, we can identify the differences and similarities in the way the text is used to represent social action. It means that

discourse is a tool that will help to enhance our understanding of the meaning of the messages we read daily on the pages of newspapers and other media of communication. It can help the critically minded to understand the use of language to promote ideology and exercise political and economic power. In fact it can help in critically unearthing news media's claim of objectivity and neutrality by placing them as partisan actors.

The ability to use language for the exercise of power and ideology, and call attention to issues of meaning that might otherwise be ignored, is where critical discourse analysis play an important role. Critical discourse analysis looks at how different societies through the use of language attempt to maintain their social identity, systems, belief and knowledge. Language is seen as a form of action that is situated historically and socially (Fairclough, 1995).

Different scholars use different linguistic tools in critical discourse analysis. Fowler (1991) based on Hallidayan linguistics sees language as having three functions, ideational, representational and textual. The ideational function of language is what gives a person the ability to communicate his understanding of a phenomenon. It provides the ability to represent an issue. The interpersonal function of language helps a person to develop relationship and explain his commitment, values and the kind of relationship that will emerge between himself and the listener. And finally the textual function, which establishes a connection between the text and the situation that the text emerges, which is what makes discourse possible. Fowler's approach therefore gives emphasis to the nature of transitivity, sentence transformation especially by the use of clauses, and the entire lexical structure of the sentence.

Fairclough's study on the use of language by new labour is another important study that explains how different linguistic tools can be used to send across a message by emphasising or de-emphasising certain issues through the manipulation of sentence and vocabularies, or by using metaphors that can create a meaning, consciously or unconsciously in the readers mind. The work also shows how the order of discourse, genres, styles and discourses are used to communicate the stand of New Labour. It shows how vagueness is created through nominalisation by using sentences without an agent or actor; while in some instances metaphors are used to create an impression that will leave a strong mark in the mind of the reader (Fairclough, 2000). The above examples therefore show that there is no single way of conducting critical discourse analysis; different scholars use different methods and linguistic tools in conducting their research (Fairclough, 1995, 2000, 2003, Fowler, 1991; Richardson, 2007, Wodak and Meyer, 2001).

This research is interested in the way language is used by Nigerian newspapers. This is one of the reasons why critical discourse analysis is chosen to content analyse the newspapers. The nature of discourse, the lexical structure, and the selection of words used in the headlines.

The unit of analysis of the research is the article, comprising of any news story, editorial or opinion article that mentions the word corruption or scandal or any term referring to the coverage of the scandals under study. The study will focus on the headlines used in the articles. Prior studies have shown that headlines can be studied as evidenced in the work of Van Dijk (1988) in his study of ethnic minorities in the press and Richardson (2007) in his work on the coverage of the war on Iraq. With specific example to Nigerian newspapers Taiwo (2007) studied the use of language and ideology in Nigerian newspaper headlines only. However Carvalho (2008) suggested that in studying newspaper headlines, the

researcher should also pay attention to at least one or two paragraphs of the story.⁴⁰ For this reason in the analysis of the newspaper headlines, following Carvalho's suggestion, I will pay attention to the text of the stories accompanying the headlines. This is important because it will provide additional insight into the factors behind the headlines.

National Dailies

Title	Ownership	Location
Daily Independent	Private	South
Daily Sun	Private	South
Daily Times	Government/ Private	South
Daily Trust	Private	North
Leadership	Private	North
New Age	Private	South
New Nigerian	Government	North
Post Express	Private	South
<i>Punch</i>	Private	South
The Champion	Private	South
The Comet	Private	South
The Guardian	Private	South
Thisday	Private	South
Tribune	Private	South
Triumph	Government	North
Vanguard	Private	South
The Nation	Private	South

Table 1 showing the list of daily newspapers in Nigeria

Weeklies (National)

Saturday Independent	Private	South
Saturday Punch	Private	South
Saturday Sun	Private	South
Sunday Champion	Private	South
Sunday Independent	Private	South
Sunday Punch	Private	South
Sunday Sun	Private	South
Sunday Tribune	Private	South
Sunday Triumph	Government	North
Sunday Trust	Private	North
Sunday Vanguard	Private	South
Thisday Saturday	Private	South
Thisday Sunday	Private	South
Weekend Tribune	Private	South
Weekend Triumph	Government	North
Weekend Vanguard	Private	South

⁴⁰ Carvalho made this suggestion in her study on mediated discourse and society: rethinking the framework of critical discourse analysis published in a special edition of *Journalism Studies on Critical Discourse Analysis*.

Weekly Tribune	Private	South
Weekly Trust	Private	North

Table 2 showing the list of weekly newspapers in Nigeria

The aim of the methodology is to help answer the research questions already identified in chapter one.

4.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the methodological approach of the research has been conceived. It has explained what qualitative study is, what qualitative interviews are, and the reason why qualitative content analysis by means of critical discourse analysis will be applied. The chapter also explained the pilot study conducted and the findings that emerged from that.

The qualitative approach selected for this research has the advantage of creating a room for an informed analysis of the data by synthesising it with the literature reviewed, and the contextual foundation of the research. It is important to highlight that the two research instruments used in this research, qualitative interviews by means of phenomenography and content analysis by means of critical discourse analysis are very important in addressing the aims and objectives and the research questions stated earlier. As stated in chapter one, one of the aims of this research is to study the regional dichotomy in the Nigerian press, understand the conception of Nigerian journalists on such aspects of journalistic practice like investigative journalism and whether they apply them in reporting corruption scandals. The interviews have the advantage of hearing from the journalists themselves on why they take certain decisions, while the analysis of the newspapers will establish the relationship, similarities and differences between what the respondents said, and what is exactly written in the newspapers. Beyond that, both critical discourse analysis and phenomenography have the advantage of studying responses and texts beyond their surface meaning.

4.10 SUMMARY

This chapter is key to this research because it gave a detailed explanation of the methodology employed in the research. The entire research will be done qualitatively because of the advantages of qualitative research, but most importantly its relevance in answering the research questions proposed from the beginning of the research. In this regard, this chapter has reviewed the relevant literature on qualitative interviews and critical discourse analysis. Methods which look beyond the surface meaning of the data and captured behind the scene issues that might contribute in understanding the phenomenon under investigation. It has also explained the pilot study conducted which helped in refining the questions and the coding frames. Qualitative research as explained goes beyond statistical analysis which concentrates on figures, but looks in-depth in order to incorporate the social, economic, political and other factors that shape our understanding of events in the social sciences.

The next chapter therefore will discuss the results of the qualitative content analysis conducted by means of critical discourse analysis. An analysis of two newspapers, *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* will be conducted. This is important because it will analyse the headlines and the text of the newspapers in order to see how the newspapers use language in reporting the scandals, but most importantly address some of the research questions in the thesis. The newspaper analysis will show whether there are stories that emerged from investigative journalism as part of the watchdog role of the media. That is important because it will show clearly the relationship between the views of the journalists (as expressed in chapter six) and what is reported in the newspapers.

CHAPTER FIVE

QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS

(CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS)

5. INTRODUCTION

This chapter will focus on the analysis of the headlines and texts selected for this research.

The chapter will analyse the headlines and the texts according to the newspapers and the scandals selected for the study. As stated in chapter one, one of the aims and objectives of this research is to compare the northern and the southern press. In relation to the research questions, the chapter will highlight the kind of attention the press in Nigeria has given to stories about corruption scandals, and this is crucial in answering the first research question which asks whether newspapers in Nigeria give prominence to stories about corruption scandals? The newspapers that will be studied are *Daily Trust* and the *Punch*, the former representing the north and the latter representing the south. These two newspapers represent the north/south dichotomy in Nigeria in terms of their readership and editorial direction such that other newspapers from the region can perhaps fit in within the direction of these two newspapers. They equally pay significant attention to stories about the scandals under study.

The focus of the chapter will be on the social use of language which critical discourse analysis seeks to uphold (see the methodology chapter for more explanation on critical discourse analysis). By concentrating on the social aspect of language, issues that may influence the selection of words and phrases and the circumstances that shape the story will be used in the analysis.

According to Richardson (2008) “the form, function and politics of the language of journalism have attracted scholars from a wide range of academic disciplines, including

linguistics, discourse studies, media studies, sociology and others. It goes without saying that such work has developed sophisticated and intricate analytic tools in order to describe the form and content of the news, and has produced detailed and frequently astute readings of the products of journalism” (p. 152).

The interest shown by scholars as stated by Richardson makes it imperative for researchers to further study the use of language in journalism, as that will avail them with the opportunity to look beyond the surface of news by looking deeper into the social, historical, cultural, political and environmental factors that shape the nature of journalism and influence our understanding of media output.

Different scholars have provided insight into areas of discourse that the researcher should pay special attention to, especially in the study of newspapers. One such scholar is Carvalho (2008) who states that “the analyst should pay close attention to headlines and the first one or two paragraphs of all the articles that constitute the corpus” (p. 166). For this reason, this chapter will concentrate on the use of language in the headlines of the newspapers under study, and as Carvalho suggested also look at some texts from the stories. Although the focus of this chapter is based on qualitative analysis, some element of quantitative analysis will be used in order to find the frequencies and charts that will further explain the qualitative data. This approach has been used by other scholars like Canel and Sanders (2006), Richardson (2007), and Stenvall (2008). The quantitative element was done using the Statistics Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). A total of 157 stories have been coded, 40 from the *Daily Trust*, and 117 from the *Punch*.⁴¹

⁴¹ Since this study is interested in the differences in the nature of coverage between northern and southern newspapers, the difference between *Daily trust* and the *Punch* in terms of the quantitative aspect has clearly shown that the *punch* a southern newspaper, has more stories on the cases under study than *Daily Trust* which is from the north. This could perhaps be explained for a number of reasons. The *punch* dedicates more pages on news stories and opinion articles compared to *Daily Trust*; it also has more pages than *Daily Trust*. It has also shown the kind of interest the paper has on stories about corruption scandals. As indicated in the interviews conducted which were analysed in earlier chapters, that corruption is universal, as such this may indicate the strong interest shown by the *Punch*.

Newspaper

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid daily trust	40	25.5	25.5	25.5
Punch	117	74.5	74.5	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 showing the total number of stories coded from *Daily Trust* and the *Punch*.

The chapter is divided into different sections, each section will focus on a newspaper, and then analyse the discourses that emerge from the headlines according to the categories. It should be noted that some of the categories do appear in some scandals or newspapers but may not in others. For instance Satire, as such this is the reason for not using all categories in all the analysis of the scandals.

5.1 DAILY TRUST: PTDF SCANDAL

Ideas are communicated through language. This may be one of the reasons why editors choose certain words to convey stories to the audience. Language carries different meanings and can be interpreted in different ways. As suggested by Fairclough (2003) “language defines a certain potential, certain possibilities, and excludes others” (p.24). This therefore could be interpreted to mean that editors do select certain words and exclude others deliberately for various reasons which may include competition, political or regional interest, fear of flak etc. As such it is important to study carefully the kind of linguistic categories, phrases and the lexical structure of the sentences used in reporting the cases of corruption scandals in the Nigerian press.

The analysis of headlines is very important because it is the gateway to a story. It is also the first contact between the reader and the story. As stated in the methodology chapter, there were previous studies which focused on headlines (Van Dijk, 1988, Riachardson, 2007, Taiwo, 2007).

5.1.1 METAPHOR AND DESCRIPTION

It is evident that the newspapers used metaphor in their headlines, as can be seen from the examples below:

PTDF: No soft landing for Obasanjo, Atiku, says senate committee, front page news March 13th 2007.

“No soft landing” is used by the paper here to describe the position of the senate committee investigating the allegation of wrongdoing involving former president Olusegun Obasanjo, and former vice president Atiku Abukabar. Human beings do work on the surface of the earth, therefore no one expects a human being to land. But an aeroplane or a missile that is thrown will be expected to land. But such landing may come with a risk, it can either land safely, or it may crash. As such certain mechanisms are set to ensure that the landing takes place without harming either the environment or the people living in the environment.

So when the headline says “no soft landing” for both individuals, it could have different meanings. Editorially it may suggest that the paper’s position is that both men should not be treated mildly because they hold important position, rather they should be investigated like any other individual. The second meaning that could be read from the headline is that the newspaper is giving prominence to the position of the senate committee, indicating that they will not be biased in their investigation. This is because in many occasions, allegations of bias and even bribery trails the work of the senate.

Metaphor

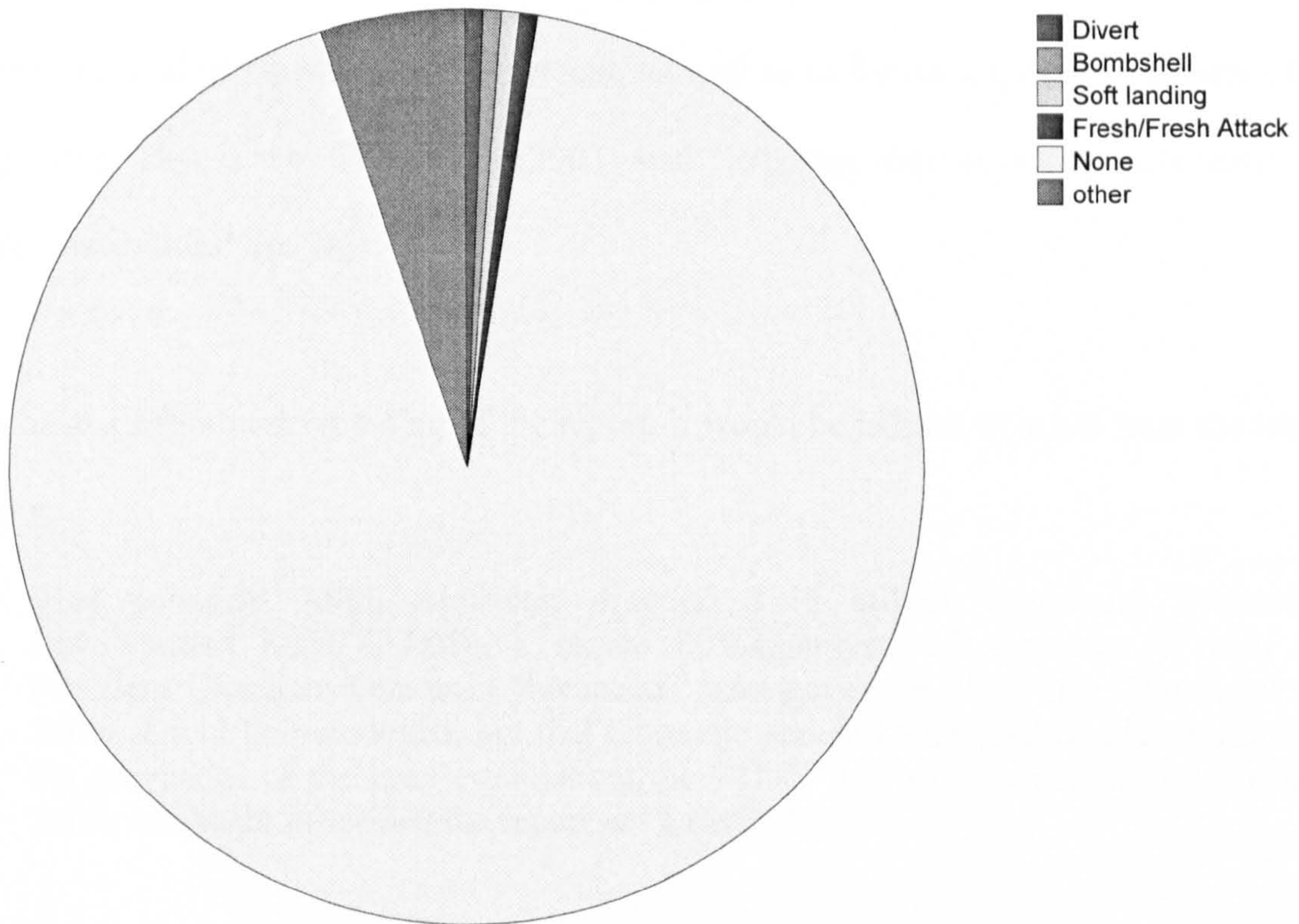


Figure 1: Chart explaining the occurrence of metaphor in the newspapers.

Consider the next headline; Senate *C'ttee*: *Atiku diverted* \$145 *PTDF funds...say Obasanjo breached the law; it is hatchet job-VP*, lead story, February 28, 2007.

The choice of description here is *divert*. In English language to divert means to redirect, to switch, to go in a different direction. And the word preceding the description was the proper name of the accused, *Atiku*, and the figure allegedly diverted followed the description immediately. However the entire headline was a rider to *Senate Committee*, which suggests that the paper is directly linking the story to the investigation of the senate committee. The understanding of this headline could be different if the newspaper said *Atiku diverted \$145m PTDF funds---senate committee*. The source of the story therefore influences the headline.

Atiku diverted \$145m would have conformed more to the sentence structure of subject+verb+Object. So what this headline did was to use a description to express the position of the senate committee on the investigation, but also the newspaper used the headline to reveal the quantity of the amount, as well as to further expose the gravity of the wrong doing. That is why Fairclough (2003) said “language defines certain potentials” and “certain possibilities” (p. 24).

But to have a better understanding of the report, it would be helpful to quote from the text of the story:

Vice president Atiku Abubakar diverted \$145 million Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF), a senate investigation said yesterday. It also said President Olusegun Obasanjo “breached” laws governing the Fund. The Panel said Atiku should be sanctioned, but that Obasanjo should be advised to adhere strictly to the provisions of the laws establishing the PTDF. In a swift reaction, vice president Atiku Abubakar described the report as “a hatchet job.”

One of the meanings that can be derived from the discourse in the above text is the issue of power, which is one of the key aspects of critical discourse analysis. As stated by Wodak (2001), “power is about relations of difference, and particularly about the effect of differences in social structures---language indexes power, expresses power, is involved where there is contention over and challenge to power” (p.11).

What is at play in the story about the diversion of \$145 million dollars suggests the struggle for power between former President Olusegun Obasanjo and former Vice President Atiku Abubakar. The media in this case provides the platform for exercising the power. From journalistic perspective, it might look like the paper was trying to balance the story by quoting both sides, what is called balancing. But a critical examination of the content indicates how each of the two sides carefully used language to draw attention to their own

perspective of the story, especially the Atiku side which calls it “hatchet job” suggesting that there is more to the story than what the legislators were alleging.

Another meaning that can be derived from the headlines, which also reoccurs several times in other headlines, is how the names of the accused are used. In the two previous examples, both Obasanjo and Atiku were addressed without the title of the office they were holding, that is the president and the vice president. This is very important in critical discourse analysis.

According to Richardson (2007):

The way people are named in news discourse can have significant impact on the way in which they are viewed. We all simultaneously possess a range of identities, roles and characteristics, that could be used to describe us equally accurately but not with the same meaning. The manner in which social actors are named identifies not only the group(s) that they are associated with (or at least the groups that the speaker/writer wants them to be associated with) it can also signal the relationship between the namer and the named (p. 49).

So let us look at the segments of the headlines where the names of the president and the vice president appeared.

- a- No soft landing for Obasanjo, Atiku.
- b- Say Obasanjo breached law
- c- Atiku diverted \$145m PTDF funds
- d- It is a hatchet job, VP

In all the four cases above, both Obasanjo and Atiku were mentioned by their proper names, except in (d) where it says *it is a hatchet job, VP*, and that was perhaps used in order to avoid tautology by repeating Atiku once again. What this could suggest is that the newspaper decided to strip the title of the offices they occupy so that they can be seen as ordinary citizens whose behaviour shouldn't be above the law. The meaning of the headlines could have changed if they were written as:

- a- No soft landing for president Obasanjo, Vice president Atiku.
- b- President Obasanjo breached law
- c- Vice president Atiku diverted \$145m PTDF funds.

Therefore even the way names are used can have a meaning and influence the way we consume the news. In this case, Richardson (2007) could be right when he suggests that “journalists have to provide names for the people in the events they report, and this naming always involves choice. And logically, by choosing one social category over another, they include them within a category and exclude them from other different categories-or perhaps, choose to foreground one social category over other equally accurate alternatives” (p.49).

Reference to the Accused

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid James Ibori	17	10.8	10.8	10.8
Saminu Turaki	6	3.8	3.8	14.6
Joshua Dariye	3	1.9	1.9	16.6
Orji Uzo Kalu	6	3.8	3.8	20.4
Olusegun Obasanjo	15	9.6	9.6	29.9
Atiku Abubakar	10	6.4	6.4	36.3
Chimaroke Nnamani	4	2.5	2.5	38.9
Jolly Nyame	1	.6	.6	39.5
Ayo Fayose	1	.6	.6	40.1
Two or more	33	21.0	21.0	61.1
None	47	29.9	29.9	91.1
Other	14	8.9	8.9	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: showing the reference made to the accused in the newspapers under study.

5.1.2 LEGAL TERMS

The headlines represent different types of discourses that explain the kind of transition the reporting of the scandals make. Some of those discourses include the use of words that lexically imply a legal process or associated with punitive measures. Here is an example

from a lead story carried by the *Daily Trust* on March 22nd, 2007.

PTDF: Committee recommends Obasanjo, Atiku for trial -I did nothing illegal, Obasanjo-president must be punished-AC.

Legal Terms

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid charge	2	1.3	1.3	1.3
probe	2	1.3	1.3	2.5
remand	6	3.8	3.8	6.4
Trial	11	7.0	7.0	13.4
Arraign	2	1.3	1.3	14.6
Testimony	1	.6	.6	15.3
Culprit	1	.6	.6	15.9
Bail	1	.6	.6	16.6
Defer	1	.6	.6	17.2
Dock	2	1.3	1.3	18.5
Court/Court order	2	1.3	1.3	19.7
Prosecution	1	.6	.6	20.4
None	122	77.7	77.7	98.1
Other	3	1.9	1.9	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 explaining the frequency of some of the legal terms used in the stories

There are almost three headlines in one, with sections of the headline as a rider to the lead headline. Let us dissect the headlines and see the words signifying the legal aspect

- a. PTDF: Committee recommends Obasanjo, Atiku for trial.
- b. I did nothing illegal, Obasanjo.
- c. President must be punished-AC.

As suggested by Fairclough (1995) language as a text helps in constituting social relations and system of knowledge and cultural identity. A surface reading above shows that certain journalistic principles have been applied in the reporting of the senate committee on PTDF. The work of the committee is to investigate whether there is any form of wrongdoing between the president and the vice president. The committee recommends that both Obasanjo and Atiku should be tried. The first duty of the journalist as a gatekeeper is to report information, which in this case has been done. But the journalist or the media organisation also has a responsibility to balance its reporting by giving a fair chance to the parties involved to explain their own side of the story. The paper did that by quoting Obasanjo saying that he did nothing illegal. But in the last aspect of the story, the Action Congress which was the party formed with the backing of former vice president Atiku Abubakar, under whose platform he contested for the 2007 presidential election, the AC was quoted saying that the president must be punished. Critical discourse analysis is interested in what is stated and what is omitted (See Fairclough, 1995), and in this case what is omitted is that rather than quoting Atiku explaining his own side of the story, the *Daily Trust* decided to quote his party, AC calling the president to be punished. This suggests some form of sympathy towards Atiku Abubakar and bias against Olusegun Obasanjo. Critics of the paper might see this as a regional bias for the paper to call for the punishment of Obasanjo and remain silent about punishing Atiku, at least from the headline. The text of the story provides additional insight:

The senate committee reviewing allegations of corruption and embezzlement in the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) recommended that President Olusegun Obasanjo and Vice President Atiku Abubakar face trial by the Code of Conduct Bureau. However, the presidency in a reaction faulted the Senate Review Committee's Report. The Special Assistant to the President on Public Affairs, Mallam Uba Sani, disagreed that the funds approved by the president from the organisation's accounts were for projects outside the mandate of the funds. Also yesterday, the Action Congress (AC) called for the immediate publication of the report of the Senate special review committee on PTDF. In a press statement issued last night the party said: "We cannot have one set of rules for some and another set of rules for others in a country governed by the rule of law".

The text of the story revealed the intertextuality that takes place in newspaper discourse. The first sentence in the text shows that despite the attention given by the mass media on the scandal, it is still at the level of allegation. The senate committee does not have the power to make prosecution; it can only make investigations and recommendations. So the discourse in the text as expressed by the senate makes a transition by recommending for a trial by the Code of Conduct Bureau. The next thing that followed was a conversation about the interplay of power between the presidency and the camp of the vice president, each using language that will portray the other in a negative light. This further suggests that language plays a vital role in the way discourses about power are shaped. Though it is one story, but it was expressed in at least three stages; allegation, recommendation, and denial.

This is one of the advantages of critical discourse analysis as discussed in the methodology chapter; it helps in looking at a story beyond the surface meaning. The language used in the story shows how politicians can utilise the media in the struggle for power, and language becomes the instrument for exercising such power. According Fairclough (1995):

Connections between the use of language and the exercise of power are often not clear to people, yet appear on closer examination to be vitally important to the working of power. For instance, ways in which a conventional consultation between a doctor and a patient is organised, or a conventional interview between a reporter and a politician, take for granted a whole range of ideologically potent assumptions about rights, relationships, knowledge and identities. For example the assumptions that doctor has the source of medically legitimate knowledge about illness, or that it is legitimate for the reporter – as one who ‘speaks for’ the public-to challenge the politician. Such practices are shaped, with their common sense assumptions, according to prevailing relationships of power between groups of people (p.54).

What this suggests is the limitation of control over certain things, and the tendency of human beings to concede those things they see beyond their power to a body or individual who supposedly possesses that knowledge or power. So when the headline states that the

committee recommends Obasanjo, Atiku for trial, it was suggesting that the senate does not have the power to exercise any form of authority on the accused. Therefore its work is a mere recommendation, but a body vested with that power, which is the judiciary should be the one to exercise such power, should the recommendation be taken. And when the paper quoted Obasanjo saying he did *nothing illegal*, it implies that he is communicating to the body that has the power to prosecute him that he is innocent. The statement by the Action Congress that *the president should be punished*, even without mentioning the court, it can be seen as communicating to the body that does the execution to take necessary action. Let us look at another headline:

PTDF: I didn't call for Obasanjo, FEC's trial- Sen Ogunwale, March 30 2007.

Prominence

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid front page	10	6.4	6.4	6.4
front page/lead	33	21.0	21.0	27.4
inside page	110	70.1	70.1	97.5
back page	2	1.3	1.3	98.7
other	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 showing the prominence given to the stories under study.

This story appeared on page 13 of *Daily Trust*. The prominence given to a story in a newspaper is determined by its location. So a story that appears on the front page is considered more important than the one that is buried inside the pages. Because the story that appears on the front page is unlikely to escape the attention of the reader. What does this signify to the headline above? The senator was denying ever calling for the trial of Obasanjo.

But why is the view of Senator Ogunwale important? This is not something we can easily understand from the headline. But an extract from the story reveals why senator Ogunwale was denying the story:

Ogunwale, an ardent supporter of president Obasanjo said the argument he advanced in the interview was that it would amount to no meaning should the senate seeks to try Obasanjo over an allegation that did not established the president as corrupt. According to him “the review committee of the PTDF was to look into the recommendation of the Senator Edoma-Egba committee which had called for witnesses. The outcome of calling for witnesses was however that Obasanjo and Atiku be tried. It was on the basis of this that I reminded them that if Obasanjo should be tried, will it also amount to trying the entire FEC which empowered Obasanjo and that will such not turn out to be meaningless? But I was surprised to have read that I called for Obasanjo’s trial”.

The extract from the story has revealed who senator Ogunwale is, an ardent supporter of Obasanjo trying to be by the side of his friend. As such the newspaper decided to publish the story in page 13, perhaps not to give too much prominence to those who may wish to support the former president. But an additional meaning that can be derived from the story is the elitist nature of the news media. According to Stenvall (2008) quoting Galtung and Ruge (1970), the news is centred on elites. The entire conversation within the headlines so far analysed, it sounds like an interplay of power between elites. The stories revolved round the president, the vice president and the senators. But the people who might be affected by the real impact of the scandal, the ordinary citizens have been left out in the story. Indeed in almost all the headlines, the word scandal is completely absent. The headlines most of the time start with PTDF followed by a semi column. If we look at the PTDF scandal, it has qualified for almost the entire criteria that qualifies a story to become a scandal as discussed in detail in chapter one.

5.1.3 PUNISHMENT

Among the themes that emerged from the texts under study are words signifying the need to punish those that allegedly perform the scandal. Let's look at this story of March 14, 2007 in the *Daily Trust*.

PTDF: Culprits must be punished-Nnamani news. the text of the story reads:

The Senate President Chief Ken Nnamani said anyone indicted in the report of the senate ad hoc committee that investigated allegation of corruption in the petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) must be sanctioned.

The headline suggests that those involved in the PTDF scandal if found guilty, they should be punished. Carvalho (2008) suggested that in critical discourse analysis, we should look beyond the text, but try to analyse the issue under study from a broader perspective. That is why she suggested two forms of analysis, what she calls "comparative-synchronic analysis" and "historical-diachronic analysis". Comparative synchronic analysis seeks to compare the story either with other stories or texts or analyse different ways in which the issue is represented. Historical-diachronic analysis pays attention to the circumstances surrounding the story, be they political, economic etc. It also "involves looking at the sequence of discursive constructions of an issue and assessing its significance. How did representations of reality impact on the subsequent ones?" (p. 171-172). Carvalho's idea of having a broader approach by looking at social factors in news production becomes relevant in the case of the above headline because the person quoted to be calling for the punishment of the culprits is Ken Nnamani, the former senate president.

Ken Nnamani is a member of the ruling People's Democratic Party, which provided the platform for both Obasanjo and Atiku to serve as president and vice president, though Atiku

later decamped to the Action Congress. When Ken Nnamani was the senate president, he led the effort to throw out the attempt by former president Obasanjo to amend the constitution so that he could run for third term. The third term bid by Obasanjo was highly unpopular in Nigeria, and by throwing out the bid, senator Nnamani became a hero. His name became associated with integrity.

So when the *Daily Trust* quoted him in that headline calling for the culprits to be punished, the newspaper was not quoting an ordinary floor member of the national assembly, but it was quoting a senator whose words are valued because of the integrity associated with it. As such the suggestion by Meyer (2001) that “discourses take place within society, and can only be understood in the interplay of social situation, action, actor and societal structures” (p. 21) become very relevant in our analysis of text rather simply paying attention to grammatical construction.

As stated earlier one of the features of the headlines under study is the omission of the word scandal. Consider the next headline for instance which feature as the lead story on March 21st, 2007:

PTDF: senate review committee members resign.

Let us borrow from Carvalho (2008) who emphasised the need to pay attention to the first or two headlines of the story when analysing headlines: the first paragraph of the story states the following:

A whiff of scandal enveloped the senate late yesterday when all seven members of the committee set up to review the earlier report of the Petroleum technology Development Fund (PTDF) resigned their posts on the review committee. Committee chairman senator Umar Tsauri said they were resigning to protest against the demands

by the Senate leadership to see the report before it was officially presented to the senate.

Looking at the attention the PTDF story attracts, and the decision of the entire committee members to quit from their assignment makes it more imperative for this headline to contain what may appropriately be termed PTDF Scandal. This is for a number of reasons especially if we refer to the criteria that qualify a story to be a scandal as discussed in chapter one. The story has attracted enough attention from the mass media as it was making front page headlines, and those investigating the story because of the perceived intrusion from the leadership of the national assembly decided to resign in protest, which is another feature of stories about scandal, people have to resign either because they want to avoid being party to the mess, or because they are involved in the wrong doing. In fact the very first sentence in the first paragraph of the story from the newspaper itself lends support to the argument this story should take the label scandal. It says; A whiff of scandal enveloped the senate late yesterday.

The next headline differs from the previous ones because it is based on an opinion article. The article was published by the *Daily Trust* on March 20th, 2007.

PTDF probe: between sanction and advice

Newspapers have a tendency to publish opinion articles related to stories making the news. It is also a way of maintaining a connection between the audience and the news media. Through opinion articles also the direction and editorial policy of the paper can be understood. This is one of the reasons why having clear and simple headlines is important. The headline above does not convey any meaningful understanding at first reading. This brings us to another aspect of critical discourse analysis which scholars use in socio-linguistic analysis, and that is

called nominalisation. “Nominalisation is a type of grammatical metaphor which represents processes as entities by transforming clauses (including verbs) into a type of noun”, “nominalisation involves abstraction from the diversity of processes going on, no specification of who or what is changing, a backgrounding of the processes of change themselves, and a foregrounding of their effect” (Fairclough, 2003; p.220, 2000 p. 26) also see Richardson (2007) Fowler (1991). If you remove *PTDF probe*, the headline will simply read, *between sanction and advice*, which makes it even more vague, which negates one of the journalistic principles that wants to draw the attention of the reader at first glance.

Type of article

		news story	opinion	editorial	other
Former governors	daily trust	17			1
	punch	43	14	1	4
PTDF	daily trust	13	3	1	5
	punch	40	5		9
other	punch		1		

Table 5 showing the frequency of the type of article according to the scandal and the newspaper.

5.1.4 SYPMPATHY

As discussed earlier in chapter one, Hallin and Mancini (2004) have argued that no one should assume that the news media is value neutral, rather it has an interest, and therefore it can be sympathetic to a particular course. This course could be ideological, political, religious or even environmental as discussed earlier in the framework of this research, the press in Nigeria is regionally divided, though there are exceptions some of the time as elaborated in the previous chapters on interview analysis. It will be interesting to see if there is an element of sympathy in the way headlines are cast. The following headline which appeared on March 28th in the *Daily Trust* provides an example.

PTDF: Finance Minister confirms Atiku innocence-Campaign Organisation

According to the text of the story:

The Atiku Campaign Organisation on Tuesday thanked the Minister of Finance, Mrs Nenadi Usman for confirming that the vice president did not engage in any secret deal over the placement of PTDF's £20m in TIB. In a reaction to the statement issued by the minister on Monday on the subject, the Campaign Organisation said Usman has unwittingly confirmed the contention of the vice president that the placement of the \$20m followed due process. The group said by admitting that the ministry of Finance authenticated the release of the money, Usman has unwittingly confirmed that the vice president did not carry out a secret transaction on the PTDF fund.

The impression the above headline will likely make in the mind of the reader is that a minister in the government that is fighting with the former vice president has exonerated him from the alleged wrongdoing of diverting money inappropriately. But reading through the story it will be clear to the reader that the story is a public relations effort by the Atiku Campaign Organisation. This can be confirmed by looking at some of the phrases used to frame the story. Consider the following:

- a. confirming that the vice president did not engage in any secret deal over the placement of PTDF's £20m in TIB
- b. the Campaign Organisation said Usman has unwittingly confirmed the contention of the vice president that the placement of the \$20m followed due process
- c. by admitting that the ministry of Finance authenticated the release of the money, Usman has unwittingly confirmed that the vice president did not carry out a secret transaction on the PTDF fund.

Although vocabularies are used to communicate an idea, that does not mean that words are innocent, literally words may maintain their every day meaning, but their lexical mapping can

be used to protect or communicate a particular political or ideological stand. Fowler (1991) has dealt with this exhaustively in his work on *language in the news: discourse and ideology in the press*. According to him “vocabulary or lexis is a major determinant of ideational structure”, therefore “each term crystallises and normalises the essentially artificial slices which are cut out of the cake of the world. It is an elementary, but fundamental, task for the critical discourse analyst to note, in the discourse s/he is studying---clusters of related terms are found to mark out distinct kinds of preoccupation and topic” (pp. 80-82).

What this suggests is that by looking at the words and phrase selected to frame the story i.e. confirm, due process, authenticate, not engaged in secret deal, are words carefully selected to exonerate the former vice president, and the headline of the story: *PTDF: Finance Minister confirms Atiku innocence*, simply finished the work of the campaign organisation. Another thing to point out from this story is the complete absence of a second opinion, whether that of the minister or her spokes person, which goes against the journalistic principles of fairness and balancing in a news story.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, some of the respondents interviewed in this research stated that the Atiku Campaign Organisation is “good” in issuing press releases in a format that can simply be published by the news media which makes the work of the journalist easy. There could also be economic reasons for publishing the story as they are: consider the following headline for instance which appeared on March 26th, 2007.

How Obasanjo authorised \$20 million PTDF investment- Atiku

The headline was about an advertorial placed by the Atiku Campaign Organisation. Such full page advertorial cost a lot of money which brings revenue for the survival of the newspaper.

And if the Atiku Campaign Organisation advertises in newspapers, it can easily be understood why its press releases will find a place in the pages of the newspapers without paying much attention to editorial issues like balancing of reports.⁴²

The following two headlines also from the *Daily Trust* are no different from the previous ones.

PTDF: Atiku Abubakar did no wrong

The above headline is an opinion article published on March 26th 2007. It is simply strengthening the effort of Atiku Abubakar to clear his name in order to fulfil his ambition of becoming the successor of President Olusegun Obasanjo. The headline reveals a lot of things which might shed light on the removal of the word scandal from the lexis of the story. If the headline had suggested that it is a scandal, that may constantly remind the reader to ask questions when an attempt is made to portray the former vice president in a positive light. But also consider the simplicity of the headline. Atiku Abubakar did no wrong. The subject of the headline was made very visible, it will be much clearer than saying the vice president did no wrong.

Just three days before the opinion article above, on March 23rd, 2007, an advertorial was featured in the *Daily Trust* with the following headline:

My Story of the \$20 million PTDF investment- Atiku

This is an example of how spin doctors can use phrases and words in order to shape our understanding of the issue at stake. Study the headline carefully, at the beginning of the headline, the story was personalised, My Story, and PTDF was described as an investment.

⁴² For more on the influence of advertising, see Herman and Chomsky (2002), specifically the chapter on the propaganda model.

What this headline did was to completely overturn the story by taking away the allegation and branding the headline to portray a positive image of the former vice president. If the headline was not an advertorial, if it were an interview, the headline could have made a front page lead story that can be read as My story of the \$20 million PTDF scandal. This makes the argument made earlier that the newspaper should have made editorial decision to always refer to the PTDF stories as PTDF scandal.

Although, as suggested by some of the respondents in the interviews discussed earlier, that the *Daily Trust* tried to be as professional as possible, which according to them was one of the reasons for the survival of the newspaper, and even though from the headlines described above, it did not take a highly partisan position, but the kind of caution exhibited by the paper in the way it reports the PTDF scandal suggests that other factors, like the region of the vice president being the same as the location of the paper might have influenced the way the story was covered (see chapter six for a discussion on the factors that determine regional parallelism such as location and the interest of the elite). This may not be surprising as some of the people managing the Atiku campaign organisation are themselves former journalists who have a network of friends not only among northern journalists, but also among the southern journalists (see chapter five and six for a discussion of clientelism).

This is one of the advantages of qualitative analysis by means of critical discourse analysis in that it allows the researcher to look beyond the surface of the argument, but also study other historical and social factors associated with the production of news. The meanings that can be derived from these analysis is that the way the PTDF scandal was reported can be linked to the framework of the research, in terms of the clientelist relationship between journalists and news sources, and secondly the findings remain relevant to the research questions set

earlier in the study in terms of the differences in reporting between northern and southern press. In the case of *Daily Trust* here, there are reasons to suggest some sympathy towards Atiku Abubakar, possibly due to both regionalism and clientelism.

5.2 DAILY TRUST: FORMER GOVERNORS SCANDAL

The stories of the former governors who served between 1999 to 2007 made a lot of headlines in Nigerian newspapers, especially after the formation of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) under the chairmanship of Nuhu Ribadu. In one of his appearances before the Nigerian senate, Mr Ribadu stated that he has evidence that 31 out of the 36 state governors in Nigeria are corrupt:

Almost all of Nigeria's state governors are being investigated for corruption, the anti-graft agency head has said. Nuhu Ribadu told the Nigerian Senate that 31 of the 36 governors were being investigated and that 15 of them would be charged in the coming weeks. He also said that the world's biggest thief was Nigerian but was prevented from naming him. Critics of President Olusegun Obasanjo say the fight against corruption is being used as a political tool. But Mr Ribadu denies these charges. Nigeria's governors enjoy immunity from prosecution while in office and the country is regularly ranked as one of the world's most corrupt countries. The president and vice-president have also swapped corruption accusations in recent weeks (BBC News, 2006 p.1).

One of the reasons that prevented the prosecution of the former governors as stated in the story, was the immunity they enjoy in the Nigerian constitution which protects them from facing legal charges. Immediately after they left office on May 29th 2007, the EFCC under Nuhu Ribadu began hunting them. The governors were not arrested at the same time. Some were arrested individually, and others were arrested in group. The arrests of the former governors under study took place in the months of March, July and December 2007. So how does the *Daily Trust* framed the stories of the former governors, seeing that they cut across the regions? Here are some examples.

5.2.1 METAPHOR AND DESCRIPTION

One of the headlines by the *Trust* which attracted attention was this headline which appeared on July 30th, 2007 as the lead story:

Ex-govs live cosy life in prison.

A prison is not a place for enjoyment. It is meant for punishment, and no matter the luxury available in the prison it remains a prison. What does it signify when the newspaper described the ex-governors as living a cosy life? Critical discourse analysts believe that language is communicated by incorporating other texts and social practices in order to make a meaning. This is what they call intertextuality. According to Richardson (2007), the concept of intertextuality is founded on the notion that texts cannot be viewed or studied in isolation since texts are not produced or consumed in isolation. All texts exist, and therefore must be understood, in relation to other texts”, “texts are only intelligible---when contextualised and ‘read’ in relation to other texts and other social practices” (p. 100).

Let us explain the possible reasons why the paper decided to cast the headline in this format, since as argued by Richardson, texts can best be understood when they are contextualised. The term ex-governors is used here as a stereotype. According to Fowler (1991) in his discussion of stereotypes, “news values, then, are to be regarded as intersubjective mental categories in determining the significance of events, the papers and their readers make reference, explicit or more usually implicit...a stereotype is a socially-constructed mental pigeon-hole into which events and individuals can be sorted thereby making such events and individuals comprehensible” (p. 17).

As such the entire former governors that found themselves in custody were grouped as ex-governors. The use of the terms may be derogatory in that the way they were behaving while in office portrays them as people who are overwhelmed by the political power they were holding. They decide who to appoint in any position within their states, but also influence the appointment of others at the federal level. Ministers from their state who show an interest in contesting for governorship election face a lot of opposition from them, sometimes even losing their ministerial appointments because the governors in most cases make the nomination to the federal government. Some of the former governors became so powerful that they relocated from the government house where they should officially conduct the administration of the state, to their private residences. Commissioners and permanent secretaries have to report to them in their personal houses. So when the paper decided to call them ex-governors, it is indirectly expressing the fact that no condition is permanent, you can be a governor today and tomorrow you will be an ex-governor. The newspaper did not stop there; it described their conditions in the prison as cosy life. This is to draw attention to the fact that they are finding it difficult to adjust to normal life because of their life style.

That is why Richardson (2007) and Fowler (1991) emphasised the importance of intertextuality in critical discourse analysis; the words contained in a sentence represent different social and discursive practices which should be understood in order to unravel the meaning behind a text. According to the text of the first paragraph of the story:

A relaxed life of social visits, reading of books and newspapers, prayer sessions, conversations under leafy trees and receiving streams of visitors is the lot of four former governors, now cooling their heels at Abuja's Kuje prison, *Daily Trust* learnt yesterday.

The text of the story further reveals the kind of life these former governors were used to, and were extending even while they were in prison. Some points of interest to a critical discourse

analyst are the list of activities which these governors are reported to be doing in the prison. Social visits, reading books and newspapers as well as prayer sessions. This is where the understanding of culture becomes relevant. As discussed in chapter one that the meaning of political culture is that political behaviour had to be seen in cultural context; what the text of the story suggest is the cultural and political behaviour of the Nigerian politician. Someone who presents himself in public as learned, caring and religious even if his actions contradict that. Another point of interest here is that irrespective if region and religion, the politicians have the same traits in their attitude.

5.2.2 LEGAL TERMS

One of the key moments in the former governors scandal was the time they appeared before the court. Prior to that, some newspaper reports suggested some doubts, thinking that the former chairman of EFCC, Nuhu Ribadu was simply making empty threats. Although Nuhu Ribadu's EFCC had arrested powerful people, including his former boss, the former Inspector General of Police Tafa Balogun, and former Managing Director of Bank of the North, Mr Bulama, some people thought some of the governors are too powerful to be tried before a court of law. Even though some among the 31 former governors have been arrested and presented before the court, the happenings that resulted in the removal of Nuhu Ribadu from the commission, and his demotion from Assistant Inspector General of Police to, Deputy Commissioner of Police, may add weight to those doubts. In an analysis by the *Daily Trust* on the removal of Nuhu Ribadu, the paper stated that:

The announcement last week by the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mike Ehindero, that Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Malam Nuhu Ribadu, is to proceed to National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru, near Jos, signalled the end of a fierce battle to unseat headship of one agency that has become a terror to the club of past governors accused of being corrupt (Reef, 2007, emphasis mine).

Ribadu himself indicated how powerful these former governors could be, and even suggested

that one of the former governors orchestrated his removal.⁴³ This therefore makes it understandable why newspapers gave a lot of prominence to the stories of the ex-governors' trial. Some of the headlines read as follows:

EFCC arraigns Ibori Today, front page news December 13, 2007

Court remands Ibori in prison, lead story December, 14, 2007

Court remands Nyame, Dariye in prison, lead story July 20th 2007

EFCC may charge Saminu, Kalu to Court, front page July 13th, 2007.

Why we detain Saminu, Kalu-EFCC, lead story July 12th 2007.

At least three things can be identified from these headlines.

- a. The use of short sentences
- b. The words used like *arraign*, *remand*, *charge* and *detain* signify a legal process.
- c. The entire headlines quoted are either the lead story, or at least they appear in the front page of the paper.

These three issues show the significance of the story and the kind of public attention it generates. Short sentences were used in order to make the story as simple as possible in such a way that the reader can grasp the message at a glance. The use of the words signifying the commencement of a legal process should not be seen as simply reporting the presentation of the accused in court, but it also represents the type of people that are charged in court. There are lots of criminals charged before various courts and tribunals daily. But they hardly attract a front page attention or even become the lead story, perhaps the story will not even be

⁴³ Nuhu Ribadu stated this in an interview with Washington post. He further stated that "One was a governor of a state called the Delta state, Nigeria's oil state. And we saw this guy who was rich with probably \$700 million. And I brought him to justice. He gave me money -- this gives you the picture of the problem of the country. He gave me \$15 million, in physical raw cash, to stop the investigation. Of course he did not succeed. We took the money and charged him for it". See <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/22/AR2009052202025.html>

published in any newspaper. What is different here is that a scandal is involved. (See chapter one for more on scandal). It will not be out of place therefore to once again differentiate between scandal and corruption. According to Lull & Hinerman (1997) “unlike corruption and bribery, which can exist (and often do exist) when others do not know about them, scandal is always to some extent a “public” affair” (p.43).

This might be one of the reasons why it became imperative for the headlines to be casted in that manner; short, concise and straight to the point without any attempt to nominalise them. Another meaning that can be derived from the headlines and the attention they were given is because it involves people, whom the public expect to behave in a particular manner, so when their behaviour negates that expectation, it becomes a public issue. This is what Lull and Hinerman called “star scandal”. This type of scandal “erupts when the mass media reveal an instance of how the desires of famous people overrule social expectations, norms, and practices. The private behaviour of a public persona enters the public arena under circumstances that are outside the star’s control. The behaviour then becomes evaluated according to the dominant moral code. Stars are in paradoxical position. They may be given more moral leeway in expectations about their social behaviour, but at the same time they endure closer scrutiny than other people” (p. 21).

Newspaper editors select their headlines carefully; they find the words that will convey the intended message, because they know that stories about scandals will sell. According to Bird (1997), “no matter how often media scholars and columnists scold them for it, people like scandal. Scandal sells newspapers and tabloids, keeps people in front of their televisions, and provides endless opportunities for conversation”. The media therefore becomes “the story teller or town crier, but the scandal gains its momentum from the audience” (p. 99-105).

Just as in some of the headlines analysed earlier, no title was used in the headlines to signify the position of the accused, they were all addressed as Ibori, Nyame, Kalu and Turaki, which may indicate the fact that the court should see them as ordinary Nigerians irrespective of the position they held. One important thing to note about the headlines, especially after reading through the core of the story, is that the stories were either from the EFCC or simply a report from the court where the trial begins. But investigative journalism is completely absent. At least from this sample, it can be said that what is reported in the newspapers about scandals, conforms with the views of some of the journalists who stated in chapter five that investigative journalism is not practiced in Nigeria, rather the journalists rely either on the handout given to them in terms of press releases, or rely on the notes they have taken from routine news reporting.

5.2.3 PUNISHMENT

A part from the headlines that signify the use of legal terms which set the legal process, some of the headlines also point at some form of punishment. Consider the following two headlines:

Ibori, Fayose to spend Xmas in jail, front page story December 18, 2007.

Court sends Saminu, Kalu to prison; Dariye remanded in EFCC, custody lead story July 17th, 2007.

The former governors mentioned in these two headlines are among the ones that attracted the highest attention in the former governors' scandal for a number of reasons. Newspaper reports across the country have indicated that that James Ibori, the former governor of Delta State, is the powerful governor who pledged to see the end of Nuhu Ribadu as the head of the

Economic and Financial crimes Commission. Apart from that, newspaper reports have indicated that he was one of the highest donors to the 2007 'Yaraduwa presidential campaign, therefore he is so close to the president, that whatever he wants from the president or in the federal government, he will certainly fulfil his wishes. As such it became a front page story that such a powerful person could not celebrate Christmas at home with his family, but he will do so in Jail. The text of the story reads:

This year's yuletide season promises to be bleak for former Delta governor James Onanefe Ibori and his former Ekiti State counterpart Mr Ayo Fayose, both of whom were yesterday remanded in prison custody by different courts until early next year. While Ibori, who is standing trial before the Federal High Court was remanded until January 11, when his case will come up, Fayose was remanded by a Federal High Court in Lagos until January 10, when his own case will be heard again.

The first sentence of the story explains the kind of interest the stories about former governors is generating. The following phrases used in the sentence, yuletide season, and promises to be bleak tell a lot about the editorial position of the *Daily Trust*. The yuletide season refers to the Christmas period. It is a joyous moment for the Christian community, and political leaders use the time to receive special courtesy calls, and organise parties. For the rest of the country, it is a public holiday. Yet this very yuletide period for James Ibori and Ayo Fayose promises to be bleak, in the sense that they will celebrate it in jail, when just a year earlier they were among those politicians who receive courtesy calls from the people in their respective states.

That is not the only thing in the story. The story started as an analysis rather than a normal news story. If we are to go by the principle of 5ws & h format, the story will simply state that former Governors James Ibori and Ayo Fayose have been remanded in prison until early next year. Instead, the paper decided to start by expressing an opinion.

Perhaps the reason why the newspaper decided to take that line might be understood when compared with the text of the story in the second headline about Saminu Turaki and Orji Uzo Kalu: the text stated that:

With his wives and a brother offering comforting words, former Jigawa State governor, Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki shed a tear yesterday when Abuja federal High Court judge Justice Binta Murtala Nyako remanded him in prison custody until Monday next week, when his bail application would be heard. Also remanded in prison custody was former Abia state governor and PPA presidential candidate Dr Orji Uzo Kalu, standing for trial alongside Turaki for alleged money laundering.

Just like the James Ibori and Ayo Fayose's Story, the text started with an explanation rather than the key story, what however defers is that, the case of Saminu Turaki was framed sympathetically. With his wives and a brother offering comforting words. The reader was taken emotionally, when we talk about brothers and wives, these are people we have a lot of compassion for, they are people who bring love to us, and we will like to share our moments together. So unlike James Ibori whose yuletide season promises to be bleak, Saminu Turaki has his wives and brothers comforting him. This story may also suggest that the *Daily Trust* here was more sympathetic to Saminu Turaki who is from the north, than James Ibori who is from the south-south (See chapter five and six for more on the views journalists expressed about northerners being their brothers' keeper, such that you don't celebrate on your brothers' predicament).

5.3 PUNCH: PTDF SCANDAL

5.3.1 METAPHOR AND DESCRIPTION

The *Punch* used a number of metaphors in reporting the PTDF scandal, even more than the *Daily Trust*, for example in a news story carried on page 8 of the paper on March 3, 2007, the headline simply reads as:

PTDF: Atiku picks holes in senate panel's report.

This story was a response to the recommendation by the senate committee investigating the PTDF scandal in which the report of the committee led by senator Ndoma-Egba accused the former vice president of aiding in diverting \$145 million. The Atiku campaign organisation therefore issued a press release which was published as a news story by the *Punch*. The headline of the story carefully selected a metaphor that will discredit the report and create doubt in the mind of the reader, Atiku picks holes. But there are more issues that can be discerned from the text of the story:

Vice President Atiku Abubakar on Friday picked holes in the report of the Senate ad hoc panel on the Petroleum Technology Development Fund. He said the report ought to have indicted President Olusegun Obasanjo, his aides and chieftains of the Peoples Democratic Party for abuse of office and diversion of public fund...the vice president said in statement issued by his campaign organisation and made available to the *punch* by email that the report failed to address pertinent issues he raised in his testimony to the committee.

The kind of metaphor used in this story, that is holes, can be understood when the political atmosphere in the country at the time of the story is explained. The story was published in early March, 2007, and that was less than a month before the April 2007 presidential election which Atiku Abubakar was contesting under the platform of the Action Congress. It was at that time that the investigation of the PTDF scandal reached its peak. Some even criticised president Obasanjo of masterminding the outcome of the report at that time in order to curtail Atiku Abubakar's presidential ambition. The entire story as published by the *Punch*, which the paper also claimed was sent to it by email, was a public relations effort by the Atiku Campaign Organisation to respond to any attempt aimed at stopping the presidential ambition of Atiku Abubakar. So when the headline says Atiku picks holes, in plural, it is suggesting that the former vice president picked holes in the attempt by his former friend, Olusegun Obasanjo to use the PTDF report to stop his presidential ambition.

Another meaning that can be understood from the story is the similarity between *Daily Trust*,

a northern newspaper, and the *Punch*, a southern newspaper in publishing press releases from the Atiku campaign organisation as they are without balancing the story by hearing from the other side. The story as published by the *Punch* was nearly half a page, yet the entire text of the story was quoting the Atiku Campaign Organisation, which further proves that it is a press release. So is the *Punch* trying to avoid taking a regional stand in the crises between Obasanjo and Atiku? The answer to this question has perhaps been explained by one of the editors from the *Guardian* quoted in chapter five who said that Atiku was simply “financing it”. If Atiku was paying for it, then this further reveals one of the challenges facing the Nigerian media, which was explained in chapter six as corruption within the Nigerian press. This does not mean that the *Punch* doesn’t always balance its stories, in one of the headlines on March 24th, 2007 the paper said: Fresh PTDF bombshell: How Obasanjo authorised \$20 million PTDF investment—Atiku---it is a lie---presidency . Although the paper reported the side of the presidency, but the text of the story was largely from the Atiku Campaign Organisation.

Other headlines also used different types of metaphor like the following:

Senate raises fresh panel to review PTDF report, news story March 7, 2007

Corruption: no sacred cow now-Nnamani, news story March 6 2007

The metaphor used in the two headlines fresh panel and no sacred cow signifies at least two things:

- a. The senate was trying to save its face from allegations that the executive branch has influenced the outcome of the report of the ad hoc committee. So the senate president made this statement that no sacred cow, when it comes to the issue of corruption, the statement is almost similar to the headline quoted earlier in the *Daily Trust* by

Nnamani, that culprits must be punished.

- b. Following that is the formation of another panel to review the PTDF scandal, as such by describing the panel as fresh, it is suggesting that the existing panel is not affected by the political wrangling that pervaded the previous one, because it is fresh, therefore it will be unbiased.

Some of the metaphors also used in the *Punch* indicate a face to face struggle between the National Assembly and the Public. Consider this headline for instance.

PTDF: Senate battles to redeem image, news/politics March 24th, 2007

Context is equally important in the analysis of the headline above, which as stated earlier, critical discourse analysis, because of its multidisciplinary nature, always pay attention to. Why should the senate battle to redeem its image? The answer is because of the public perception of the senate being a conglomerate of individuals who are after their personal interest, and being representative of the people who are elected to serve their constituency, the public have strong interest in how they conduct their affairs.⁴⁴ Since 1999 when Nigeria returned to a civilian administration, the credibility of the legislator has been questioned. They are seen as the rubber stamp of the executive who manipulate them any time they wish. This is not unconnected with the fact that during the presidency of Olusegun Obasanjo, he allegedly masterminded the removal of any senate president who disagreed with him. So within his eight years in office, the senate had five senate presidents: Evans Enwerem, Dr Chuba Okadigbo, Anyim Pius Anyim, Dr Adolphus Wabara and Ken Nnamani. So when the *Punch* in its news analysis captioned the headline as senate battles to redeem image, it is

⁴⁴Members of the public and the media pay attention to the activities of legislators, especially from those who are sceptical about their credibility. This is not peculiar to Nigeria, as in the United Kingdom, the Members of Parliament expenses scandal drew a lot of attention from the media. See for instance <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8041232.stm> downloaded 27th/05/09, for a story on the MPS scandal.

referring to a battle with public opinion which questions the integrity of the senate. Such scepticism about the credibility of the senate can be seen in some of the opinion articles in the newspapers as exemplified by the headline of this article which featured in the *Punch* on March 24th, 2007: *Senate on trial*.

One of the interesting things to learn about the headlines under study is what Fairclough (1995) calls “official discourses”, referring to the way newspapers use the words expressed directly by official sources in reporting events. This can be seen in some of the similarities between the headlines in both *Daily Trust* and the *Punch*. It was evident in the story which says that Atiku picks holes in the PTDF report. The headline was just a summary of the first paragraph of the story which used similar metaphor.

5.3.2 LEGAL TERMS

The *Punch* also used terms that can be described as signifying a legal process. The newspapers frequently use the word trial in reporting the PTDF scandal. The following headline is another example.

PTDF: Atiku should face trial-Presidency, news March, 2 2007

While in the analysis of some of the previous headlines, it was suggested that the *Punch* also published stories from the Atiku Campaign Organisation without balancing them in many occasions with the Obasanjo side, from the surface, the above headline might suggest that the *Punch* is using a language that is against Atiku, and pro-Obasanjo. The language was simple, that Atiku should face trial. But the text of the story differed from the text of previous stories which quoted Atiku’s side only. In the case of this story, statements by the presidency, which obviously represent Obasanjo were in most part of the story followed by Atiku’s

response. Here is an excerpt:

The presidency on Thursday advised the senate to recommend the prosecution of vice president Atiku Abubakar for allegedly mismanaging the accounts of the Petroleum Technology development Fund.

The advice came barely 24 hours after the senate ad hoc committee on the management of PTDF.

The vice president however, said it was president Olusegun Obasanjo, who had something to worry about.

When compared with some of the stories analysed in this chapter where Atiku's line of argument find a space without paying attention to that of Obasanjo, the way this story gave Atiku Abubakar a fair chance to air his view show clearly the bias of the *Punch* in favouring Atiku Abubakar over Obasanjo. If that is the case, then this has created a paradox. How can a southern newspaper be more favourable to a northerner, Atiku Abukakar? There might be two reasons.

The first is, when Olusegun Obasanjo was released from prison in 1998, and decided to run for the presidency, the southwest, which is also the predominant location of Nigerian newspapers as explained by Oyoivbaire (2001), were not in the support of his candidature. Therefore to borrow the suggestion by Carvalho (2008) of using "historical-diachronic analysis", regionally and historically Obasanjo has an issue with the southwest elite, who see him as a northern stooge, both at the time he was the military head of state in the 1970s, and in 1998 when he decided to join partisan politics, and was eventually elected president in 1999. South western press and its elite never hide their disdain for Olusegun Obasanjo. However after he was elected president, Obasanjo decided to incorporate a clique of the south western mainstream politicians like chief Bola Ige. Chief Bola Ige made it clear that he

accepted to serve in Obasanjo's government because Obasanjo has agreed to implement Afenifere⁴⁵ agenda (Haruna, 2007). So the south western press changed from opposing Obasanjo to his defender. However as suggested by one of the editors interviewed for this research, Obasanjo became highly unpopular when the southwest saw that there was little his administration could show in terms of concrete achievements, and also his attempt to change the constitution and have a third term was not popular with the media as well, and the press in the southwest therefore changed its position once more and returned to its opposition against Obasanjo. This perhaps might explain one of the reasons why the *Punch* was not too supportive of him. (See chapter six for more on the factors associated with regional parallelism such as the elite factor, location and the complexity of the Nigerian press).

Second, Atiku's Abubakar was becoming popular with the media for opposing Obasanjo's third term bid. Atiku was opposed to third term because he saw himself as the natural successor to Obasanjo being his deputy, so when he had disagreement with Obasanjo, he left the party and fought against the attempt to change the constitution. Most of the verdicts of the supreme court between Obasanjo and Atiku favoured the latter, and so that contributed in making Atiku popular with the Nigerian press. However the issue of using his financial muscle to get favourable coverage in the media should not be divorced from the reasons why he tends to have a better coverage in the press compared to Obasanjo.

5.3.3 PUNISHMENT

Just like the *Daily Trust*, the *Punch* carried a number of headlines which lexically imply punishment. A couple of these headlines will be illustrative:

⁴⁵ Afenifere is the Yoruba socio-cultural organisation, and claims to be speaking on behalf of the southwest politicians.

PTDF: Panel blames Obasanjo, indicts Atiku; Fasawe to refund N1.55bn, presidency, VP react, lead story February 28 2007.

Nnamani seeks stiff penalty for indicted officials news March 14, 2007

Prosecute PTDF scandal culprits, text message March 23rd 2007

Senate review panel indicts Obasanjo, Atiku; presidency faults report, Atiku praises committee,

.....We have no hidden agenda, says Nnamani- lead story, March 22nd 2007.

Punishment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Resign	3	1.9	1.9	1.9
Indict	5	3.2	3.2	5.1
Blame	1	.6	.6	5.7
Detain	1	.6	.6	6.4
Arrest	9	5.7	5.7	12.1
Penalty	1	.6	.6	12.7
Sanction	2	1.3	1.3	14.0
None	122	77.7	77.7	91.7
Other	13	8.3	8.3	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 showing the frequency of words related to punishment theme.

The similarities in the above headlines are the kind of phrases used in framing the stories.

Blames Obasanjo

Indicts Atiku

Stiff penalty

Prosecute PTFDF scandal culprits

The phrases used to describe the allegation of wrong doing in these headlines occurred in different dates. Yet they suggest almost the same thing. This brings to attention the limit of the newspapers in terms of what gets reported and the language to be used in describing the reported event. According to Fowler (1991) in his explanation of discourse and the reader, he states that:

It should be clear that linguistically constructed representation is by no means a deliberate process, entirely under the control of the newspaper. The newspaper does not select events to be reported and then consciously wrap them in value-laden language which the reader passively absorbs, ideology and all. Such a ‘conspiracy theory’ would give the newspaper too much, and the reader too little, power---the practices of news selection and presentation are habitual and conventional as much as they are deliberate and controlled. And as for value-laden language, the crucial point is that values are in the language already (p. 41).

What this highlights is that though editors cast the headlines, but the language can give more meaning if analysed than the journalist might have intended. Linking this to Carvalho’s suggestion of “comparative-synchronic analysis” and “historical-diachronic analysis”, the relevance of context and multidisciplinary approach to critical discourse analysis will help unearth some of the behind the scene issues, as well as the historical, journalistic and sociological issues that will add meaning to our understanding of media discourse. As such, despite the effort by both former president Olusegun Obasanjo, and former vice president Atiku Abubakar to show themselves in a positive light, by criticising the other or exposing his shortcomings, a careful analysis of the language used in reporting the scandals will reveal that both of them may have questions to answer. No matter the spin contained in the text of the stories, the lexical mapping of the headlines tell the reader that something is wrong somewhere.

5.3.4 SYMPATHY

There are group of headlines also in the PTDF scandal as reported by the *Punch* which on the surface might sound sympathetic. Such headlines include.

Presidency commends senate committee news story February 28, 2007

PTDF report: senate panel exonerates Adenuga, Globacom new March 1 2007

-----PPA seeks report's rejection-----report vindicates Obasanjo

Why we didn't indict Obasanjo-Senator Ndoma Egba news March 4, 2007

We do not regret our PTDF report— news, senate adhoc committee member March 4, 2007.

The key words used in the headlines under this category may sound sympathetic especially to Obasanjo, compared to the headlines in the previous themes. Presidency commends senate, senate panel exonerates Adenuga, report vindicates Obasanjo, why we didn't indict Obasanjo, we do not regret our PTDF report. If you group some of the underlined words, *commendation, exoneration, vindication*, what easily comes to mind is the absence of wrongdoing.

But one basic thing that is common about these headlines, and which will help us in understanding the tone of the headlines is the source of the stories.

In the first headline, the story was developed from statements made by Mrs Remi Oyo, senior special assistant to president Obasanjo on media. The second story was an extract from the ad hoc committee while the third story was developed from an interview with senator Ndoma-Egba who chaired the ad hoc committee investigating the PTDF scandal. As such it is clear why the reports took such a sympathetic tone. That is why it is important in critical discourse

analysis to understand what Van Dijk (2001) calls “local context” which he defines as “the immediate, interactional situation in which communicative event takes place. Some properties such as a situation are its overall domain (politics, business), an overall action (legislation, propaganda, participants in various communicative and social roles---as well as their intentions and goals, knowledge, norms and other beliefs. Such contexts are said to constrain the properties of text and talk. That is what we say and how we say it depends on who is speaking to whom, and when and where, and with what purposes” (p. 108).

By applying Van Dijk’s idea, we can understand that the source of the story has influenced the content because of the “local context”, and their goal was to communicate a positive side of their argument to the reader. This approach corresponds with that of Fowler (1991) who questions the assumption that newspapers have total control over what they write, rather as suggested by Van Dijk, there are other factors like politics, and actions like legislation which play a role in shaping the language of news.

5.4 PUNCH: FORMER GOVERNORS

5.4.1 METAPHOR AND DESCRIPTION

The former governors scandal received a lot of coverage from the *Punch*. Different linguistic categories emerged just like in the *Daily Trust*. As suggested by Fairclough (2000) metaphors have a social significance, because the qualities of other creatures or objects are transferred to human beings. Here are few examples of metaphors used in the *Punch* in its reporting of the former governors’ scandal.

How governor nailed Kalu, news story , July 29th 2007

Ibori’s journey to EFCC’s net, news story December 13, 2007

The first story on Kalu was a reference to his successor, who the report alleged was the one who reported Kalu to the EFCC in 2006, stating that he is aware of every penny that was spent in the government. Perhaps the *Punch* decided to use this metaphor, nail, because his successor, Theodore, Ahamefule, Orji, was formally the Chief of Staff to Orji Uzo Kalu. This can be further understood when we relate this to the nature of Nigerian politics, where godfathers play an important role, especially on who succeeds them. For instance, only one deputy governor, that of Zamfara State, Mahmud Aliyu shinkafi, succeeded his governor among those who served between 1999-2007. This is because the governors wanted to choose their successors, and many of them did not trust their deputies. So Orji Uzo Kalu supported his Chief of Staff, a position that is normally held by a loyalist, yet it turned out according to the story that he was the one who reported his predecessor to the EFCC. For this Orjo Uzo Kalu was nailed politically by his successor. When something is nailed, it means it is fixed to a particular position so that even if you remove it, it will leave a mark that will be difficult to erase.

Concerning the second headline, as was explained earlier, James Ibori was seen as one of the most powerful governors, whose arrest seems unlikely despite the pledge made by Nuhu Ribadu, the former EFCC chairman. Yet, less than a year after he left office, he was arrested and detained by the EFCC. So it is like a fisherman who spread his net in a river, though some of the fishes might try to escape, but with patience, the fisherman can capture it, and once in the net, it is difficult to escape. So that might explain the choice of this metaphor; Ibori's journey to EFCC's net. The EFCC symbolises the net, and Ibori was the fish that was eventually captured.

5.4.2 LEGAL TERMS

The *Punch* has also carried stories which signify the beginning of a legal process or the trial

of the ex-governors as can be seen from these headlines:

S'East speakers back trial of Kalu, others, front page lead, July, 22nd, 2007

Buhari supports trial of ex-governors, news story, July 19 2007.

Ex-governor Turaki looted N17bn in one day: Judge remands him, Kalu in Custody-EFCC, front page, lead, July 17, 2007.

How governors indicted kalu, front page lead, July 29, 2007.

Ibori's trial begins: How EFCC arrested former Delta Governor, front page lead, December 13 2007.

Some of the words used in the headlines, just as in the *Daily Trust* include, trial, indicted, remands and custody. The selection of these words further adds momentum to the proposition by Fowler (1991) that the newspapers are sometimes passive in their selection of words because they have to report events as they come to them; and this may explain why the lexical choices in both *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* were almost similar.

However there is a headline which requires further analysis in the *Punch*. The need for comparison here is because we have seen how the *Daily Trust* framed the story of former Governor Turaki. The first sentence in the second headline under this category states that *Ex-governor Turaki looted N17bn in one day*: The headline was as clear and as vivid as possible, that Turaki has Looted N17 bn. If the headline had stopped there, it will certainly attract attention, and may still sound unthinkable for someone to loot that amount (which is about sixty eight million pounds, if exchanged at 250 Naira to a pound). But the paper provided additional detail by saying in one day, which reveals the extent to which he did the looting. The text of the story also went straight to the point. So this brings us back to the issue of regional divide in the newspapers and how that sometimes determines how the newspapers

report events. To illustrate this further, the point made by one of the correspondents from the *Guardian* which will be discussed in chapter six is very relevant:

“If the issue of corruption involves someone from the north, the Southern newspapers will announce it gleefully and be very thorough in their investigation while the northerners will manage it in such a way as not make their son look bad”

Though in interviews, respondents express their subjective opinion, but what becomes apparent in the way the story of Saminu Turaki was reported between the *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* confirms the view of the journalist. The *Daily Trust* was mild in its approach, while the *Punch* to quote the correspondent “announce[s] it gleefully”.

5.4.3 PUNISHMENT

One of the common things in the reporting of the PTDF and former governors scandal by both *Daily Trust* and the *Punch* was that the newspapers remained consistent in following the stories. But the main shortcoming as stated earlier was the absence of investigative journalism. As such in this category, the *Punch* also carried the stories of the former governors as shown by the following headlines under the punishment category:

Kalu, Turaki: Increased security vigilance at Kuje prisons. July 19 2007.

Inside Kuje prison: Kalu, Others shun prison food. Front page lead, July 21, 2007.

Fayose, Ibori to spend Xmas, New year in prison. Front page lead, December 18, 2007.

Life in prison: Ibori buys generator, air conditioner, Fayose in Solitary Confinement for using GSM phone. Front page lead, December 22, 2007.

These headlines paid attention to the conditions of the former governors while they were in prison. One of the meanings that can be derived from the headlines is what Scollon (2001) calls “chain of mediated actions”. This is because critical discourse analysis is interested in actions which are produced by a chain of mediated events, and the events are represented in the text using language. What this means is that the former governors under investigation did not find themselves in this situation over night, but there are chains of activities that preceded that. They contest for elections, they became governors, they looted or embezzled public funds, they were investigated, and then brought before the courts, detained in the prisons, which they found unbearable, so they had to buy generators, air conditions etc. Therefore the entire headlines were no more than a text that describes these chains of events using language. Scollon added further, that “our actions are frequently accompanied by language and, conversely, much of what we say is accompanied by action” (p. 140).

5.4.4 SATIRE

The *Punch* also carried headlines that involve satire. But they were able to capture the story.

Study the following headlines carefully:

Ibori, His Excellency behind bars, news story, December 25, 2007.

Hello, your former Excellencies, opinion, July 27 2007.

Their Excellencies in the dock, July 16, 2007.

As many critical discourse analysts would argue, that language is not innocent and can be manipulated to suit the intended purpose, notice the use of the word Excellency in the three headlines. It appears either in the middle or in the end of the sentence, but certainly not at the beginning of the headlines. This is a sharp contrast to the way the governors were addressed while they were holding political power. Whether in government documents, or in public occasions then, they were addressed as His Excellency, Governor James Ibori, or His

Excellency Governor Saminu Turaki. So the first meaning that can be derived from these headlines is that beyond the satire itself, it is signifying a shift in the entire discourse, which is they are no longer the Excellencies they used to be. Apart from the first headline which mentioned the name of Ibori, the remaining two, were all nominalised. The nominalisation here is not to hide their identity or kill the story, but to show the transition from their Excellencies to non-Excellencies. Because they no longer live in the prestigious government houses or their personal mansions, nor are they free to engage in foreign trips or receive courtesy calls, rather they are behind bars or in the dock.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined the cases under study by means of critical discourse analysis. The key differences in the two papers are in the use of language when reporting some of the former governors. Particularly former governor Saminu Turaki, whom the *Daily Trust* was mild in reporting his arrest, while the *Punch* was more critical. This has exposed the regional dimension of the newspapers, which is an essential element of this research as set out in the aims and objectives of the research and the research questions.

One point to note is that the *Punch* did not sound as regionally inclined as perhaps might be expected. This might be so because in the period under study, there is only one governor from the southwest, Ayo Fayose, and he did not attract much attention compared to James Ibori or Saminu Turaki or even Orji Uzo Kalu both of whom were from the south east and south-south. This is also one of the criticisms against the anti corruption war which the EFCC led under the administration of former president Olusegun Obasanjo. That the EFCC paid more attention to governors from other regions except the south west where the president came

from, and incidentally the heart of the Nigerian press.

It is not easy to make generalisation on the level of partisanship of the newspapers because of the amount of the sample under study, and as expressed by the interviewees in subsequent chapters, corruption is something that almost everyone frowns at, so the newspapers, though not always, might be influenced by a patriotic and professional desire to report the cases of corruption than by regional or ethnic bias, and as the literature has shown, stories about scandals sell. What however the chapter did successfully is that it provides an indication into the social, historical, environmental and political factors that shape the language that is used in the discourse of the newspapers. It has also suggested how regional and clientelist sentiments can influence the use of language in reporting. And these are issues which remain relevant to the research questions as well as the aims and objectives of the thesis as identified already in chapter one.

5.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter, following additional explanation on critical discourse analysis, various sections of the chapter have analysed the use of language in the two newspapers under study, the *Daily Trust* from northern Nigeria, and the *Punch* from southern Nigeria. The analysis was done according to various categories such as metaphor, legal terms, punishment etc, which were developed from the coding frame. The analysis has revealed the similarities in the two newspapers, which includes the attention both papers gave to the coverage of scandals. There are also similarities in the absence of investigative journalism, and the use of press releases which are published as news stories. An additional similarity between the two papers is the tendency to be more sympathetic towards the former vice president Atiku Abubakar than former president Olusegun Obasanjo, either for regional reasons, political reasons or because of the financial muscle of the former vice president.

It is worth stating here that the content analysis of the newspapers has given credence to the assertions made by the journalists about the regional division of Nigerian newspapers. This was clearly seen in terms of how stories about former governor of Jigawa State Saminu Turaki were framed between *Daily Trust* from the north and the *Punch* from the South. As stated by one of the respondents from the *Guardian* newspaper in chapter six that if the allegation of corruption involves someone from the north the southern newspapers will announce it “gleefully”, and that was exactly how the *Punch* framed the story of Saminu Turaki. At the same time the journalist suggested that a northern newspaper will try to be mild on a northerner, in framing the story about the arrest of Saminu Turaki, *Daily Trust* was so mild that the story was started sympathetically. The analysis of the newspapers has also reinforced the allegation of corruption within the Nigerian press, seeing how stories about former vice president Atiku Abubakar were framed. The southern newspapers that will

ordinarily be hash on him tend to do so more on Obasanjo. One of the interviewees has suggested in chapter six that Atiku was paying for it.

The content analysis also supports the view of the journalists that they don't believe Nigerian newspapers practice investigative journalism. None of the headlines studied, or the text quoted emerged from investigative journalism. As such the combination of interviews and critical discourse analysis have proved to be valuable instruments in this research in that the two complement each other in addressing the aims of the thesis and the research questions. The next chapter therefore will present the result of the interviews conducted with the journalists in order to find out their understandings of how they report allegations of corruption scandals, and why they report stories in the way they do.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERVIEW RESULTS

6. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the interviews conducted in Nigeria will be presented. A total of twenty two interviews were conducted with journalists. The journalists cut across the northern and southern newspapers because this research is comparing how newspapers from the two regions of Nigeria cover the cases of corruption scandal. The questions asked during the interviews stem from the context of the research already discussed in chapter one. Most of the journalists interviewed are editors, political correspondents and columnists. Majority of the interviewees have been in the profession for more than fifteen to twenty years. Because of the complexity of the Nigerian society, the respondents cut across different sections of the divide. There are Muslims, Christians, southerners, northerners and women from different sections of the country.

The discussion is grouped into five themes, corruption/scandal, journalism and political culture, fourth estate role of the media, investigative journalism and suggestions and recommendations. In the first theme, the journalists were asked about their views on how newspapers from northern and southern Nigeria cover the cases of corruption, whether they consider the coverage to be adequate, and if they consider the newspapers from one section to be biased against politicians from another section?

The second theme asked questions on whether the cultural background of the journalists' influences the way they practice journalism, whether ethnic and regional considerations are

given preference over professional ethics, and if there is a difference in political orientation between the journalists from the north and the south?

The third theme looked at the fourth estate role of the media by asking the journalists whether they are satisfied with the watchdog role of Nigerian newspapers, if the watchdog role contributes in reducing corruption, whether the watchdog role is soft or active, and whether what is reported in the newspapers is determined by the nature of ownership of the newspapers?

The fourth theme concentrated on investigative journalism, the journalists were asked what they understood by investigative journalism, if Nigerian journalists practice investigative journalism, whether corruption within the media militates against the practice of investigative journalism, if the passing of the freedom of information bill will help the journalists in practicing investigative journalism, the challenges facing journalists in Nigeria, and the ways for improvement? The last theme asked for suggestions and recommendations from the journalists.

In this chapter therefore, the responses provided in each of the five themes used in the interviews will be studied, and categories that define the conceptions and descriptions of the interviewees will be itemised for the purpose of analysis. This will bring a better picture on how the journalists interviewed for the research have different perspective on how the press in Nigeria report stories about corruption scandals in relation to the framework of the research. As explained in chapter four the analysis will be done using phenomenography.

6.1 FIRST THEME: CORRUPTION/SCANDAL

In this theme, corruption/scandal, various experiences have been discerned from the respondents on how Nigerian newspapers report corruptions scandals. These experiences and conceptions as described by the journalists are categorised in to five. Consensus, which explains how the journalists agree that there is no difference in the way corruptions scandals are reported and therefore could not see any difference between northern and southern newspapers. The second is regionalism, where the journalists see an apparent bias towards the region of the newspaper. The third is clientelism in which personal or corporate considerations determine what is reported rather than professional ethics. The fourth is adequacy of reports which looks at the views of the journalists on whether the amount of coverage given to corruption scandal is adequate. The fifth category focuses on the unevenness in newspaper ownership between the south and the north. Each of the five categories under this theme will be discussed. The description of conception among journalists may not be the same in terms of their understanding of corruption scandals, the theme therefore will look at the diversity of views expressed by the respondents and analyse it accordingly.

6.1.1 CONSENSUS

Many of the respondents agree that when it comes to the coverage of corruption scandals there isn't much difference between the northern and southern newspapers. This view was held by a number of the respondents who look at the attention the front pages of many newspapers give to the coverage of stories related to corruption. According to this young editor working for a weekend newspaper in northern Nigeria:

“I think to a great extent, newspapers in Nigeria are doing well in terms of coverage of political corruption in Nigeria in both the Northern and Southern newspapers”

The kind of coverage given to stories about corruption could be due to a number of reasons; the establishment of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent and Corrupt practices Commission (ICPC) has attracted the attention of the media. No newspaper would like to be out marketed by the other in its coverage. It can also be due to the tradition of Nigerian newspapers to unite on anything that is of national importance as confirmed by this woman editor:

“And when it comes to issue of national concern I think we give it adequate coverage. I can almost say there is enough attention to issues of political corruption in both the Northern and Southern newspapers”

As discussed in the literature review, Nigerian newspapers have a history of consistency, by going beyond ethnic and regional sentiments when it comes to issues of national survival. This has been exemplified from the onset of the newspaper industry. The press worked together to challenge the colonial government until independence was achieved in 1960. The newspapers also have a history of standing together at various times to ensure that the country returns to civilian rule. Harsh economic policies like the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the 1980s was vehemently opposed by Nigerian journalists. Attempts by various leaders, military and civilian to elongate their tenure and remain in office never received favourable coverage in Nigerian newspapers. In fact according to one of the respondents, the Nigerian press has performed better than the national assembly since the country returned to civilian administration in 1999.

According to this journalist who reports for the *Daily Trust*:

“They have done tremendously well in reporting such cases. Even though there are lapses here and there. Typical among this is the issue of governors who have been picked recently by the EFCC. I believe that it is apparent and very obvious that the Nigerian dailies have been in the heat of reportage of all these vices allegedly committed by these ex-governors while in office”

The journalist is referring to the arrest of some former governors by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission. The former governors are Orji Uzo Kalu, Ibrahim Saminu Turaki and Chimaroke Nnamani, allegedly for stealing public funds and enriching themselves. All the national dailies carried this report.⁴⁶ The chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Nuhu Ribadu has vowed to arrest all governors who are corrupt after they left office when the constitutional immunity they enjoy will be stripped.

According to Nuhu Ribadu:

Our jurisdiction does not go beyond the boundaries of Nigeria, so if these people manage to run away from the country, it will be difficult to get to them...But we do enjoy very cordial working relationship with the law enforcement agencies of some countries and those of the UK and the US, for instance, have been very helpful in this regard (BBC News, 2007).

The arrest of the former governors was one of the promises Nigerians were waiting to see fulfilled,⁴⁷ seeing that majority of the governors arrested were from the ruling People’s Democratic Party, whose president, Olusegun Obasanjo appointed Nuhu Ribadu as the Chairman of the EFCC.

⁴⁶ Orji Uzo Kalu was the former governor of Abia State, Saminu Turaki was the former governor of Jigawa State, and Chimaroke Nnamani was the former governor of Enugu State. All the three governors served between 1999 and 2007. Kalu and Nnamani were members of the ruling People’s Democratic Party, while Turaki was a member of All Nigeria People’s Party (ANPP) which is the main opposition party, but he switched to the PDP before the 2007 elections and is currently serving as a senator under the platform of the PDP.

⁴⁷ See Olayinka, Abiodun (2008): *EFCC: Before we all fall victim*, as a sample of an opinion article in the tribune newspaper on the views of Nigerians regarding the arrest of the former governors.

Other journalists have a different perspective to the reasons why the newspapers were competing in reporting the allegations of corruption scandals against public office holders. According to this senior journalist working with the *Sun Newspaper*, a leading tabloid following the style of *the Sun* in London:

“You see I think that the evolution of the media over a period of time now has broken down that barrier north-south as far as I know. Because a Minister was caught for the ID card scam Sunday Afolabi and Shata it was covered...There is a new Nigeria evolving where corrupt practices are not condoned. If you don't publish it you will not sell”

From the account of the journalist above, he identified at least two reasons why he thinks there are no differences in the way the newspapers cover the cases of corruption. The first is the *“evolution of the media over a period of time”*, which means that the media could be concentrated in a particular location, but the increase in the number of newspapers has reduced the likelihood of being unnecessarily biased when it comes to the issue of corruption. The second point is that *“there is a new Nigeria evolving where corrupt practices are not condoned”*, meaning that though there could be regional and tribal differences in the past, at the moment Nigerians cannot condone the act of taking the resources of the state for personal use, and this includes the journalists themselves who reflect that on the pages of newspapers. A leading columnist from northern Nigeria, who has been practicing journalism since the 70's also, agrees that there is a degree of balancing in the way newspapers report stories about corruption in Nigeria, though there might be some differences:

“I think it will be risky for one to make a generalised statement because some of them have been fairly balanced and some not so well balanced depending on who the proprietors are”

6.1.2 REGIONALISM

It is interesting to note that while many of the respondents agreed that there isn't much difference in the reporting of corruption between northern and southern newspapers, when the interview becomes in-depth, the same journalists bring examples to show that Nigerian newspapers can tilt towards the region they belong and favour it in their report. This may suggest how different section of the country can utilise the media for regional, ethnic or religious purposes as perceived by this senior editor from *Thisday* newspaper:

“The southwest group of this country know how to use the media to the extent that a Yoruba agenda is put on centre stage to become a national agenda. So they make much noise out of it, that the media is the place for public opinion where you can buy and sell whatever it is. So the media depending on which side of the divide, whether of the northern divide or the southern divide would naturally take sides on issues like this”

Though the media try to portray itself as national in content and outlook, but it is difficult to divorce the regional divide, because as discussed in the chapter on historical landscape of Nigerian newspapers, the historical origin of Nigeria is influenced by the regional divide. The above point suggest that the views expressed by each of the individual journalists is first of all a reflection of the diversity of views regarding the practice of journalism, and second, while the respondents try to portray a national outlook, when the interview becomes more in-depth, that is when they express their real mindset and perception of issues. The journalists do not necessarily express different points on the same issue because they want to be hypocritical, but because, that is how Nigeria operates as a country. The federal government which is at the centre of the country's administration has people from different background and ethnic nationalities, and government policies attempt to have a national approach, but once you come down to the regions, states and local governments, people become much more

concerned about their immediate needs and make little pretention about being national in nature.

In fact as confirmed by the experience of the journalist below, what might be seen as a story in newspapers belonging to one section of the country may not be seen in the same light in newspapers published in another section of the country.

“The practice of journalism in Nigeria I must confess if I am to be sincere is just around that level of interpretation. For example what Daily Trust will see as news probably we in the south west will not see it as news. And it has nothing to do with hating Daily Trust or anything. It just has to do with the location of the paper and its audience”

The journalist above has highlighted a seemingly relevant issue in what determines the news. The geographical location of a newspaper in relation to whether it is northern or southern contributes in determining the news it carries. So according to this example, there could be stories which might be of more interest to the *Daily Trust*, which is published in the north, but may not be as interesting to a newspaper published in the south. For instance an editor from the *Nation* newspaper which is based in Lagos stated during the interview that there are stories for instance about Hajj or about emirs from the north which they will not bother to publish, when similar story can make the front page in the north. Similarly the activities of the traditional institutions in the south may not receive much attention in northern newspapers, unless the issues have national significance. One of the respondents mentioned that if you want to see the interest of readers, you can find out from the culture sections of the newspapers, southern newspapers review the home videos produced in Lagos, and northern

newspaper review the home videos produced in Kano. So it is clear that the description of experiences from the journalists shows the presence of the regional divide.⁴⁸

A clearer example about the perception of the regional divide as understood by the journalists was given by this respondent, who was an editor in several newspapers and magazines. According to her:

“Let me come to the most daring case ‘the June 12.’ The reporting of June 12, that singular incident on its own upturned the underbelly. It revealed the underbelly of Nigerian journalists. As soon as the event happened, all of us were democrats or pretended to be democrats at heart. Abiola got more votes in the north than he did in the south. But there is that perspective of the Northerner as somebody who wants to load it over others. And that affects the reporting of political successes even of Northern politicians”

“June 12 “was the election that took place on that date in 1993. The two contestants were Mashood Abiola and Bashir Tofa, the former from the south and the latter from the north. At the beginning of the contest the southern newspapers framed Abiola as a northern stooge, because of his friendship with previous military rulers, the majority of them northerners. The criticism was also because Abiola was a member of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN)⁴⁹ in the 70s and early eighties, and he used his wealth to establish the concord newspapers which

⁴⁸ The home video industry is booming in Nigeria, majority of the films, popularly known as *Nollywood* are produced in the south, the films are mostly in English and marketed across the world. But in the north also the home video industry exists, but the language used is Hausa and Kano is the centre of the production, and the films produced there are called *Kannywood*. For more details on both *Nollywood* and *Kannywood*, see Okome, Onookome (2007): “Nollywood: Audience, Spectatorship and the Sites of Consumption”. *Postcolonial text*. Vol 3 No 2 pp. 1-21, and Adamu, Abdalla Uba (2007): *Transglobal Media Flows and African Popular Culture: Revolution and Reaction in Muslim Hausa Popular Culture*. Kano-Nigeria. Gidan Dabino Publishers.

⁴⁹ NPN was the political party that won the 1979 election and was in power until December 1983 when the civilian administration was overthrown by the military. Though the party was the most national in outlook at the time, it was seen as party with a strong northern base because some of its key members were from the Northern People’s Congress, the dominant political party in northern Nigeria in the 1950s and 1960s.

became a rival to the main newspapers in the southwest, and the presidential candidate from the region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo. The military decided to annul the election, and immediately after that, the newspapers from the south turned around and began to support Chief Abiola, claiming that the election was annulled because Abiola was a southerner. Seeing that, journalists from northern Nigeria who were also supporting Abiola reconsidered their support, and the regional divide in reporting became more apparent. According to Haruna (2008)

Whereas the editorial of the *Nigerian Tribune* in question reduced June 12 to a purely Yoruba affair, an earlier editorial in *The Guardian* of June 23 had cautioned against doing just that. Titled "Arresting the drift", the editorial argued that the struggle for June 12 was not just between Abiola and Tofa or between the North and the South or between Islam and Christianity. Rather, it was, as the newspaper said quite correctly, a struggle "between the democratic political current nationally constituted...and the anti-democratic current, also nationally constituted." Unfortunately the *Guardian's* exhortation was ignored by the "June Twelvers" and, in time, by even the newspaper itself.

It will be apt to suggest that the annulment of the June 12 presidential election refreshed the regional memory of Nigerian newspapers. As indicated above, the newspapers drew a regional line, though it will be difficult to make a generalized statement about the extent of regionalism in the press, because there were few newspapers from the north that can balance the fecundity of the southern press, but there was hardly a newspaper from the south that did not take the regional tone, even if it was against the candidature of Abiola ab initio. An interesting point from Haruna's assessment above was the position of the *Guardian* newspaper, which from the example quoted by Haruna, the paper tried to act professionally by cautioning Nigerians against taking a regional line of thinking. It can be said that the paper

was interested in getting rid of the military so that a civilian administration can be instituted after ten years of military rule (at that time), but the fact that the *Guardian* itself later took the regional line, may be a pointer to the fact that political events can override professional considerations. And that can give room to more partisanship, or in this case regionalism. This point corresponds to Hallin and Mancini's (2004) view that no news media organization is politically neutral.

Some of the respondents indicated that the existence of regionalism can also be found in their working relationship. According to this young journalist from the *Daily Trust* who has been reporting for less than three years, stated the following:

“But we that have practiced the little though in the field, have realised that this colouration exist even among the most junior among reporters. You understand that someone who is covering a story for Punch will not oblige to give that story to someone who is coming from Daily Trust willingly. He will first of all look for his ‘kith and kin’ from maybe ThisDay, Vanguard or Guardian. Some newspapers have a kind of a gang up, a clique a cabal sort of thing in terms of getting information. So that really exists. The fact that some people say that most of these newspapers what they practice is the same, yes I will say most of what they practice is the same in the sense that when that issue is general or is national; that is when they come to meet together. But when issues touch on regional or other inclinations they really tend to exhibit those traits and characteristics”

The statement above could mean a lot of things in journalistic practice. It might suggest that cultural proximity plays a role among journalists to the extent that they feel more comfortable with colleagues who come from the same area. It could also indicate the level of competition between newspapers from different regions.

During the period of military rule, it was common in Nigerian newspapers to read stories about corruption being directly linked to the region of the individual involved, and because majority of the heads of state during the military era were from the north, the reports tend to portray northerners as corrupt and incompetent. But with the emergence of Olusegun Obasanjo as the president in 1999, there are reports about corruption with regional tone, but not as much as it was before Obasanjo as was suggested by this editor:

“There is always this assumption that the country was governed by Northerners for so long that was why things went bad and that may be they were incompetent, corrupt and so on. But you know after all the corruption, people have seen under the Obasanjo administration. I think I am not sure if I have noted that regional change in the coverage of political corruption”

Another journalist, who is the chairman of the editorial board of one of the newspapers being published in Lagos, also confirms the existence of this regional dichotomy among Nigerian newspapers:

“Yes. That is a matter of fact. You see papers that are seen as south-west papers, papers that are seen as Niger-Delta papers; you get papers that are seen as northern newspapers. So there is ethnic and regional bias in newspapers”

But the question to be asked is whether the journalists see the dichotomy as something positive or as something that undermines the success of journalism as a profession. This view may signify the fact that there are journalists who believe that the existence of the regional and ethnic division is part and parcel of Nigerian journalism. With regards to the above

journalist in particular, he received his education in the post independent and post civil war period, when the regional and ethnic rivalry was more apparent because of the existence of regions⁵⁰ at that time, perhaps it might suggest that journalists who were product of that era might have stronger views about the regional leaning of the newspapers than those who came later. It will also be interesting to know whether the regional bias is promoted because the readers like sensational stories. According to this journalist:

“There is more of that principal divide that has existed between the two angles of the media ownership. And I will frankly say that it is not good for journalism in particular in the country”

This experience can be seen as a lamentation of the situation, meaning that some of the journalists are not happy about it. But they can't help it, since the foundation of the country itself was based on the regional dichotomy. They may not be happy about it because, for those who see journalism as a profession, and would like to uphold the principles and values of journalism, resorting to regionalism will undermine their effort. However there is little they can do, because they are working as employees, and they lack the capital to establish media organizations that will try to uphold the principles they cherish.

As discussed earlier in the chapter on the historical landscape of Nigerian newspapers, the location of newspapers within a particular section of Nigeria is historical, which might also help in understanding the reason for the regional dichotomy; it starts with the arrival of Christian missionaries and later colonialists. This historical fact gave the south-western part of Nigeria an edge over the rest in terms of ownership of newspapers, but also because from

⁵⁰ Between 1960 and 1966 Nigeria was operating the Westminster parliamentary system. The country comprises of three independent regions then; Northern region, Western region and Eastern region, and later the Midwestern region. Each of these regions had a premier who governs the region independent of the federal government. But after the military took over in 1966, the regions were abolished and substituted by states. The civil war took place between 1967-1970. See chapter one for a brief history of Nigeria.

the early stage of Nigerian history Lagos became both an administrative and commercial capital. This according to this respondent who has worked both in northern and southern part of Nigeria is the reason why newspapers from south-western Nigeria control the thinking and shaping of government policies ahead of other regions.

“Why I said it is more structured is because the Yoruba have their mainstream politicians, the Afenifere group, this is the mainstream political machinery of the Yorubas. Now they have their industrialists, these are people who do not participate in politics they just run industries; they also have their own media that complement these groups. Now let me try to provide the linkages between these groups. A newspaper like the Punch which reflect the thinking of people from that part of the country especially their elite, its reporter goes out to interview professionals about government policies”

This shows that there are certain factors that contribute in the survival of the media in the south-western part of Nigeria because the region has a historical advantage in terms of the economy, professionals and other factors that are needed for the survival of newspapers.

Some of the respondents interviewed also confirmed that the location of the newspaper, the nature of its readership, and the interest of the proprietor can influence reporting as stated by this journalist:

“Let me give you a typical example. The Nation is located in Lagos and the Sun is also located in Lagos. Daily Trust is in Abuja, the north; Leadership is also in the north. Now if the former governor of Abia state was accused of corruption and corrupt practices. I wouldn't expect the Sun for example to take the story from the angle of Orji Kalu being corrupt because I know the relationship of Orji Kalu with the Sun. If for example somebody in the north like Turaki in Jigawa was also accused of corrupt practices. Unless on exceptional cases when they are in court; the normal practice is that Daily Trust will pick the

story from the angle the man said he used the money for third term. They might not just see it as corruption and I think it is just in our system”⁵¹

If the south-western part of the country has the advantage of industries that provide advertising revenue for the survival of newspapers, the professionals that support the newspapers morally and intellectually, the banks that help maintain a business environment, then it is easier to understand why the media is concentrated in the southwest. Because the media cannot survive in isolation, it needs some social factors to drive it and keep it moving. However this may come with a price. Because as discussed by Hallin and Mancini (2004) no one should think the media is objective or value free. Therefore its content might reflect the interest of the environment that helps it to thrive. So the newspapers that come from other regions may likely reflect the interest of the environment that will help them remain in the market. This might help in understanding the dichotomy that exists between different regions in Nigeria such that according to this senior journalist, when there are cases of corruption against somebody the newspapers look at the region where a person comes from rather than the actual wrongdoing.

“I think the common problem is that you find newspapers taking side not on the basis of the merit of the case but on the basis of those involved where they come from”

Once the newspapers report the cases of corruption on the basis of the area a person comes from, then the reporting can take different dimension, each section trying to reveal the atrocities of the other as explained by this journalist from the *Guardian* newspaper:

⁵¹ Third term refers to the attempt by former President Olusegun Obasanjo to get the constitution amended to allow him have a third term in office instead of the two terms stipulated in the constitution.

“If the issue of corruption involves someone from the north, the Southern newspapers will announce it gleefully and be very thorough in their investigation while the northerners will manage it in such a way as not make their son look bad, vice versa. ... the southerners have the same thing except the Yoruba’s, and that is determined essentially by your political affiliation. If you are seen as an Awoist, and you are involved in corruption. (Awoist means a follower of Chief Obafemi Awolowo), the southern press on first contact with the story will want to protect the person believing that he is related to Awolowo, so he must always fight for the people and that may be wrong”

The statement above brought to light some issues involved in Nigerian journalism. First, it has brought to light the existence of the north/south dichotomy in Nigerian journalism, which to a large extent plays a role in reporting. It has also brought to light some form of self censorship in which the prominence, reporting or otherwise of a news item might be dictated in a way by the region of the person affected in the story, and lastly the existence of certain stories that might be termed as taboo stories because the political leaning of the individual involved has provided a shield for him. This attitude towards reporting was stressed by a journalist from the north and a former editor of some newspapers who stated that:

“I will give you this case; that I really discovered to my shock, a few years ago I attended the conference of Nigerian Bureau of Editors somewhere in Osun state, and there one of the editors she is a woman[] she said there was a time, the late Bola Ige had an illegitimate child and she got the story and she was so excited about it[] she investigated, she got the story, she wanted to publish it, the publisher said that is a taboo, the story was not published in spite of the fact that the story was a scandal”

While this journalist has pointed one of the areas that might be considered as taboo, or at least might receive a mild treatment in the hand of editors in southern newspapers, another

journalist from a southern newspaper also pointed an area which he thinks might not receive prominence in a northern newspaper:

“I wrote an article in 1994 in the Guardian, and in that article, I recall vividly that I posited that the northern newspapers were trying most the time to shield their corrupt men[] The culture of the people in the north restricts them from talking extensively, about traditional rulers, about elders, about political leaders, not that they don’t, but they hardly talk about them. For example they hardly talk about people who entrench poverty in the north”

6.1.3 CLIENTELISM

Clientelism as described by Hallin and Mancini (2004), and Hallin and Papathanassopoulos (2002) is a form of social organisation in which access to resources and loyalty to other considerations are more important than professional values of objectivity etc. In the case of the media, journalist and politicians or people interested in certain favours establish a relationship which promotes this sense of clientelism. The description of the experiences of the journalists is a pointer to that. According to this journalist who is the editor of a Sunday newspaper:

“Obviously there are differences you know because some of the papers have certain links with the some of the accused persons I mean some of those accused of corrupt enrichment. There are some of these newspapers that are somehow connected with some of these personalities and where some of the cases concern the personalities you hardly see those papers mention anything about those cases”

What the editor above is describing is a new trend in Nigerian journalism in which serving state governors establish newspapers. They employ journalists who have been in the profession for a long time. The papers carry stories like any other newspaper, except when it

affects their proprietor. Then the newspapers either become silent, or treat the story mildly, and this is the point Hallin and Mancini (2004) and Hallin and Papathanassopoulos (2002) were trying to make in their discussion of media and clientelism. These relationships, serve to control and oversee what gets into the pages of newspapers. One of the respondents, who is also a senior figure of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) confirmed this clientelist relationship during the interview. According to him:

“But the interesting thing is while it is going on we saw process of crime getting into the media. So much money that public officers steal is getting into the Nigerian media and is owned by them. For example if I show you this paper [the Sun newspaper] is a product of corruption”

The above respondent made this comment in the middle of the interview, he confirmed some newspapers, and he picked some of them from his table, the *Sun* linked to former Abia State Governor, the *Independent* owned by former Delta State Governor, James Ibori, and the *Nation* allegedly owned by former governor of Lagos State, Ahmed Bola Tinubu. The EFCC official mentioned that they were able to trace some of the money which was taken from various state treasuries, and was used to procure materials for the establishment of these newspapers.

One important thing to note is that, even here the differences in various regions among the governors who tried to establish these newspapers was clear. All the newspapers owned by governors, are associated with southern governors, and this may suggest that the edge in terms of understanding the role the media plays whether for promoting societal or personal interest is higher in the south than in northern Nigeria. It also shows a stronger link in terms of media clientelism among southern politicians than northern politicians. This does not

mean that politicians from northern Nigeria do not attempt to have this clientlist relationship with the media. A female respondent from the *Daily Trust* newspaper mentioned that they have been under pressure several times from politicians, urging the newspaper to withdraw stories because the person involved is a northerner. What is different however is that some politicians from the south invest directly in the media making the clientelist relationship more direct, while politicians from the north make it indirect through contact with journalists.

The respondents gave examples on how politicians use the media in promoting or protecting their interest. According to this journalist who is a political editor with a Lagos based newspaper:

“Whether those we report, whether those of us doing the reporting. You think Atiku got the amount of exposure he got in the media because they love Atiku; it is not that of love. He was financing it .That is still some other truth”

The above respondent did not absolve any one from blame. According to him, both journalists and politicians are blameworthy. The examples he cited above with Atiku Abubakar, the former vice president, and a strong politician from northern Nigeria is a classical example. The vice president found himself in a battle of survival with former president Olusegun Obasanjo. Both sides started exchanging accusations against each other. The senate established a committee to find the truth about those allegations. Both the president and the vice president were indicted by the committee for diverting resources from the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF). But the point the respondent was trying to make was that despite the allegations of corruption against Atiku Abubakar, he continued to get a favourable coverage in the press when he launched his presidential campaign. There are at least two reasons within Nigerian context on why the media should be

careful in the coverage of Atiku's campaign. The first is the allegation of corruption, and the media which should serve as watchdog should be able to analyse and bring out the issues affecting Atiku Abubakar, the second is being a politician from northern Nigeria, and the media being regionally based, this should provide coverage that uses the regional angle to demonise his campaign, yet from the perspective of the above respondent, that did not happen. So what is the reason? According to this perspective as suggested by the respondent, it is because "he [Atiku] was financing it". This perspective suggests the corruption within the media itself, which we shall discuss later in this chapter.

From the description given by the respondents, clientelism can take different forms. It can be internal, in the sense that when a story touches on the interest of the newspaper, either its publisher or some other interest, the newspaper might give a mild treatment to the story, and that is the point made by the journalist below:

"For example the Sun newspaper was very cautious in its coverage of the scandalous allegations against Governor Orji Uzor Kalu reportedly the publisher and the newspaper owner. So you can say there are some inclinations or factors or underlined interest that shapes the general ideology of this coverage by the newspapers. Of recent, there was a banner headline in the Daily Trust newspaper which says 'Governor Sule Lamido was responsible for scuttling ex-governor Saminu Turaki's bail.' it was only governor Saminu Turaki who has not gotten a surety [] But I will say that it is generally out of sympathy that the newspaper even went to press with the story"

The above example suggests some of the views held by some journalists concerning corruption within the media. The example shows that this interest can be found in any of the regions, with the *Sun* being a southern newspaper and *Daily Trust* published in the north.

Another point made by the journalists is that, the journalist can do his homework and write the story. But when it reaches the editors desk, it might not be published as confirmed by the example below which goes on to suggest how strong the clientelist relationship is between journalist and politicians taking into consideration the experience of the respondent:

“Once in a while, there is always a slant to a story depending really on who is involved and that I think is general. For example, if the case of corruption is established against somebody that is close to my publisher, for example it’s not as if the journalist will not write the story the way it should be written but you can be rest assured that when it gets to the headquarters they will change certain things. Basically due to the relationship of the person involved”

The respondents were very clear about the relationship between publishers and politicians, and how they work hard to protect their interest. According to this journalist:

“To be candid the politicians have infiltrated the newspaper industry. They own the papers, pay the salaries”

This is a clear case of political clientelism, the journalists know this fact, but they can’t do otherwise because they need their jobs in order to survive. The editors who determine which stories are published might also be powerless, and so the interest of the publisher will triumph. Equally important is the fact that the newspapers may have certain political interests. In the west, for instance you might have different political and ideological leanings, some papers being right wing or conservative, others being liberal, leftist or centre ground. In Nigeria that may not be the case. Two things might determine the political interest of the paper. First, its location, and second, the interest of the publisher. According to this journalist:

“I can hardly point to a newspaper that has no political interest. And the political interest is not basically informed by goodwill. It is informed by the man that has the catch”

Clientelism from the views expressed by the respondents could be influenced by historical factors. That is the historical advantage of pioneering the publishing of newspapers, which make those in that region to master the art of newspaper publishing, and then use it to their advantage if the need be. This was explained by a journalist from *Thisday* newspaper, specifically referring to the advantage the south has over the north:

“More importantly as a tool of agenda setting, do not also forget the fact that they were in the thick of the struggle for independence and so overtime they have honed their skills on how to effectively use the media. These are historical facts we can't run away from them. I am saying this for you to understand so that it may not appear from the word go some people were destined to own the newspapers, these were the realities. And so you find an interesting scenario where the bulk of the newspapers are cited in the Lagos-Ibadan axis owned by people from the south-south and to some extent the people from the southwest determines what goes into those newspapers”

The conclusion from the description given by the journalists above also reveals the complexity involved in the nature of the newspaper industry in Nigeria. It shows that the south does not refer to a monotonous entity. It has complexities as confirmed by the journalist above. Not only the journalist above, many of the respondents interviewed made similar point. The southern part of Nigeria comprises of three geo-political zones. The south-west which is predominantly Yoruba, the south-east which is predominantly Ibo, and the south-south, which is a mishmash of different ethnic groups, what is however distinct about the south-south geo-political zone is that it is the oil producing area of the country, and the point the journalist from *Thisday* was trying to make is that majority of the media owners are from the south-south, while the southwest maintains its advantage of location and management.

These factors combined contribute in the nature of the content of political news. The same journalist elaborated on this point:

“The media has never been immune to the political realities depending on trends in Nigeria. When it has mattered they have taken sides, at other times they have tried to hide”

The above point might be one of the reasons why it will be difficult to give a straight explanation about the Nigeria media, because sometimes national issues are given preference over regional issues, and at other times, regional issues are given advantage. Beyond regionalism, other respondents look at the interest of proprietors, those who own the newspapers. According to one columnist and a former editor in northern Nigeria, the newspapers ignore stories that affect their owners:

“It all depends, you find were a proprietor if you take for instance the Independent which is speculations say it is owned by Ibori, and you find that cases that involved him hardly get highlighted in the newspaper. You can see it clear in the obvious case of Orji Kalu in the Sun; clearly as far as the Sun is concerned Orji Kalu has done nothing wrong”.

Certainly the experiences of the journalists might suggest different forms of clientelism, in the interplay of power between different sections and interests in Nigeria, among the regions and the newspaper proprietors with the press as the tool used in the political interplay.

6.1.4 ADEQUACY AND PROMINENCE

One of the perceptions of Nigerian journalists as expressed by the respondents is the adequacy of reports about corruption scandals, and the prominence given to the stories on the pages of Nigerian newspapers. This is significant because stories about corruption scandals were featuring regularly despite the factors mentioned earlier about clientelism and

corruption within the media. A description of how the newspapers take stories about corruption was given by a journalist who reported from the national assembly for the *Daily Trust* newspaper:

“So the coverage is very adequate in the sense that an average Nigerian on the street knows that so and so governor is corrupt. I could remember when I was covering the national assembly, the Senate in particular when the EFCC boss Malam Nuhu Ribadu was in the dock, he was in the Senate chamber addressing them on the list of corrupt governors. He was reading out names and it was beamed on national television and the next morning most of the newspapers were awashed with the name of these governors. ”

This statement brings about two issues, first how the activities of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission made stories about corruption to become common knowledge in Nigeria, and secondly, the interest of the newspapers in carrying these stories. With regards to the first, it appears that the EFCC chairman, Nuhu Ribadu was able to articulate his points that the media in Nigeria found in him a person who supplies the news uninterruptedly. The second is how news about corruption can be used in promoting the newspapers themselves. Many of the respondents confirmed that the amount of coverage given to stories about corruption was adequate. According to this journalist from the *Sun* newspaper:

“It is there, yes it is very adequate. If you check, if you have been here in the last one week you will discover that oil scam, NNPC is there. So it is adequate if you ask me. I will give it seventy percent out of hundred”.

But not all the journalists agree with the same view, according to another journalist from the *nation* newspaper:

“Adequate, no. but condoned within the limit of powers available to them yes. But has never been adequate because there are limitations”

In the case of the first view that sees the report as adequate, the journalist was looking at it from quantitative point of view. Therefore if a governor or minister is arrested, and all the papers carry it, and continue to follow the story for one to three days, or even a week, that can be considered adequate. As for the second view, the journalist was looking beyond the quantity; he was looking at it in terms of quality, in terms of independence of the media, and other challenges and limitations that surround news production. What is however agreeable is that the newspapers pay attention to news about corruption scandals, but whether that contributes in reducing corruption is a subject of debate.

Different administrations in Nigeria have made an attempt to address the issue of corruption in Nigeria, in particular during the military era. When the country returned to civilian rule in 1999, two bodies were established by President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Though the activities of the EFCC seems to draw more attention than ICPC, many of the journalist interviewed suggest that the establishment of these two agencies contributed in giving prominence to news about corruption as confirmed by this journalist:

“But from 1999 up to now the issues of corruption are featured more prominently in the media because the govt established the[se] agencies, ICPC and EFCC, especially from the EFCC side [] in a nutshell I think corruption has been receiving more attention in the media more than any other time, because due to the primary activities of these two Anti-corruption agencies”

“Almost every day you open the newspapers in Nigeria; there are reports about the cases of corruption, either those who have reached the courts or the ones that are being investigated by the police and the anti-corruption agencies”

The two agencies mentioned above attract the attention of the media, which as stated by the respondents gave additional prominence to news about corruption. Another journalist from the *Punch* newspaper believes that apart from the activities of these two agencies, news about corruption attracts attention:

“Because a corruption story is a very interesting story all the time, I mean people are always interested to hear stories about official corruption and these newspapers are aware of this. The southern newspapers and the northern newspapers are aware of it. But you cannot run away from the fact that in Nigeria the tendency is to dedicate a lot of coverage to political corruption even with some ethnic undertones in it.

So in terms of the adequacy of the reports and the prominence given to stories about corruption, we can identify at least three different experiences. Those who agree with the amount of coverage and prominence given to the news, those who are more critical of the amount of coverage by looking at the wider picture in terms of challenges and limitations, and those who agree that the reports are adequate, but they may come with regional or ethnic undertones. What this suggests is that there is diversity of views, as adequacy of reporting means different things to different journalists. The category who are satisfied that the amount of time and space given to the coverage of corruption scandals is sufficient, and they are satisfied with what the newspapers were able to cover. The second categories, who acknowledge the effort of the newspapers but feel that what is done is not enough and the press needs to do more. And finally those who may be happy with the amount of coverage,

but do not see any departure from the traditional assumption about the newspapers being regionally and ethnically biased.

6.1.5 UNEVENNESS IN NEWSPAPER OWNERSHIP

While the journalists give different perspectives on the nature of journalism practice in different parts of Nigeria, with particular reference to stories about corruption, they were mindful to acknowledge the unevenness in the ownership of newspapers between the north and the south. Unevenness in newspaper ownership is one of the common features of journalism in Nigeria, because the newspaper industry is dominated by one section of the country, and reflects the views, politics and life style of the region (Agbaje, 1990; Adebaniwi, 2004; Oyovbaire 2001). To date there are at least twelve to fifteen national dailies published in Lagos⁵², southern Nigeria, while there are only three national dailies from northern Nigeria, and these three cannot compete with the economic strength of the ones published in Lagos.⁵³ According to this journalist:

*“The way I look at it is that the northern newspapers are not even much, the Daily trust, leadership; So corruption is corruption and I don’t think there is any particular way because corruption is a big news anywhere whether you are northern or southern newspaper, it is still corruption and it wouldn’t make any difference whether somebody was caught in Lagos or your newspaper was based in Lagos or in Abuja corruption is universal”.*⁵⁴

⁵² See the table outlining Nigerian newspapers as well as their location and ownership in the methodology chapter.

⁵³ See the discussion chapter for more on this.

⁵⁴ This point is not a denial of the existence of the unevenness and regional leaning of the newspapers, but the point he seems to be illustrating is that news about corruption sells, and irrespective of who is involved, the newspapers have to report it. One of the interviewees, made this point more clearly by saying that the subjective orientation of the papers is more in the opinion and editorial sections rather than in the news stories.

The two newspapers mentioned by the journalist above, *Daily Trust* and *leadership* are the only two leading private newspapers published in what is referred to as the Kaduna-Abuja axis, meaning newspapers from northern Nigeria. The third, *New Nigerian*, is government owned, and is bedevilled by problems and government interference as explained earlier by the journalist who asked the rhetorical questions on whether *New Nigerian* and *NTA*, two media outfits owned by the federal government investigate anything. The other newspaper from northern Nigeria that is still in the market is *Triumph*, but couldn't even match the *New Nigerian* at the moment. The journalist tried to argue that corruption is corruption, and so irrespective of the location of the newspaper, the story will make the headlines. But that is a simple view, when compared to the views expressed by the journalists in the regionalism sections. However these views can be seen in the light of the effort of the newspapers to report cases of corruption in spite of who is involved. It can also be seen in the light of the fact that the allegations of corruption under president Olusegun Obasanjo, who comes from the south has created an understanding among Nigerians that corruption is corruption and has no ethnic or regional colouration. A view that hitherto became prominent especially during military rule, majority of whom were from the north. Equally, the view may suggest that though the newspapers may have a regional leaning, but that may not be the personal views of the journalists working in those newspapers.

Though the unevenness in the ownership of newspapers between northern and southern Nigeria is a reality, some of the journalists tried to explain that within a historical context, a point that was highlighted earlier. According to this journalist from *Thisday*:

“But also the elite, those who have come in contact with the colonial masters predominate in this particular area. And so it was only natural that it will also be the place that will harbour the newspapers. So the Nigerian newspapers were born into a struggle. That struggle was in

Lagos and all the time Lagos has assumed the status of a flick street of Nigeria so to say. And you find that a lot of the papers are situated there”

From the perspective of this journalist, rather than look at it from regional advantage, it should be looked at from historical perspective, which has not been reversed from the inception of newspapers in Nigeria⁵⁵

There were attempts in the past that tried to address the imbalance, but those attempts were not always successful. According to the same journalist:

“Then in the north we have had attempts that had failed until Daily Trust... came [and] from all indications it is here to stay. Then Leadership is also trying to make attempt and a lot of others down. That is why I said I didn’t want to make a comparison because how do you compare a thousand to two? Ninety nine percent of the media are located around Lagos-Ibadan axis”

The last point made by the journalist is one of the complexities explored in this research, the difficulty in comparing two things that are unequal. While the journalist above works with a southern newspaper, another journalist who made an attempt to publish in the north, but could not succeed, and two senior journalists from *Daily Trust* and *Sunday Trust*, published in the north made similar points:

“I think part of the problem in trying to make comparison is the imbalance in the media themselves. Because invariably if we are talking of newspapers’ that is the print media; the north has effectively two newspapers, the Trust and the Leadership.”

⁵⁵ For details about the history of Nigerian newspapers see chapter two “Historical landscape of Nigerian newspapers”.

“I am sure you are aware that there are more newspapers in the south than we have in the north.”

“You see the first problem is that most of the newspapers in Nigeria are southern newspapers, so that is the first problem. So it’s difficult to do a direct comparison. Lets say for example in Lagos, we have 12-15 Dailies, that in Abuja you have two, in Kaduna you have 1, and then you have other weak ones. The overwhelming number of the newspapers is southern”

A look at the imbalance in newspaper ownership in Nigeria is not restricted to the media only, it is a historical issue that is linked to the evolution of Nigeria, almost in every sector of the economy this imbalance can be found, and as explained by Mancini (2004) “journalism does not grow up in a vacuum” (p.1), it is part of the culture and environment it find itself. So from this perspective, it can be stated that the imbalance of ownership is part of the Nigerian structure which will take time to bridge.

Does that imbalance always affect the way stories are reported? Not all the journalists share the view that stories are killed depending on the region the person affected comes from. According to this journalist from the south:

“There is no distinction there, basically we write the same stories. Probably we even have the same sources. But once in a while there is always a slant to a story depending on who is involved, but that one I think is general too. For instance if a case of corruption is established against somebody who is close to my publisher, is not as if the journalist will not write the story, but be rest assured when it gets to headquarters, they will change certain things there, basically due to the relationship of the person involved”

From this perspective therefore, publishers establish friendship with a number of people, these people could be business associates, politicians or everyday friends, once the story

affect this category of people, irrespective of whether they are from the north or from the south, the story might be censored.

Another perspective brought by the journalists during the interviews is that the imbalance in reporting the cases of corruption may not necessarily come from the newspapers, but could be as a result of government action that takes more punitive measures against certain government officials from a particular section of the country, and soft on somebody from another region. Now the prominence given by the government might be reflected in the way the story is reported. This is the opinion of this journalist who has been an editor, and later worked in some government institutions in the previous administration (1999-2007):

“This is an issue that even led to a presidential broadcast like at that time they said fifty million but now we are hearing that governors steal billions, you find the Igbo’s complain there, Is it because of fifty million naira, there was a Presidential broadcast, the President broadcast to the nation to expose the matter. But later when he came to the issue of Tafa Balogun, a public officer, the Inspector General of Police, a Yoruba man, there was no presidential broadcast and we are talking of billions, I think Tafa Balogun was thirteen billion so you find this one because of fifty million it involves a presidential broadcast, so I will expect the Lagos papers to really celebrate that”

This journalist is referring to two cases of corruption against two former high ranking individuals, Adolphus Wabara, the former President of the Senate, and Tafa Balogun, the then Inspector General of Police. Adolphus Wabara was accused of taking fifty million Naira bribe to inflate the budget of certain government ministries (approximately two hundred thousand pounds). While Tafa Balogun was accused of diverting thirteen billion Naira (approximately fifty two million pounds). In the case of Wabara the then President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo made a presidential broadcast to the nation condemning the act, this led to his resignation as Senate President, but in the case of Tafa Balogun there was no

presidential broadcast, even though the amount he was accused of diverting was higher than Wabara's. But he was also removed from his position and arrested by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.

6.2 SECOND THEME: JOURNALISM AND CULTURE.

As discussed in chapter one, political culture is seen as the situation where political behaviour is seen in cultural context. Hallin Mancini (2004) emphasise the role of culture in journalism, because according to them, journalism cannot be practiced outside the culture of the people. This research is also interested in finding out the role of culture in journalism practice. The respondents have different views on how culture plays a role in the practice of journalism. Two issues came up during the interviews about the differences in culture between the north, and south, and according to some of the journalists, those behaviours are imported into the news room. The first is that a northerner is somebody who does not disagree with those in authority, does not speak badly about his brother, and is careful not to offend. Secondly, southerner is seen as somebody who can challenge authority, and can argue with anyone. These behaviours according to the journalists play a role in the making of news; here is an example by a woman editor from one of the newspapers published in the north:

“I don't know whether to say it is the cultural background. I think it is always that because there are times when we report... in the north we are heavily influenced by our Islamic culture for sometimes to downplay your brother's sins. Because it is not recommended in Islam to go in town and say these are all the faults of so and so. And some people that also extend to our public office holders. So many a times our paper will lead with a story that is against a prominent northerner and before the day is over our editor or editor-in-chief will be bombarded with phone calls; he is a brother, he is this and that, how can you do this to such a person. So we try to enlighten them o.k. we are not exactly after the person... there is nothing personal against him”

The point made by this editor is that, the concept of brotherhood in Islam which commands people to be kind and not to cause harm to a fellow Muslim is erroneously constructed to mean condoning evil and making cover up for people whose transgression may have an impact on the society. So people use that as a way of censoring the news indirectly. From the experiences of this editor, people, from northern Nigeria, call the editor-in-chief and ask him not to publish stories, because the person is an elder who should be respected.⁵⁶ One of the respondents from the *Guardian* newspaper indicated that to him, that is the reason why newspapers could not survive in northern Nigeria, until the coming of *Daily Trust*, which tries to go away from that tradition.

According to the same journalist, the distinction between journalists from the north and those from the south is that you don't find this kind of behaviour in the south; they may decide not to publish the story possibly for fear of libel. According to her:

"I think they don't really pay heed to that may be sometimes they keep away from certain scandalous things because of the possibility of libel. But not necessarily because it is something that they feel culturally is offensive"

Some of the respondents have the view that, though the culture plays an important role which may sometimes have an impact on the news production, one thing that journalists find difficult to be impartial about, whether from the north, or from the south, Muslims or Christians, is if the issue of religion is involved. Some of the respondents even believe it is religion that is important not the culture. According to this journalist who works with a southern newspaper:

⁵⁶ For a detailed account of what an elder means in the Muslim community in northern Nigeria, see Last, Murray (2003): *Towards a political history of Muslim youth in northern Nigeria: 1750-2000* available at <http://www.ascleiden.nl/Pdf/conference24042003-last.pdf> downloaded 24/11/2008.

“Take religion for example, when there is religious riot rarely do you find any newspaper that has its head above water. Look at it from your own perspective, oh! They are killing our brothers the Christian, no! They have slaughtered Muslims in Agege in Lagos lets fight back and when you read some of the things that your own colleagues write, is pathetic. But if you find yourself in their shoes what will you do. So these things are still affecting us, we can’t run away from it, we have to mature up to the level where we can report objectively on such issues and I don’t think there is anything, if you try to publish anything that is against the established national interest in the United States they will stop you, if it means killing you, remember the Aljazeera thing, did it occur to you if when that thing was exposed that US government and the British government were planning to bomb the Aljazeera office “

Another journalist from northern Nigeria has expressed similar views about the role of religion as the main issue that influences the culture:

“Well yes but this is probably more of a religion thing than a culture in the sense that the newspapers that come from this part of the country, although you will say that it is Trust of all the newspapers that are here that you will say is predominantly Muslim owned. Islam because it abhors ‘kwakwa’⁵⁷ you will find that they are reluctant, not that they don’t investigate but even the language they use they tend to be more deferral to the authorities than newspapers from the south. Even when they criticize you find their language more deferential, they don’t use strong languages and to that extent yes. So it is more of a religious thing than a culture thing. But except that Islam is the predominant religion in this part of the country so it also affects the culture”

Some of the respondents clearly stated that everybody is influenced by his cultural background. As such, what might be seen as a story worth making big headlines might not be seen in the same way in other cultures. He gave an example:

⁵⁷ Excessive curiosity, or going beyond limit.

“Everybody is influenced by his cultural background. You know there are some things that are seen as corruption in other lands which here due to our own cultural circumstances we don’t see it as corruption or as scandals. For example, the western media could make a big hive out of a politician having a mistress somewhere. Here in Nigeria this is not regarded as a corruption if a minister has a mistress somewhere. If his wife finds out she talks to him, its not the kind of thing you publish and say so-so minister did something. Even the definition of corruption somehow culturally determines some things which people do here which society does not regard it here as news. So there is no doubt we are influenced by our own cultural conditions”

The position of these journalists corresponds with the position of Bayley (1966), whose work has been discussed in chapter one. His position is that corruption is culturally conditioned, and what is seen as corruption in one society might be normal in another.

But another journalist has a contrary view. For him, the cultural background of journalists as northerners or southerners is melting. Because these journalists interact together, and so they develop the same culture of practice. They have common values, they sometimes do things right and sometimes do things wrongly: according to him:

“So the cultural background I was talking about earlier is beginning to melt and you find that all these journalists now have common values that drive them all over the place. They take bribe, those that have integrity have integrity, those that take bribe take bribe and they mix freely”

However some of the examples given by the journalist reveal the differences in culture which might perhaps show the differences in attitude, between people from the north and those from the south. According to this journalist from the south, such differences are beginning to manifest with the change of political power from the south to the north:

“I was talking to somebody yesterday who is a journalist and he said the villa is getting better because at least we will be getting more money unlike Obasanjo who was stingy. You see it is just the impression we have that northerners are free with money than the southerners; whether it is true or not I don’t know. But it is easier for you to get money from a northerner than from a southerner and that is the culture”

So by implication, this journalist is saying that the attitude of people from the north and people from the south is so obvious that a southern president is seen as stingy and northern one as generous.⁵⁸ True to his words, people from the south see northerners as people who are stupidly generous, and you can easily make money out of them. On the other hand people from the north also have an impression that southerners are less respectful and can be dubious. One respondent, who is a Christian from northern Nigeria, but worked with a southern newspaper until he left to work for the BBC, made this long comparison about the cultural differences between people from the north and those from the south, and according to him, these attitudes are also imported in to the news room.

“I think so. Because in the north, you find in the northern culture even the way you interact with an elder, if you look at them straight in the eye it’s considered rude in most cultures. If your elder is speaking to you, you lower your head out of respect for him. In the south its not uncommon, it is not strange to hear a Yoruba boy for instance, his father telling a story about what he did in the office or in the army during the war and [the] kid will just say ‘iro ni baba’ meaning you are lying father, that is unthinkable in northern culture. You don’t even think of it let alone do it but in the southern culture this thing is ok, this boy is telling his father you are lying baba. So that is the sort of thinking we grew up with and that sort of thinking we take to our newsrooms. So you find the southern newspaper reporter bringing his ‘iro ni baba’ into the newsroom and report it. And the northern reporter is bringing the way he puts his eyes down when he is listening to an elder that also finds its way into the newsroom inevitably because that is his makeup, that is his orientation that is his mental makeup, that is the way he approaches the world that is his world view. So that is why I talk

⁵⁸ See the earlier discussion the qualities of *mutumin kirki* by Kirk-Greene.

about restraint on the part of the northern newspaper not because they condone corruption, no. but because of the culture”

What comes out from this section is that the respondents do acknowledge the role of culture in news production, and how that makes an impact in deciding or censoring what comes out as news? But it is difficult to draw conclusion about the extent to which the views expressed by the respondents play a role in shaping news values. But the points raised by the journalists suggest that journalists are products of their own culture, and their cultural orientation may contribute in shaping their journalistic attitude.

6.3 THIRD THEME: FOURTH ESTATE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

The fourth estate role of the media has been discussed by scholars from historical context to its application and limitations (See Albuquerque; 2005, Shultz; 1998), the respondents in this research have expressed different views about the fourth estate role of the press in Nigeria.

According to this journalist from *Thisday* newspaper:

“I think the Nigerian press has performed creditably. But then a whole lot of things have to be done to ensure that the watchdog role is strengthened or rather fed up. And that is why there has been this clamour for more access to information. The FOI bill was supposed to provide that platform for us to get access to information. But then what happened to the bill, the former President didn’t sign it into law. If it had been signed into law the Nigerian journalists will have had a legal platform to be able to demand federal access to certain information. Because if you are able to establish the trail; nothing stops you from going all the way to get to the root of the matter”

This journalist has within the context of Nigeria given a pass mark to the fourth estate and watchdog role of the Nigerian press, but with reservations. In particular he has brought out the issue of the freedom of information bill, which has become a subject of controversy in the national assembly. What however was not made clear by the journalist is what he understood

by the fourth estate role of the media and if there is consensus on the fourth estate role as he understands it (See Schultz, 1988, Albuguerque, 2005). The executives including the legislators do not seem to be comfortable with the FOI bill. The House of Representatives even threw the bill out during one of its deliberations.⁵⁹ Many of the journalists expressed concern that without the bill, it will be difficult for the media to play its role as the fourth estate of the realm. Some of the respondents indicated that having the freedom of information bill passed will contribute in reducing corruption in Nigeria. Despite the constraints; he feels, the press in Nigeria is trying its best. He gave the following account:

“I think somehow it reduces corruption. If I have facts now, I have documents I don’t care, I will write about whoever I will want to write about. But if you don’t have access to information it is always difficult. My next piece for tomorrow I wrote on Jonathan because I find it to be insulting really that a Vice President will make public his assets form and he will tell me that the only car in his garage is =N= 15.8 million car given to him by somebody. I asked the question ‘does it mean that this man has never used his money to buy a car before. He is a PhD holder and a lecturer and the only car you are declaring is a BMW worth fifteen point eight million naira given to you. And I said he must be hiding something”

The example he cited above refers to the vice president, Goodluck Jonathan. It was one of the stories attracting attention during the week of this interview. And the respondent angrily stated that he will write an article in his column to condemn the attitude of the vice president, first for not declaring his assets willingly until he found himself under pressure, and secondly for, according to the respondent trying to play with the intelligence of the people. The point made by this journalist shows the kind of freedom the media enjoys, especially when you compare it with other countries in Africa. And that is the position of majority of the interviewees, though they feel the media could still do better in Nigeria.

⁵⁹ For reports on throwing out the bill, see <http://allafrica.com/stories/200806040567.html> .

To illustrate the watchdog role played by the media, some of the respondents are of the opinion that the media proved to be better than the national assembly in the watchdog role.

According to this senior journalist from *Daily Trust*:

“You see, the way it is in Nigeria now, if any executive officer is going to abuse his office, he will be more afraid of that information falling into the hands of the media than falling into the hands of the National Assembly. It is as simple as that. If the President or a minister wants to do anything, he will be more afraid of media exposure than being called before a committee of the National Assembly and sanctioned. So also if the media blow open a case of corruption it becomes very difficult to cover up”

“If you ask me, the watchdog role of the newspapers right now is more effective than the watchdog role of the national and state house of assemblies. I mean in terms of checking corruption and govt excesses”

But some of the respondents disagree. According to the journalist below, the media continued to dance to regional sentiments after the return of the country to civilian rule in 1999 for at least four years, until the allegations of corruption under Obasanjo became an issue of public discourse:

“The newspapers especially the predominantly southern papers turned a blind eye to corruption and to all the bad things that Obasanjo was doing. In fact they were focusing at that time on the National Assembly especially the National Assembly leadership which they say it was corrupt even when they came out with clear evidence”

Another senior journalist also disagrees, but from a different perspective. He feels that there are certain factors that militate against the attainment of the fourth estate role of the Nigerian press:

“No I am not satisfied at all. I am not satisfied because of these critical factors that I talked about. There are so many issues that are not covered. One is that we cover too much of politics and we leave other areas of national interest. For instance even the business and economy, you do not find people following the cash, following the money train especially the business and economy desk. We cover too much of politics in business rather than the real business. We also do not have enough correspondents these days to cover science and technology issues. And you find that editors are not actually asking correspondents to pursue those issues. They pursue issues in the National Assembly, the federal executive council”

One interesting point mentioned by the respondent above, is too much coverage of politics. This in itself is a subject of research. Why should the media concentrate on politics? Is it because politics is so attractive that journalists want to be part of it, or is it simply responding to the needs of the audiences who may also be interested in political news?

6.4 FOURTH THEME: INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Investigative journalism is a segment of the fourth estate role of the media. (See chapter one for further details on investigative journalism. The view expressed by the journalist below reveals the picture on investigative journalism in the Nigerian press.

“One of the things I have not been able to get right in the Nigerian media is investigative stuff. We have not gotten that right, perhaps because of the fact that investigative journalism is a very expensive enterprise. You need to put people permanently; you need to mobilize resources in that particular area and all of that. We are in a society where people are looking for shortcuts and that also includes the media. Nobody wants to put his money in a long term investment and investigation as far as the media is concerned is a long term investment. And so people will start looking for the breaking story and by so doing the media has deprived the sale of perhaps the most important aspect of its responsibility which is as a check. Because if a government made a budget today and say in the next one year this is what we are going to spend, as media people we should look down the line and look at the budget and the reality

on the ground. Is there a match or mismatch between what was budgeted and what is on the ground?”

In this section, the respondents described a lot of issues related to investigative journalism. These include clientelism, the understanding of the concept, its application, corruption within the media and the challenges faced by the journalist.

6.4.1 CLIENTELISM AND INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Clientelism is a form of “social organisation in which access to social resources is controlled by patrons and delivered to clients in exchange for deference and various kinds of support” (Hallin and Papathanassopoulos, 2002 pp.182-183). Clientelism is seen as a feature of societies where little distinction is made between public good and personal interest. It is a system whereby rules and procedures are less important than personal connection (Roudakova, 2008 p. 42), and media organisations will only succeed if clientelism is weakened and discouraged (Lee, He and Huang, 2007 p. 39).

While the aim of investigative journalism is to be impartial and report facts as they are for the good of the public, exposure to clientelism could be an obstacle in achieving that aim. Accounts from the respondents interviewed have shown that clientelism is one of the features of journalism practice in Nigeria. According to this journalist:

“Daily Trust was punished several times by Nasiru El- Rufa’I. He was giving advert but not to Daily Trust because he believes he was fighting Daily Trust, he believes Daily Trust was fighting him...Nasiru El-Rufa’I for example felt as a Northerner, the Daily Trust has an obligation to support him,”

Nasiru El-Rufa’I was the minister of the federal capital territory, Abuja, and from the perspective of this journalist relationship between him and the *Daily Trust* newspaper should

be determined by regional loyalty rather than professionalism. If *Daily Trust* has bowed to the pressure, many stories emanating from the federal capital territory might be compromised. Even with that, the paper was punished by denying it advertisement. That is why many journalists develop a close relationship with politicians and media organisations “end up serving intra-elite communication needs rather than looking for the public interest or the common good” (Roudakova, 2008 p. 43).

One of the ways in which clientelism undermines investigative reporting is that politicians and public office holders have rivalry among themselves, and they can use the personal relationship they have with journalists in order to bring down their opponents, something that can easily be camouflaged as investigative journalism. Such behaviour was confirmed by this senior journalist from the Guardian newspaper:

“That is because always there are adversarial sources of information, you have your enemies all out there, and they will release all that concerns you to me if they lay their hands on it”

As discussed earlier by (Roudakova, 2008), concerning the rapport established by politicians with journalists, one of the respondents working with *Thisday* newspaper confirmed that some politicians think that when they fall into trouble their journalist friends will help them to get out of it:

“As long as they can perpetrate corruption and they are not exposed, they are happy. That is why some of them go out of their way to befriend journalists. Once they get their way to befriend the journalists, their belief is that when they run into trouble they will get protection from the journalists. That is the base for the friendship between politicians and journalists”.

6.4.2 UNDERSTANDING OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

From the responses gathered; Nigerian journalists have different understandings of investigative journalism. Some of the journalists see it as a way of digging the truth as pointed out by this journalist:

“Investigative journalism by my understanding is where the media focuses on exposing corruption in public places. Not just exposing corruption but trying to dig out the truth”

Other journalists have a wider conception of investigative journalism, looking at it from the way the data is compiled about the subject of investigation and producing an accurate description of the situation as explained by this journalist from *the Nation* newspaper.

“Investigative journalism is dependent on different things. People will say when you do a thorough job; you get your documents, get your sources right from the appropriate quarters before you go ahead and publish it...If you want to do it you must have funding”

The above description shows that the journalist does understand that investigative journalism is beyond routine journalism where the journalist relies on news releases or press conferences, but it means going an extra mile to solicit for information and compare the facts.

According to these two editors:

“Usually that means going after exclusive stories, exposing something that somebody is trying to hide”

“Well I guess it is when you come across a topic which is of public interest and you pursue it to the very end whatever the troubles ahead”

From the conception of these two editors, the watchdog role of the media is at play. Investigative journalism is involved where public office holders try to hide something from the public, whether it is the declaration of their asset, inflating contracts or using their office for self enrichment. It also means going after any story that might be of interest to the public. Other journalists see it from a more journalistic perspective, that is making a thorough investigation on stories that are already making headlines, so that the public will be more informed as described by this young journalist.

“It is just a way of going an extra mile into finding more facts, figures or even more information about an event or an issue that is making the news”

From the various responses derived from the respondents. Investigative journalism can be defined as the compilation of information from the effort of the journalist to find stories that may otherwise remain hidden, and provide an accurate and sound description of the issues in order to educate the members of the public.

6.4.3 APPLICATION OF INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

But the questions to be asked is do Nigerian journalists believe that they practice investigative journalism? The responses vary. According to this journalist from the *Guardian* newspaper:

“Well investigative report is not something that you will do within a week or within 1 or 2 or 3 days. You spend a lot of money, a lot of time; you need a lot of documents a lot of interviews of all the characters that are involved. But we don’t have time to do that now--- because we don’t have the resources to do so”

From this perspective, it can be understood that investigative journalism takes time and resources, both of which are difficult to manage. Even those who claim to practice investigative journalism are careful in their assertions as exemplified by this journalist from *Sunday Trust*:

“I will say that since we started our Sunday Trust paper we have done quite a bit of investigative stories which have gotten a lot of response in the govt. circle. Since it is because of the public interest we go out of our way to investigate things that have to do with the government and its policies”

One of the consequences of investigative journalism is that sometimes it results in resignation from office (as in Watergate scandal), litigation or a punitive measure taken against the erring individual. According to this journalist:

“You know Nigerians don’t resign anyway, even full plane crashes under one minister and nobody told him to go and he was not willing to go”

The statement above will bring forward different questions that require some explanation. Is it because investigative journalism in its ideal form has not yet taken root in Nigeria? Is it because of the media elite integration, whereby the journalists are compromised into a relationship that is simply defined by clientelism? Or is it because those involved have little concern over public interest? The answer may not be a categorical yes or no, but as identified by many of the respondents it could be as a result of a combination of these factors and the nature of Nigerian society itself, where it is easy for the mighty and the powerful to get away with apparent wrongdoings.

But other journalists see investigative journalism not just from the perspective of public office holders, but through undercover reporting that exposes maltreatment of workers as suggested by this respondent:

“But in the Sun we do. That is one of our greatest strength because we have in the Saturday Sun investigative series. Our reporter Emmanuel has won three consecutive times investigative reporter of the year. Wole Soyinka prize of investigative reporter. He was once posed as workers in a factory were Indians were using Nigerians I mean maltreating Nigerians.”

From the responses above, it is clear that Nigerian journalists do understand that investigative journalism is different from day to day reporting of events, they do understand that investigative journalism can only be practiced when there is support for it, both from the media organisation and the society at large. It is important to point out that though the journalists do have an understanding of investigative journalism, but it is not a shared understanding, there are differences in their conception. One of the respondents confirmed that investigative journalism is not something we do here. Others suggest that it is done but the effort is limited. What this suggests is that though the journalists may theoretically understand what investigative journalism means, and some of the journalists may want to pursue that line in their carrier, but the political, economic and environmental factors needed to make it thrive may not be there. The frequent reference by the journalists on the lack of passage of the freedom of information bill is a pointer to that. Beyond the passage of the freedom of information bill, the fact that those in authority hardly take responsibility for their action unless in certain isolated cases, can undermine the effort of the journalists to practice investigative journalism.

6.4.4 OBSTACLES

No doubt there are challenges, these challenges could be physical in which the individual journalist is harmed as exemplified by this respondent:

“do you know what happened to my face, I believe so much in investigative journalism and somebody thought I was being too irresponsible and wanted to stop me---That was about fifteen years ago. I still carry the scars today, Remember Dele Giwa, his own case he died, mine I am alive to show all my colleagues, if you go too far your handsome face will turn this way”

The above respondent was a senior journalist, and half of his face is burnt, because he tried to investigate the wrongdoing of a senior government official from his State. Though he was working for a private newspaper, yet an attempt was made to destroy his life.

For the government owned media, it is even more difficult, because journalists can not even publish stories against the government, otherwise they will either be suspended, frustrated or be forced to resign. According to this editor who was suspended for publishing a story against the federal government while working for a government owned newspaper:

“As a general rule the New Nigerian does not dig up stories by fact of government ownership just like NTA does not do in exposing of anything”

The *New Nigerian* is one of the newspapers owned by the federal government, while NTA, *Nigeria Television Authority* is the main television station owned by the federal government. It is common knowledge that these two media organisations have been reduced to government mouthpieces without room for sound and critical journalism, even though they are meant to serve the interest of the public.

Another challenge identified by the respondents is “poor capitalisation”. Lack of strong capital base according to the respondents seriously undermines the effectiveness of journalism in Nigeria. According to this journalist who is a Bureau Chief of one of the leading newspapers in Nigeria:

“So we do not have too many journals in Nigeria and organs of mass communication and even electronic media that can begin an investigation that cannot be interfered with by big business bureaux. It is because of this poor capitalisation”

This according to the respondents provide senior politicians and business owners to invest in the media organisations, but the consequence of that is that what goes against their interest will not be reported. In fact during the interviews there is a statement mentioned by almost all the respondents, “He who pays the piper, dictates the tune”, the journalists were unanimous on this.

Corruption within the media itself is another challenge. Journalists are seen as beggars because they either use their positions to make money, or even extort public figures as testified by this political correspondent:

“A whole lot of good stories would have been investigated and Nigerians would have been better for it... At the end of the day they do not get investigated because people that are involved succeeded in getting the journalists to get off the investigation”

According to some respondents, the media organisations themselves are not interested in investigative reporting due financial constraints and other factors as confirmed by this reporter:

“Not enough because of constrains like financial constraints. Most newspapers don’t finance it anymore”.

6.4.5 CORRUPTION WITHIN THE MEDIA

Many of the respondents agreed that reports about corruption are receiving more attention now than before. But they also blame the media for being part of the problem, because of the corruption within the media itself. As indicated by this journalist:

“The media is corrupt not could be corrupt. Why has nobody said anything about Odili?⁶⁰ Common let us ask ourselves questions, the governors we have are not the most corrupt the ones that have been tried are not the most corrupt .Somebody is paying so that these things do not come out in the open”.

So beyond regional and ethnic divisions in Nigeria, people can also plant stories or bribe the journalists to ignore certain stories. This will make the reporting of corruption much more complex, first by allowing the media to be a platform for political opponents to settle scores, and increasing corruption by making political office holders to take money from the treasury in order to satisfy journalists who use the privilege of their position to either promote or blackmail people”. This journalist from a leading newspaper in the south added this point:

“Bitter truth. We are all corrupt .whether those we report, whether those of us doing the reporting. You think Atiku got the amount of exposure he got in the media because they love Atiku; it is not that of love.⁶¹ He was financing it”.

⁶⁰ Peter Odili is the former governor of Rivers State, one of the oil rich states in Nigeria.

⁶¹ Atiku Abubakar was former Vice President from (1999-2007), he was together with President Olusegun Obasanjo accused of diverting money from the Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF) by a senate committee.

The two examples given on Odili and Atiku could mean that the section of the media that is corrupt as alleged from the statements above do not care where a person comes from as long as he can finance his stories, or bribe the journalist to remain calm on activities. Atiku is from the north, and Odili from the south-south part of Nigeria, none of them is from the south-west which is the media capital of Nigeria.

However according to another journalist, there is a reason that forces some journalists and media organisations to collaborate with politicians in blackmailing or hiding the wrongdoing of others:

“Another problem entirely in the Nigerian mass media whether electronic or print is poor capitalisation. Because this poor capitalisation does not allow editorial independence. Most of the organs either in the south or in the north are owned by either business men who have interest in politics, or are owned by political leaders, or some political leaders have invested because of poor capitalisation, some of these organs depend on daily basis on handouts from political leaders who are using public funds, that is why so many newspaper stories are sponsored, columns, articles, some of them are full of impurities”

The factor mentioned by the journalist above shows some of the difficulty journalists’ face, in particular those who are genuinely interested in promoting the profession. And the result of that will be the example given by this journalist:

“If you don’t have money to pay your staff, you don’t have money to buy the latest software, you don’t have money to buy newsprint, it means that you will depend on people who are either in business or in politics to run operations, so how independent can you be? That’s part of the problem, corruption in the mass media make journalists to lose credibility in the eyes of members of the public. Some of the newspapers are owned by former governors, how independent can you be when some of those governors are being haunted by EFCC”

The elite have seen the potential of the media in protecting their interest. That therefore might explain the reason why they invest in the media. But the implication of that is more politicisation of journalism, and making journalists to be tools that can be manipulated by those who have the capital to establish the media organisations. However this journalist suggests that such newspapers established with money from suspicious sources have no basis to be in the market:

“I just find it interesting that the media never beams the search light on itself. Very rare do they beam the search light on themselves. A governor is being tried in Nigeria today for money laundering, thieving and stealing. The former governor of Abia state, Orji Kalu and this man owns a newspaper, a tabloid, its account were recently frozen by the EFCC and so they were having difficulties running and so they began to link that to the political difficulties of their owner. But for me I saw it a little bit beyond that, if a newspaper is running on the basis of funds acquired fraudulently, what basis does it have to be a newspaper”

6.4.6 POOR CAPITALISATION

One of the issues of concern to many of the respondents is poor capitalisation, which they see as one of the problems encountered by the press. Poor capitalisation here refers to a strong capital base that will make the newspaper to be financially independent. The journalists see poor capitalisation as one of the issues affecting the credibility of the profession, because without strong capital, there will be challenges which the media will find difficult to overcome. One of the reasons for the poor capitalisation is in the nature ownership, in which politicians and businessmen invest in the newspaper industry without much concern for the welfare and credibility of journalism. According to this journalist from the Guardian newspaper:

“The building block of credibility in the media is trust. If people no longer trust what you put there because they believed that some political leaders in one opposition party or another are sponsoring what you are broadcasting, it is a problem”

The problem of poor capitalisation has made it difficult to carry out such tasks like investigative and in-depth reporting which is required in order to keep the public fully informed on the affairs around them. This senior journalist elaborates on how poor capitalisation affects journalism practice:

“We are constrained because of poor capitalization. Investigation either in the media or in security services consumes a lot of money. But the publishers and the editors do not pay attention to special desks that can do investigation. If you don't have the money if you want investigate corruption or corrupt practices, if you yourself cannot pay your way to where you are going to investigate; it means that the people you are going to investigate can influence you, they can pay you. They said you haven't paid your house rent of =N=200 000 and they give you 1 million naira. So poor capitalization is the trouble with the Nigerian mass media”

The journalist above is citing an example of how the absence of strong capital base affects even the payment of salaries. In this case if the rent of the journalist is 200, 000 Naira (£800) per annum in Abuja, the capital for instance, and his annual income is just a little above his rent, how will he avoid the influence of the people who would like to take advantage of his situation to influence the stories he writes. This could perhaps suggest the reason why so much attention is given to the coverage of politics, because of the favours that might come with it as suggested by the journalist below:

“There are so many issues that are not covered. One is that we cover too much of politics and we leave other areas of national interest. For instance even the business and economy,

you do not find people following the cash, following the money train especially the business and economy desk. We cover too much of politics in business rather than the real business”

As identified by the journalist above, there is much to cover, yet the coverage of politics is receiving more attention. It is not bad to cover politics, what may be bad is using the coverage of politics for personal gain. From the accounts of the respondents, if the condition of the journalist is not improved, political sources, especially those in position of authority will look down on the journalist. According to the journalist below, a media organisation should be strong enough to invite a politician or any other person no matter how highly placed. But when the journalist looks hungry and in shambles he will hardly get the respect he deserves, let alone make a serious impression on his source:

“By the time I pay my way to talk to a minister or a public office he may know that it is a very serious matter and he cannot influence me... And he cannot even think about it because he knows I am independent. The way I dress, the way I talk and even the quality of my hotel room, where I stay will dictate to him that this one is a serious matter. But when they know where you are coming from, they look at the quality of your tie and shoes they know that you need better tie and shoes and they begin to talk about that and that is the end of the story”

Therefore poor capitalisation can retard the input a newspaper can make in the political communication process of a country, especially a developing one like Nigeria, which requires a vibrant press that can assess the political situation and provide honest and impartial account of issues.

6.4.7 BAD WORKING CONDITION AND INADEQUATE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Among the issues identified by the respondents, which are related to the points raised earlier, is the nature of the working condition of the journalist. The respondents suggested what they

think can be done to improve the quality of journalism in Nigeria; the journalist below provides an example.

“Better education, better equipments, faster communication and greater ethical reorientation. But the single most important thing that will improve Nigerian journalism as far as I can see is having the FOI act more than anything. Because having the FOI will automatically eliminate rumour mongering and inaccurate reporting”

From the account above, five important points have been raised. These are; better education, better equipments, faster communication, ethical reorientation and the FOI (freedom of information) bill. Education is important; it provides the basic background and shapes the thinking of journalist. Equipments make the work easy, faster communication will increase efficiency, ethical reorientation will teach the journalist the values of the profession and the trust he should seek to establish and defend. But if the working condition is not good, those with the relevant education will move to other sectors of the economy, and those who agree to join the profession, they may do so as a gateway for other opportunities, and this can create a serious problem in terms of reporting and the credibility of the newspaper and the journalist himself. A senior editor from the *Daily Trust* believes that is its poor pay that creates corruption among journalist:

“Corruption in the media is due to poor pay and also in some cases irregular pay and infact in some newspaper houses no pay at all. There are some small newspapers that don’t have a pay roll and they say that the reporters ID card is his pay roll meaning they are encouraging him to go out and seek brown envelope”

Though some journalists might engage in corruption because of poor pay, some may do so simply because of greed as explained further by the same journalist:

“But of course as a human being I know that is not enough because there is the greed factor and you know when somebody is greedy if you give him a million he may want two million, if you give 2 million I want 3 million. So that one I don’t know as long as there is overall corruption in the community the newspapers are bound to suffer somehow”

Another factor that can create problem in terms of what gets reported is the interest of the publisher. Many of the respondents confirmed that politicians and businessmen establish newspapers in order to get access to the government. Therefore these publishers will make sure that what gets reported does not go against their interest. That is the point made by a journalist from *Thisday* newspaper.

“The man who owns the business like I was taught in the communication school is the man who decides. Your interest cannot be higher than that of the man who owns it...you know the world over, that the man who owns the newspaper would determine his editorial direction. He can give you a free direction, not even that. Advertising and advertisers would naturally influence it. They are the ones who sustain your paper. That is one powerful force stronger than the owner of the paper.”

The comment above raises some questions regarding the independence of the press, because the journalist as a gatekeeper may be constrained by other factors like the interest of the publisher and the power of advertisers, who may even be more powerful the publisher himself. (For details on the power of advertising in deciding what the news is, see Herman & Chomsky, 2002).

One of the respondents asked rhetorically, how do journalists survive despite the above challenges? Some of them living a life style which is beyond their earning. According to this journalist, somebody might be paying for it.

“The question to now ask yourself is how do the journalists survive? How do they manage to drive the cars they are driving? That is the question. Somebody is putting the bills somewhere. A publisher once told his staff, what do you think I gave you that identity card for?”

The reference to the identity card is about one of the publishers who according to the respondents does not pay salaries on time, he simply tell the journalists that their identity card is enough to make them earn a living.

However one of the respondents, a former managing director of a newspaper publishing company, and at the moment a leading columnist in the country offered some suggestions which he thinks can help in addressing some problems affecting the newspaper industry.

“The solution invariably we must be up and doing, we must eschew tribalism and ethnicity. We must eschew religious bias. Of course we all have our biases but the most important thing is when you come to do your reporting, try as much as possible to put it aside. It is not easy but you must try. Trying is not too difficult, achieving the end of it, balance; objective, fair reporting is difficult. But at least making the attempt is not that difficult. All it involves is when any issue comes up, try and get all the parties involved”

The points raised by the above respondents showed the need for training apart from other considerations that must be made available if journalists are to practice in an ideal environment, where they will uphold the principles of honesty and impartiality.

6.4.8 SOLUTION

The respondents have offered different views on what they think might serve as a solution to the challenges faced by the Nigerian media. According to this journalist from the *Nation* newspaper:

“This solution is to have more resources, better training for our staff and the lowering of some of the obstacles in the official, private and cultural circles. You know we have to bring these things down so that we can do our job easily. We need a little more courage from journalists and reporters too; and a little belief in the sense of justice.”

This view further suggests some of the issues discussed earlier in the section on obstacles and poor capitalisation. Resources are very important if the media is to become independent in Nigeria. Another journalist looks at the solution from the challenges of information technology and support from other institutions that will complete media effort. According to him:

“They can be improved. I hope with the Nigeria’s recent opening up to international system and which means the standard will be raised higher because you have challenges coming in as these borders open up and so you are challenged by a new level of practice to want to step up your game. So there is also the internet which has brought this big boom and people watch what others are doing and so they are challenged to try to improve the system so that is helping. But we can also help with law, the legislation, and the freedom of information bill; if it ever gets to be passed in this country it will improve journalism practice in Nigeria in no small measure.”

Another important issue raised by the respondents which they suggest will help in improving journalism practice is training. During the interviews, the respondents stated that some journalists simply join the profession as a means of earning a livelihood, and some proprietors do not care to provide them with sufficient training before going into the field. So according to this senior journalist from the *Sun* newspaper, the starting point is:

“Pay well, give them good training and then motivate them because they are performing a role that is constitutionally recognised. It is very tough; it is like an anti-corruption crusader who has no money. He will be tempted”

Good salaries and training will help journalists to practice professionally, but also to be equipped intellectually. The same journalist elaborated on the consequences of lack of payment and training:

“I am sure you could ask some of them how many books they have read in the last one month, you can't perform your educating role when you yourself you are not equipped. There are no trainings; people don't go for refresher courses. It is not about poor pay alone, if you do not read how then do you write, how do you inform others?”

A part from training, other journalists emphasised the need for investment. This may not be unconnected with the way some proprietors make money from newspaper publishing, but channel the resources elsewhere rather than investing more on the newspaper industry. This point was emphasised by an editor from *Thisday* newspaper:

“Some of us have been privileged to attend some BBC programs and fellowship. But a whole lot of people have not got that benefit. More investment in the media so that we look at a long time gestation, investigative stuff so that we better hold our leaders accountable.”

But training and investment may not be the only solution to the challenges faced by Nigerian journalists. There are other issues related to the culture, regional and political interests, and the journalist below who runs a column with *Daily Trust* emphasises that angle:

“The solution invariably we must be up and doing, we must eschew tribalism and ethnicity. We must eschew religious bias. Of course we all have our biases but the most important thing

is when you come to do your reporting, try as much as possible to put it aside. It is not easy but you must try. Trying is not too difficult, achieving the end of it, balance; objective, fair reporting is difficult. But at least making the attempt is not that difficult. All it involves is when any issue comes up, try and get all the parties involved”

Ensuring objectivity, fairness and balancing may be important, but the policies from government that will allow journalism to prosper are equally important in ensuring that journalists do practice in the best way they can. According to a senior journalist with the *Guardian* newspaper:

“Definitely public policies that will favour this media practice. Beginning from these consumables, regulatory authorities to be in place. May be consolidation, because I don’t mind to tolerate a situation, as a journalist I am ashamed of my colleagues are not paid for one year or six months. And I don’t think that they will be proper journalists”

The same journalist also recommends that journalists should practice with passion and work hard to ensure that they restore the dignity of the profession as he explained in the following words:

“My own recommendation is that we should begin to restore value to the practice of journalism. We should reinvent it because I still believe like people including this CNN man who has this interview every day, Larry King, he said that journalism is the best profession in the world and I still believe in it”.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter analyses the interviews conducted with Nigerian journalists. The discussions were framed under four different themes. Corruption/scandal, journalism and culture, fourth estate role of the media and investigative journalism. The analysis was done by means of phenomenography, which describes the conception of the journalists regarding the issues

raised during the interviews. In each theme, different forms of understanding were identified, and relevant quotations from the interviews were used as examples to explain the understanding of the journalists. The analysis has shown the complexity of the media in Nigeria. The respondents provided different views that sometimes converge, and sometimes disagree with each other. But what is clear is that the press in Nigeria is alive, the journalists have realised this, but there are challenges that must be addressed in order to strengthen the media and the journalists in their political communication role.

The usefulness of the interviews used in this chapter is to help in answering the research questions suggested at the beginning of the work and also to see the relevance of the data in terms of the contextual framework of this research. So far from what has been discussed, the interviews have been useful in substantiating and having a relevant linkage to the literature and the framework of this research. It is noteworthy that the conceptions of the journalists under the first theme of the interviews in which some of the journalists have a consensus that there is no difference in the coverage of corruption between north and south, but counteracted by the journalists who expressed the biases of the Nigerian press in terms of regionalism only strengthens the need for an intra-national comparative research which this research has pursued. Some of the issues raised by the respondents in terms of the unevenness in newspaper ownership, the cultural differences between journalists from different parts of Nigeria suggest the diversity of the country and the need for a research that will look into the nature of Nigerian media system.

The views expressed by the respondents in this chapter in terms of the prominence given to news about corruption and the fourth estate role of the media further shows the relevance of the literature reviewed earlier in chapter one on the issue of fourth estate, and the absence of

consensus on the watchdog role of the media. But most importantly the issues raised by the respondents have addressed some of the research questions such as *Do Nigerian newspapers give prominence to news about corruption scandal? Do the northern and southern Nigerian journalists consider their role as that of the fourth estate role of the media?* In terms of the first question there is no consensus as some of the journalists are satisfied with the prominence, while others are more sceptical and would like to see more effort in terms of the watchdog role which the second question seeks to explore. As the data revealed, the journalists truly see their work as that of the fourth estate role of the media, but they acknowledge the constraints that militate against such an objective. Some of these factors could be internal like poor training, corruption within the media and others are external like political clientelism and lack of support from other institutions that can help in strengthening the fourth estate role, like the judiciary and the legislator.

As discussed already in chapter one, among the ways of uncovering corruption scandals is through investigative journalism. The issues raised by the journalists suggest that investigative journalism is not practiced in Nigeria as it is understood theoretically. This is due to factors that equally challenged the fourth estate role of the media. The relevance of this is that the findings of this research are suggesting that the prominence given to news about corruption scandals is not as a result of the efforts of the journalists, but it is a reflection of the tide of activities related to the works of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission and the Independent and Corrupt practices Commission that provide news that is attractive and can help sell the newspapers. But the interest shown by the press in reporting these cases suggests the kind of freedom enjoyed by the press in Nigeria despite the challenges it faces, and is consistent with the nature of the Nigerian press before and after independence when it comes to issues of national importance as discussed already in Chapter

two on the Nigerian newspaper landscape. The interviews have also identified some of the challenges faced by the Nigerian press, which includes corruption within the media, poor capitalisation, bad working conditions, poor remunerations and clientelism, challenges which addressed the research question which asks, *what are the constraints faced by Nigerian journalists in reporting corruption scandals?*

The views expressed in this chapter by the journalists on the nature of journalism practice in Nigeria further suggests that it is difficult to have a single model of journalism that can be applied in every society. As such the works of Hallin and Mancini on *Comparing Media Systems* (2004), where the framework of this research was adopted and modified to suit the Nigerian newspaper landscape, remains an important contribution. However as with other works that seek to explore the nature of journalism practice, their work, though useful in suggesting a framework for comparative research, it remains inadequate in creating a picture of journalism practice that can be applied globally. To do that, the work of Hallin and Mancini needs to be expanded to other continents beyond Europe and North America. Beyond that, such effort must also understand the internal dynamics of the society in which the study will be conducted, rather than a simple overview of the literature written on that society. To do that, media scholars and researchers need to collaborate so that any thesis that may be provided can be sound and in line with the dynamics of our world. The issues raised in this chapter have shown that no two societies are the same. The main relevance of this chapter is that it has provided additional insight into the intricacies and complexities of the Nigerian media landscape, some of which may share certain characteristics with other developing countries, and others radically different and unique to the Nigerian society.

The next chapter will provide analysis of the results presented in this chapter. This will help in providing a better understanding of the social, economic and cultural factors that influence and shape the Nigerian media landscape as well as the issues at play in reporting corruption scandals.

6.6 SUMMARY

This chapter has explained the views of the respondents by means of phenomenography. It is a method employed in education but extended to other sectors. The chapter is divided into themes which were originally drawn from the context of the research, and used in developing the interview schedule. This contents of this chapter are directly linked to the research questions proposed earlier in chapter one. The content of the chapter has shown the complexity of the press in Nigeria, a factor that is present in how it reports corruption scandals. The results stemmed from a fieldwork conducted in Nigeria where twenty two journalists were interviewed on the nature of reporting corruption scandals in Nigeria. Many issues have been raised in the chapter that require an analysis. The next chapter therefore will analyse the meaning of the issues raised by the respondents.