



INFLUENCE OF THE BOKO HARAM SECURITY THREAT IN NIGERIA ON THE LEVEL OF INTEREST IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA NEWS AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

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Abstract

In times of uncertainty and insecurity, people rely on all types of media (social media, traditional, inter-personal, etc) for information on the state of affairs. Therefore, in the light of the recent insecurity and threats to lives and properties in Nigeria by the activities of the Boko Haram Sect, this study investigated how this influenced the level of interest in mainstream media news by Post Graduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Survey method of research was adopted in a randomized sample selection of survey participants. A 10-item questionnaire was employed in eliciting data from the population of Post Graduate Students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Data generated was analyzed using the Rensis Likert's scaling technique. As the findings show, consequent upon the insecurity in the country posed by Boko Haram, there was a significant increase in the level of interest in the mainstream media news by Postgraduate students of the University of Nigeria, than other sources of news. Findings also showed that the increase in interest in mainstream media news was associated with participants' perception of mainstream media news as credible and dependable. Among others, we recommend that the mainstream media, should, irrespective of the stiff competition from other sources, continue in their social responsibility role, since they are seen as credible and dependable source of information in times of crises.

Keywords: Influence, Boko Haram, Security Threat, Interest, Mainstream Media, News.

Background to the Study

National security seeks first and foremost to guarantee internal cohesion, maintain law and order and ensure safety of citizens' lives and property as well as guide against State vulnerability to internal insurrections and external aggression (Ringim, 2010). One of the distinguishing characteristics of nationhood is a State's ability to provide security for her citizens, defend her sovereignty and territorial integrity. National security is therefore a grand policy to achieve, sustain and maintain a state of national survival. This is the minimum requirement for a nation to build a solid prosperous economy and begin the ultimate match towards social and political well being encapsulated as national interest (Nwosu, 2012; Ringim, 2010). When the above indices are lacking, a situation of insecurity becomes predominant and the result is that citizens become apprehensive and this may impact on their information seeking pattern.

Nigeria has been plagued with various security crises recently more than any other period ever, especially, with the mode of Boko Haram's operations in the country. The spate of bombings, sporadic shootings, killings, arson and other forms of violence has threatened security and sovereignty of the nation. Some studies have contended that security forces have been implicated as acting as a stumbling block to security itself (Popoola, 2011:342; Obi, 2011:355). Some have pointed to the poor use of pre-emptive intelligence and a coherent strategy in the management of the security issues arising from the Boko Haram insurgence. A recent editorial in the DAILY SUN newspaper aptly captures the scenario, "The recent multiple bomb attacks on three churches in Kaduna and Zaria, which killed 70 people and injured scores of others, have once again drawn attention to worsening security situation in Nigeria" (Editorial SATURDAY SUN, June 23, 2012). Another editorial in the THISDAY newspaper points at the insecurity in the country and warns:

While we commend the Federal government for quickly responding to the security situation in the country, we must stress that tension and incoherent maneuvers have lasted long enough and faith in the emerging new government and commitment to core national values will be permanently jeopardized by a state of insecurity (Editorial, Thisday 14th July, 2011).

That the situation of insecurity fuelled by Boko Haram might spiral into a large scale ethnic and religious war between the Christians and Muslims, and between the North and the Southern region of Nigeria, is reflected in what Bishop Chukwuma Emmanuel, (the CAN chairman in Enugu State) warned recently,

Christian leaders will have no other option than to begin retaliation on their mosques and Emir places (in Enugu). He lamented that attacks on Christians in the North every Sunday had become a weekly ritual saying that was giving Christian leaders a lot of concern as it was increasingly militating against security of Christians in their worship places.

In times of uncertainties and emergencies, timely and transparent production and dissemination of information generates trust and credibility. Citizens, National authorities, International agencies and Humanitarian assistance organizations and the affected population will demand information in the form of data, figures, reports and situation

analysis or recommendations. These stakeholders depend on this information to make decisions and to translate their interest and concern into action (Ekharefo, 2011:232-244). However, information in emergency and disaster situation comes from many sources; it represents different points of views and serves a wide range of interest and needs. For example, following an earthquake, scientific technical and operational information will serve decision makers, the affected population and the international community involved in response efforts. Clearly, the type of information provided reflects the multi-disciplinary nature of emergency and disaster response and the ever-growing number of specialists and organizations from different technical disciplines who are involved in disaster response. The participation of national and international actors will be beneficial to affected populations to the extent that they have precise, timely and relevant information. (Ekharefo, 2011:232-244).

The insecurity in the country has no doubt, made people become apprehensive and speculative. Thus, information on what happens in and around the environment has become highly priced commodity. However, scanning the environment and providing timely and useful account of the day's event, fall under the purview of the surveillance and information function of the media, which in this study, we refer to as *Mainstream media* (Radio, television newspaper, magazine). But contemporary realities and scholarly literatures, show that it is hardly only the traditional media that could attempt the provision of the surveillance and information service. There is the alternative to either rely on the several social networks that are powered by the advent of the internet and ICTs, or interpersonal communication, which are most times products of rumour. Also, the individual may decide to rely on opinion leadership or group discussions. The result is that individuals are thrown into a state of indecision as to making a choice of what alternative media to turn to for reliable information in the time of relative insecurity and uncertainty as inflicted on the nation by the bombing, killing and maiming activities of Boko Haram in Nigeria.

Boko Haram: A historical Analysis

As Okoro and Okechukwu (2012) note, Boko Haram is an Islamic sect in Northern Nigeria. The sect which opposes western education, culture, modern science and democracy was formed in 2002 by late Ustaz Mohammed Yusuf in Maiduguri, Borno State. Boko Haram, which literally means western education (Boko) is sinful (Haram), is believed by many as a break-away republic from the deadly Maitatsine Group of 1980s. In fact, the history of Boko Haram is as elusive as the group itself and studies on the group remain inconclusive about its origin (Madike, June 2011).

According to sources (Okoro & Okechukwu 2012; Emewu, 2011; Suzan, 2012), the group has evolved from various efforts by extremists' elements dating back to the 1940s through the end of the 1990s that sought to radicalize various segments of Northern Nigeria. To some other sources, Boko Haram started in 1995 as '*Sahaba*' and was initially led by Lawan Abubakar, who later left for the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia for further studies. Late Yusuf Mohammed who was killed in a controversial circumstance in 2009 by men of the Nigerian Policies Force was said to have taken over the leadership after the departure of Abubakar and indoctrinated the sect with his own teaching which he claimed were based on purity and Sharia law.

Shortly after his take over, he commenced what many described as intensive membership mobilization after his first release from police custody in November 2008 in Maiduguri. This intensive mobilization recorded huge success. He allegedly had over 500,000 members before his demise and usually taxed them one naira, which approximated to N500, 000 daily. Sources note that the Almajiri system in the north made this mobilization easy (Madike, June 2011; Okoro & Okechukwu, 2012).

To nip the festering crisis in the bud, the late president Umaru Musa Yar'Adua ordered the deployment of the military to contain those government described as dissidents. After initial resistance, Boko Haram fell to the superior fire power of the military, and Yusuf, its leader, was arrested and handed over to the police. Hours later, police executed Yusuf alongside his alleged sponsor, Alhaji Buji Foyi, who was the Commissioner for Religious Affairs during the first term of former Governor Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno State. However, despite the death of the once dreaded Yusuf, the group has continued its attacks. In fact, the insurgency has just gone critical and has indeed assumed a very dangerous dimension. From the time the group was formed to the present day, it has carried out lots of successful attacks most of which were bomb blasts which have left lots of people dead and properties destroyed. Some of these deadly attacks are the August 26, 2011 bombing of the United Nation's Building in Abuja which left over 25 persons dead with several others seriously wounded and the December 25 (Christmas day) bombing of St. Theresa's Catholic Church, Madalla, in Suleja Local Government Area of Niger State which left 43 people dead and several others injured. (Emewu, 2011, Suzan, 2012; Madike, 2011 cited in Okoro & Okechukwu, 2012).

Operational Definition

Influence: This refers to a change or the impact a stimulus has on a phenomenon.

Boko Haram: An insurgent group in Nigeria, that uses targeted bombing as its strategy.

News: Timely information about an on-going phenomenon.

Security: A state of relative safety and peace in a country.

Interest: A preferred alternative.

Mainstream Media News: Traditional media like, Radio, Television, Newspaper, Magazine.

Other Media: Sources of news or information like, facebook, twitter, opinion leadership, inter- personal communication, youtube.

Statement of Problem

In times of insecurity, people are apprehensive and speculative. Thus, information on what happens in and around the environment becomes a highly priced commodity. It usually results in a field period (economic bust) for those who trade in the distribution of news and information. However, scanning the environment and providing timely and useful

account of the day's event, fall under the purview of the surveillance and information function of the media, which in this study, we refer to as *Mainstream media* (Radio, television newspaper, magazine). But contemporary realities show that it is hardly only the traditional media that could attempt the provision of the surveillance and information service. There is the alternative to either rely on the several social networks that are powered by the advent of the internet and ICTs, or interpersonal communication, which are most times products of rumour. Also, the individual may decide to rely on opinion leadership or group discussions. The result is that individuals are thrown into a state of indecision as to making a choice of what alternative media to turn to for reliable information in the time of relative insecurity and uncertainty. No doubt, these array of sources have their disadvantages. For instance, some information from these sources may be poorly investigated while some even when well investigated, may misinterpret the information and sequence, and therefore present the information wrongly. Some still, may lack proper presentation characteristics, all of which may lead to misinforming the recipient. The choice of what medium to turn to for information in such circumstances ultimately, may have to be influenced by certain intrapersonal considerations. However, as rife as this debate is, empirical evidence showing the news source interest of the public in times of insecurity is lacking in the literature. Also, lacking in the literature, is evidence, indicating what might influence the interest in a particular medium at a time of insecurity.

Against the backdrop of the rising security challenge in Nigeria caused by the Boko Haram terrorist activities, this study attempts to find out if the level of interest in the mainstream media news was influenced by the activities of Boko Haram. The researchers are assuming that people will more readily turn to mainstream media news for reliable information in a time of uncertainty.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out if the Boko Haram security threat in Nigeria influenced interest in mainstream media news by post graduate students of the University of Nigeria.
- To examine the level of interest in mainstream media news on Boko Haram, compared with other non mainstream media news.
- To ascertain factors responsible for the interest in mainstream media news on Boko Haram.

Research Questions

- Did the Boko Haram security threat in Nigeria influence interest in mainstream media news by post graduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka?
- What is the level of interest in mainstream media news on Boko Haram by Post graduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, compared with other non mainstream media news?
- What factors were responsible for the interest in mainstream media news on Boko Haram?

Theoretical Platform

- Uses and Gratification Theory

The theme of social reality as could be identified in some theoretical inquiry into media preferences, suggests that we inhabit a real world of material circumstances and events and that the media provides us with reports or reflections of this reality with varying degrees of accuracy, completeness or dependability. Thus, the notion of truth is often applied as a standard to contents of news (Mcquail, 2005:8). To this end therefore, individuals seek their information through certain media. This informed the use of the Uses and Gratification theory as a theoretical base for this study.

This theory according to Folarin (2002:72), perceives the recipient as actively influencing the effect process since he selectively chooses, attends to, perceives and retains the media messages on the basis of his/her needs, beliefs, etc. In discussing this theory, certain issues are considered:

- Individuals have communication-related needs
- These individuals select the media that appear likely to satisfy those needs.
- They selectively consume the communication content
- An effect may or may not occur.

The relevance of this theory to this study is that, with the security challenge in Nigeria, which is induced by the bombing activities of Boko Haram, individuals will seek information related to the activities of this group. However, the assumption is that they will seek this information in particular media because of the satisfaction they derive in such media.

Literature Review

In his study of the role of the media in sustaining democratic cultures in Nigeria, Obukoadata (2009:76) observed that Media roles in a polity are summed up in the creation, maintenance and shaping of public opinion. The media provide the instrument for opinion formation, sustenance and change through its capacity to transmit information to the people. There is the role of an interpreter and analyzer of events vested on the media through which it provides the necessary background to events for the public to appreciate specific situations (Obukoadata, 2009:76). The above view is supported by Baran (2010:4) and he avers that the media so fully saturate our everyday lives that we often are unconscious of their presence, just like fire is usually unconscious of the presence of water until its absence. Thus the media inform, entertain, alert us to trends and even offend us.

Violence in Nigeria has flared up periodically over the last 30 years. Mainly in the form of urban riots, it has pitted Muslims against Christians and has seen confrontations between different Islamic sects. Although there have been some successes in conflict management in the last decade, the 2009 and 2010 troubles in Bauchi, Borno and Yobe states involving the radical Boko Haram sect show that violence still may flare up at any moment. If the situation were to

deteriorate significantly, especially on Christian Muslim lines, it could have serious repercussions for national cohesion and security (Amaraegbu, 2011).

That there is serious security challenge in Nigeria, is not an issue of contention. The contention is its rising frequency. A review of several media content, will show the state of affairs. A quick content scan of the front pages of Nigerian Newspapers between the months of April, May and June, show the state of the nation as it relates to security and threatening disintegration. The following will suffice:

“Boko Haram gives Jonathan Ultimatum” (Vanguard May 6, 2012, pg 5)

“Terrorism: FG Opts for Dialogue” (Vanguard, May 11, 2012. Pg. 5)

“Blood Birth in Borno, Plateau, as Bomber, gunmen hit churches” (Guardian, June 11, 2012. Pg. 2)

“North East leaders Beg Boko Haram, Seek Dialogue” (Guardian June 1, 2012. Pg.2).

“Suicide bomber kills in Maiduguri” (Guardian June, 9, 2012. Pg.11).

“FG too weak to stop Terrorists” (Vanguard, May 3, 2012. Pg 5).

“SSS arrests suspected Boko Haram Bomb Manufacturer” (ThisDay, May 3, 2012. Pg. 1)

“Fear not, Jonathan pleads as Boko Haram strikes again” (ThisDay May 1, 2012. Pg. 1).

“Boko Haram Plans to destroy Nigeria” (Guardian May 19, 2012. Pg. 1).

“Obasanjo Laments insecurity” (Guardian May 8, 2012. Pg. 1).

“Northern Governors vow to end terror attacks” (Guardian May 18, 2012.Pg 1).

“Boko Haram unleashes Mayhem in Yobe” (Guardian June 19, 2012. Pg 4.)

(SOURCE: News Paper Section, Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria Nsukka, June 2012).

While the above cases reflect newspaper coverage of Boko Haram threats, it should be noted that the group have matched their threats with action in several parts of the country, especially the Northern region, where insecurity and uncertainty has become the order of the day. Below is a chronological account of their bombing activities since December 2010 to June 2012:

- January 2010, four persons killed in an attack at Dala Alemeri Ward in Maiduguri metropolis, Borno State.
- September 7, 2010, group freed over 700 inmates from a prison in Bauchi State.
- Friday January 28, 2011, group killed Borno State candidate of the All Nigeria People’s Party (ANPP), Mr. Modu Fannami Gubio, his brother, four police officers and a 12 year old boy.
- March 3, 2011: Three people are killed and 21 injured by an explosive device thrown from a car at an election rally near Nigeria’s capital, Abuja.
- April 1, 2011: Sect attacked a police station in Bauchi.
- April 7 2011: An explosion hits a polling booth at Unguwar Doki, Maiduguri, Borno State, injuring more than 10 people.
- April 8 2011: Bomb explosion at the Independent Electoral Commission office in Suleja, kills 11.
- April 9, 2011: A polling center in Maiduguri was bombed.
- April 15, 2011: The Maiduguri office of the Independent National Electoral Commission was bombed, and several people were shot in a separate incident on the same day.
- April 20, 2011: Boko Haram killed a Muslim cleric and ambushed several police officers in Maiduguri.
- April 21, 2011: Two suspected bomb makers die in a blast in Kaduna.
- April 22, 2011: Boko Haram freed 14 prisoners during a jailbreak in Yola, Adamawa State.
- April 25, 2011: Three mob blasts rip through a hotel and a motor park in Maiduguri killing at least two persons.
- May 29, 2011: Boko Haram blamed for a series of bombings in northern Nigeria that killed 15 persons.
- June 17, 2011: The group’s suicide bomber bombed the Police Force Headquarters in Abuja killing many people.
- June 26, 2011: The sect bombed a beer garden in Maidguri, killing about 25 people.
- June 27, 2011: Another bombing in Maiduguri attributed to the group killed at least two girls and wounded three customs officials.
- July 03, 2011: Another bombing in a beer garden in Maiduguri killed about 20 people.
- July 10, 2011: A bombing at the All Christian Fellowship Church in Suleja, Niger State. (38).
- August 12, 2011: A prominent Muslim Cleric, Liman Bana was shot dead by Boko Haram.
- August 26, 2011: The UN headquarters in Abuja was blown up by a suicide car bomber, leaving at least 21 dead and dozens injured.
- October 16,2011: Boko Haram shot and killed politician Modu Bintube outside of his home in Maiduguri.
- October 22, 2011: Boko Haram slew Alhaji Zakariya Isa, a Nigerian Television Authority journalist, claiming that he was a government informant.
- November 5, 2011: A series of coordinated attacks in Borno and Yobe States, primarily around Damaturu, killed at least 67 people, leaving a new police headquarters in ruins, and government offices burned.
- November 11 2011: Explosion in Bauchi left five people injured.
- December 8, 2011: Bomb least at a market in Kaduna claimed 15.
- December 25, 2011: Bomb explosion at St. Theresa’s Catholic Church, Madalla, Sulaja, Niger State. 43 persons died.
- January 20, 2012: Multiple bomb explosions in Kano State metropolis left 186 persons dead.
- January 22, 2012: Bomb explosions in Bauchi left 11 dead.

(SOURCES: News Paper Section Nnamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria Nsukka, June 2012; Okoro & Okechukwu, 2012).

Research Method

- Research Design

The survey research method is used in this study. Survey is appropriate because it seeks to elicit behavioral response from the respondents. Okoro supports the use of this method in studies that seek to ascertain opinions (Okoro, 2001:41). The population of the study include post graduate students of the university of Nigeria. As Reinard (2001:4) suggests, it is important to know the population from which the sample will be drawn. Post graduate students of the University of Nigeria, who are resident in the post graduate hall, formed the target population of the study. This refers to all those who are pursuing one postgraduate degree or the other in the post graduate school of the University of Nigeria and who are resident in the post graduate hall. These programs include Masters, PGD, Ph.D programs. It should be noted that the University of Nigeria has two campuses (Nsukka and Enugu) where post graduate studies are carried out. However, the researchers, due to proximity, studied only post graduate students in one of the campuses, which is, Nsukka campus. In order to draw the sample of this study, it is important to state the population. Stating the population of the study is also in line with Reinard (2001:280)'s suggestion that, "To draw samples from population, researchers must first determine the actual size of the population". The population of Postgraduate students at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, is 555. Therefore a sample size of fifty six (56) was drawn for the study. This is supported by Gay (1981) who postulated that a study's sample depends on the type of research involved. For a descriptive research as this, he recommends a minimum of 10% of the population. The study therefore adopted the minimum requirement of 10% in drawing the sample size. However, the study limited itself to studying those who stay in the hostels, since it was observed that over 97% of the student stay in the PG hostel. Multi-sampling techniques were adopted. The cluster sampling method was first used to divide the whole of the hostel into floors. The cluster yielded five floors. Wimmer and Domminck (2011:99) suggest that, with cluster sampling, an entity can be divided into subdivisions. The five floors were further clustered into rooms. The cluster yielded 185 rooms in the post graduate hall. This agrees with the official number of rooms in the post graduate hostel (*Source: Office of The hall supervisor*). The systematic random sampling method was used in drawing One room each at an interval of 4 rooms from this cluster. That is $=184/4=46$. This yielded 46 rooms from which the subjects would be studied. To complete the number of rooms needed for the sample size for the study, 138 rooms which did not fall into the first systematic method, were collated and subjected to a further systematic sampling. Out of these 138 rooms, Ten (10) clusters from an interval of ten rooms were selected. With this approach, the study was able to sample a total of Fifty Six (56) rooms from a total of 184 room clusters at the postgraduate hostel. The stratified method was used in determining the number of students in a room. The strata showed that there are three (3) students in each room. The random sampling method was used in drawing One (1) student from three students in each stratum. This yielded Fifty six (56) students from Fifty six (56) room clusters.

The questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. The instrument had 10 items which covered issues on the subject matter of study. Fifty six (56) copies of the questionnaire were administered by two of the researchers on a face-to-face basis. The instrument was distributed at night and recollected very early the next morning which gave an interval of 12 hours for the copies of the questionnaire to be returned. This resulted in a 91.0% return rate. The study adopted the Mean statistics, based on Likert scaling system in analyzing the responses to the questions in the instrument. Data generated with the instrument, were analysed with the use of Tables, mean scores and simple percentages.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Total copies of Questionnaire distributed were 56. A total number of 51 copies was returned, which gave the study a return rate of 91.0%, while 8.9% mortality rare was recorded.

An analysis of the Demographic data revealed the following age bracket of the population of study:

20-30 = 32 (62.7%)

31-35 = 9 (17%)

36-40 = 4 (7.8%)

41-45 = 2 (3.9%)

46 above = 4 (7.8%)

Analysis showed that females were 27 (52.9%) while males were 24 (47%). Those who were married are 12 (23%) while those who are single are 39 (76%). Those who are Christians are 49 (96%) while 2, (3.9%) are Muslims.

A 10-item questionnaire was analysed with the use of mean statistics. A scale of 5 points was used to measure the degree of response. The range was 5-1. Total values allotted to the responses were divided by 5 points to arrive at the Level of Acceptance. Schematically presented:

SA =Strongly Agree ----5

A = Agree ----- 4

U = Undecided -----3

D = Disagree - -----2

SD =Strongly Disagree -1

$$5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = \frac{15}{5} = 3.0$$

The Level of Acceptance is therefore 3.0. The rule is that, high level acceptance from the responses for each item, will be implied, if an item in the questionnaire has a mean value greater than the minimum level of acceptance, 3.0 . A rejection will be implied, if an item in the questionnaire has a mean value lesser than 3.0; which is the minimum level of acceptance.

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: Did the Boko Haram security threat influence interest in mainstream media news by post graduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka?

Table 1: Influence of Boko Haram activities on level of interest in mainstream media news.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	LA
		5	4	3	2	1	15	3.0
1	I always have interest in news	27 135	18 72	4 12	2 4	- -	<u>223</u> 51	4.3
2	What determines the type of media from which I seek news, is the magnitude of the incidence.	13 65	19 76	10 30	6 12	3 3	<u>186</u> 51	3.6
3	I have interest in knowing about the Boko Haram security threat in Nigeria.	23 115	21 84	- -	4 8	3 3	<u>210</u> 51	4.1
4	Because of the Boko Haram security threat, I became more interested in news.	8 40	15 60	3 9	14 28	11 11	<u>148</u> 51	2.9

The above analysis showed that item one, which sought to know the level of interest of the respondents in media news, received high statistical support. With a mean score of 4.3, that rose above The 3.0 acceptance level, the respondents in showed a high interest in media news. Item two equally received strong statistical backing with a mean score of 3.6. Thus, the magnitude of an incidence or event, dictates the type of media to rely on for news. There was also high interest in knowing about the Boko Haram security threat in Nigeria. This high interest is statically supported by a mean score of 4.1 which is significantly above the minimum level of acceptance. However, item 4 did not receive support numerically since it fell below 3.0% level of acceptance. So, respondents did not become interested in media news because of the Boko Haram threat.

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO:What is the level of interest in mainstream media news on the Boko Haram security threat, compared with other non mainstream media news?

Table 2: The level of interest in mainstream media news compared to other media.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	LA
		5	4	3	2	1	15	3.0
5	I seek information on the Boko Haram insurgence in any available media.	16 80	17 68	9 27	7 14	2 2	<u>191</u> 51	3.7
6	I prefer to seek information on Boko Haram in mainstream media than other media.	16 80	17 68	6 18	8 16	4 4	<u>186</u> 51	3.6
7	Given the option, I will seek information more on mainstream media than others.	15 75	18 72	7 21	7 14	4 4	<u>186</u> 51	3.6

Item 5 attempted to know if respondents seek news on Boko Haram on any media available. This received a mean score of 3.7 level of acceptance. Item 6 showed that postgraduate students of University of Nigeria, Nsukka, would prefer to seek information on the main stream media. This was supported statistically by a mean score of 3.6 level of acceptance. When given the option, as item 7 showed, respondents will seek information more on Boko Haram in the mainstream media than in other media. These received a strong statistical support of 3.6 mean score as level of acceptance.

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE:What factors were responsible for the interest in mainstream media news on Boko Haram?

Table 3. Factors responsible for the interest in mainstream media news.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL	LA
		5	4	3	2	1	15	3.0
8.	I think that mainstream media news is reliable than other media.	22 110	16 64	6 18	5 10	2 2	<u>204</u> 51	4.0
9.	Mainstream media investigate and research more on incidence before reporting	16 64	22 110	6 18	6 12	1 1	<u>205</u> 51	4.01
10.	I prefer mainstream media news on Boko Haram because it is more reliable than other media.	16 80	23 92	9 27	2 4	1 1	<u>204</u> 51	4.0

Research question three aimed at knowing the factors responsible for respondents' interest in mainstream media rather than other media. Item 8 shows that the believe that main stream media is more reliable than other media. This was supported statistically by a mean score of 4.0 level of acceptance. Item 9 rceived a statistical support of 4.0 % mean score level of acceptance because the PG students accepted that mainstream media investigate as well as research on events before reportage. Finally, item 10 received a statically support of 4.0 level of acceptance as post graduate students accepted that they would prefer mainstream news on Boko Haram because it is more reliable.

Findings

In summary, findings how that the Boko Haram security threat in Nigeria, influence interest in mainstream media by post graduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Secondly, compared to other media the level of interest in mainstream media was significantly higher than interest in other media. Finally, the respondents accepted that, considerations like, reliability, credibility and in-depth research are the factors that influenced their reliance on mainstream media. These factors received a significant statistical backing of 4.0

Conclusion

The strength of any research and its contribution to knowledge lie in its ability to explore new grounds. This paper was able to achieve most of that by examining the relationship between heightened security situation and interest in mainstream media news among post graduate students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. There was statistical support to show that in times of insecurity and uncertainties, the population studied, relied more on mainstream media news for information pertaining to the problem and its catalyst, in this case, Boko Haram.

Suggestions

Research in communication is never exhaustive but partial. This means that there is always more that could be said about a study area. It is suggested that, further inquiries in this area should look at the relationships between variables not examined here. For instance, further studies could examine how the security threat influenced Northern Nigeria's perception of mainstream media news. Or the relationship between the mainstream media framing of the Boko Haram security threat and how it affects audience news interest.

Also, Further studies could compare news interest among post graduate students across Nigerian Universities and the Boko Haram security threat. In this case, a larger population should be studied.

Recommendations

On the strength of the above findings, we recommend the following:

- Since mainstream media is mostly relied on for news or information in times of uncertainty, they should be preemptive in their approach so as to alert relevant authorities on the trend of events and draw attention to security threatening issues way before they occur.
- It is advisable for mainstream media to employ the approach of advocacy to give this group (Boko Haram) a voice so as to know what their grievances are. In circumstances where it is discovered that their grievances are real, the press should, while condemning their violent strategy, implore the relevant authorities to address their case.
- The mainstream media should allow the ethics of reporting to determine the nature of their reportage. This is more so, now that this study has shown that in times of insecurity and bedlam, mainstream media are considered reliable source. Surveillance journalism finds a lot of relevance in this circumstance.
- To deal with the risks, posed by security threats community level initiatives need to be reinforced, a more subtle security response should be formulated and the management of public resources must be improved.
- Finally mainstream media should take advantage of the new media to register their presence on these 'sites' where several people hangout. Since, given the option, people will seek mainstream media news for news on emergency. Such option should be an opportunity to access online versions or social networks of mainstream media.
- As with many jihadi movements, Boko Haram needs to be understood in both its Nigerian and international aspects. Links with al-Qaeda may provide the means to sustain the group for far longer than the Maitatsine. The highly violent reaction of the security forces in 2009, the group's ability to find refuge in both urban centers in Nigeria and bordering countries and indications of evolving tactics all point to a serious and persistent problem.

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