

Newspaper Coverage of the Hazards of Nigerians Migrating to Foreign Countries: Content analytical study of *Vanguard*, *Nation* and *Daily Sun* Newspapers

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Abstract

The study examined the content analysis of newspaper reportage of the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries. Content analysis research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprises of all the edition of the Vanguard, the Nation and Daily sun Newspapers from January to December 2017. A purposive selection of the Newspapers was done as a result of their strength in circulation, national outlook and wide coverage of issues of national importance. The sample size is made up of 42 editions of the population. To determine the sample size, the continuous and constructed week procedure was adopted which resulted to 14 issues of each of the three Newspapers. The unit of analysis includes all feature articles, news stories, editorials, opinions, letters to the editor and cartoons relating to migration. The content categories for the study checked the direction of stories, whether they are positive, negative or neutral; frequency of coverage, forms of migration challenges; story prominence (front page, back page, centre page or inside page). The code sheet was the instrument for data collection. Result shows that the direction of the reports was mostly negative, length of coverage was mostly one third page, migration pattern was mostly trafficking, nature of reports was analytical and criticism, exploitation and death were the forms of hazards mostly reported. It was recommended that investigative reports of migration should be paramount which will propel full coverage and reportage, however, prominence should be given to the hazards of migration.

Keywords: Content analysis, Newspaper, reportage, hazards, Nigerians, Migration, foreign countries

Introduction

It is common knowledge that immigration has become an increasingly important political issue in many African countries. Europe's largest refugee crises in years has

gained prominent headline, hundreds of thousands of people are risking their lives at the sea for a better life in Europe. The poor living condition in Africa will continue to be the main reason for migration (United Nations

High Commissioner for Refugee and the International Organization for Migration 2015). But, how well are media coping with this stories and how migration is being reported on the pages of newspaper, also how media and migration are related, how media portray migrants and migration, how these coverage relates to the wider world, including what people think and what factor may contribute to their slant of news stories still remain the questions in the minds of many (Allien, *et al*, 2017).

Many studies have documented the specific techniques used to portray migrants. Sometimes, media link immigration with insecurity, sociocultural threat, or economic impacts, or dehumanise migrants through metaphors of insects and natural disasters. Other times, the media may use humanitarian language that emphasises migrants' vulnerability and status as victims (World Migration Report, 2018). It is estimated that one to two million people are trafficked around the world every year, mostly women and children, but increasingly, men and boys as well, generally for forced labour, agricultural bondage, prostitution or other forms of indentured servitude (Ofuoku 2010; Nwokedi, 2014 Ndifon *etal* 2012). Globally, United Nations (2006) provided staggering statistics on number of people migrating from African to foreign countries, especially to Europe and American. According to the U.S State Department (2005), six hundred thousand to eight hundred

thousand youths mostly men are migrating annually across international borders.

Approximately, 80 percent are young boys and up to 50 percent are young ladies, while the vast majority of those trafficked under 18 years of age are girls (Allien, *et al*, 2017). In Nigeria, figures and statistics on the number of migrating Nigerians have been inconsistent. This however, does not negate the fact that migration is in the increase in Nigeria. For instance, it was reported by the Nigeria police force and the women trafficking and child labour eradication foundation (WTCLEF) that between March 1999 and April 2000, about 1, 126 illegal migrants were deported from various countries. (*Daily Times*, 14 June, 2001 p4; Melina *et al* 2008). In March, 2002, WOTCLEF in a seminar organized by the international federation of women lawyers (FIDA) reported that there are about 20,000 Nigerians young ladies who migrated to Italy and became involved in sex industry as a mandatory vocation. The *Daily Champion* of July, 2012 reported that 80 percent of foreign prostitutes in Italy were Nigerian women. No doubt, the movement of people across borders does not necessarily relate to Nigeria alone, but given the increase in scale and diversity of international migration over recent decades, nearly all countries in the modern era are affected by migration (Castle *et al*, 2014; Greens Lade, 2016)

While many Nigerian youths have died from the risks associated with illegal migration through the Sahara

Desert and Mediterranean Sea to Europe, those who have been lucky to live and tell their stories say the perilous journey is not worth it. According to Ifijeh (2017 p.1) "Many Nigerian youths who believe the best way out of poverty, high unemployment rate, harsh economic life and the pursuit of happiness is to seek greener pastures abroad which makes the inherent dangers inevitable" (Cole 2012; Self 2016).

However, some concern agencies have moved to stem the trend with partnership with other related agencies. The national commission for refugees, migrants and internally-displaced persons (NCFRMI) has said that about 11,600 migrants of Nigerian origin are currently facing repatriation from different parts of the world. The federal commissioner for NCFRMI, Farouk, (NDA) to stem the illegal migration of Nigerians to other countries, especially through the deserts and the deadly Mediterranean Sea.

In a report, the UN Refugee Agency gave details of the impact of the increased border restrictions introduced in 2016 on refugee and migrant movement towards Europe. In the report a total number of 181,436 people arrived Italy in 2016 by sea, out of which 90% travelled by boat from Libya. Those who came to Italy in 2016 include people in need of international protection and victims of trafficking and migrants seeking better lives. The top two nationalities of those arriving in Italy were Nigerians (21%) and Eritreans (11%). A striking feature is

the increasing number of unaccompanied and separated children making the journey over 250,000 in 2016. They represent 14% of all new arrival in Italy and their number is more than doubled compared to the previous year. Perhaps, this could be as a result of conflicts in these nations as human society from time immemorial has been replete with conflicts of different types. As in the Nigerian case where there is increasing agitation for resource control, religious and ethnic wars upping the tension and increasing the likelihood of conflicts in the country giving the victims no option than to migrate, no matter the cost (Ugwuoke and Ekwueme, 2018). Third World and African countries are believed to be victims of a growing decadent and decrepit social value system which manifests in form of corruption and ethnicity, militancy, separatist violent agitations leading to mass movement of ideas, material and human resources (Obagbinoko, 2017).

According to the report, the journey to Italy is particularly dangerous, with more deaths at sea in the Mediterranean recorded in 2016 than ever before, of the 5,096 migrants reported dead or missing at sea in 2017. So, 90% travelled along the sea route to Italy, amounting to one death for every 40 people crossing. In addition, United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has received worrying reports of refugees and illegal migrants kidnapped, held against their will for several days, physically and sexually abused, tortured or extorted by

smugglers and criminal gangs at several points along key routes.

No fewer than 17 million Africans left the continent in 2017 in search of greener pastures, that same year, a new report by the UN conference on trade and Development (UNCTAD) has said. The Economic Development in Africa's report also said 5.5million people moved to Africa from other continents while some 19million internal migrants moved within Africa. Overall, some 19million internal migrants moved within Africa and 17million Africa left the continent during last year. The continent was also the destination for about 5.5million people.

The report also said that migration offered a chance for a better life, with the social and economic benefits extending to both source and destination countries as well as future generation. However, alongside the numbers of migrants moving and working within Africa, the continent also has some of the highest number of people forced from their homes due to conflicts or natural disasters, also, there is significant economic and social burden faced by host countries, leaving many migrants dependent on international humanitarian aid.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to examine newspaper reportage of the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Find out how the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign

countries were reported by Nigerian Newspapers.

2. Ascertain the dominant frames in Newspaper reportage of the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries.
3. Find out if Nigerian Newspapers were socially responsible in the reportage of the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries.
4. Ascertain the direction of reportage Nigerian Newspapers gave the issues of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

- 1.How were the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries reported by Nigerian Newspapers?
- 2.What were the dominant frames in Newspaper reportage of the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries?
- 3.Were the Nigerian Newspapers socially responsible in the reportage of the hazards of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries?
- 4.What direction were the Newspapers reportage given to the issues of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries

Methodology

As the study bother on newspaper coverage of the challenges of Nigerian's migration to foreign countries, it readily lends itself to the content analysis research design wherein 3 national dailies. The Daily

Sun, The Vanguard and The Nation were studied and the 2017 calendar year considered as the immediate past year. In compliance with the submission of Hester and Dougall (2007) cited in Wimmer and Dominick (2017:178) clarified "... compared the accuracy of the constructed week sample, the simple random sample, and the consecutive day sample of online news content.... They found that the constructed week sample was the most efficient than those needed for sampling print newspapers." 14 editions of respective dailies were studied totalling 42 editions were recognised along the constructed and continuous week patterning.

The content categories are: Direction of report, length of coverage, migration pattern, prominence, nature of report and forms of challenges. The Krippendorff Alpha is best used for content analysis, hence it was used for the analysis. 0.7321 was achieved as reliability. Two trained coders who worked on four dailies each. The unit of analysis was the migration of Nigerians.

Findings

Below are the results of the data analyzed.

Hazards of Nigerians Migrating to Foreign Countries Reported by Nigerian Newspapers

Table 1: Percentages of Newspaper reportage of migration pattern of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries

Migration Pattern	Frequencies	Percentages
Through Border	1	14.29
Waterways		0
Land	1	14.29
Airport	0	0
Academic Deception	0	0
Trafficking	5	71.42
Prostitution	0	0
Total	7	100

Table 2: Percentages of Newspaper reportage of forms of hazards facing Nigerians migrating to foreign countries

Forms of Challenge	Frequencies	Percentages
Deportation	1	12.5
Death	2	25.0
Imprisonment	0	0
Health Hazard	0	0
Stagnation	0	0
Exploitation	5	62.5
Total	8	100

Table 1 shows the percentages of Newspaper reportage of pattern of migration of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries. The table shows that trafficking is highest with 71.42% while land and border has 14.29% each and waterways, Airport, academic deception and prostitution have 0% each.

Similarly, table 2 shows the percentages of Newspaper reportage of forms of challenges facing Nigerians migrating to foreign countries. The table shows that exploitation is highest

with 62.5%, followed by death with 25.0%; and deportation with 12.5% while imprisonment, health hazard and stagnation have 0% each.

This shows that the pattern of migration is basically trafficking, through border and land while the forms of challenge are mainly exploitation, death and deportation

Dominant Frames in Newspaper Reportage of the Hazards of Nigerians Migrating to Foreign Countries

Table 3: Percentages of Newspaper reportage of forms of challenges facing Nigerians migrating to foreign countries

Nature of Reports	Frequencies	Percentages
Analytical	5	62.5
Criticising	2	25.0
Investigative	1	12.5
Non-Supportive	0	0
Supportive	0	0
Total	8	100

Table 3 shows the percentages of Newspaper reportage of nature of reports on Nigerians migrating to foreign countries. This shows that analysis is highest with 62.5% while criticising and investigative have 25.0% and 12.5% respectively and non-

supportive and supportive have 0% each.

Therefore the basic nature of reportage of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries is analytical, criticising and investigative reports.

Nigerian Newspapers' Social Responsibility in the Reportage of the Hazards of Nigerians Migrating to Foreign Countries

Table 4: Percentages of direction of reports of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries

Direction of Reports	Frequencies	Percentages
Positive	0	0
Negative	6	75
Neutral	2	25
Total	8	100

Table 5: Percentages of length of coverage of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries

Length of Coverage	Frequencies	Percentages
One Page	1	12.5
Half Page	1	12.5
One-Third Page	3	37.5
One-Quarter Page	3	37.5
Total	8	100

Table 6: Percentages of Prominence given to Nigerians migrating to foreign countries

Prominence	Frequencies	Percentages
Full Page	1	12.5
Back Page	0	0
Centre Page	0	0
Inside Back Page	0	0
Inside Front Page	0	0
Others	7	87.5
Total	8	100

Table 4 shows the percentages of Newspaper reportage of the direction of reports of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries. The table shows that negative is highest with 75%; neutral has 25% and positive has 0%.

Again, Table 5 shows the percentages of Newspaper reportage of length of coverage of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries. The table shows that one-page and half-page has 12.5% each and one-third page and one-quarter page has 37.5% each.

Similarly, Table 6 shows the percentages of Newspaper reportage of prominence given to Nigerians

migrating to foreign countries. The table shows that full page has 12.5% while Others has 87.5% and back page, centre page, inside back page and inside front page has 0% each. This clearly show that the direction of reports was basically negative and neutral while the length of coverage was one page, half page, one-third page and one-quarter page and prominence was given to full page and others.

Nigerian Newspapers' Objectivity in the reportage of the hazard of Nigerians Migrating to Foreign Countries

Table 7: Summary of items in *The Sun* Newspaper

Items	Direction of Reports	Length of Coverage	Migration pattern	Prominence	Nature of Reports	Forms of Challenges
Features	X	1/4		FP	C	DT
News Stories	X,X	1/4,1/3	T,T	O,O	A,I	E,E
Editorials						
Opinions						
Letters to the Editor						
Cartoons						

The table shows that THE SUN Newspaper reportage of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries was reported three times under two items namely: Features and News Stories. Under direction, negative appeared three times while positive and neutral did not appear at all. In length of coverage, the reportage was one-quarter page for feature; one-quarter page and one-third page for News Stories. Migration was not reported

under features but it was reported under News Stories twice for trafficking. Prominence was given full page under features item and twice under News Stories. Nature of reports was criticising under features and analytical and investigative under News Stories and finally, the forms of challenges was death under features while exploitation appeared twice under News Stories.

Table 8: Summary of items of THE NATION Newspaper

Items	Direction of Reports	Length of Coverage	Migration pattern	Prominence	Nature of Reports	Forms of Challenges
Features	N	1	T	O	A	E
News Stories	X	1/4	L	O	O	E
Editorials						
Opinions						
Letters to the Editor						
Cartoons						

The table shows that THE NATION Newspaper reportage of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries appeared twice under Features and News Stories. Neutral appeared under

Features while negative appeared under News Stories. In length of coverage, the reportage was one full length for features and one-quarter length for News Stories. In migration

pattern, trafficking appeared under features while land appeared under News Stories. In prominence, others appeared for both Features and News Stories. The nature of reports was

analytical for both Features and News Stories and finally, the forms of challenge was exploitation for both Features and News Stories.

Table 9: Summary of items of THE VANGUARD Newspaper

Items	Direction of Reports	Length of Coverage	Migration pattern	Prominence	Nature of Reports	Forms of Challenges
Features News Stories	X	1/3	T	O	A	DT
Editorials Opinions Letters to the Editor Cartoons	X	1/3	TB	O	C	D

The table shows THE VANGUARD Newspaper reportage of Nigerians migrating to foreign countries appeared twice under Features and Editorials. In direction, both Features and editorials reported negative; the length of coverage was one-third for both Features and Editorial; migration pattern was trafficking for Features and land for Editorial; prominence was others for both Feature and Editorial while nature of reports was analytical for features and criticising for Editorials and forms of challenge was death for Features and academic deception for editorials.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study highlight Features, News Stories, Editorials, Opinion, and Letter to the Editor, Cartoons, Photographs and Interviews in the reportage of migration hazards.. For direction of report, no report

supported migration of Nigerians, six reports were against migration of Nigerians and neutral had two reports. With respect to the length of coverage: one report had a page dedicated to it, ½ page had one entry, 1/3 and ¼ page sizes had three entries each. It was observed for migration pattern that: Journeys through borders, had an entry each while trafficking had five slots.

With respect to prominence of the news items: front page had one entry and others outside the conventional positioning had one entry and others outside the conventional positioning had seven entries. Nature of reports had: five analytical reports, two criticizing and one investigative. As it pertained forms of challenges: a report was on the deportation of Nigerians, two on death row and five on deportation.

Worthy of mention was the predominance of news stories and editorials against other news items that had no entry. Out of the 42 papers studied, only three days of the Daily Sun, the Nation and the Vanguard had two days of treating migration issues respectively.

Conclusion

The study deduced that the direction of the reports was mostly negative; the length of coverage was mostly one-third page and one-quarter page; migration pattern was mostly trafficking; prominence was others; nature of reports was analytical and criticism and forms of challenge was mostly exploitation and death.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Nigerian newspapers should do more of investigative reporting on migration hazards. This way, people can get abreast of the implications of the reports.
2. Prominence should be given to reporting the hazards of migration so Nigerians can learn from others misfortunes and take precautions.
3. Coverage of migration issues should not be relegated to the background. It should be given full coverage instead.

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