

Media and the restructuring discourse: A study of selected Nigerian newspapers

Jammy Seigha Guanah

Department of Mass Communication
University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria

Corresponding author: Email: jammyguanah@yahoo.com

Ijeoma Obi

Department of Mass Communication
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University

Ayibatonye Alari Timi

Department of Political Science
Delta State University (DELSU)

&

Moses Chukwudi Ihiaeme

Department of Mass Communication
Delta State Polytechnic
Ogwashi-Uku, Delta State, Nigeria

Abstract

Background: The discourse on the restructuring of Nigeria is a burning issue in the Nigerian body polity. Its advocates see it as crucial because they believe it can bring about equity and inclusiveness in a society as diverse as Nigeria. The media, on their part, serve as the melting point by availing people the opportunity to express their divergent views on issues such as the restructuring question.

Objective: This study investigates how selected Nigerian newspapers reported restructuring stories in the build up to the Nigerian 2019 general elections, and immediately after the elections. The objectives were to ascertain the frequency given to restructuring stories; to determine if prominence was given to restructuring stories, and to identify the sources of the restructuring stories in the selected newspapers.

Methodology: The researchers made use of content analysis as the research method while the newspapers that were examined included *Daily Trust* and *The Guardian* newspapers for the period of December, 2018 to April, 2019. The instrument for data collection was the code sheet.

Results: The study revealed that restructuring stories were more before the elections because it was made a political topic, but the reports trickled down immediately after the elections. Also, it did not enjoy prominence in newspapers.

Conclusion: The different positions taken by people clearly show they still want Nigeria to exist as an entity rather than it being balkanised, but that it should be restructured so there will be equity, and all stakeholders will have a sense of belonging

Key Recommendation: It is recommended that newspapers should continue to make restructuring a continual topic of discussion until the necessary restructuring of Nigeria is done.

Keywords: Discourse, elections, media, newspapers, restructuring

Introduction

The debate for the restructuring of Nigeria predates Nigeria's independence in 1960; this is due to the feelings by many that the architectural governance framework of the country is faulty. Supporters of restructuring are clamouring for true federalism where more power will be devolved to the states and local governments, and peaceful coexistence will be enhanced in the country. Their assumption is that, as it stands now, all the powers are concentrated at the federal level. According to the Chairman, Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), Elias Mbam, quoted by Sahara Reporters (2019), in the current revenue allocation formula, the federal government gets 52.68 percent of the nation's income while the 36 States get 26.72 percent, and 774 local government councils, and the 6 municipal councils in the Federal Capital Territory in Nigeria share 20.60 percent. Also, there are 68 items on the Exclusive list being managed by the federal government while there are 12 items on the Concurrent list under the care of the States. The demand is that more items be moved from the former to the latter which is considered to be overloaded.

Some critical items on the restructuring debate include, fiscal federalism, states creation or remodeling, over bloated government system, resource control and sharing, devolution of power, revenue sharing, state policing, and exclusive list versus concurrent lists. Restructuring is basically the call for a new political framework to address these numerous issues so as to right the imbalances that are visible in the country. Minority groups in Nigeria are feeling short-changed, therefore they long for true federalism where there will be inclusiveness in governance, fairness and equity in Nigeria and among Nigerians. This is a situation where no section or group in the country will be seen as being superior to another.

The agitation for restructuring is rife because most of the apostles of restructuring consider it as the uneven distribution of the common wealth of Nigeria in favour of the Northern part of the country. Briggs (2019) lists some of these inequitable distributions thus: out of the total of 360 House of Reps members, the entire South has 169, while the North has 191. There is also injustice of oil allocation in Nigeria as reflected in the following: North Central receives 20%, but contributes 0.00%; North East receives 16%, but contributes 0.00%; North West receives 21%, but contributes 0.00%. Every month, the 19 Northern states receive a minimum of 57% of 100% of oil revenue to which they contribute 0.00%. South West receives 16%, and contributes 3.97%; South East receives 11.00%, and contributes 25.07%; South-South receives 15.00%, and contributes 70.64%.

Also, Nigeria has 774 local government areas (LGAs); the North has 19 states, and the 19 states have 419 LGAs. The South has 17 states, and the 17 states have 357 LGAs. Briggs (2019) reveals further that the data from the office of the Accountant General as published by the Ministry of Finance in April, 2013 show that the 357 LGAs of the 17 Southern states receive 45.1% of the 100% they contribute while the 419 LGAs of the 19 Northern states receive 54.9%, and what they contribute 0.00%. This must be the reason a distinguished Yoruba development scientist and thinker, the Emeritus Professor Akin Mabogunje, opines that "a restructured Nigeria will be a Nigeria in which the Central Government will no longer be able to automatically pool funds un-evenly from different parts of Nigeria, while re-distributing the same funds unfairly and inequitably (at the expense of the larger contributors) among the various states and local governments ..." (as cited in Odumakin, 2017, p. 3).

The discourse on restructuring has got to the point that the leader of the Yoruba socio-cultural group (Afenifere), Chief Ayo Adebajo, has warned that there will be no Nigeria in the next ten years if the country is not restructured now (as cited in Ukwu, 2019a). This is in consonance with the prediction made by a former Governor of Akwa Ibom State, Victor Attah,

who said that “by the end of his (Buhari`s) tenure in the next four years, there may not be a country called Nigeria as we know it today”(Attah, 2019, p. 2). President Mohammadu Buhari too has added his voice to the discourse, as he spoke on the need for true federalism, especially at this time of the country`s political and democratic experience (Daka, 2019). As reported by Ukwu (2019b), the President rejected the notion of restructuring in his 2018 New Year's address, saying, "When all the aggregates of countrywide viewpoints are examined, my strong belief is that our issues are more to do with procedure than structure" (p.2).

There is also a school of thought that some of those clamouring for restructuring may not sincerely be demanding for true federalism, democracy and development of Nigeria, but are rather talking about ethnic nationality. Lawal (2019) quotes the former Emir of Kano, Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi II, as saying that, “It is not as if we are pro- or anti-restructuring, but rather the restructuring has been turned into a fault line that is being manipulated and exploited by the elites” (p. 1). However, Briggs (2019) insists that the North will never allow restructuring because it cannot survive in a level playing ground.

The problem of restructuring, according to many, must be addressed immediately for Nigeria's existence and unity. Professor Itse Sagay (SAN), the chairman of the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC), echoed this call, saying that in his second term, President Buhari should consider restructuring, saying, "I think he has to move on to restructuring to a certain extent now because that is the wish of a significant proportion of people in Nigeria." As a result, it cannot be overlooked” (Sagay, 2019, p.2).

Though the discourse on restructuring has been on for a long time, it seemed to have heightened just before the 2019 general elections in Nigeria to the extent that the presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Atiku Abubakar, and his party made it as part of their manifestoes. This endeared Atiku Abubakar to some socio-political organisations such as the Northern Elders Forum (NEF), Pan-Niger Delta Forum (PANDEF), Middle Belt Forum (MBF), Afenifere Socio-Cultural Organisation, and Ohanaeze Ndigbo who endorsed his candidacy because they felt their zones have been marginalised hitherto. However, the Vice President of Nigeria, Professor Yemi Osinbajo, believes that the problems facing Nigeria are not about restructuring as being suggested in many quarters, “It is about managing resources properly and providing for the people properly, that is what it is all about”, he declares (as cited in Adetayo, 2018, p. 1).

The Nigerian media spaces are open to those who are calling for the restructuring of the country, and those who do not see a reason for it, to ventilate their views. The role of the media are so significant in an issue as important as this because, “... until the media are involved, no matter or issue revolves; every issue remains docile until the media choose to activate it and cause it to be matters of national discourse” (Guanah, Anho & Obi, 2018, p. 197). The media do not only direct and moderate the flow of public discourse in the society, but also influence it in one way or the other

This study intended to compare the manner of reportage of restructuring stories in *Daily Trust* and *The Guardian* newspapers two months before, and two months after the general elections that took place in Nigeria in February 2019. *Daily Trust* newspaper is published in Abuja, and it is owned by a Northerner while *The Guardian* is published in Lagos, and owned by a Southerner.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives were to:

- i. Ascertain whether the selected newspapers had more frequency of restructuring stories before the 2019 general elections, or after the elections;
- ii. Determine if the selected newspapers gave prominence to ‘restructuring’ stories; and
- iii. Identify the sources of the restructuring stories in the newspapers.

Concept and Content of Restructuring

Hornby (2015) defines restructuring as organising “something such as a system or a corporation in a new and different way” (p.1322), but it implies various things to different individuals in Nigerian politics, depending on which side of the split they are on. According to Abubakar (2017), restructuring entails “making adjustments to our existing federal structure.. In order to solve the exact difficulties and challenges that prompted them to choose a less centralised system” (p.1). This entails devolution of additional authorities to the federating units, as well as the associated resources, as well as increased control of the resources in their regions by the federating units (p. 1).

Simply defined, restructuring, according to Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, former Minister of External Affairs from 1985 to 1987 and former Director-General of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), involves allowing “local concerns to be dealt by local institutions” (as cited in Affe 2019, p.1). He defines it as a situation in which “rather than having a massive machinery at the federal level that is too far removed from the issues we are talking about,” more concerns and resources are passed to local government regions and states for them to implement (p. 1).

Clamour and Divergent Views on Restructuring

The history of the agitation for restructuring can be traced to the 1914 amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Protectorates to form Nigeria. A few years after the amalgamation, the Eastern, Western and Northern regions with the minority ethnicities under the regions were established. According to Asadu (2008) due to marginalization, discrimination and neglect, the minority ethnic groups began to agitate for their separate regions and the control of the resources in their regions (p. 221). It was such agitation in the Niger Delta area of Nigeria that made the colonial government set up the Sir Henry Willincks Commission to take a detailed look into the complaints of the minorities (Akpotorr & Eregha, 2006, p. 144). The Henry Willincks Commission recommended in 1958 that the Niger Delta region be developed, and this led to the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB), but the board could not perform to expectation. Temitope (2006) recounts that “the political frustrations of the minorities made Isaac Jasper Adaka Boro and his Niger Delta Volunteer Force to attempt secession from Nigeria on February 23, 1966” (p. 196).

Nkemdiche (2018) attests that the less-than-satisfactory three-regional structure, which the British bequeathed to Nigeria, was significant in the premature collapse of the First Republic in early 1966 because “country-wide agitations for structural review of the regions had followed on the heels of national independence in 1960” (p.2). He says those agitations led to the creation of Mid-Western region from the Western region in 1963 while other ethnic nationalities also called for more regions to be created from the Northern and Eastern regions respectively.

Even, in recent times, the clamour and agitation for the restructuring of Nigeria has been hinged on the claim of marginalization and injustice by a varied number of groups, cutting across ethnic nationalities, pan-sectional groups such as Ohanaeze Ndigbo, Afenifere Socio-Cultural Organisation, Movement for National Reformation and The Patriots, Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MOSSOB), and Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta (MEND); and eminent Nigerians like Ben Nwabueze, Wole Soyinka, Edwin Clark, Ibrahim Babangida, Emeka Anyaoku, Ishola Williams, and others.

This supposed marginalisation has made some to be nursing secessionist tendencies if the call for fiscal federalism and restructuring is not adhered to, because there can be no peace without justice. The present unacceptable position of things in the country is seen as the creation of the military that forced unconstitutional constitutions on the country at various times, especially the 1999 constitution that is more or less a proponent of a quasi unitary system of governance rather than being a democratic one, though it was purportedly agreed on by ‘we the people of Nigeria’.

Nda-Isaiah (2017) recalls that until 1966, Nigeria was practising a unitary government where every region was in control of its resources and were paying taxes to the centre. The regions were viable and growing at their own pace. However, when the military organised the first coup d'état in Nigeria, and took over the leadership, they changed the status quo; the regional constitution was suspended, all legislative bodies were dissolved, all political parties were banned, and a centralised federal military government was foisted on Nigeria. The present situation which many have described as “feeding bottle federalism” (Okonkwo, 2019, p. 1), whereby states of the federation cannot develop at their own pace using resources which nature has endowed them with, but rather gather in Abuja every month with ‘begging bowls’, looking for allocation (money to share) for the ineffective running of the States is no more sustainable (Sagay, 2019).

Some Northern stakeholders appear to be opposed to restructuring, and Professor Akinyemi believes this is because the North believes it is being targeted when restructuring is discussed, “whereas, it is not so [...] but I am afraid that the prejudice is still there that restructuring is targeting a particular section” (as cited in Affe, 2019, p.2); even though Adamu Ciroma says he does not agree that the North is being targeted when restructuring is discussed. Restructuring, according to General Yakubu Gowon, may take place, but only within set parameters, stressing that “we can reorganise within one Nigeria environment” (as cited in Obaze, 2019, p.3).

Northerners are also opposed to restructuring, according to Sagay (2019), because they are “so reliant on oil revenues that they are afraid that if restructuring occurs, the proportion of oil proceeds they will receive will be much smaller, and thus their capacity to look after themselves will be much reduced” (p.2). Governor Abdullahi Ganduje of Kano State, on the other hand, does not believe that restructuring would address the country's myriad issues; rather, he believes that changing “national attitudes” will restore Nigeria to “the road of growth” (as cited in Obaze, 2019, p. 3)

General Ibrahim Babangida, Nigeria's former military president, agrees that the talks to reorganise the country show that Nigerians are united in their diversity. “We should enhance our structures to make the union more functional based on our comparative advantages,” he said (Babangida, 2017, p. 3).

Newspapers` Role in the Society

The media, as the watchdogs of the society, have the responsibility to create the ideal atmosphere for progress and development of the human society through the professional ways they disseminate information and operate. This is attested to by a former Director General, Voice of Nigeria, Aremo Taiwo Allimi, who opines that “while you may have information without development, you cannot have development without information” (as cited in Onayiga, 2016, p.4).

Babangida (2017) recognises this when he calls on the media to constantly consider the security implications of their stories and to be more “circumspect” in their reporting. The media, according to Babangida (2017), should be wary of shouting headlines that confront the Nigerian

people every day, “especially during a vulnerable moment of the nation's political emanations” (p.2).

When referring to a number of studies that show that, in many contexts, even when newspaper readership is lower than television viewership, newspapers still set the agenda in terms of topics and debates for other media, as well as for politicians, ACE Project (2019) asserts that the newspaper is far ahead of other forms of communication. The fact that newspapers can frequently afford greater space for in-depth stories may account for this attitude. It might also be due to the print media's more "serious" profile than other kinds of media, politicians' media habits, and politicians' assumptions about the influence of newspapers (Walgrave & Aelst, 2006; Walgrave, Soroka & Nuytemans, 2008). Further emphasising on the importance of the newspaper to the society, Walgrave, Soroka and Nuytemans (2008) declare that:

Newspapers tend to have a greater political agenda-setting influence than television news, at least in Belgium in the 1990s... Newspapers are an essential platform for public and political discussion... In each post-industrial democracy, newspapers have some inherent features that make them prone to determining the political agenda (p.4).

In essence, due to its daily availability and easy access to them by their readers, newspapers do not only bring information to the doorsteps of readers, but also set agenda for them to deliberate on. This is affirmed by Illah, Ogwo and Asemah (2012) who agree that we get to know about certain issues that unfold in the society through newspapers, therefore the “newspaper is very important in our lives, and it is the most common form of printed media” (p.14). The *Daily Trust* and *The Guardian* newspapers served as platforms for people to express their different views about the restructuring discourse, hence their contents are analysed in this study.

Theoretical Anchorage

The agenda setting theory is the foundation of this research. McCombs and Shaw came up with the notion (1972). In 1972, they began the first comprehensive investigation of the agenda-setting process. Most agenda-setting research is based on two fundamental ideas, according to the theorists: the press and media do not represent reality; they filter and mould it, and media emphasis on a few topics and themes causes the public to see those concerns as more significant than others. As a result, Uzochukwu, *et al.* (2015) claim that “the frequency with which the media cover certain topics causes the audience to care more about those topics or believe they are more salient in their lives” (p. 286). Cohen (1963) claims that different people see the world differently based on what the media present to the public, and that whatever the media focuses their reporting on becomes the public's talking point.

This notion eventually became the foundation for what is now known as the media's agenda-setting function (Du, 2008, p. 4). In other words, news stories in the media correlate to the broad issue of debate in any community. This theory is germane to this study because the newspaper serves as a means of information dissemination, and an avenue through which citizens can air their views on various issues, including the discourse on restructuring.

Methodology

Content Analysis research method was used for this study. *The Guardian* and *Daily Trust* newspapers were purposively selected. Their editions from December 2018 to January 2019 (two months before the 2019 general elections), and March and April 2019 (two months after the

elections) were studied. This period was chosen because of the relevance of the issue of restructuring in the build up to the 2019 elections. The newspapers were chosen because of their national circulation strength, ownership, availability to be content analysed, and because of their geo-political representations. *The Guardian* is published in the southern part of Nigeria while *Daily Trust* is published in the north.

The population of this study is the editions of the two newspapers that fall into the period of study, totalling 151 editions. The sample size is also 151. The decision to use the entire population (Census studies) is justified because it is few (Ifeakor, 2009). The newspapers published 34 stories that have to do with restructuring during this period. The unit of analysis for the study is all news, news features, editorials and interviews on restructuring in the selected newspapers.

The content categories are **Frequency** (to determine the number of times each of the unit of analysis occurred). That is, frequency of coverage in the context of these newspapers refer to the number of times a sub-category appears in the newspapers. **Prominence** (Front page lead story, Front page other story, Inside, or Back pages). Prominence relates to degree of salience attached to the part of the newspaper in which a sub-category appears. **Sources of stories:** To determine the originator (s) of the stories in order to ascertain whether it is these newspapers that have interest in the issue by detailing their in-house reporters to report them; or they got these information from secondary sources like politicians, political parties, ethnic/minority groups, civil society organisations etc. The instruments used for the coding are the Coding Guide and Coding sheet.

Inter-coder Reliability

To achieve dependable result, inter-coder reliability was achieved using the formula below recommended by Levi Nwodu (2017, p.99) thus:

$$A = \frac{Po - Pe}{100 - Pe}$$

Where Po = Observed percentage agreement

Pe= Expected percentage agreement by chance

A= Inter-coder agreement

Therefore: Po = 90

Pe= 45

$$A = \frac{Po - Pe}{100 + Pe} = \frac{90 - 45}{100 + 45} = \frac{45}{145} = 0.31$$

This was done for the two instruments. The results (0.82) showed high level of agreement, which indicates that the instruments were reliable for objective analysis.

Validity of instrument of data collection

Face validity and content validation of the instruments were done by two communication expert researchers in the Department of Mass Communication, University of Benin, (UNIBEN), Benin City. They ensured the instruments were structured in a way that they would produce the needed data to accomplish the research objectives.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: The frequency of *restructuring* stories by the two newspapers

Months	<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>Daily Trust</i>	Total	Percentage
December 2018	5 (50%)	1 (4.17%)	6	17.14
January 2019	4 (40%)	13(54.17%)	15	42.86
March 2019	1 (10%)	2 (8.33%)	3 (%)	8.57

April 2019	0 (0.00%)	8 (33.33%)	10 (0%)	31.43
Total	10	24	34	100

Source: Content Analysis, 2019.

Table 1 reveals that the newspapers reported more (58.34%) about restructuring before the elections, but reports on *restructuring* dropped to 41.66% after the elections.

Table 2: Prominence of *restructuring* stories

Locations	<i>The Guardian</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Front page lead	1	10	2	8.33	3	8.82
Front page other	1	10	1	4.17	2	5.88
Inside pages	8	80	21	87.5	29	85.29
Back page	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10	100	24	100	34	100

Source: Content Analysis, 2019.

Table 2 clearly shows that prominence was not given to “restructuring” stories by the two newspapers

Table 3: Sources of Information

Locations	<i>The Guardian</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Politicians/Political parties	2	20	16	66.67	18	52.94
Opinion/Feature Articles	6	60	2	8.33	8	23.53
Socio-political organisations	1	10	2	8.33	3	8.82
Civil Society Organisations	1	10	4	16.65	5	14.71
Total	10	100	24	100	34	100

Source: Content Analysis, 2019.

The data in table 3 show that most of the stories on *restructuring* emanated from politicians and political parties. The implication is that the issue was highly politicised during the period of study.

Discussion of findings

The first finding from this study is that the selected newspapers had only 34 stories on restructuring during the period of study. This figure is abysmally low compared to the sensitivity and importance of this issue of discourse. This finding is contrary to the assertion by Professor Bolaji Akinyemi, that when you pick up a typical Nigerian newspaper, restructuring “is a daily discourse. Whatever they need to know about it is there” (as cited in Affe, 2019, p. 1). The finding is also incompatible with the claim of *The Guardian* newspaper’s editorial (2018) that it has been consistent in reporting about restructuring, reiterating the benefits and the need to restructure.

This finding is also inconsistent with the argument of Nda-Isiaih (2017) that the most popular term in the country’s political lexicon at the moment is restructuring, and that the issue has been dominating the media space, being featured in news, talk shows, online media, and being discussed by analysts, public commentators and other close watchers. These foregoing expressions show that the issue of restructuring is an important one that newspapers ought to give special attention and space to.

The second finding revealed that prominence was not given to restructuring stories by the newspapers. According to Guanah, Obi and Ojo (2019), “prominence is said to be given to a story when it is strategically placed in either the front or back pages of a newspaper where it can be easily seen by readers, in the case of newspapers, or when it makes the headlines of a broadcast news” (p. 532). Data show that the inside pages have 85.30% of “restructuring” stories. The issue of restructuring is considered to be very important, and should be a front page discourse of newspapers often since the media can drive salient issues with their agenda setting prowess; but this was not the case here.

Thirdly, finding shows that restructuring stories in the newspapers emanated mostly (52.94%) from politicians and political parties. The politicisation was even brought to the fore when the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) accused the All Progressives Congress (APC) of not restructuring the country even though the party had it as one of its manifestoes during the 2015 general elections. PDP national publicity secretary, Kola Ologbodiyan, gave instances where APC chieftains rubbished the idea of Restructuring as recalled by Ukwu (2019b) in a paraphrased form thus:

In an interview with Radio Nigeria (FRCN) on June 9, 2017, the minister of communication, Lai Mohammed, claimed that restructuring is not a priority for President Buhari...On June 29, 2017, Malam Nasir El-Rufai disputed that the APC promised restructuring and referred to those criticising his party as "political opportunists and irresponsible" Nigerians. Our folks have not forgotten Borno State Governor Kashim Shettima's remark that "to hell with restructuring"... (p. 2).

This confirms that the issue was highly politicised as affirmed by Bolaji Akinyemi who agrees that “it has become politicised” (as cited in Affe, 2019, p. 2). It is assumed that ethnic nationalities, Socio-political organisations and Civil Society Organisations, among others, who have been complaining about marginalisation would be spear-heading the discourse on restructuring, and not politicians.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The different positions taken by people clearly show they still want Nigeria to exist as an entity rather than it being balkanised, but that it should be restructured so there will be equity, and all stakeholders will have a sense of belonging. More of the dissenting voices to restructuring are from the North, but the North can develop the various natural resources that are spread around the region. Even though restructuring will not solve all the problems of Nigeria, yet it can go a long way to bring about peaceful coexistence. It is high time the National Assembly and President Muhammadu Buhari commenced the process of restructuring the country because, for now, it is considered the best option to prevent any impending doom that may befall this country due to the myriad of challenges facing it.

For a start, the president can send the recommendations of the 2014 Confab Report, and the report of Governor Nasir el-Rufai Committee, which the ruling APC set up on January 25, 2018 to the National Assembly for deliberations. The media, especially newspapers, should remain the rallying point where Nigerians can express their views about their agitations, talk, and negotiate so that the root causes of the marginalisation and the disequilibrium in the distribution of both the economic, social and political powers in the country can be addressed.

It is also recommended that newspapers should give more space to the discourse on restructuring, and also give it prominence by publishing stories on restructuring on their front pages. Since communication is the basic human tool that helps people to interact with themselves

for peaceful coexistence, newspapers must make themselves available for this purpose. Newspapers should intensify the reportage of the issue and adequately educate both sides of the divide so that they can be able to arrive at agreeable decisions at the end of the day. Similarly, the restructuring discourse should go beyond political parties` and politicians` rhetoric as it is appearing to be through its politicisation; it should be discussed as an important national issue that can make or mar the peace of Nigeria.

References

- ACE Project (2019). The ACE Encyclopaedia: Media and Elections. 2009. Retrieved from http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/me/default/mobile_browsing/onePag.
- Abubakar, A. (2017). Restructuring Nigeria for National Cohesion and Good Governance. Retrieved from <https://opinion.premiumtimesng.com/2017/07/14/restructuring-nigeria-for-national-cohesion-and-good-governance-by-atiku-abubakar/>.
- Adetayo, O. (2018). Nigeria`s Problem not about Restructuring, says Osinbajo. Retrieved from <https://punchng.com/nigerias-problem-not-about-restructuring-says-osinbajo/>.
- Affe, M. (2019). North believes it`s being targeted by restructuring- Prof. Bolaji Akinyemi. Retrieved from <https://punchng.com/north-believes-its-being-targeted-by-restructuring-prof-bolaji-akinyemi/>.
- Akpotorr, A. S. & Emome, E. E. (2006). The Role of Local Government Chairman and Head of Personnel Management in Conflict Management in the Niger Delta. In: O. D. Omotor, A. F. Sanubi, and A. I. Owhona (Eds) *Readings in Conflict Management and Peace Building in Africa*. (Pp. 139-151). Abraka: Faculty of the Social Sciences, Delta State University.
- Asadu, A. C. (2008). "Mainstreaming Communication for Development in the Resolution of the Niger Delta Conflict." In: E. M. Mojaye, E. Aragba, E. Soola, & L. Oso (Eds) *Media, Dialogue, Peace Building and Reconciliation: Conference Proceedings*. (Pp. 220-229). Abraka: African Council for Communication Education.
- Attah, V. (2019). Nigeria, Buhari and the common man. Retrieved from <https://newsnowonline.com.ng/2019/03/29/nigeria-buhari-and-the-common-man/>.
- Babangida, B. I. (2017). IBB: Nigeria needs restructuring now. Retrieved from <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/2017/06/27/ibb-nigeria-needs-restructuring-now/>.
- Briggs, A. (2019). Facts, figures on why Nigerian polity must be restructured. Retrieved from <https://businesshighlights.com.ng/facts-figures-on-why-nigerian-polity-must-be-restructured/>.
- Cohen, B. (1963). *The Press, the public and foreign policy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Daka, Terhemba. Nigeria needs true federalism now. Retrieved from <https://m.guardian.ng/news/nigeria-needs-true-federalism-now/>, 2019.
- Du, Y. R. (2008). Mass media`s agenda setting function in the age of globalisation: a multi-national agenda-setting test. PhD Dissertation, University of North Carolina. Retrieved from <https://docs.google.com/viewer>.
- Guanah, S. J., Obi, I. & Ojo, G. O. (2019). Coverage of Culture and Tourism by Select Mainstream Mass media in Nigeria. In: A. M. Adeyanju, B. Jimoh & H. M. Suliman (Eds) *Research, Theories and Practice. A Book in Honour of Professor Suleiman Salau*. (Pp. 517-399). Kuru-Jos: National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS).

- Guanah, S. J., Anho, E. J. & Obi, I. (2018). Media Buzz and Sources of Exposure to Daddy Freeze's Comments on Tithing: Perceived Influence on Tithers in Select Pentecostal Churches. *Journal of Theatre and Media Studies (JOTAMS)*, 3(1),192-212.
- Hornby, A. S. (2015). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (New 9th Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ifeakor, C. A. (2009). Population, sample and sampling techniques. In: I. E. Osegbo, A. C. Amaechi, & J. O. Enemuoh (Eds) *Research methodology in education: Basic issues & techniques* (Pp. 98-117). Odoakpu Onitsha: Folmech Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd.
- Illah, J., Ogwo, C. & Asemah, E. (2012). Nigerian newspapers and sensational journalism practice: A content analysis of four newspapers. *Benin Mediacom Journal*, No. 6: 12-22.
- Lawal, N. (2019). The Emir of Kano, Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi II identified a key problem with agitation for restructuring. Retrieved from <https://www.legit.ng/1234420-emir-kano-slams-political-elites-says-manipulated-restructuring.html> Legit.ng.
- McCombs, M. E. & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda-setting function of the press. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36:176-187.
- Nda Isaiah, J. (2017). Politics, intrigues behind restructuring debate. Retrieved from <https://leadership.ng/2017/06/30/politics-intrigues-behind-restructuring-debate/amp>.
- Nkemdiche, A. (2018). Restructuring: History 101. Retrieved from <https://m.guardian.ng/opinion/restructuring-history-101/>.
- Nwodu, C. L. (2017). *Research in communication and other behavioural sciences: Principles, methods and issues* (2nd Rev. Ed). Enugu: Rhyce Kerex Publishers.
- Obaze, H. O. (2019). Policy Interrogation, Discourse and Debate: Restructuring Nigeria; not when, but how. Retrieved from <http://www.gamji.com/obaze/obaze15.htm>.
- Odumakin, Y. (2017). Ten reasons to restructure Nigeria.” Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/09/ten-reasons-restructure-nigeria/>.
- Okonkwo, O. (2019). Failure to restructure will mean annihilation- Obiora Okonkwo.” Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2019/04/failure-to-restructure-will-mean-annihilation-obiora-okonkwo/>.
- Onayiga, G. (2016). The Nigerian Media and the Re-Shaping of the National Economy.” Being a keynote address at the NRGi-Nigeria's Media for Oil Reform (MFOR) Conference held at the Lagos Business School, Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos on Wednesday, April 13.
- Sagay, I. (2019). Why Buhari should consider restructuring in his 2nd term- Sagay. Retrieved from <https://www.legit.ng/1232086-why-northerners-agree-restructuring-sagay.html>.
- Sahara Reporters (2019). Nigeria Revenue Sharing Formula: States, Local Councils To Get More Funds, Says RMAFC. Retrieved from <http://saharareporters.com/2019/08/07/nigeria-revenue-sharing-formula-states-local-councils-get-more-funds-says-rmafc>.
- Sahara Reporters (2018). Restructuring Will Help Solve Problems Confronting Nigeria, Says Gani Adams. Retrieved from <http://saharareporters.com/2018/04/22/restructuring-will-help-solve-problems-confronting-nigeria-says-gani-adams>.
- Temitope, R. A. (2006). Nationalism to Individualism? Applying the Right to Development to Ethnic Nationalism in Nigeria's Niger Delta Region. In: S. Akinrinade, D. Fashina, & D. Ogungbile (Eds) *The Humanities, Nationalism and Democracy*. Ile Ife: Faculty of Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU).
- The Guardian Editorial (2018). Who is afraid of restructuring Nigeria? Retrieved from <https://m.guardian.ng/opinion/who-is-afraid-of-restructuring-nigeria/>.

- Ukwu, J. (2019a). Nigeria'll break up if not restructured in 10 years- Adebajo. Retrieved from <https://www.legit.ng/1234609-nigeria-break-restructured-10-years-adebanjo.html> Legit.n.
- Ukwu, J. (2019b). President Buhari not committed to true federalism, says PDP. Retrieved from <https://www.legit.ng/1238426-president-buhari-committed-true-federalism-pdp.html>.
- Uzochukwu, E. C., Morah, D. N., & Okafor E. G. (2015). Coverage of Child Right and Protection Issues: Analysis of Selected Broadcast Media in Nigeria. *The Nigerian Journal of Communication*, 12 (1): 272-297.
- Walgrave, S., Soroka, S. & Nuytemans, M. (2008). The Mass Media's Political Agenda-Setting Power: A Longitudinal Analysis of Media, Parliament, and Government in Belgium (1993 to 2000). *Comparative Political Studies*, 41: 814. Retrieved from <http://www.m2p.be/index.php?page=publications&id=56>.
- Walgrave, S. & Aelst, V. P. (2006). The Contingency of the Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power: Toward a Preliminary Theory." *Journal of Communication*, 56:92. Retrieved from <http://www.m2p.be/publications/00101132.pdf>.