CONTENT ANALYSIS STUDY OF ABC NEWS PRESENTATIONS
ON NIGERIA AS AN EXAMPLE OF THIRD WORLD
NEWS COVERAGE, 1974-1983

THESIS

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By

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The purpose of this study is to inquire if there are dispositions of any type of newscast carried by ABC News about Nigeria and if these newscasts are positively or negatively inclined.

The analysis quantified and verified that while the broadcast content of ABC News presentations on Nigeria have been objectively covered, the newscasts have taken stereotypical patterns. This, thereby establishes the need for ABC News, being an example of American network news, to diversify and cover stories of social and human interest in Nigeria and other Third World countries. The study concludes that a true maxim of news coverage is needed as a guide to unbiased, unslanted or clichéd news presentations.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1935, when the British began the first wireless radio distribution service in Nigeria, the direction for improvement of the nation's communication needs began (1). The Nigerian federal government particularly took interest in using the media as an amalgamating force for the vast and diverse land. This lent a vote of confidence to the power of the media in shaping people's presumptions and attitudes. The acknowledgement of this power has been shown variously, from people's concern for children's television and live coverage of news events, to the coverage of crises.

Americans' views concerning other countries are obtained predominantly from television news (16). For this potentially all-powerful reason, the television news system needs to be under scrutiny and evaluation from time to time. Television news is supposed to be an as-it-is report of what is happening in the world today. The late Frank Reynolds used to imply complete foreign news coverage by saying "and now, for the international news, here is Peter Jennings in London." Walter Cronkite ended his newscast with "and that's the way it was today" which implies complete coverage of the day's news events. This kind of immediacy
that people have grown to expect from television news puts an enormous responsibility on the networks. In most parts of the world, the Anglo-American pattern of international news coverage on television is followed (19), and this universal acceptance of the American news media system reinforces the opinion-leader effect that American news media play in the world.

American Broadcasting Company's log, The World News Tonight, is probably the best example of the kind of coverage that is expected on network television news. Thus, the type of newscast to which viewers are exposed forms the major mold into which they make their impressions of a society, town, or country. An example is Dallas's misunderstood negative association after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963 (16).

Background

Since Nigeria became independent from Britain in October, 1960, the nation has gone through several changes in the quest for a strong, independent, sovereign state. During the period for this study, 1974 through 1983 inclusive, Nigeria has gone through two military regimes and one civilian administration. One of the pioneers of Nigerian independence, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, described the country as "a mere geographical expression . . . the word 'Nigerian' is merely a distinctive appellation to
distinguish those who live in, [and] within Nigeria from those who do not" (17, p. 3). However, perhaps a more apt description is the one given by the colonial British governor, Hugh Clifford. In an address to the Nigerian Council on December 29, 1920, he described Nigeria as a "collection of self-separated and mutually independent native states separated from one another by vast distances, and by ethnological, racial, political, social, and religious barriers" (17, p. 3).

Nigeria can be viewed in terms of the oil boom reconstruction period from 1974 through 1977 and the post-oil boom containment period from 1978 through 1983.

Oil Boom Period, 1974-1977

The oil boom period from 1974 through 1977 was a period of rapid growth and development. Coming out of a bitterly fought civil war, Nigeria suddenly came to the awareness of its leadership role in the continent of Africa.

Nigeria had joined the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), becoming the sixth largest producer of high quality crude oil. Nigeria had turned from a traditionally agricultural (exporting) society to a more industry conscious nation. According to Nelson,

The proportionate contribution of agriculture was declining as commercial petroleum production grew. The contribution of agriculture, forestry, and fishing, which had been 65 to 70 percent of gross domestic product in the late 1950s, dropped to
about 54 percent in 1966 and 1967. Tentative projections thus estimated that in 1970 about 14 percent of gross domestic product would be derived from petroleum and 43 percent from agriculture and that by 1973 some 19.3 percent would come from petroleum and 38 percent from agriculture (6, p. 297).

Although the earlier projections were right, the later ones were wrong because today Nigeria relies more heavily on oil as its primary export. Although this trend has helped the economy of Nigeria, there are inherent disadvantages to such a heavy dependence on oil revenues. Nigeria, a self-feeding and food exporting nation, is today a heavy importer of food (18).

The most important development in Nigeria was the sudden proliferation of radio and television stations. Television has been in operation in Nigeria since 1957 with the opening of WNTV in Ibadan, Nigeria (14). It was the very first television station in Africa (4).

WNTV was Nigeria's first form of a network. Serving mostly the western region, it became the Western Nigerian Television in October 31, 1959 (10). However, not until the mid-1970's did most parts of the interior receive any kind of electronic picture. Not until 1977 was any kind of national network formed. The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) was formed by the federal military government as a corporate body to coordinate the activities of television broadcasting in Nigeria. Under this decree, NTA took over all former regional and state-owned television stations (8).
During 1975, the most important activities in Nigeria were the world trade exposition in Lagos, the all-Africa games, the Murtala coup, the introduction of color television by NTV in Jos, Plateau State, and the all-Nigerian sports festivals. In 1976, the most important news events included the abortive coup of Colonel Joseph Dimka, the nationalization of British petroleum, the great rise of the GNP in the economy, the foreign exchange deficit, the formation of several national corporations that were quasi-government owned such as the National Supply Company, and the transmission of the Ali-Foreman fights. In 1977, news events included the celebrated Kaduna '77 (a Nigerian sports festival), the World Scout Jamboree, the extravagant World Black Festival of Arts and Culture, and the much acclaimed World Trade Fair.

These were the news events and developments occurring in Nigeria as shown in the dissemination of information by the various television stations. Since Nigeria is a diverse and vast land, television was seen as a bridging method, important in reaching the various ethnic groups. This may have led the government to make contracts to launch balloon communications satellites called Comsat and introduce a microwave relay system with the formation of the various NTA zones in 1977.
Nevertheless, the print medium still enjoyed a prominent role in Nigeria's information system. The various newspapers were cheaper and more affordable to most of the populace than the more expensive television sets.

Post-Oil Boom Period, 1978-1983

The post-oil boom period from 1978 through 1983 saw many drastic reforms from the formation of the constitutional draft in 1978 to the overthrow of the Shagari civilian administration by the military in December, 1983. After the oil boom, Nigeria began to undertake several ambitious projects. In a move aimed at unifying the nation, the federal capital was moved from Lagos to Abuja in the central part of Nigeria. This project was initially estimated to cost three billion dollars, but the cost doubled and is still rising. Nigeria, in another move aimed at playing a more important role in regional African leadership and world politics, formed the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and played host to a variety of regional and world conferences. Other projects undertaken included the free universal primary education for every Nigerian child, the health and welfare campaigns for birth control, the reforestation of waste lands, the controversial land-use decree, the highway projects connecting most urban and suburban cities, and the
historic visit of United States President Jimmy Carter in 1978.

Most significant among the news events during this period was the voluntary transfer of power by the military to an elected civilian administration in October, 1979. This single event brought much speculation about what was to come in Nigeria, from talks about being a world leader and nuclear weapons to launching extravagant space projects. However, as the oil-glut crisis started, the nation found that an economy based on one export commodity was simply not realistic. Additionally, the tremendous bureaucratic patterns of democracy suddenly came to light. The government found that a diversification of its economy supported by private and commercial ventures, not just government projects, made an economy strong. The government accounted for about 40 percent of the employment force which meant an enormous payroll, most of which was not needed. Nigerians seemed to be dependent on the government to act on every cause instead of on the community or individual efforts.

Nevertheless, these kinds of wastefulness and extravagance, evident in both the 1977 world trade fair and festival of cultures, marked the early period of the civilian administration. There were rumors of corruption, fraud, and hoarding of basic consumer commodities to inflate prices. Crime was high, partisan politics was never more
brutal, and there were rumors of a military coup that never happened.

However, just before the 1983 elections, the Shagari administration started what it called austerity measures to help the economy. Actually, the measure put the lower and middle income populace at a disadvantage; while the rich gained more due to the scarcity of commodities and the over-inflated Naira, the poor got poorer, thus the term "beggar country" was coined by Buhari. After a very controversial re-election in October, 1983, the Shagari administration tried desperately to turn the economy around. The effort, however bold, was a little short of time and public opinion because a popular (at least at that time) military movement led by Buhari, overthrew the civilian administration at midnight, December 31, 1983.

Progress was made during this time. It was more political in nature, made to enhance the image of the civilian administration. The secessionist, Omedugu Ojukwu, was given a presidential pardon and allowed to return from exile. The former head of state, General Yakubu Gowon, was granted freedom from exile in London. General Gowon had been exiled because of his linkage with the abortive coup of Colonel Dimiento in 1976 and Ojukwu for leading the eastern region in a bid to secede from Nigeria in 1967. Although these moves indicate that the civilian administration had
control over the "dreaded" military, it was probably a political strategy to win the votes of the central and eastern regions of Nigeria.

The post-oil boom era was one of drastic changes. Full of optimism in its early period, this era concurred with Nigeria's ambitious projects and the government malpractice and abuse with measures to get a vote of confidence or approval and the eventual military interruption. This era has been credited as the era in which television, more than any other media in Nigeria, changed the political scene.

Nigerian mass media policies (especially television) have been directed mainly toward the unification of the country. To this end, therefore, the Nigerian television stations have been aiming at putting politics in its right perspective by steering the manner of political practice in the country (11).

The establishment of a television college in Jos, the capital of Plateau State, in 1980 probably is the most important indicator of the priority associated with telecommunications (12). Additionally, the establishment of television in Nigeria and the various advancements from color to micro-wave live telecast relay, gave Nigeria more prominence. This means that various countries with the right equipment can come into Nigeria and make segments or special reports with live coverage, for example, coverage of President Carter's visit in 1978.

The three major television news networks have been covering Nigeria since its colonial days, starting with
NBC's series, *Africa*, in the 1950's. However, it was not until the mid-seventies that television coverage proliferated in format to cover the various facets in Nigeria.

**Recent and Related Research**

Although study of the third world is not new, facts pertaining to network television news coverage of Nigeria are sparse. Most studies have involved the communication process, technology, or history. However, concern has been shown about the dominance of the western press, particularly United Press International Television News (UPITN) and Vision International News as addressed by Reinhard Keune (9). A 1978 UNESCO declaration called for a reduction of imbalances as well as current disparities in the facilities available and used for communication both within and between countries (20).

Research at North Texas State University dealing with Nigeria dealt mainly with the history and development of television in Nigeria. Adejumobi's thesis, "The Development of Radio Broadcasting in Nigeria," about the early days of wireless communication in Nigeria, gives insight into the form, structure, and problems of radio broadcasting. He concludes that little can be done to solve the problems of Nigerian radio unless internal problems of Nigeria are solved (1). But even this 1974 thesis has fallen prey to the rapid technological and economic advancement that has
marked the entire communication world including Nigeria since the early 1970's. Mere discussions of historical perspective of structure of television in Nigeria will not give a true reflection of the universal coverage of modern times' communication. Inwang's "Twenty Years of Nigerian Television: 1959-1979" is typical of most studies in their attempt to paint the form and structure of the development of Nigerian television (7).

More recent studies have focused on the role of television in Nigerian society. In his dissertation, Egbon concludes,

The growing awareness of Nigerians over mass media contents points out the possibility that television could be used as a real means of coping with the nation's [Nigeria's] political, social, and economic problems (4, p. 3).

Onwumere agrees with Egbon's prediction. He says, "There is no doubt that television is a positive influence for the country and people of Nigeria" (13, p. 67).

In similar studies done on the Third World, it is noteworthy that Kenji's content analysis of international affairs coverage by the British and Japanese television networks found that the imbalance of news between industrial and developing countries is attributed to the fact that the political affairs of countries like the United States and other developed nations are significantly important to many of the developing nations' national interest (8).
In the print medium, Charles found that the New York Times' coverage of eighteen South African nations for the first six months of 1960, 1965, and 1975 indicated that violence and economic issues received the most coverage (3). One of the reasons that may explain the findings of Charles is the fact that the late 1960's and early 1970's were either early independent or late colonial periods that were usually marked with a higher percentage of violence. A related study concluded that although news about the Third World is not underemphasized, specifically in the New York Times and Chicago Tribune; nevertheless, negative news is played up more in both newspapers than news from other nations of the industrial world (15). Gerbner and Marvany investigated foreign news coverage in nine countries, and found that Africa was barely visible in the world press of 1970 (5). Aggarwala presented a paper at the Edward R. Murrow Center for Diplomacy in which he concluded, "Most of the Third World news is negative and deals with subjects such as shortages, famines, natural disasters, and political and military intrigues" (2, pp. 12-13).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to ascertain and quantify what categories of news events about Nigeria have reached the homes of Americans via ABC network television news by the means of a content analysis. The study has objectively
verified the directional scores of each of the categories in order (a) to compare ABC's directional inclination to the theoretical ideal of objectivity and (b) to compare the network's inclination to the amount of air time given each of the categories.

Questions of the Research
1. What was ABC's overall degree of intensity of bias?
2. How did intensity of inclination (categories' scores) vary according to percentage of given air time?
3. What was the percentage of air time to the most covered category and the degree of intensity of bias?
4. How did intensity of inclination (categories' scores) vary by each individual category?

Limitations
The study covered the period from January, 1974, to December, 1983. The reason for beginning in January, 1974, was that the research included only news stories from the beginning of the new era, after the Nigerian civil war (July, 1967 to January, 1970) and the recovery period. The study terminated in December, 1983, because it marked the peak period of Nigerian civil politics.

The study covered six years of military regimes in Nigeria and four years of civilian government administration.
All patterns of ABC network television news coverage of Nigeria were analyzed according to the amount and frequency of coverage given to a particular type of news event and the category to which it belonged. Words were coded positive or negative according to their singular or qualified definition. The reason for using the ABC network as a model of American Network Coverage was that it covers more foreign news per telecast than CBS or NBC with their foreign news bureau in London that Peter Jennings used to head. As part of its regular 5:30 p.m. newscast format, ABC had Frank Reynolds as the anchorman, Peter Jennings with the foreign news from London, and Max Robins with the economic news in Chicago.

The scope included news stories of organizations in which Nigeria was actively involved such as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries or the Organization of African Unity. However, it was limited to those that had a first or direct relationship to Nigeria or issues that included Nigerian interest but originated elsewhere, for example, issues dealing with South Africa. Thus, the research analyzed the content of ten years of ABC network television news coverage of Nigeria in order to give enough diversity of coverage of Nigeria in different stages of its development as covered by ABC exclusively.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this study closely followed that presented in Budd, Thorp, and Donahew's *Content Analysis of Communication* (2). The equation of measurement in the research was done following that presented in Dollard and Mowrer's "A Method of Measuring Tension in Written Documents" (3).

News events were coded according to their attributes and manifest content. News reports fall into one of these categories: economic, political, military, missions or trips, religion, and OPEC.

The study focused on the positive/negative direction shown in each of the categories. From the analysis of the data available, the study determined the inclination on a positive/negative chart of the news that viewers received. Answering the problem of the study suggested what aspect of ABC's news needs the most concern.

Direction was determined by comparing individual words within the sentences used by the Vanderbilt University archives of television news index and times, against a category of tables comprising mutually exclusive or independent words that included all the possible adjectives, adverbs, or nouns that may be related to the subject matter.
It was assumed that no single word could be classified as both pro-Nigeria and anti-Nigeria, and that words favorable to Nigeria's opponent in any conflict are unfavorable to Nigeria, and vice-versa. This is necessary in order to reconcile the obvious invalidity that may arise if one looks at only the performance of the subject without evaluating the subject's opponent or adversary on that particular newscast.

Most situations were coded with words that stand by themselves and are nonsynonymous to one or another's direction; however, certain situations were coded out of context. These situations usually had a qualifying word close to or at the beginning. For example, the word "pleased" when qualified by "not" or some other negating term were placed in the negative column and recorded as "not pleased" just as the expression "freed from pain" would be scored as "freed pain" and placed in the positive column.

The coding of each category was determined following Dollard and Mowrer's discomfort-relief quotients (DRQ). Thus, by calculating the total number of positive words and adding that number into the total of negative words, the result or total is divided into (not by) the total number of negative words and will produce the positive-negative quotient. The formula is:
Thus, though high tension levels at the end of the analysis were prognostic of bias in coverage, which would be negative, low tension levels were prognostic to coverage that was positively inclined.

The two major variables in this research, "trials" in the form of the different "categories" and "time," were precisely quantifiable by the simple expedients of counting the tension level in each category, taking note of the high, moderate and low trends.

Therefore, it was theorized that news coverage with the lowest tension level over the longest periods of time was an ideal positive inclination, while the opposite was true for a negative inclination. In other words, the result produced the degree of positiveness or negativeness. The measure yielded a reliable graphic picture of tension change in the newscast by the use of a tension-index graph.

For example, if there were a total of thirty (30) positive plus seventeen (17) negative, when the total is divided by the total of negative words, the quotient is .3617. The calculation is made thus:

\[
\frac{17 \text{ negative}}{30 \text{ positive} + 17 \text{ negative}} = \frac{17}{47} = .3617
\]
This figure was marked on the tension index showing its position relative to high or low trends. The number of highs and lows will indicate an inclination overall. However, for the purpose of this study, the limit of objective coverage is set at between .4500 and .5500, indicating neutrality.

The methodology was not attempting to determine a cause-effect relationship or if any "functions" existed, in this case the independent variable, Nigeria, and the dependent variable, the newscast. It was an investigation of the independent variable, Nigeria, in (trials) "categories" to which it had been "exposed" (newscast). Thus it was a content analysis of ABC news coverage on Nigeria.

Definitions of Terms

Definitions were adapted from the study of The Flow of News conducted by the International Press Institute. Modified phrases and adjectives were used as defined by Gieber (4) and Budd, Thorp, and Donohew (2).

Absolute Value: The value of a number regardless of the plus or minus sign. Example: the absolute value of -.1200 is +.1200.

Category: A category is an archtypical thought unit, symbolic of other thought units. For example, in the example stated in the methodology, "Shakarov" is the category in which the word "dissident" would fit.
**Category Scorer:** The direction or inclination expressed in a category. It is measured quantitatively in scores ranging from 0.00 to 1.00.

**Content Analysis:** A method of scientific observation in which the researcher can make inferences based on a systematic quantitative description. Directional content analysis indicates the degree to which words are positive or negative.

**Directions:** Direction is the inclination expressed in a category. The inclination may be positive or negative. It is a quantitative measure expressed in directional scores ranging from 0.00 to 1.00.

**Favorable news:** Items that report cohesion and international cooperation (political, social, and economic) in which Nigeria or any group or individual representing Nigeria is depicted as strong, right, or amicable.

**Inclinations:** A written expression about a subject whether it is an overt expression of attitude and opinion as a controversial subject or plain fact.

**Intensity:** The prefixed value of a directional score. It shows the distance of a score from 0.00. Although it does not indicate the direction of a score, it does indicate the strength of degree of inclination expressed whether it is mildly, moderately, or strongly inclined to positive or negative.
**Negative News:** News reflecting social conflict and disorganization: international tension; conflict between nations; military, political, and economic conflict; social tension; crime and vice; accidents and all disasters.

**Positive News:** News reflecting social cohesion and cooperation: international cooperation, harmonious communication among nations, government at work, society at work, life-goes-on, and news items about persons and individual contributions to community, society, nation, or the world (4).

**Stereotypical Coverage:** An oversimplified image that may present Nigeria as either anti-western and susceptible to communist blandishment (1) and presentation of the Nigerian way of life in styles conditioned by Tarzan movies and similar Hollywood adventure movies (5).

**Thought Unit:** A group of words that relate to a certain topic. Example: "Labor," "unemployment," or "industry" all relate to the category "economy."

**Unfavorable News:** Items that report social conflict and disorganization and political and economic instability and/or weakness. Any international tension (political, social, and economic) in which Nigeria or any group or individual representing Nigeria is depicted as weak, wrong, or not flexible.
Data of Broadcast

The following is a series of tables showing all the categories, dates of broadcast, length of time, and the individual scores of each day's broadcast used in analyzing the content of ABC news coverage.

**TABLE I**

**TABLE OF BROADCAST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Date of Broadcast</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Length of Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>02/03/83</td>
<td>.9000</td>
<td>0.01.50 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/01/83</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>0.00.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>01/03/83</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.00.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03/23/82</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.00.16 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total/Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>4 broadcasts</strong></td>
<td><strong>.8500</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPEC</td>
<td>02/22/83</td>
<td>.3333</td>
<td>0.00.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/21/83</td>
<td>.5555</td>
<td>0.02.50 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/20/83</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>0.00.45 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03/19/82</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.04.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>08/26/81</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0.00.10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12/30/80</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.00.10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>05/22/80</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.00.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>09/17/79</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.00.10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03/17/79</td>
<td>.7500</td>
<td>0.01.00 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03/15/79</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0.00.10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12/29/78</td>
<td>.2500</td>
<td>0.00.10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>04/03/78</td>
<td>.3333</td>
<td>0.01.40 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11/24/76</td>
<td>.7500</td>
<td>0.00.10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total/Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>13 broadcasts</strong></td>
<td><strong>.6517</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories</td>
<td>Date of Broadcast</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Length of Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Military</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03/20/79</td>
<td>.8000</td>
<td>0:00.20 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/13/76</td>
<td>.6666</td>
<td>0:00.20 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07/30/75</td>
<td>.5000</td>
<td>0:00.10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>07/29/75</td>
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<td>0:00.20 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total/Average</strong></td>
<td>4 broadcasts</td>
<td>.6166</td>
<td>0:01:10 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/17/82</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>0:00.40 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/16/82</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0:00.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/15/82</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0:00.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/14/82</td>
<td>0.0000</td>
<td>0:00.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/14/82</td>
<td>0.5000</td>
<td>0:01.30 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>02/12/82</td>
<td>.2500</td>
<td>0:01.50 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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TABLE I--Continued

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**Totals**

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CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

Having categorized news events (Table I) and coded the news events accordingly (Appendix C), the following was derived: the coding was done comparing positive and negative words from Appendices A and B, respectively, to words from network television news indexes and times of the Vanderbilt Archives. A total of six categories of broadcasts aired by ABC were as follows: Economy, OPEC, Military, Politics, Religion, and Missions/Trips.

Stories of the economy did not include topics that had to do with oil or the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) meetings and revenue. The stories in the category of Politics had to do with every issue from local government to Nigerian policy debates or discussions on South Africa or Namibia. However, stories in the Military category mostly had to do with new regimes, coups or attempted coups. Religious coverage pertained mostly to activities of the church and its relationship with the Moslem faith in Nigeria. Missions/Trips comprised for the most part news stories about diplomatic or ambassadorial activities, usually involving the heads of state or presidents and the other various arms of the diplomatic corps.
From the positive/negative quotient (PNQ) code (Fig. 1), the Economy category scored the highest in tension. It was, therefore, the section of Nigeria covered most negatively by ABC news. Figure 2 indicates that coverage of the economy totaled three minutes coverage time within the period under study (1974-1983). This indicated little interest in covering this category by ABC news.

The OPEC category, though showing the highest amount of coverage (Fig. 2), scored the second highest in tension on the PNQ tension chart (Fig. 1). However, the fact that the amount of tension indicated on the chart, .6517, is far less than the high, .8500, of the Economy category, and only .1276 away from the overall average, indicates that though the OPEC category received more than average coverage time, the contents of the broadcast were not necessarily unfavorably inclined. Nevertheless, it shows a moderate negative coverage by virtue of its position on the PNQ tension chart.

The Military category scored a relatively mild tension value on the chart, given the potential of this category in third world nations. This .6166 value shows that though this traditionally high negatively inclined section was not totally unfavorably covered, it had the lowest air-time of any of the categories. Although this category was slightly above average on the PNQ tension chart due to its limitation of topics, it was still astonishingly low-tensioned considering the volatile nature of the topic at hand.
Fig. 1--Positive/negative curve
Fig. 2--Chart showing length of time by category
The Political category, though scoring the third highest in the amount of coverage, was slightly below average in its PNQ. This kind of relationship in a topic that included such issues as Nigerian policies on South Africa and American versus Nigerian points of view was at the very least surprising. Such heated topics usually indicate a highly tense relationship. However, this indicated rather tranquil coverage by ABC news.

Although the Religious category scored the second lowest in tension and placed a strong fourth in coverage time, it has to be viewed with intervening variables; the variable of Pope John Paul’s visit to Nigeria accounts for more than 95 percent of the total coverage; and the topic does not spur controversial matters or subjects, at least not in the traditional network news coverage of third world nations like Nigeria. Nevertheless, the category shows a highly positive inclination, thus indicating that ABC news was positively biased or favorable to coverage of religious news stories. In fact, it accounts for more than 65 percent of the total coverage of all of 1982 (Fig. 3) and for the entire month of February during 1974-83 (Fig. 4).

The Missions/Trips category has certain variables, from diplomatic jargon to the use of various occasions and the use of people as symbols for government. This category, though showing the least tension (.1952), has the second
Fig. 3--Curve showing coverage by year
Fig. 4--Curve showing coverage by month
highest coverage per broadcast (Fig. 2). It has a consistent amount of coverage through the years (Fig. 3) and months (Fig. 4). This indicated that ABC news coverage in this category, although consistent, was the most positively inclined of all the categories. Not only does it show a positive score, but it shows a highly positive relationship by having the second highest allotted time. Thus, ABC news was favorably or positively biased to coverage of the Missions/Trips category during the period under study.

Discussion

Although the various categories show different inclinations and relationships, the overall coverage from the total average PNQ score shows a slightly above mild coverage by ABC news. This falls within the research limit of objectivity, indicating that the overall coverage by ABC news had been objective.

Various factors could be suggested to support this indication. Besides the highly negative economy category, most of the other categories were either moderately negative or below average. Of the six categories, three were above average—one being highly negative, three being below average, and one being highly positive. All of this suggests a certain balance overtly.

As Figure 3 shows, there had been a steady increase in coverage by ABC news. The peaks through the years are all
pointing upwards, thus a continued growth. However, the news stories were slightly stereotypical. For example, ABC aired news reports of the 1975 coup against the Gowon regime, but did not carry the 1979 civilian elections of the Shagari administration. To its credit, ABC news carried news reports of Nigeria's conference on Namibia and devoted one full minute (a high percentage by any standard, considering how much a thirty-second commercial costs to air during the evening news) of the broadcast on that news event. This privilege, which is usually reserved for heated gubernatorial campaigns, indicated a different approach to a Third World nation like Nigeria, although the issue involved another Third World nation, Namibia.

For the purpose of emphasis, Figure 5 shows that ABC news was only three news stories short of CBS's total of forty-four broadcasts on Nigeria in 1974-1983. NBC had a low thirty-five, being nine and six news stories behind CBC and ABC, respectively. However, only NBC carried coverage of the 1979 civilian election in Nigeria. All of these indicated that the three networks, particularly ABC news, were concerned with newsworthy material from the third world and Nigeria. Thus, the news stories covering Nigeria's economy were negative since they reflected what was actually happening in Nigeria that was newsworthy as already chronicled in the background section of Chapter I (pp. 2-10).
Fig. 5--News coverage of Nigeria by ABC, CBS, and NBC during the years 1974-1983.
The fact that all of the Economy stories came after 1982 is significant. As Figure 3 indicates, ABC news, though being selective in its time allotment, was reporting events as they were taking prominence in Nigeria and how they may or may not have affected other countries, in this case, the United States.

Additionally, since 1982 records the highest amount of coverage (Fig. 3), this indicates that ABC news explored the Nigerian situation, looking for sensational news by carrying the more austere, dramatic periods of the early 1980's as against carrying news stories of the jubilant festivals of 1977 or the civilian elections of 1979.

The question of air time given to certain categories and the degree of intensity of tension was significant to ABC's inclination of bias. ABC news had more news stories of the OPEC category and more air time. Therefore, it had a preference for news stories of Nigeria concerning OPEC, rather than any other news stories pertaining to Nigeria.

This relationship might have existed because of the direct effect of OPEC decisions on American lives via the American economy. The OPEC category took more significance when compared in terms of the economy category that not only received the least coverage, but also the highest PNQ tension score. Therefore, it would suffice to say that ABC news was biased against news stories not concerning the
United States in terms of the amount of frequency of its coverage of such news stories.

Conclusion

The question of whether ABC news was biased overall on its coverage as graphically illustrated in Figure 6, could be stated that, though the overall newscast had been objective, certain subject matters covered were stereotypical in the choice of news stories aired, indicating a negative coverage in such categories.

First, as has been indicated, the Economy category with the highest PNQ tension score reflected what was happening in Nigeria at that time. From the surprising Political category to the unpredictable OPEC category, ABC showed a balanced objective coverage. However, the choice of time and events covered have been very stereotyped in sequence and packaged time through the years (see Appendix C).

The choices of coverage as evident from the categories are sensational by tradition and volatile by nature. ABC news covered the dramatic coups of 1975 and 1976, but left out the drafting of the constitution and civilian elections in 1978 and 1979, respectively. During various broadcasts they gave final decisions on varying issues, but left out the very important background issues that preceded the decisions. Thus, very little time was given to news stories of Nigeria
Fig. 6--Scores of each category and position toward strength of bias.
increasing or decreasing oil prices. This pattern of coverage shows a preference for the rather weaker characteristics of Nigeria, thus reinforcing the point of stereotypical coverage given to Third World nations (1, pp. 12-13).

Second, the fact that ABC news omitted, neglected, or forgot to cover stories that could fall into other categories like human interest, culture, education and slice-of-life, may have denied ABC news viewers another perspective and information about Nigeria. In the United States, there is almost no newscast that does not include one of these categories in its newscast on the lighter side or as a soft bite. This again supports the point of stereotypical coverage given to third world nations. After all, ABC news carried news stories about the Venice festivals and even the Japanese domino wizards who set a world record for the most arranged and complicated structure of dominoes.

Nevertheless, though ABC news broadcasts have been within the acceptable limits of objectivity, ABC has not balanced the news well enough to cover the different facets of Nigeria. Although the total time devoted to newscasts of Nigeria may seem small, the average broadcast by each year (Fig. 3) and by month (Fig. 4) is high for any one third world nation. ABC news, therefore, has established the fact that there are newsworthy stories from such areas of the world. It has established, however, the need for American
networks (the opinion-leaders for the world in television news broadcasts) to break away from traditional stereotypical coverage into other areas of concerns about Nigeria and the Third World's aspiration and sensitivity in this age of the electronic global village.

Recommendations for Further Research

Having analyzed the content of ABC news coverage of Nigeria as one example of typical third world news coverage by American broadcast news networks, this research gives the following suggestions for further study.

First, a standard of international news coverage should be researched and an objective format be developed as a standardized axiom or truism. Thus, this could be used to make inferences for coverage of any nation or news event.

Second, a content analysis of first world or industrial nations should be universalized and compared with Third World nations to identify problem areas and execute appropriate actions to cure weaknesses or enhance strengths.

Third, a content analysis of Third World nations' coverage of the industrial world should be equally examined and types of patterns noted should be discussed and evaluated according to an objectively standardized axiom.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX A

POSITIVE WORDS

These adverbs, adjectives, nouns, and verbs all suggest or connote "positive" inclination and are pertinent in the research in analyzing the type of coverage that ABC network has given to Nigeria.

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Tranquility
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Universal
Useful
Valuable
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Welcomed
Welcomes
Zeal
APPENDIX B

NEGATIVE WORDS

These adverbs, adjectives, nouns, and verbs all suggest or connote "negative" inclination and are pertinent in the research in analyzing the type of coverage that ABC network has given to Nigeria.

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APPENDIX C

CODING

Category: Military 07/29/75 Length: 0:00:20 sec.
Positive Leader 2
Negative Deposited 2 + 2 = 2 = .5000
Leader Coup

Category: Military 07/30/75 Length: 0:00:10 sec.
Positive Leader 2
Negative Deposited 2 + 2 = 2 = .5000
Leader Bloodshed

Category: Political 12/17/75 Length: 0:00:10 sec.
0 0 = 0.0000 (by approximate portioning of time)

Category: Political 12/20/75 Length: 0:00:40 sec.
0 0 = 0.0000

Category: Political 12/22/75 Length: 0:00:40 sec.
Positive Popular 1
Negative Prisoners 1 + 1 = 1 = .5000

Category: Military 02/13/76 Length: 0:00:20 sec.
Positive Attempt (fails) 2
Negative Coup 2 + 2 = 2 = .6666
Negative Killed 3

49
Category: Military 03/20/76 Length: 0:00:20 sec.

Positive (not) Executed
Negative
Dissident
\[ \frac{4}{1 + 4} = \frac{4}{5} = 0.8000 \]
Coup
Executed
Leader (of coup)

Category: OPEC 11/24/76 Length: 0:00:10 sec.

Positive Representatives
Negative Warn
\[ \frac{3}{1 + 3} = \frac{3}{4} = 0.7500 \]
Danger
Increasing (prices)

Category: Mission/Trip 02/09/77 Length: 0:00:10 sec.

Positive Talks Festival Festival
Negative
\[ \frac{0}{3} = 0.0000 \]

Category: Politics 08/77 Length: 0:01:00 sec.

Positive Racism (conf.) Harmony Approval (settle) Problem Free (elections)
Negative Problem Refuses Cooperate (refuse)
\[ \frac{3}{4 + 3} = \frac{3}{7} = 0.4285 \]

Category: Mission/Trip 10/11/77 Length: 0:00:20 sec.

Positive Welcomes Stop (at Nigeria)
Negative
\[ \frac{0}{2} = 0.0000 \]
Category: Mission/Trip 04/04/78  Length: 0:05:10 sec.

Positive
Growth
Visit
Arrival
Leaders
Power
Release
Visit
Arrival
Leaders
Rights
Arrival
Greetings
Talks
Hopes

Negative  = \frac{7}{14 + 7} = \frac{7}{21} = .3333

Category: Mission Trip 04/03/78  Length: 0:03:30 sec.

Positive
Peace
Similarities
Joint
(communicate)
Leaders
Suspicion
(U.S. sides
with African
wants)

Negative  = \frac{9}{5 + 9} = \frac{9}{14} = .6428

Category: OPEC 04/03/78  Length: 0:01:40 sec.

Positive
Possibility
Reasons
Right
Lower (prices)

Negative  = \frac{2}{4 + 2} = \frac{2}{6} = .3333
Category: Political 06/05/78  Length: 0:01:10 sec.
Positive Policy Followed
Negative Protest
Warning Against Force Colonialism Helps (U.S.S.R. movement)

Category: OPEC 12/29/78  Length: 0:00:10 sec.
Positive Purchases Supply Supplied
Negative Friendly (to Soviets)

Category: OPEC 03/15/79  Length: 0:00:10 sec.
Positive 0
Negative Increase (price of oil)

Category: OPEC 03/17/79  Length: 0.01:00 sec.
Positive Refusal (price increase)
Negative Profit (windfall) Shortage (oil) Against

Category: Politics 05/30/79  Length: 0:00:20 sec.
Positive Recognition
Negative Threat

Category: Politics 06/07/79  Length: 0:02:30 sec.
Positive Election Advantages Sanctions (lifting)
Negative Threat Cease (oil supply) Sanctions
Category: Politics  08/01/79  Length: 0:00:40 sec.
Positive  Negative  = \frac{2}{2 + 2} = \frac{2}{4} = .5000
Beginning  Against  Reaction  (lifting)  (to nationalization)

Category: OPEC  09/17/79  Length: 0:00:10 sec.
Positive  Negative  = \frac{1}{0 + 1} = \frac{1}{1} = 1.0000
Surcharge

Category: Mission/Trip  02/05/80  Length: 0:00:10 sec.
Positive  Negative  = \frac{0}{1 + 0} = 0.0000
Trip  (to Nigeria)

Category: OPEC  05/22/80  Length: 0:00:30 sec.
Positive  Negative  = \frac{2}{0 + 2} = \frac{2}{2} = 1.0000
Raising  (price)  Increase  (oil & gasoline price)

Category: OPEC  12/30/80  Length: 0:00:10 sec.
Positive  Negative  = \frac{2}{0 + 2} = \frac{1}{2} = 1.0000
Increase  (price)  Rise  (gasoline price)

Category: Politics  03/20/81  Length: 0:01:10 sec.
Positive  Negative  = \frac{5}{1 + 5} = \frac{5}{6} = .8333
Visiting  Threatening  Force  Attack  Criticism (of U.S. policy)  Criticism (of U.S. policy)
Category: Politics  07/29/81  Length: 0:00:30 sec.
Positive Games
Negative Riots
Threatened Boycott Apartheid
\[ \frac{4}{1 + 4} = \frac{4}{5} = 0.8000 \]

Category: OPEC  08/26/81  Length: 0:00:10 sec.
Positive Cutting (prices)
Negative 0
\[ \frac{0}{1 + 0} = 0.0000 \]

Category: Religion  02/12/82  Length: 0:01:50 sec.
Positive Trip (to Africa)
Scenes (of Nigeria)
Dancers (Nigerian)
Negative Problem
\[ \frac{1}{3 + 1} = \frac{1}{4} = 0.2500 \]

Category: Religion  02/14/82  Length: 0:01:30 sec.
Positive Tour
Negative Forces
\[ \frac{1}{1 + 1} = 0.5000 \]

Category: Religion  02/15/82  Length: 0:00:30 sec.
Positive Visit
Negative 0
\[ \frac{0}{1 + 0} = 0.0000 \]

Category: Religion  02/16/82  Length: 0:00:30 sec.
Positive Tour
Featured (Lagos, Nigeria)
Negative 0
\[ \frac{0}{2 + 0} = 0.0000 \]
Category: Religion

02/17/82 Length: 0:00:40 sec.

Positive

0

Negative

Ending

\[
\frac{1}{0 + 1} = 1.0000
\]

Category: OPEC

03/18/82 Length: 0:04:30 sec.

Positive

0

Negative

Emergency

Crisis

Exit

Curtailment

Threat

\[
\frac{5}{0 + 5} = \frac{5}{5} = 1.0000
\]

Category: Economy

03/23/82 Length: 0:00:10 sec.

Positive

0

Negative

Halting

Lower (revenues)

\[
\frac{2}{0 + 2} = \frac{2}{2} = 1.0000
\]

Category: Economy

01/31/83 Length: 0:00:30 sec.

Positive

0

Negative

Forced

Deportation

\[
\frac{2}{0 + 2} = \frac{2}{2} = 1.0000
\]

Category: Economy

02/01/83 Length: 0:00:30 sec.

Positive

Efforts

Negative

Deadline

\[
\frac{1}{1 + 1} = \frac{1}{2} = .5000
\]

Category: Economy

02/03/83 Length: 0:01:50 sec.

Positive

Support

Negative

Exodus

Forced

Deportation

Killings

Silent (on events)

Exodus

Problems

Worsening

Needs (for food)

\[
\frac{9}{1 + 9} = \frac{9}{10} = .9000
\]
Category: OPEC

02/20/83

Positive Price (cut) Benefits
Negative Breaking War
= \frac{2}{2 + 2} = \frac{2}{4} = .5000

Category: OPEC

02/21/83

Positive Drop (oil price) Cut (oil price) Drop (oil price anticipated) Drop (on airline)
Negative Breaking War Emergency Recession Breaking Arrogance Greed
= \frac{5}{4 + 5} = \frac{5}{9} = .5555

Category: OPEC

02/22/83

Positive Reductions (price) Drop (price)
Negative War
= \frac{1}{2 + 1} = \frac{1}{3} = .3333
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Articles


**Reports**


**Publications of Learned Organizations**


**Public Documents**


**Unpublished Materials**


Magazines