

PRINT MONITOR

A REPORT ON THE PRINT MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT

January 2002



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Other Publications by Media Rights Agenda (MRA)

- * *Media Rights Monitor* (Monthly Journal) published since 1995
- * Annual Reports on the State of the Nigerian Media
 - + *Sentenced to Silence*, 1998
 - + *Back from the Brink*, 1999
 - + *A Harvest of Blooms*, 2000
 - + *At A Crossroads*, 2001
- * Other reports and publications
 - + *Unshackling the Nigerian Media: An Agenda for Reform*, July 1997 (In collaboration with ARTICLE 19)
- * *Media Scorecard* (Report of the Print Media Coverage of the Political Transition Programme - six issues, from January - June 1999)
- * *Airwaves Scorecard* (Report of the Broadcast Media Coverage of the Political Transition Programme - six issues, from January - June 1999)
- * *Unlocking Nigeria's Closet of Secrecy*, August 2000 (A Report on the Campaign for a Freedom of Information Act in Nigeria)
- * *Broadcasting In Nigeria: Unlocking the Airwaves*, February 2001 (A Report on the Framework for Broadcasting and Telecommunications in Nigeria - In collaboration with ARTICLE 19)

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FOREWORD

Section 22 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution provides that “The Press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter (Chapter Two) and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people.”

Naturally, the question arises as to who watches the watchdog to ensure that it performs this duty of holding the government accountable to the people. It is a delicate question for which there is no one correct answer. Governments and societies all over the world have for decades grappled with this problem without being able to reach a consensus solution.

However, the right of citizens to be informed about the political process and to be able to hold and express opinions generally about their governments is one that is now recognized under international human rights law as an essential component of the right to freedom of expression. This right is guaranteed by a number of regional and international human rights instruments.

What this means in real terms is that there is an obligation on governments to create an environment where the media can access and disseminate information for the benefit of the wider society. For the media, it means that beyond narrow commercial interests, there is also a responsibility to act in the larger interest of the society. This responsibility has been internationally recognized as far back as 1960 when the United Nations Economic and Social Council, at its 29th Session, in its Resolution 756 (XXIX) of 21 April 1960 adopted a draft declaration on freedom of information wherein it proposed that the “Media of information should be employed in the service of the people...”

One of the main problems which has inhibited the growth of the print media in Nigeria over the years has been the low literacy level which has severely limited the size of its audience, comparative to the audience in the broadcast sector.

Although precise data are not available, it is estimated that there are over 300 newspaper and magazine titles being published in Nigeria. Estimates put the combined circulation figures of newspapers at less than 500,000 daily. The number is pitiable in a country with over 120 million people. Added to this is the fact that these newspapers and magazines are located mainly in the southern part of the country, especially in the Lagos area, and hardly circulate outside the major towns in the country.

Despite these problems, the print medium remains an important vehicle for mass political education and mobilisation. This is particularly so because of the print media which has less stringent control than broadcast, and the greater private ownership of the print media which also serves to ensure its independence from government control. Besides, despite the reversals in fortune which the print media has suffered with the opening up of more radio and television stations, it still has the advantage of serving as a conveyor of more detailed information that can be stored relatively more easily and more cheaply than information from the broadcast media.

This project is intended to provide some empirical data on how the media covers public issues, especially democracy, politics and human rights and in the process highlight the fairness or otherwise of their programmes to all interest groups as well as monitor how they seek to enhance the political process.

The objective of the project is not to condemn the media’s coverage of these issues or to create a competition among the various media establishments. Its primary purpose is to provide a barometer for media establishments to measure their performance in the reporting of public issues and government activities and undertake voluntary adjustments to bring themselves into conformity with international standards in the coverage of political issues.

Edetaen Ojo

Executive Director, Media Rights Agenda

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PREFACE

In any democratic society, the media plays the foremost role in the shaping of public opinion. This is why in undemocratic societies, the media is one of the first targets of repression by the government. If a democratic government is sophisticated, it may opt for media control and manipulation as a way of controlling the flow of information and teleguiding public opinion. Where the government is crude, the media, especially the public state-owned media, is simply used as a mouthpiece.

But even in democratic countries, different sections of the society and economy openly try to influence the media. Publishers, editors, correspondents and reporters are cultivated by different interest groups and significant amounts of money are openly spent on advertising and public relations. It has also been known to happen that informal incentives (for brown envelope journalism) influence some journalist. Furthermore, journalists have their individual biases and this sometimes gets in the way of objectively, balanced and factual reporting. In some cases, it may just be lack of adequate training, lure of sensationalism or laziness that gets in the way of good reporting. Whatever the reason for inaccurate, fictional or unbalanced coverage, the results are the same. Distortion of information can have, and has had, catastrophic implications for society.

But the media must strive to overcome all obstacles to fair, accurate and balanced reporting. The strategic position of the media in modern society as regards influencing and shaping public opinion means that the media has an obligation to ensure equitable access for all sections of society. All reports must be truthful, factual and reflect the views of all parties to any issue. Pictures, headlines and reports must not be misleading and no one should receive undue projection over others. Unfortunately, the media does not always live up to these ideals and the consequences to the society are often much higher than we imagine.

Very often, people tend to equate the media with the printed form. But the fact is that the printed form is just one of the several forms of media. In present times, the media also include the broadcast medium, the Internet and traditional forms of information dissemination and entertainment.

The reason most people equate the Print Medium with Media is because besides the traditional form of media, the printed form of the media was the first to be applied to a mass dissemination of information. While the history of the print media in Nigeria dates back to 1859 with the publication of a Yoruba vernacular newspaper, *Iwe Irohin*, the broadcast media started in 1945 with the establishment of the Western Nigeria Television by the then regional government of Chief Obafemi Awolowo.

Despite having suffered a loss in its appeal due to the arrival in the scene of broadcast media such as radio and television, which in addition to being spontaneous have the advantage of audio and images, the printed medium remains clearly indispensable. It still has the advantage of serving as

a conveyor of far more information that can be assessed most conveniently and that can be stored relatively more easily and at less cost, than the broadcast information.

Although Nigeria has a low literacy level, making the readership of the print medium much less than the numbers of people who may tune-in to the broadcast medium, yet the Nigerian print medium remains a most potent means of mass political education and mobilisation.

This is more so because of the huge percentage of private participation in the industry which gives the government-owned print media organisations sufficient opposition in times when official quarters might wish for a hush-up of matters otherwise of public interest. But the question remains, just how efficiently is the media living up to its rating?

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INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of the media monitoring exercise is to assess the role of the media in upholding and promoting democratic culture and practice as well as ensuring transparency, accountability and good governance.

Some of the questions to be addressed are: How well does the media provide a robust atmosphere for the promotion of political debate, democratic governance and public accountability? How well does the media ensure the fair, accurate and objective coverage of political issues and political interest groups? How well does the media ensure fair, accurate and objective coverage of human rights issues and safeguard the rights of disadvantaged and minority groups?

The project seeks to determine the extent of coverage given to these issues by both the state-owned public media and the private media. It also seeks to identify the significant issues covered and those which were ignored.

The Topics\Variables covered in the monitoring were:

Political Issues

1. Reports on federal, states and local governments and their agencies
2. Reports on political-economic policies and the public's responses to them
3. Reports on emerging political issues

Democracy Issues

1. Reports on separation of power (between the three arms of government)
2. Reports on the legitimate role of the opposition and opposition activities
3. Reports on the registered political parties—AD, APP, PDP.
4. Reports on other political associations and organisations
5. Reports on the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC)
6. Reports on other general democracy issues

Human Rights Issues

1. Reports on gender issues
2. Reports on human rights violations
3. Reports on human rights promotion
4. Reports on human rights violations investigations

Reports on Public Accountability

1. Reports on corruption in government
2. Reports promoting transparency in public life.

SECTION 1 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unmistakably, the pendulum of political activities was on the upswing again during the month of December under review and the blame or credit could be laid at the feet of the Electoral Act. It was by no means the only cause of increased political activities but its provisions concerning local government councils tenure, the order of respective elections and above all, the almost impossible requirements for new party registration, stirred up a hornet's nest which had not subsided as at month's end, three weeks after the Act was signed by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

In fact, even this assent was improbably the occasion for a fresh controversy over whether or not he and his aides "smuggled" a contentious clause into the Act. The press covered the wrangling fairly well at least until its attention was distracted by the December 23 assassination of Nigeria's Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Chief Bola Ige.

The press also performed reasonably well in its coverage of politically - related issues such as state government budget proposals, by-elections, intra-party squabbles, Minister for State, Defence, over the Mrs. Dupe Adelaja's faux pas over the fate of Biafran ex-soldiers, the problems between Osun State's Governor Akande and his deputy, Iyiola Omisore and the continuing tension between Tivs and Jukuns, Birom and Hausa, Sayawa Christians and Fulani in Bauchi and several other festering crises.

A good indicator of the predominance of politics this month was the combined total for the Democracy and Political Issues, which variables came to 852 reports and a dimension of 26, 146 square inches. These, compared with 99 reports (2,963 square inches), for the two remaining variables, public accountability and human rights, clearly shows the picture.

While there were a few public accountability reports, human rights was almost universally ignored this month. In fact, had it not been for the continuing ordeal of Safiya Hussein, a Muslim lady based in Sokoto, who a Sharia Court sentenced to death for adultery, the human rights total of 27 reports would have been much less.

The cumulative total of 963 evaluated reports during the month under review, was the lowest recorded so far. For example, there were 2,562 evaluated reports in the June monitoring exercise; 1,454 evaluated reports in July; and 1,851 reports in August. Others are 2,264 evaluated reports in September; 2,149 evaluated reports in October and 1,601 evaluated reports in November. The fact that monitoring was conducted for three calendar weeks during the month due to the Christmas break is partly responsibility for the sharp drop. However, as the pointed out in previous reports under this project, newsfeatures were excluded from the calculation and naturally thousands of news reports in the categories of issues monitored for in this exercise were equally excluded.

The issue of biased news reporting has stubbornly remained. Some were clearly intentional but some others were accidental in the sense that the publications attempted to reach all sides to an issue but did not succeed. Following up events, issues and crises has definitely improved but this could be due to increasing competition between the newspapers. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the widespread practice of quoting anonymous sources. The practice continued during the month, as well as the use of speculative or sensational reports, which lack substance. It was also clear that some reports were "sponsored" and were not the product of independent journalistic investigation.

The monitoring exercise showed that governments at the three tiers, their agencies and functionaries remained the main focus of the print media organs. This showed a similar pattern to what obtained during many months of the monitoring exercise. In second place were politicians and political activists of every hue. A related issue was that during the month, the majority of all news reports originated either from the Abuja Federal Capital Territory or Lagos State.

On the whole, the Nigerian Press continued to do a useful job in the polity, but there is no doubt whatsoever that it can do much better than its present performance suggests.

RECOMMENDATION

Media owners and managers have always discounted the need for sustained on-the-job training but perhaps the time has come for a change of heart. If professional training is adopted and emphasized for all categories of journalist, this should ultimately rub off on the end-product. It is even possible that this initiative may help journalists themselves to take their profession more seriously.

It is necessary for the editors of the publication to broaden the base of their newsgathering in the interest of objectivity.

SECTION 2 - GENERAL FINDINGS

Period of Report: December 1-22, 2001

Number of Publications monitored: 15

Number of Newspapers monitored: 10 (*Daily Times* and *New Nigerian*, both state-owned; *The Comet*, *Post Express*, *Daily Champion*, *Daily Trust*, *National Interest*, *The Punch*, *ThisDay* and *The Guardian* - privately owned)

Number of Newsmagazines monitored: 5 (*TELL*, *The News*, *The Week*, *The Source* and *Newswatch* - privately owned)

Number of Total Newspaper Reports: 12,005

Number of Evaluated Newspaper Reports: 938

Space covered by Evaluated Newspaper Reports: 25,235 square inches

Percentage of Evaluated Items to Total Reports: 7.8%

Number of Total Newsmagazine Reports: 176

Number of Evaluated Newsmagazine Reports: 25

Space covered by Evaluated Newsmagazines reports: 3,874 square inches

Percentage of Evaluated Items to Total Reports: 14.2%

Total Number of News Reports: 12,181

Total Number of Evaluated News Reports: 963

Total Space Covered by Evaluated Reports: 29,109 square inches

Percentage of Evaluated Reports: 7.9%

TOPICS/VARIABLES

During the month under review, there was only marginal difference between the total news reports monitored that fell under Democracy and Political Issues variables, unlike what obtained in past months when there was always a wide gap between them. In fact, for newspapers, the Political Issues total came to 417 compared with 415 for Democracy. Specifically, the respective figures for Democracy Issues categories are as follows:

Newspapers: 415 reports (11,721 square inches)

Newsmagazines: 14 reports (2,266 square inches)

The variables had a grand total of 429 reports with dimension of 13,987 square inches.

On the other hand, Political Issues variables had a total 423 reports and a cumulative dimension of 12,159 square inches. The breakdown is as follows:

Newspapers: 417 reports (11,124 square inches)

Newsmagazines: 6 reports (1,035 square inches)

On the whole, there were 72 reports with dimension of 2,251 square inches for the Public Accountability variable out of which newspaper accounted for 70 reports (1,819 sq. inches) and newsmagazines had 2 reports (432 sq. inches).

Human Rights variable had in incredibly low 27 reports with dimension of 712 square inches out of which newspapers accounted for 25 reports (571 sq. inches) and newsmagazine had 2 reports (141 sq. inches).

AREA OF NEW ORIGINATION

Most reports originated from the Abuja Federal Capital Territory, which recorded a total of 216 reports. In second place was Lagos State with a total of 71 reports. Abia State (23) and Osun State (14) were ranked third and fourth respectively.

GEOGRAPHICAL SCOPE

The geographical scope of most evaluated reports was Nigeria (NGR). It had a total of 583. Ondo State was in a distant second place with 21 reports.

MENTION (MEDIA PROJECTION)

The most promoted institutions or individuals during the month were the state governments, their functionaries with a total of 350 reports. In second place was the federal government and its functionaries with a total of 325 reports. The National Assembly (12) and the local governments (8) were distant third and fourth respectively.

PERCENTAGE OF MONITORED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS

NEWSPAPERS

Publication	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	Percentage
Daily Times	1,149	83	7.2
New Nigerian	874	67	7.6
The Comet	1,028	101	9.8
Post Express	1,001	95	9.5
Daily Champion	1,028	89	8.6
Daily Trust	764	67	8.7
National Interest	1,539	87	5.6
The Punch	2,161	152	7.0
ThisDay	1,437	120	8.3
The Guardian	1,024	77	7.5
Newspapers Total:	12,005	938	7.8

MAGAZINES

Publication	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	Percentage
TELL	59	9	17.3
The News	26	3	11.5
The Week	40	5	12.5
The Source	15	3	20
Newswatch	36	5	13.9
Magazines Total:	176	25	14.2

ALL TITLES: **12,181** **963** **7.9**

COMPARATIVE DATA (No of Evaluated Reports and Dimensions in square inches)**NEWSPAPERS**

Publication	Democracy	Political Issues	Human Rights	Public Accountability
Daily Times	19(452)	48(1,256)	2(31)	13(290)
New Nigerian	33(730)	31(935)	2(44)	1(11)
The Comet	61(1,885)	33(914)	1(51)	6(210)
Post Express	36(854)	46(991)	1(18)	11(280)
Daily Champion	45(1,163)	34(577)	4(92)	4(49)
Daily Trust	17(508)	44(1,210)	-	6(184)
National Interest	35(1,086)	38(1,176)	2(36)	9(247)
The Punch	73(2,099)	64(1,629)	4(102)	7(155)
ThisDay	60(1,971)	47(1,539)	4(92)	9(309)
The Guardian	36(973)	32(897)	5(141)	4(84)
Newspapers Total:	415(11,721)	417(11,124)	25(2,571)	70(1,819)

MAGAZINES

Publication	Democracy	Political Issues	Human Rights	Public Accountability
TELL	5(795)	3(397)	-	1(292)
The News	2(420)	1(424)	-	-
The Week	3(286)	1(64)	1(73)	-
The Source	2(560)	-	-	1(140)
Newswatch	2(205)	1(150)	1(68)	-
Magazines Total:	14(2,266)	6(1035)	2(141)	2(432)

ALL TITLES: 429(13,987) 423(12,159) 27(712) 72(2,251)

SECTION 3: FINDINGS ON SPECIFIC PUBLICATIONS

1. Daily Times (State - owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8 1-8	359	17	410	FCT-7 ONDO-3	NGR-6 ONDO-2	SG-10 FG-10
December 10-15	210	13	234	FCT-6 LAGOS-3	NGR-9 ONDO-3	FG-6 SG-3
December 17-22	580	53	1,405	OSUN-14 FCT-13	NGR-29 KWARA-3	SG-21 FG-21
December 1-22	1,149	83	2,049	FCT-4 LAGOS-15	NGR-10 ONDO-6	SG -16 AGENCIES-13

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 7.2%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Political Issues - 48 reports (1,256 square inches); Democracy Issues - 19 reports (452 square inches); Public Accountability - 13 reports (290 square inches) and Human Rights - 2 reports (31 square inches); .

OBSERVATIONS: In the third week of the month, the newspaper gave useful attention to the inquiry on the past management of Nigerdock, the erswhile government ship repair facility. The views of several interest groups on the Electoral Act also got significant space. To a lesser extent, state government budget proposals also received attention. The drawbacks during the month included allusions to anonymous sources, neglect of human rights issues, poor gatekeeping in the newsroom and spotty production. The December 6 (page 4) assertion that 5,000 PDP members decamped to AD in Ogun State was a questionable claim. The quality of photographic reproduction was inconsistent.

2. New Nigerian (state - owned newspaper published in Kano)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	291	14	530	-	-	-
December 10-15	305	17	403	ABIA-4 LAGOS-2	NGR-10	SG -8 FG-5
December 17-22	278	36	785	FCT-6 OSUN-4	NGR-21	SG-15 FG-9
December 1-22	874	67	1,718	FCT-6	NGR-31	SG-23 FG-14

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 7.6%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Political Issues - 31 reports (935 square inches); Democracy Issues - 33 reports (730 square inches); Human Rights - 2 reports (44 square inches) and Public Accountability - 1 reports (11 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: The newspaper seemed to have taken to heart the criticism of publishing stale news. The December 18 report on the front page of Plateau Governor Joshua Dariye’s policy statement was a good copy. However, the use of anonymous news source let down the December 21 report on Afenifere’s proposal to address Alliance for Democracy’s problems. Also, its sympathy for government remained obvious. In the December 15 edition, (page 2) it did a poor job of Safiya, the supposed adulterer convicted by a Sharia Court. Poor colour photo reproduction marred three pages on December 19. On the whole, page planning remained below average.

3. The Comet (privately- owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	270	19	596	FCT-11 EK-3	NGR-13	PARTIES-14 FG-8
December 10-15	411	38	1,182	OSUN-4 FCT-8	OSUN-2 NGR-31	FGAS-17 FG-25
December 17-22	347	44	1,246	FCT-10 LAGOS-10	NGR-21 ONDO-6	SG-17 PDP -7
December 1-22	1,028	101	3,024	FCT-29 LAGOS-10	NGR-65 ONDO-6	FG-33 SG-17

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 9.8%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues -61 reports (1,885 square inches); Political Issues - 33 reports (914 square inches); Public Accountability -6 reports (210 square inches) and Human Rights - 1 report (15 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: On December 21, the continuing parts of front page reports were wrongly directed to page 2 instead of page 4. Follow-ups on the Electoral Act received significant space and one of them *Electoral Act stands, says Pius Anyim* of December 19, received not less than 91 square inches of space. On December 6, the report on Enugu State averred that the state government proposed to spend N1.3 billion in 2002 but the report’s first paragraph stated that *The Enugu State governor, Dr. Chimaroke Nnamani has presented a budget proposal of N17.1 billion for next year.* On the whole, the production quality of the publication was good and specifically, news and pages layout as well as printing were satisfactory.

4. The Post Express (privately- owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	324	18	424	FCT-5 OSUN-2	NGR-13	SG-11 FG-15
December 10-15	287	20	485	FCT - 3 RIVERS-2	NGR -12	SG-13 FG-6
December 17 -22	390	57	1,310	LAGOS-8 EDO-5	NGR-18 LAGOS-7	SG -25 FG -15
December 1-22	1,001	95	2,219	FCT-8 LAGOS-8	NGR-43 LAGOS-7	SG-49 FG-29

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 9.5%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Political Issues - 46 reports (991 square inches); Democracy Issues - 36 reports (854 square inches); Public Accountability - 11 reports (280 square inches); and Human Rights -1 report (18 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: While the publication did well to publish public accountability-related reports such as Senator Jim Nwobodo failure to appear before a probe panel; the embattled Ondo State Commissioner who reportedly went into hiding; and federal government's threat to probe contracts awarded by the National War College, it did little more than scratch the surface. Those issues and similar others deserved vigorous follow-up. Due to the storm over the Electoral Act, political matters predominated in the newspaper with 46 reports for that variable alone. The only thing missing was the input of lawyers and other stakeholders in the judicial sector.

It is safe to say that if it weren't for Safiya of Sokoto State who was condemned to death for alleged adultery by a Sharia Court, the human rights variable may not have recorded any report. There was a deluge of opinionated write-ups on Saturdays and Sundays. On December 6, the report under the headline *Imo indigenes receive Udenwa in Lagos* referred to Senator Pius Anyim receiving an award in Ondo State. The production quality of the newspaper was above average.

5. Daily Champion (privately- owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	368	18	354	FCT-5 LAGOS-2	NGR-8	SG-9 FG-8
December 10-15	357	27	595	FCT-10 LAGOS-3	NGR-10	FG -15 MASSES-11
December 17-22	303	44	908	FCT-11 LAGOS-7	NGR-30 SE-2	SG -14 IND-8
December 1-22	1,028	89	1,887	FCT-26 LAGOS-12	NGR-60 SE-2 FG-7	FG-26 SG-23

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 8.6%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues - 45reports (1,163 square inches); Political Issues - 34 reports (577 square inches); Human Rights - 4 reports (92 square inches); and Public Accountability - 4 reports (49 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: Sometimes, the sub-editors crammed too many reports on the front page. The publication continued to monitor reactions to the Electoral Act. On December 18, the follow-up headlined *Protests heighten over Electoral Law* (pages 1 and 2) was detailed and well backgrounded piece. There was an element of sensationalism in the December 18 (page 1) report headlined *Okadigbo, Nzeribe demand Adelaja's sack*. The December 7 (page 4) report headlined *305 benefit from poverty alleviation scheme in Imo* looked suspiciously like a sponsored write-up. Its drawback was that there were no interviews with any of the beneficiaries nor were their photographs published. The printing quality as well as the colour reproduction of the newspaper were satisfactory during the period being reviewed.

6. Daily Trust (privately- owned newspaper published in Kaduna)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-10	336	15	394	FCT-4 KATSINA-3	NGR -11	SG -10 FG- 6
December 12-17	198	11	265	FCT-7 LAGOS-1	NGR-11	FG-3 SG-2
December 19-22	230	41	263	FCT-14 LAGOS-5	NGR -24 C/RIVER- 2	FG -12 SG-9
December 1-22	764	67	922	FCT-25 LAGOS-6	NGR -46 C/RIVER-2	FG -21 SG -21

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 8.7%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Political Issues - 44 reports (1,210 square inches); Democracy Issues - 17 reports (508 square inches); Public Accountability - 6 report (184 square inches); there were no reports for Human Rights variable.

OBSERVATIONS: A preponderance of reports from the northern areas of the country was observed. There were too many sketchy reports which cried out for more details and adequate backgrounding. One report in the December 3 edition occupied 9.4 square inches and another took up just 10.4 square inches. The fact that the publication was well printed and sported excellent colour reproduction was not enough to obliterate the editorial lapses.

7. National Interest (privately- owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	660	26	778	FCT -14 LAGOS-4	NGR -21	FG-24 SG-30
December 10-15	432	22	727	ABIA-7 RIVERS-2	NGR -14	FG -12 SG-10
December 17-22	447	39	1,076	FCT-7 LAGOS-6	NGR -21	SG -16 FG -11
December 1-22	1,539	87	2,581	FCT-21 ABIA-7	NGR -56	SG -56 FG -47

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 5.6%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Political Issues - 38 reports (1,176 square inches); Democracy Issues -35 reports (1,086 square inches); Public Accountability - 9 reports (247 square inches); Human Rights - 2 reports (36 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: In the second week of December, at least seven reports were sourced from Abia alone. This is good for a Lagos-based newspaper. Also commendable was the significant attention given to public accountability matters. But the most positive thing in the publication during the month under review, was that in the third week, for five days, it published insightful, unbiased and well-backgrounded reports on the contentious Electoral Act. An example was the package of December 21. However, the newspaper was rather hard on Osun's Governor Bisi Akande in the December 19 edition. The write-up was not quite fair. Also, reproduction of colour photographs was below average, and on the 20th, there was some bad printing.

8. The Punch (privately- owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	897	34	1,017	FCT-10 KADUNA-4	NGR-19	SG-36 FG -24
December 10-15	613	45	5,527	ABIA-14 LAGOS-4	NGR - 33	SG -15 FG-15
December 17-22	651	73	1,729	LAGOS-10 DELTA-10	NGR-42 ABIA-5	SG-29 FG -11
December 1-22	2,161	152	8,273	LAGOS-14 ABIA-14	NGR-94	SG -80 FG -50

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 7.0%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues - 73 reports (2,099 square inches); Political Issues - 64 reports (1,629 square inches); Public Accountability - 7 reports (155 square inches) and Human Rights - 4 reports (102 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: It was observed that the publication's news reports on the Electoral Act were sourced from 15 states and it also endeavoured to publish the views of several camps. In the edition of December 12 (page 9), the promise by Alliance for Democracy that it would verify Delta Governor Ibori's claim that he has completed 1,000 projects required a follow-up. This was not done as at the month's end. There were additional follow-up reports on the Electoral Act on the 19th. The page one report of the 21st on the resolve of all the state governors to hold local government elections in the year 2002, was another good follow-up. There was competent photographic accompaniment for several reports on the 17th. Unnamed sources marred the December 17 back page report concerning the presidency's threat to prosecute corrupt Ondo State officials, as well as a front page piece on INEC, on the same day.

9. ThisDay (privately-owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	555	41	1,468	FCT-19 OYO-8	NGR-27	FG-24 SG-15
December 10-15	432	28	1,004	FCT-6 OYO-3	NGR-17 SE-2	FG -12 SG -7
December 17-22	450	51	1,541	FCT-14 LAGOS-7	NGR-22 FCT-3	FG -22 SG -15
December 1-22	1,437	120	4,013	FCT-39 LAGOS-7	NGR-66 FCT-3	FG -58 SG -37

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 8.3%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues - 60 reports (1,971 square inches); Political Issues - 47 reports (1,539 square inches); Public Accountability - 9 reports (309 square inches); and Human Rights - 4 reports (92 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: The reporting of issues relating to democracy was generally balanced. It was noteworthy that the publication reported the alleged theft of N10 million from the training and research fund of the Nigeria Labour Congress, although it would surely required a follow-up. This had not been done as at the month's end. On the whole, politically-related matters predominated in the period being reviewed. But most of the news reports published failed to convey the opinion of judicial experts, and grassroots pressure groups such as students, artisans, market women, and trade unions. There was frequent use of anonymous sources. On December 6, a report titled: *Obasanjo chides NASS over NDDC Bill*, was printed on pages 4 and 8.

10. The Guardian (privately- owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	308	14	428	FCT-7 OSUN-2	NGR-7	FG-7 FGAS-7
December 10-15	370	24	697	FCT-10 EKITI-4	NGR-23 MASSES-12	FG-14
December 17-22	346	39	950	FCT-13 LAGOS-8	NGR-23 ONDO-4	SG-10 FGAS-5
December 1-22	1,024	77	2,075	FCT-30 LAGOS-8	NGR-53 ONDO-4	FG-21 FGAS-12

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 7.5%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues - 36 reports (973 square inches); Political Issues - 32 reports (897 square inches); Human Rights -5 report (141 square inches); and Public Accountability - 4 reports (84 square inches).

OBSERVATIONS: Several even-handed and detailed reports were noted this month and an example was the December 19 front page report headlined *Senate President forecloses review of Electoral Act*. In addition, the report benefitted from good backgrounding. The newspaper's printing quality and photographic reproduction was good throughout the period under review. Besides the heavy focus on politics, the newspaper's strong focus on business activities reduced the space available for non-political issues. As an example, the newspaper's coverage of human rights and public accountability matters was poor.

11. TELL (privately- owned newsmagazines published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	21	3	382	- -	NGR-3	FG-2 SG-2
December 10-15	17	2	582	FCT-1 ONDO-1	NGR-2	FG-3 SG-3
December 17-22	14	4	518	FCT-1 LAGOS-1	NGR-4	SG-3 AD-3
December 1-22	52	9	1,484	FCT-2 LAGOS-1	NGR-9	FG-5 SG-2

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 17.3%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues - 5 reports (795 square inches); Political Issues - 3 reports (397 square inches); and Public Accountability - 1 report (292 square inches). No report was evaluated for Human Rights variable.

OBSERVATIONS: The newsmagazine completely ignored human rights matters this month and barely gave attention to issues of public accountability. This was probably due to the plethora of domestic political troubles which beset the country during the period. This is, however, not a justification for giving short shift to these important matters. The report on Abia-State in the second week of the month required a follow-up. But it did a good job with *A governor's dirty deal* (third week edition) which exposed fraudulent activities among Ondo State government officials. Two other good write-ups in the edition were *A lingering controversy* (page 36) and *A dangerous power play* (page 43). TELL's production and printing quality was above average during the month.

12. The News (privately- owned newsmagazine published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8		NOT	MONITORED			
December 10-15	10	2	420	FCT-1 AN-1	NGR-2 -	FG-1 SG-1
December 17-22	16	1	424	FCT-1 -	NGR-1 -	FG-1 P DP-1
December 1-22	26	3	844	FCT-2 AN-1	NGR-3	FG-2 SG-1

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 11.5%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Political Issue - 1 report (424 square inches); Democracy Issues -2 reports (420 square inches); No reports were evaluated for Human Rights and Public Accountability variables.

OBSERVATIONS: In the second edition of the month, the publication published *Barred from Aso Rock* which alleged that the Anambra's Governor, Chinwoke Mbadinuju, was not more allowed into the presidential villa, was rather sketchy and appeared one-sided in favour of the governor. However, in the third edition of the month, the newsmagazine turned out a good report on the Electoral Act which reflected the views of sundry camps.

13. The Week (privately- owned newsmagazine published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	23	2	133	FCT-1 DELTA-1	NGR-2 -	FG-2 PORG-1
December 10-15		NOT	MONITORED			
December 17-22	17	3	292	LAGOS-2 FCT-1	NGR-3 -	IND-2 FG-1
December	40	5	425	FCT-2 LAGOS-2	NGR-5 LAGOS-1	FG-3 IND-2

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 12.5%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues -3 reports (286 square inches); Political Issues - 1 report (64 square inches); and Human Rights - 1 report (73 square inches). No report was evaluated for Public Accountability variable.

OBSERVATIONS: The general disregard this month for civil rights issues was also observed in this publication. As an example, only one human rights report was evaluated and there were none for the public accountability variable. Often, reports suffered from having only one news source; and almost inevitably, they were one-sided. *Electoral Bill of Intrigues* in the third week of the month was okay but the headline was defective since the legislation had already become law. The week's production quality was good although some readers may complain about the low grade newsprint used for the inside pages.

14. The Source (privately- owned newsmagazines published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8		NOT MONITORED				
December	15	3	700	ABIA-2 LAGOS -2	NGR-3 NGR-2	SG -3 PDP-3
December 17-22		NOT MONITORED				
December	15	3	700	ABIA-2 LAGOS -2	NGR-3 NGR-2	SG -3 PDP -3

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 20%

TOPIC/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues -2 reports (560 square inches); and Public Accountability -1 report (140 square inches). No report were evaluated for both Political Issues and Human Rights and topic/variables.

OBSERVATIONS: It was commendable that the newsmagazine took up the campaign by Alliance for Democracy (AD) to expose corruption in Kano State. However, the report certainly requires follow-up in order to ascertain the truth of claims and counter-claims. In the second edition of the month, vexed issue of adversarial relationship between governors and their deputies got some useful focus.

No.15 Newswatch (privately- owned newspaper published in Lagos)

Period	Total Reports	Evaluated Reports	(Sq. Inches) Dimension	News Origination	Scope	Mentions
December 1-8	12	1	150	EBONYI-1	NGR-1	LG -8 SG-1
December 10-15	24	4	779	LAGOS-2 EDO-1	NGR-4	IND-3 SG-2
December 17-22		NOT MONITORED				
December 1-22	36	5	929	LAGOS-2	NGR-5	SG-3 LG-8

PERCENTAGE OF EVALUATED ITEMS TO TOTAL REPORTS: 13.9%

TOPICS/VARIABLES: Democracy Issues -2 reports (205 square inches); Political Issues -1 report (150 square inches); Human Rights- 1 report (68 square inches). There were no evaluated reports for Public Accountability variable.

OBSERVATIONS: The newsmagazine placed some emphasis on personality interviews and travelogues during the month which, however, reduced the space available for straight news. In the second edition of the month, a report on the Senate President Chief Anyim Pius Anyim, was a whitewash or public relations job. In the same edition, poor sub-editing messed up a report on page 21 while a few colour photographs came out blurred. The newsmagazine's production standard was satisfactory.

SECTION 4: STATISTICAL DATA

Frequency of Topics By Publication (%)

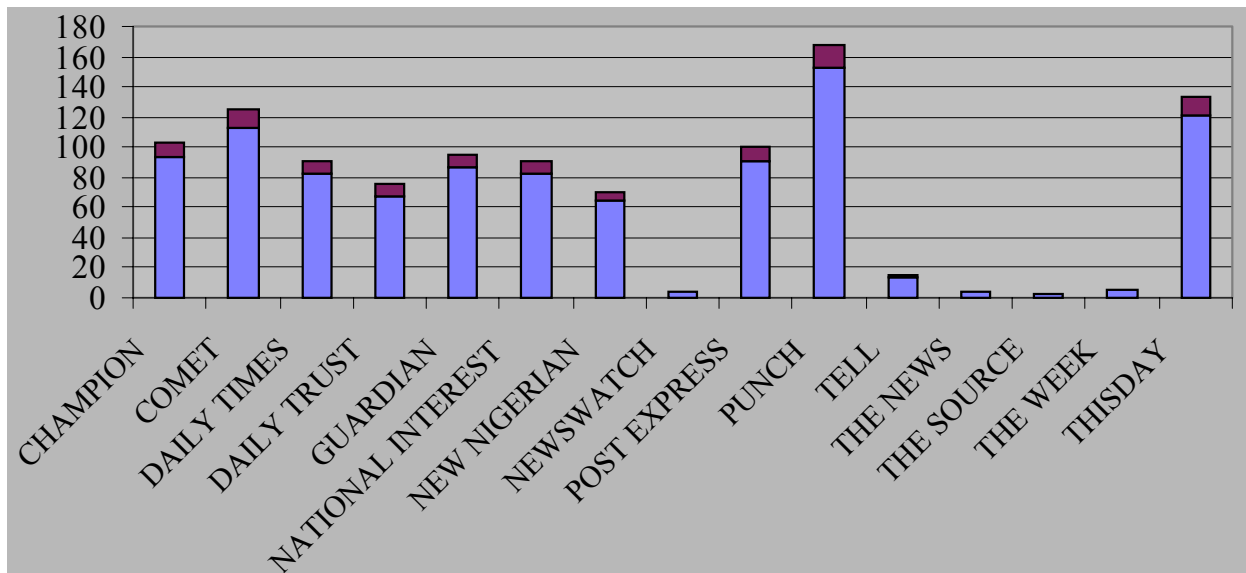
Newspapers & Magazines	Guardian	ThisDay	Post Express	Daily Trust	Champion	Daily Times	New Nigerian	National Interest	Punch	Comet	TELL	Newswatch	The News	The Source	The Week
Variables															
Separation of Powers	- (-)	- (-)	2 (0.20)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	3 (0.31)	1 (0.10)	2 (0.20)	4 (0.41)	- (-)	- (-)	2 (0.20)	- (-)	- (-)
Recognition of Opposition	7 (0.71)	13 (1.32)	6 (0.61)	4 (0.41)	4 (0.41)	10 (1.02)	7 (0.71)	11 (1.12)	24 (2.44)	7 (0.71)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Registered Political Parties	14 (1.43)	22 (2.24)	16 (1.63)	6 (0.61)	19 (1.93)	7 (0.71)	8 (0.81)	6 (0.61)	18 (1.83)	22 (2.24)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)
Other Political Associations	3 (0.31)	3 (0.31)	3 (0.31)	- (-)	7 (0.71)	- (-)	2 (0.10)	1 (0.10)	3 (0.31)	8 (0.81)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Reports on INEC	- (-)	5 (0.51)	1 (0.10)	2 (0.20)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	1 (0.10)	3 (0.31)	2 (0.20)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Other Democracy Issues	14 (1.43)	17 (1.73)	8 (0.81)	5 (0.51)	16 (1.63)	2 (0.20)	9 (0.92)	13 (1.32)	28 (2.85)	24 (2.44)	5 (0.51)	2 (0.20)	2 (0.20)	2 (0.20)	2 (0.20)
Gender Rights	1 (0.10)	- (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	2 (0.20)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)
Human Rights Violations	- (-)	2 (0.20)	- (-)	- (-)	2 (0.20)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Human Rights Promotion	1 (0.10)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	2 (0.20)	2 (0.20)	2 (0.20)	1 (0.10)	1 (0.10)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Human Rights Investigation	4 (0.41)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Corruption	2 (0.20)	5 (0.51)	5 (0.51)	3 (0.31)	2 (0.20)	8 (0.81)	1 (0.10)	5 (0.51)	4 (0.41)	5 (0.51)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)	- (-)
Promoting Transparency	2 (0.20)	4 (0.41)	3 (0.31)	3 (0.31)	1 (0.10)	3 (0.31)	- (-)	4 (0.41)	2 (0.20)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Political Issues	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	2 (0.20)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Governments and Agencies	19 (1.93)	18 (1.83)	17 (1.73)	24 (2.24)	23 (2.34)	15 (1.53)	10 (1.02)	9 (0.92)	17 (1.73)	18 (1.83)	4 (0.41)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Economic Policies	9 (0.92)	9 (0.92)	7 (0.71)	2 (0.20)	2 (0.20)	8 (0.81)	6 (0.61)	11 (1.12)	14 (1.43)	7 (0.71)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)
Emerging Political Issues	10 (1.02)	21 (2.14)	19 (1.93)	19 (1.93)	12 (1.22)	25 (2.55)	15 (1.53)	18 (1.83)	32 (3.26)	14 (1.43)	2 (0.20)	1 (0.10)	- (-)	- (-)	1 (0.10)
Omitted Political Issues	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)	- (-)

Print Media: Frequency of Areas of Origin, Coverage Scope (%)

AREAS OF ORIGIN(%)			COVERAGE SCOPE(%)		
AreaName	Frequency	Percentage (%)	ScopeName	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Abia	45	4.58	Abia	19	1.93
Adamawa	5	0.51	Adamawa	4	0.41
Akwa Ibom	10	1.02	Akwa Ibom	7	0.71
Anambra	15	1.53	Anambra	10	1.02
Bauchi	4	0.41	Bauchi	3	0.31
Benue	8	0.81	Benue	4	0.41
Borno	4	0.41	Borno	4	0.41
Bayelsa	2	0.20	Bayelsa	1	0.10
Cross River	21	2.14	Cross River	14	1.43
Delta	32	3.26	Delta	24	2.44
Ebonyi	5	0.51	Ebonyi	6	0.61
Edo	16	1.63	Edo	16	1.63
Ekiti	30	3.05	Ekiti	31	3.16
Enugu	19	1.93	Enugu	11	1.12
Abuja	247	25.15	Abuja	11	1.12
Gombe	10	1.02	Gombe	7	0.71
Imo	15	1.53	Imo	8	0.81
Internationa	4	0.41	International	2	0.20
Jigawa	7	0.71	Jigawa	7	0.71
Kebbi	2	0.20	Kaduna	3	0.31
Kaduna	16	1.63	Kogi	2	0.20
Kogi	3	0.31	Kano	7	0.71
Kano	7	0.71	Katsina	18	1.83
Katsina	17	1.73	Kwara	6	0.61
Kwara	14	1.43	Lagos	31	3.16
Lagos	113	11.51	Nasarawa	1	0.10
Nasarawa	2	0.20	Niger Delta	6	0.61
Niger	14	1.43	Niger	5	0.51
Nigeria	9	0.92	Nigeria	533	54.28
Nil	79	8.04	Nil	2	0.20
Ondo	49	4.99	Ondo	45	4.58
Ogun	16	1.63	Ogun	10	1.02
Osun	45	4.58	Osun	42	4.28
Oyo	43	4.38	Oyo	15	1.53
Plateau	16	1.63	Plateau	8	0.81
Rivers	16	1.63	Rivers	7	0.71
Sokoto	10	1.02	Yobe	1	0.10
Taraba	2	0.20	Zamfara	6	0.61
Yobe	2	0.20	South East	14	1.43
Zamfara	8	0.81	Sokoto	8	0.81
TOTAL:	982	100.00	South South	2	0.20
			South West	18	1.83
			South	1	0.10
			North	2	0.20
			TOTAL:	982	100.00

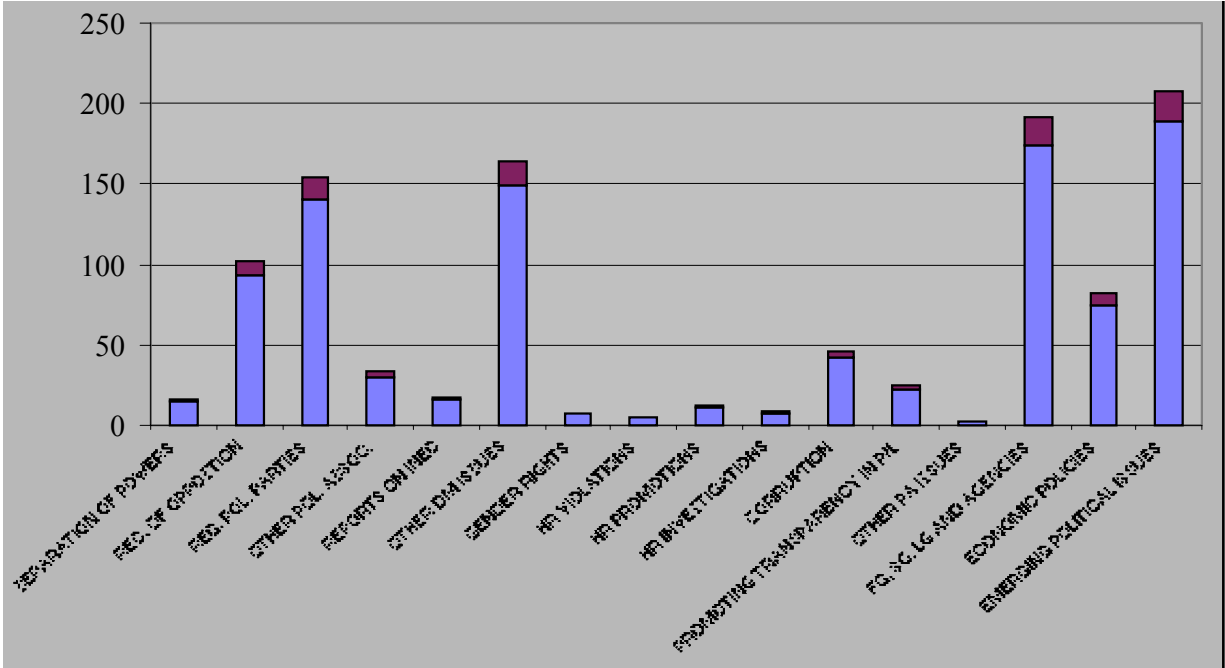
Print Media: Frequency of Publications (%)

Publication	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Champion	93	9.47
Comet	113	11.51
Daily Times	82	8.35
Daily Trust	68	6.92
Guardian	86	8.76
National Interest	82	8.35
New Nigerian	64	6.52
Newswatch	4	0.41
Post Express	91	9.27
Punch	152	15.48
Tell	14	1.43
The News	4	0.41
The Source	3	0.31
The Week	5	0.51
ThisDay	121	12.32
Total:	982	100.00



Print Media: Frequency of Topics (%)

TopicName	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Separation of Powers	15	1.53
Recognition of Opposition	93	9.47
Registered Political Parties	140	14.26
Other Political Association	30	3.05
Reports on INEC	16	1.63
Other Democracy Issues	149	15.17
Gender Rights	7	0.71
Human Rights Violations	5	0.51
Human Rights Promotions	11	1.12
Human Rights Investigations	8	0.81
Corruption	42	4.28
Promoting Transparency	23	2.34
Other Political Issues	2	0.20
Government and Agencies	174	17.72
Economic Policies	75	7.64
Emerging Political Issues	189	19.25
Total:	982	100.00



SECTION 5: NOTES AND KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

The news reports which were monitored but not evaluated can be categorised into many departments. They included sports, business and finance, overland and maritime transport, aviation, law and adjudication, violence and crime, communication, agriculture, religious matters, the environment, the arts and entertainment, housing, education and the traditional institution.

KEYS

NGR	-	Nigeria
IND	-	Individuals
FG	-	Federal Government of Nigeria
SG	-	State Governments of Nigeria
FCT	-	Federal Capital Territory, Abuja
INEC	-	Independent National Electoral Commission
LG	-	Local Governments
NORTH	-	Northern States
PDP	-	Peoples Democratic Party
AD	-	Alliance for Democracy
APP	-	All Peoples Party
PORG	-	Political Organisations
FGJUD	-	Federal Judiciary
FGAS	-	National Assembly
SE	-	South-Eastern Nigeria

SECTION 6: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. Monitoring: Assessing the programmes or publications of a news medium in terms of journalistic standards and production characteristics.
2. Square Inches: This refers to the length and breadth of the news item being monitored.
3. Topic: This concerns the variables being monitored in a particular publication or station.
4. Subject: This concerns the precise issue being monitored under a particular topic. For example, the annual convention of a political party is a subject under democracy (DM).
5. Source: This applies to the person, group or authority from whom or which the information was elicited for the news report being monitored.
6. Mention: This concerns the person, group or institution being promoted in the report being monitored. Note that the promotion could be positive or negative.
7. Area: The term refers to the city, state or region where the report was sourced. For example, Abuja federal capital territory
8. Station: This means the electronic broadcast medium being monitored. For instance, Channels Television.
9. Bulletin: An item of news in a programme.
10. Duration: This refers to the length of time that a news item being monitored was aired. For instance, 20 seconds.
11. Actuality: The screening of the event being reported in a broadcast.
12. Still: A library picture used to illustrate a news report
13. Sound-bite: This refers to the actual voice of the person being reported in the news broadcast. It means hearing the news subject speak on radio or television.



Media Rights Agenda (MRA) is an independent, non-governmental organisation established in August 1993 for the purpose of promoting and protecting press freedom and freedom of expression in Nigeria. MRA is registered in Nigeria, and has Observer Status with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in Banjul, The Gambia.

The Aims and Objectives of Media Rights Agenda are:

- to promote respect and recognition for press freedom and freedom of expression in Nigeria;
- to provide protection and support for journalists and writers engaged in the lawful pursuit of their professional duties;
- to promote the highest standards of professional ethics, integrity, training and conduct in the journalism profession; and
- to bring about a conducive social and legal atmosphere for the practice of journalism, and ensure the protection of the journalist's right not to be compelled to work against his or her conviction or disclose confidential sources of information.

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