The Flow, the Bias: An Analysis of International News Coverage on Nigerian and Foreign Television News Networks

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Abstract: A content analysis of international news in two Nigerian TV Networks – *African Independent Television (AIT)* and *Channels* and their two foreign counterparts - *Cable News Network (CNN)* and *Aljazeera* strikes a chord of similarity in terms of contents, areas of focus, and time allotment. While developing countries continue their agitation for a more equitable international communication order with regard to news flow, this study reveals that there is no clearly discernible difference in the way these four dominant news media outlets broadcast their international news stories, thereby implying a rethinking of that agitation.

Keywords: News, international, quantitative, qualitative, television, Nigeria.

Introduction

The debate over international news imbalance has generated so much controversy, as scholars attempt to provide empirical basis for their views on the issue. The flow of news across borders, in the views of many, mirrors the Global North and Global South divide. Therefore, news is not merely a broadcast

commodity but also a reflection of power - economic, political, social, and technical.

International news imbalance is believed complicit in the subjugation of a significant component of the Global South - who lack the means to produce or make news - by the Global North. In a bid to provide guidelines on equitable

international news coverage, the United Nations, through UNESCO, set up the

International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems in 1977. The McBride Commission came out with its report ¬- Many Voices One World: Communication and Society Today and Tomorrow - with far reaching recommendations after arriving at the conclusion that the world required a new information and communication order to make it a better place. The publication of the McBride's report in 1980 brought the problems of unbalanced international flow to the attention of the global audience. According to Ayish (2005) the McBride Report generated a wide range of debates on issues relating to cross border media flows, professional norms and ethics, communications technologies, and the role of media in social transformation.

The imbalance in international news (Odiboh, et al. 2017) flow manifests in quantitative and qualitative forms. Quantitatively, it is the sheer size of news generated from the Global North, usually, the West, with only an inconsequential amount of it dedicated to the less developed countries, especially those in Africa. Qualitatively, imbalance can manifest in terms of how positive or negative the news is. Third world countries are usually portrayed negatively with concomitant adverse political, social and economic ramifications.

The lopsidedness in news flow as documented in the McBride Commission's document may turn out to be a misconception in the present times as news now flows from the Third World or developing countries to the Western World, owing to the democratized use of satellite broadcasting systems and the internet. African Independent Television (AIT) and Channels Television are two dominant Nigerian television networks that broadcast to all over the world with signals well received and subscribed to in the West. This study juxtaposes the international news coverage by AIT and Channels with their foreign dominant counterparts - Cable News Network (CNN) and Al Jazeera.

Statement of the Problem

Several studies have been carried out on the imbalance in international news coverage and flow (Rodney,

1972; McBride, et al. 1981; Ekeanyanwu, 2005; Okunna, 2002). The conclusion of some of these studies is that the developing world is not positively portrayed in the international media dominated by the western countries. What has not been properly studied is the treatment of international news by the media in the developing countries of the world in comparison with their foreign counterparts. Are the media in less developed countries treating international news differently from the way their foreign counterparts do?

The problem, therefore, is the dearth of empirical studies to find out with verifiable evidence, how the media, with particular reference to television, in the developing countries such as Nigeria, treat international news. This study attempts to cover that gap.

Research Questions
This study has the following research questions:
1. Is there news imbalance in the coverage of international news by Nigerian television stations?
2. Is there news imbalance in the coverage of international news by foreign television stations with respect to news about developing countries including Nigeria?
3. How does international news coverage of Nigerian television

stations compare with their foreign counterparts?

Literature Review
The issue of news imbalance in the international arena between the North (developed western countries) and the South (developing countries) continues to attract the attention of communication scholars. This is because foreign and international news sources are critical in informing people about what is happening outside their countries and are important as a means of understanding an increasingly complicated world. (Elvestad: 2009).

What is news imbalance? According to Cauwenberg, Gelders & Javis (2009), as politicians and newsmen and women make sense of reality by providing certain ways to think about politics, researchers are not only interested in what news is covered, but also how news is covered. Scholars are not merely concerned with what news is reported but also how it is reported. This why Ivie (2009) has noted that by taking into account the filters of language, culture, and circumstance, and the rhetorical dynamics of narrative form, all of which influence news production¬, ¬the measure of a story is not about truth or objectivity in some narrow or isolated sense but instead how much and in what ways it is inadequate or

incomplete. The issue here is about news that is overemphasized, underemphasized, missed, and otherwise distorted regardless of how compelling the story might be. Other questions of note in this regard are: what is the bias and limit of perspective in news production? What is ignored in order to make one party in a conflict appear legitimate and sympathetic and another party appear illegitimate and unsympathetic, one heroic and the other demonic, one present and another absent, one humanized and the other dehumanized?

The history of international news imbalance is traceable to the history of resource disparity between the North and South. The resource inequality between the developed and the developing countries of the world is made manifest in the disproportional communication infrastructures of the two worlds. There are other spheres of development where this gulf is also apparent namely, standard of living, infrastructural development, life expectancy ratio and the like. Besides that, the disadvantaged positions of the less developed world had also been exaggerated. Ansa (1984) found that reports about developing countries were distorted in the Western media. These distortions elicited negative image of the South held by the industrialized nations.

Wilholt and Weaver (1983) found that 6o per cent of all wire stories examined contained some form of conflict, with a third of all dispatches dealing specifically with violent struggles in the Third World. Stories about violent conflicts were twice as likely to feature. Thus, international news was also about the organization of power and international leverage that made developed countries exert influence and control through the platform of their mass communication infrastructure to the detriment of the less developed countries.

A study by Miller (2004) concluded that there were significant differences between the portrayals of the North and South in international television news coverage of events adding that news form the North focused on crises, with repetitive imagery of famine, war, disease and death. It is not surprising, according to the author, that 80 percent of the British people had associated the developing world with famine, disaster and war. Owing to these skewed presentations, most images people saw of Africa were those of the victims of crises, restricted essentially to passive roles. The author added that 74 percent of Britons believed that developing countries would depend on the money and knowledge of the West in order to progress.

The issue of news imbalance in the international media space cannot be over emphasized if one looks at it from the perspective of television broadcasts from the global news companies such as CNN. Okigbo & Amienyi (2003) assert 65 television remains the most engaging mass medium in most regions of the world including Africa. When Werder and Golan (2002) said that international news has not only increased in importance with the world becoming a communications village, it is also the predominant source of knowledge about other countries for most citizens; their words denoted the power of television. Incidentally, television broadcasting in the developing countries has developed significantly and the need arises to determine how the TV networks compare with those of the developed world. AIT and Channels networks from Nigeria and CNN and Al Jazeera are the focus of this study.

Unimpressively, however, research on the international news flow from the media networks based in less developed countries is not visible yet. Scholars and researchers are more Interested in the flow of news from the western world to the Third World, but not the other way around. Little has been done about the international news content of the third world media, especially television. The media - public and private - in the developing countries have transformed over the years, using the best available satellite technologies to reach audiences that were impossible to reach a few years ago. Nearly all of them broadcast 24 hours a day and seven days a week. I put them under the radar in this article and compared them to CNN and Aljazeera.

Theoretical Framework

This study reflects the concerns of the critical theory that sees mass media as a vehicle that elevates the interests of the ruling or dominant class in society above those of others. Thus, the interests of the dominant class are preponderant in the production of news, in popular culture, and in the formation of public opinion. The theory was also the intellectual architecture that elicited the formation of the New World Information and Communication Order, promoted by UNESCO through the McBride Commission. The critical theory is concerned with the pursuance of social action that protects the public from the distortions of everyday news by the dominant class interests in society. Craig (1999) asserts that the basic communication problem in the society arises from "the material and ideological forces that preclude and distort discursive reflection" (p. 147). Fuchs (2009) adds that critical communication studies are not "only about the analysis of those conditions that distort

communication, that is, the ways how communication is embedded into relations of domination, but also about finding alternative conditions of society and communication that are non-dominative and about struggles for establishing such alternatives" (p. 2).

Other relevant theories include the propaganda theory, media imperialism theory, and the ideology theory. They share a focus on the analysis of media, communication, and culture in the context of domination, asymmetrical power relations, exploitation, oppression, and control. According to Freedman (2009), "the propaganda model is a powerful reminder that mainstream media are a critical tool for legitimizing the ideas of the most powerful social actors and for securing consent for their actions" (p. 59). Thus, what is presented as news may have embedded in them class interests that pander to the dominant class in society. It is this concern that prompted this study to make a comparative analysis of the news coverage of some leading national and international TV networks; to ascertain the imbalance in their reporting.

Method
Content analysis was the method adopted for the study. Two experienced coders were employed

to monitor and count the main news stories of the four networks and ascertain their content categories. These counts were coded according to the set criteria (see results below). The criteria incorporated both qualitative and quantitative aspects of news, including their tone and perspective. Only news broadcasts over a period of 30 days (November, 01 – 30th, 2016) were investigated. A mock coding period of 5 days was done with each coder monitoring a different channel at two-day intervals. This was done to ensure familiarity with the coding design as well as ensure uniformity in the coding. Coder reliability test generated Krippendorff alpha coefficient of .80.

The research design was created to capture the quantitative as well as the qualitative aspects of news. Quantitatively, this is the number of times a categorized news item appeared in the main news bulletins of the network. For example, how many times did war stories appear in a given news broadcast or how long the narration (quantity) lasted. The design also captured the qualitative aspects such as the tone of the news and the perspective. Was the story positive or negative; biased or unbiased? And so forth.

The selection of the four television networks in this study was informed by their dominant posture locally and internationally. Channels television was the best in Nigeria

for nine consecutive years courtesy of the Nigerian Merit Media Awards while its reporters and newscasters also won awards in different categories. AIT is not far behind either and is acknowledged to have the largest reach of any Nigerian TV network. It is also a pioneer in the area of satellite broadcasting in Nigeria. The foreign networks - CNN and Aljazeera – are leading international news carriers. CNN is the international pioneer of the 24-hour news broadcast. Its prominence was engendered by its coverage of the Gulf war which broke out in 1991.

Aljazeera is believed to be successfully challenging the dominance of CNN. For millions of people around the world, it is the network of choice. Besides that, it is a network that viewers think could offer an alternative voice to CNN, which in several occasions had been accused of lack of objectivity in its news presentation. AIT and Channels on one hand and CNN and Aljazeera on the other represent the two divides of the global South and North in this study.

Results
The first part of the analysis focuses on the quantitative aspects of news - the number of news stories broadcasted and the areas of coverage, the regularity of coverage or the lack thereof, and the time devoted to the coverage. The second part deals with the qualitative aspect of international news coverage.

Typically, qualitative analysis focuses on the tone of the news, selection of particular news items over others, and the prominence conferred on certain news items rather than others. Since news flow and bias are both quantitatively and qualitatively implicated in the everyday news, these data will assist in answering the three research questions.

Channels Television had 355 international news items within the period under study, African Independent Television (AIT) 359; Cable News Network (CNN) 432, and Aljazeera, 481.These items were counted across eleven categories namely: Diplomacy (DP), Politics (POL), Business (BZ), Sports (SP), Natural Disasters (ND), Technology (TEC), Environment (ENV), Violent Crime/Terrorism (VCR/T), Entertainment (ENT), Civil Unrest (C/UR), and War (WR). The data are presented in the tables below.

Table 1 a & b: International news coverage by Channels and AIT television

Table 1 a: International news coverage by AIT

	AIT				NOVEMBER 2016 ANALYSIS						
DATE	*DIP*	*POL*	*BZ*	*SP*	*N/D*	*TEC*	*ENV*	*VCR/T*	*ENT*	*C/UR*	*WR*
1	2	1	3	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
2	0	2	1	3	0	1	0	0	2	1	0
3	0	1	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
4	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
5	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	1	2	1	1
6	2	2	1	3	1	0	0	2	1	0	1
7	0	3	2	5	1	1	1	1	1	0	3
8	1	2	1	3	0	0	2	1	0	2	2
9	2	2	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
10	2	2	2	4	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
11	2	1	1	2	0	0	1	1	2	1	0
12	0	3	3	3	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
13	0	1	2	3	1	0	0	2	1	0	3
14	2	1	2	3	0	1	2	0	1	0	1
15	0	1	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	1	2
16	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
17	3	1	3	4	2	1	1	2	0	1	2
18	0	1	1	2	0	1	1	0	2	1	1
19	1	3	1	2	1	0	2	1	2	2	1
20	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	2
21	0	0	2	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	1
22	1	2	2	2	0	0	2	0	1	1	2
23	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
24	0	2	1	4	0	0	0	2	2	1	0
25	1	0	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
26	0	1	2	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	2

27	1	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	0	1	2
28	0	1	2	3	0	1	1	0	1	0	1
29	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
30	1	0	2	3	1	0	1	0	2	0	1
TOTAL	28	39	51	81	18	12	22	23	28	18	39

Table 1b: International news coverage by Channels

CHANNELS NOVEMBER 2016 ANALYSIS											
DATE	*DIP*	*POL*	*BZ*	*SP*	*N/D*	*TEC*	*ENV*	*VCR/T*	*ENT*	*C/UR*	*WR*
1	1	1	3	4	1	0	2	3	1	1	3
2	2	2	2	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	3
3	1	0	2	4	0	1	1	2	2	1	2
4	0	1	1	5	0	1	0	1	3	2	0
5	0	O	2	3	1	1	0	1	0	0	1
6	1	2	2	3	0	0	1	1	2	1	0
7	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
8	2	2	2	4	1	3	0	1	0	0	1
9	0	1	4	5	0	0	1	2	0	1	3
10	0	2	3	3	1	0	1	0	2	0	2
11	0	2	2	3	1	1	0	1	0	1	2
12	1	1	3	4	0	1	0	2	1	0	0
13	2	0	2	3	1	0	0	1	2	1	0
14	0	0	3	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
15	2	3	2	4	0	0	2	2	1	0	1
16	0	2	3	3	0	0	1	0	1	1	2
17	1	0	2	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
18	2	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	2
19	0	1	2	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	1
20	1	0	1	2	0	1	0	1	1	0	2
21	0	1	1	2	0	0	1	2	3	0	2
22	2	0	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	3	1
23	o	0	3	3	0	0	1	2	1	1	2
24	0	2	1	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
25	1	2	3	2	1	0	0	1	2	1	1
26	1	1	2	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	2

27	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
28	1	1	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	2	1
29	0	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	2	2	2
30	1	1	0	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	2
TOTAL	22	33	64	98	14	16	14	29	31	19	45

The data on Table 1a and Table 1b reveal striking similarities between the local networks and their foreign counterparts. For example, sports constitute the single most reported news for the four channels – Channels (25.45%), AIT (22.56%), CNN (19.68%) and Aljazeera (18.71%). This is understandable given that sports have become every day event in the world. This is followed by business news – Channels (16.6%), AIT (14.21%), CNN (15.05%), and Aljazeera (14.35%), news on war, Channels (11.69%), AIT (10.86%), CNN (11.11%), and Aljazeera (13.93%) and news on politics – Channels (8.57%), AIT (10.86%), CNN (9.72%), and Aljazeera (9.56%)

Table 2 a & b: International news coverage by CNN and Aljazeera

Table 2 a: International news coverage by CNN

CNN NOVEMBER 2016 ANALYSIS											
DATE	DIP	POL	BZ	SP	N/D	TEC	ENV	VCR	ENT	C/UR	WR
1	0	2	4	3	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
2	1	3	2	5	1	2	1	0	1	0	3
3	3	2	3	3	2	0	1	2	0	2	2
4	1	0	2	4	2	1	1	0	1	1	3
5	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	0
6	1	1	3	2	2	1	0	2	1	1	2
7	0	2	1	3	0	1	1	1	0	1	2
8	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	1
9	0	1	1	3	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
10	2	2	2	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	1
11	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	1	0	2	3
12	2	1	3	4	1	1	1	2	2	1	2
13	2	2	2	2	0	0	1	2	1	2	3
14	1	1	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	0

15	2	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	2	1	2
16	3	1	3	5	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
17	3	1	2	3	0	1	0	0	1	0	2
18	1	0	2	2	1	0	1	3	1	2	1
19	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
20	0	0	3	3	1	1	0	2	0	1	1
21	2	2	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0
22	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
23	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
24	1	2	2	3	0	1	1	2	1	0	2
25	1	2	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	1
26	2	2	3	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	2
27	1	1	2	4	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
28	0	1	2	1	1	0	0	2	2	1	1
29	3	1	2	2	0	0	2	1	0	1	2
30	2	2	2	3	1	0	1	1	0	2	2
TOTAL	42	41	65	85	28	20	20	37	18	28	48

Table 2 b: International news coverage by Aljazeera

	ALJAZEERA NOVEMBER 2016 ANALYSIS										
DATE	*DIP*	*POL*	*BZ*	*SP*	*N/D*	*TEC*	*ENV*	*VCR/T*	*ENT*	*C/UR*	*WR*
1	2	2	3	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	2
2	3	1	2	4	2	2	1	2	0	1	3
3	1	2	2	3	1	0	0	3	0	2	1
4	3	2	3	3	1	0	1	1	1	0	2
5	0	2	4	5	0	1	0	3	0	3	3
6	2	1	2	4	2	0	0	1	0	2	3
7	3	2	4	4	1	0	2	3	0	2	4
8	0	1	2	2	2	0	2	1	1	2	3
9	1	0	1	3	1	1	2	1	0	1	2
10	2	0	2	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	3
11	1	2	3	4	1	0	2	2	1	2	0
12	3	1	2	4	2	0	0	2	0	1	1
13	3	1	3	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	3

14	2	0	3	3	2	0	0	1	1	0	4
15	1	0	2	3	1	0	1	2	0	2	3
16	2	1	1	3	2	0	1	1	1	2	2
17	1	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	3
18	2	1	2	3	2	0	0	0	1	1	2
19	1	2	3	3	1	0	1	1	2	2	2
20	1	1	2	3	1	1	0	2	2	0	3
21	2	1	2	3	2	1	0	2	2	1	2
22	2	1	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
23	2	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
24	1	1	3	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	2
25	0	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
26	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
27	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	3
28	1	2	1	3	2	0	0	2	0	1	1
29	2	2	2	2	0	1	2	1	1	0	2
30	0	1	3	4	2	0	2	1	2	0	1
TOTAL	46	34	69	90	33	13	23	41	20	45	67

In Table 2a and Table 2b, the figures show that the four networks had little time for technology news as it constituted the least reported segment for the news channels. It formed only 4.16% of the news content of Channels television, 3.34% for AIT, 4.63 % for CNN and 2.70% for Aljazeera.

Technology news was followed closely by news on the environment, and natural disasters.

The rest of the data are presented in Table C below.

Table 3 a & b: Percentage Breakdown

Table 3a: Percentage Breakdown: Channels and AIT

	CHANNELS		AIT	
NEWS TYPE	n= 385	%	n= 359	%
DIP	22	5.7	28	7.80
POL	33	8.57	39	10.86
BZ	64	16.6	51	14.21
SP	98	25.45	81	22.56
N/D	14	3.6	18	5.01

TEC	16	4.16	12	3.34
ENV	14	3.6	22	6.13
VCR/T	29	7.5	23	6.41
ENT	31	8.05	28	7.80
C/UR	19	4.94	18	5.01
WR	45	11.69	39	10.86

Table 3b: Percentage Breakdown: CNN and Aljazeera

	CNN		ALJAZEERA	
NEWS TYPE	n= 432	%	n= 481	%
DIP	42	9.72	46	9.56
POL	41	9.49	34	7.09
BZ	65	15.05	69	14.35
SP	85	19.68	90	18.71
N/D	28	6.48	33	6.86
TEC	20	4.63	13	2.70
ENV	20	4.63	23	4.78
VCR/T	37	8.56	41	8.52
ENT	18	4.17	20	4.16
C/UR	28	6.48	45	9.36
WR	48	11.11	67	13.93

This study has not found the usual 'suspect' news items identified by many scholars in the flow of international news as constituting the bulk of the reportage of international news involving third world or developing countries, as shown in Table 3a and Table 3b. These were news on violent crimes, civil unrest, natural disasters, and war but they did not form the predominant segments of the news make-up of the four networks. Using the quantitative data alone as the yardstick, I did not see any obvious and consistent difference between the two local networks' treatment of international news from their foreign counterparts. As shown by the quantitative data, the four had comparable foci in terms of the areas of interest, and consistency of exposure.

I subjected the data to further analysis to search for any dichotomy between the developed and the developing countries with regard to the type of news that emanated from these regions (as shown in Table 4a and Table 4b below).

Table 4: Breakdown of News Type and Region

Table 4a: Breakdown of News Type and Region: Channels and AIT

NEWS	CHANNELS					AIT				
	n	DC	%	DV	%	n	DC	%	DV	%
DIP	22	9	40.91	13	59.09	28	16	57.14	12	42.86
POL	33	11	33.33	22	66.67	39	22	56.41	17	43.59
BZ	64	29	45.31	35	54.69	51	36	70.59	15	29.41
SP	98	64	65.31	34	34.69	81	61	75.30	20	24.69
ND	14	5	35.71	9	64.29	18	5	27.78	13	72.22
TEC	16	11	68.75	5	31.25	12	7	58.33	5	41.67
ENV	14	8	57.14	6	42.86	22	9	40.91	13	59.09
VCR/T	29	12	41.38	17	58.62	23	11	47.83	12	52.17
ENT	31	26	83.87	5	16.13	28	19	67.86	9	32.14
C/UR	19	4	21.05	15	78.95	18	5	27.78	13	72.22
WR	45	9	20.00	36	80.00	39	10	25.64	29	74.36

KEY: n: Number of News Item
          DC: Developed Countries
          DV: Developing Countries

Table 4b: Breakdown of News Type and Region: CNN and Aljazeera

NEWS	CNN					ALJAZERA				
	n	DC	%	DV	%	*n*	DC	%	DV	%
DIP	42	32	76.19	10	23.81	46	31	67.39	15	32.61
POL	41	25	60.98	16	39.02	34	18	52.94	16	47.06
BZ	65	41	63.08	24	36.92	69	46	66.67	23	33.33
SP	85	51	60.00	34	40.00	90	62	68.89	28	31.11
ND	28	9	32.14	19	67.86	33	10	30.30	23	69.70
TEC	20	11	55.00	9	45.00	13	9	69.23	4	30.77
ENV	20	8	40.00	12	60.00	23	11	47.83	12	52.17
VCR/T	37	14	37.84	23	62.16	41	22	53.66	19	46.34
ENT	18	11	61.11	7	38.89	20	11	55.00	9	45.00
C/UR	28	6	21.43	22	78.57	45	9	20.00	36	80.00
WR	48	8	16.67	40	83.33	67	10	14.93	57	85.07

KEY: n: Number of News Item; DC: Developed Countries; DV: Developing Countries

In Table 4a and Table 4b, there are cases of bias. For example, average 67.38% (*Channels* 65.31 + *AIT* 75.30 + *CNN* 60.00 + *Aljazeera* 68.89) of the sporting news from the four networks came from the developed world, notably, United States, United Kingdom, France, Italy, Australia, Spain, Germany, and Japan. For business news, the pattern is similar with 61.41% of the news coming from the developed countries. However, when it pertains to news on war and the like, the pattern was completely reversed as 80.69% of such news emanated from developing countries particularly Africa and the Middle East.

It is important to note, however, that while this predominance of 'bad' news from the developing countries is obvious, there is no significant difference between how they featured on the four networks. For example, the figures for wars are comparable between the four channels with 80% coming from Channels, 74.36% from AIT, 83.33% from CNN and 85.07% from Aljazeera. This trend replicated in news about violent crime and terrorism with 58.62% from Channels, 52.17% from AIT, 62.16% from CNN, and 46.34 from Aljazeera.

From the foregoing, the treatment of news by the four television networks during the period was strikingly similar. It appears the epistemology behind the accusation of lopsidedness in the international news flow levelled the foreign networks is fragile (Morah & Omojola, 2011).

The qualitative assessment of the data is a revealer (see Table 5). Significant portions of the news reports were balanced or neutral and appeared not skewed in favor of any direction or outcome across the four media systems. For example, 60.52% of the news from *Channels* was neutral or balanced, ditto 60.17% from AIT, 65.05% from CNN news, and 60.08% from Aljazeera. However, negative tonal treatment of news was marginally higher than positive, but this cut across all news categories and regions.

In terms of the time allotted, the performance was also similar across. The average time allotted to news was largely uniform. Apart from the sports, entertainment, business, and technology, the remaining categories were reported as *passing* news items. These four were generally regarded as soft or *harmless* news in the make-up of the foreign news. The four combined, took 33% of Channels' time, 35% of AIT, 30% of CNN, and 25% of Aljazeera. The hard news of crime/ terrorism, war, civil

unrest, natural disasters took approximately 10% of the time in the average news of the four networks. Unfortunately, viewers tend to remember or recall the negative news more (Oresanya, et al, 2017).

In terms of updates or rebroadcasts, we found that on the average that CNN rebroadcasted bad news more than any other network (12 times), followed by Channels (9 times), Aljazeera (7 times), and AIT (5 times). The same trend was observed with other genres - sports, technology, business, and entertainment – CNN (8 times), Channels (7 times), AIT (5 times), and Aljazeera (5 times). The middle ground items where politics, and diplomacy as the two constituted the least reported and least controversial variables. From qualitative analysis, it is visble that focus and the time allotted both in terms of broadcasts and rebroadcasts followed no so discernible pattern as to form a deliberate policy to skew news in a predetermined manner. The tonal analysis is presented below on Table 5.

Table 5 a & b: Tonal Analysis

Table 5a: Tonal Analysis: Channels and AIT

SEGMENTS	T	P	N	B	TV NETWORK
DIP	22	5	7	10	
POL	33	9	7	17	
BZ	64	21	5	38	
SP	98	15	2	81	
ND	14	0	6	8	CHANNELS
TEC	16	6	0	10	
ENV	14	3	4	7	
VCR/T	29	0	12	17	
ENT	31	5	2	24	
C/UR	19	6	8	5	
WR	45	4	25	16	
TOTAL	385	74	78	233	
DIP	28	10	5	13	
POL	39	14	8	17	
BZ	51	11	9	31	

SP	81	3	1	77	AIT
ND	18	0	7	11	
TEC	12	2	2	8	
ENV	22	6	9	7	
VCR/T	23	1	12	10	
ENT	28	8	5	15	
C/UR	18	6	4	8	
WR	39	5	17	19	
TOTAL	359	66	79	216	

Table 5b: Tonal Analysis: CNN and Aljazeera

SEGMENTS	T	P	N	B	TV NETWORK
DIP	42	5	15	24	CNN
POL	41	14	17	10	
BZ	65	7	11	47	
SP	85	3	2	80	
ND	28	0	8	20	
TEC	20	2	4	14	
ENV	20	3	5	12	
VCR/T	37	0	15	22	
ENT	18	0	0	18	
C/UR	28	17	5	6	
WR	48	11	9	28	
TOTAL	432	62	91	281	
DIP	46	11	17	18	ALJAZEERA
POL	34	7	12	15	
BZ	69	21	5	43	
SP	90	0	0	90	
ND	33	0	11	22	
TEC	13	4	0	9	
ENV	23	8	5	10	
VCR/T	41	0	26	15	

ENT	20	7	0	13
C/UR	45	21	7	17
WR	67	8	22	37
TOTAL	481	87	105	289

T = Total number of stories
P = Positive portrayal
N = Negative portrayal
B = Neutral portrayal

As Table 5a and Table 5b show, the pattern of reporting of international news by the four outfits is clearly too similar to detect any covert or overt biases based on any developed/developing world dichotomy that has played out so prominently in the international news flow controversy.

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