

**AUDIENCE PERCEPTION OF BROADCAST MEDIA FRAMING OF POLITICAL  
PARTY PRIMARIES IN NIGERIA**

**BY**

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**AUCHI POLYTECHNIC, AUCHI**

**NOVEMBER, 2022**

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**A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS  
COMMUNICATION, SCHOOL OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION  
TECHNOLOGY, AUCHI POLYTECHNIC, AUCHI, EDO STATE**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA (HND) IN MASS COMMUNICATION**

**NOVEMBER, 2022**

### **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this project entitled “**Audience Perception of Broadcast Media framing of political party primaries in Nigeria**” was written by me and that it is the record of my own research. To the best of my knowledge it has not been presented in any previous application for an academic award. All sources of information have been acknowledged using references.

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**Emonyon Otibhor Thelma**

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**Date**

## **APPROVAL**

This project is approved based on the student's declaration and its compliance with the requirements of the Department of Mass Communication, Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, in partial fulfillment for the award of the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Mass Communication.

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**Dr. Paul Umolu**  
**(Project Supervisor)**

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**Date**

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**Mr. Ikerodah Joseph**  
**(Ag. Head of Department)**

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**Date**

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to Almighty God

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My sincere gratitude goes to God Almighty for life, strength and knowledge which have collectively assured the accomplishment of this work. I want to appreciate the intellectual brain behind the success of this work, my supervisor, Dr. Paul Umolu for his guidance during the process of writing this project.

My immeasurable depth of gratitude goes to my parents Mr. Christopher Emonyon and late Mrs. Roseline for their love ,care and support throughout my schooling.

To my family and friends, Mrs. Cynthia, Miss Evon (CEO Style by Evon), Osarobo Emwinghare , Mr. Silas Emonyon and CEO Ben's Fittings fashion company. who were my source of inspiration and whose contribution to the success of my academic pursuit is immense.

My thanks goes to all Mass communication lecturers for their great impact academically and morally which contributed massively to the success of my academic career.

Finally, I also wish to acknowledge all authorities whose ideas cited and used in this project work.







### **Abstract**

This study examined Edo resident's perception of broadcast media framing of political party primaries ahead of the 2023 elections in Nigeria. The study's main objective was to examine how Edo residents view or perceive broadcast media coverage of political party primaries. This is with a view to determine if they see broadcast media to perform up to expectation. In order to carry out the above effectively, the survey methodology was adopted while the questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The simple percentage was used to present and analyse data. Result showed that Edo residents were highly exposed to broadcast media messages on 2023 political parties' primaries. Further findings showed that respondents have a positive perception of the broadcast media with regards to how they covered the 2023 political party primaries. The study further recommend among others that journalists should be mindful of the framing devices – words, phrases, illustrations and display – used in constructing news stories about political campaigns. This is because such devices have implications on interpretation, perception, opinion and voting actions.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

An essential element to the principal-agent approach to understanding politicians and voter behaviour is the notion that political incumbents both at the national, state and local government levels act in certain ways to raise their chances of reelection and to further their political careers. They often do this by taking undue advantage of the government media at their disposal to spread political propaganda that favours their re-election ambitions. Media and politics have had a contentious relationship since the beginning of democratic rule in Nigeria (Ekeanyanwu, 2007); however, the pivotal role the media play in politics has never been in contention. This makes it attractive for politicians to venture into media ownership so as to control the political narrative that influences electoral outcomes (Ekeanyanwu, 2008).

The media have been described as the fourth estate of the realm and the watchdog of the society that is after the legislative, executive and judicial arms of government in any democratic society. In the contemporary world, the form of government that continues to enjoy widespread support and acceptance is democratic government which is presided upon by electing leaders. Omoera (2010) adds that the canine metaphor of the media as a watchdog is an indication of its watchful role in any government.

Scholarly attention to the roles of mass media as key players in the political environments of modern democracies has increased as democracy becomes increasingly popular around the world. Political journalism as a crucial area of media participation in politics is crucial and indispensable due to the need for information dissemination as an important democratic requirement, through which reasoned and rational choices among citizens are promoted in their political decision making and actions (Chambers & Costain, 2001). According to McNair (2009), the constitutional roles of the mass media in a

democracy, which are performed through political journalism, include surveillance, through routine news reporting of political events; critical scrutiny by means of interpreting political issues and coordinating opinions, otherwise referred to as the correlation function; representation and advocacy, through editorial writing on key political issues; and partiality by means of commentary by means of columns and opinion writing about political policies, issues and events. Oriola (2017) observes that the foundation for the performance of all other journalistic functions is news reporting as other functions depend on this fundamental role.

Meanwhile, news is considered as a construct (Schudson, 2010) or product which suggests that “like any other commodity, news is gathered, processed, packaged and sold” (p. 1). As a product or construct, news is a journalistic tool used to define political reality. The outcome of the news production process is thus “a finished articulation of what really matters in political affairs at any given time” (McNair, 2007, p. 67). The narrative frameworks are generically called ‘frames’ while their production or construction process is termed ‘framing’. Knudsen (2014) simply describes framing at the macro level as the manner of news presentation and at a micro level, “how certain elements in a news narrative affect the reader” (p.209). de Vreese (2005) states that frames refer to persistent patterns of selection, exclusion, presentation, cognition and interpretation of issues by which symbol handlers (journalists) organise political and social movement discourse.

Applied to this study, framing is the news narrative about political parties primaries for the 2023 election in Nigeria, which has the potential to give the audience certain kind of interpretation, knowledge, problems and the contexts of the campaign issues in the news, and lead to a particular pattern of voting. The Nigerian political milieu witnessed a fierce horserace among candidates/political parties particularly candidates of All Progressive Congress and the Peoples Democratic Party during the 2023 primary elections held across the country. The primaries were covered by the media particularly the broadcast media and in the

coverage, issues and events were constructed using narrative frameworks (frames) that could have evolved certain patterns. In the light of the above, this study empirically examine how audience perceive broadcast media framing of the 2023 primary election held by different political parties in Nigeria ahead of the 2023 general election.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The problem that prompted this study revolved round the fact that media involvement in politics through coverage of Political party primaries could lead to certain patterns of news narratives through framing. Interactions between reporters and political gladiators could result into patterns of framing of the Political party primaries in Nigeria in a way to promote certain party/candidate. If news is framed subjectively in the media, it could have misleading consequences the audience and shift voting patterns in the wrong direction. This leads to a problem worthy of an empirical attention: intended or unintended frames in news stories about the 2023 party primaries in Nigeria. According to Aalberg, Stromback and de Vreese (2011), framing of political issues may have negative consequences such as undermining of political information among citizens, promotion of politicians' self-interests, depression of knowledge about policy positions, distraction of the public from the substance of the issue, promotion of spiral of cynicism in the public and springing of mass disengagement from political participation. In the light of the foregoing, this study examined how audience perceive broadcast media framing of party primaries held prio the 2023 general election. The study examined if audience members perceive media report to be framed to favour some candidates or some political parties.

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

This study was carried out to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine Level of exposure of Edo residents to broadcast media contents on political parties primaries;

2. To determine the frequency of exposure to broadcast media content on 2023 party primaries;
3. To find out how audience perceive media reports on 2023 political parties primaries.

#### **1.4 Research Questions.**

1. What is the level of exposure of Edo residents to broadcast media contents relating to 2023 parties primaries?
2. How often did Edo residents assess broadcast media content on 2023 party primaries?
3. What is the perception of Edo residents of broadcast media coverage of 2023 party primaries?

#### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study is limited to how Edo residents perceive broadcast media coverage of 2023 political party primaries. The data for the study were collected from residents of Edo state.

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

Upon completion, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge and literature. This means that this study will provide literature for researchers and students who might be interested in venturing into research area of similar interest.

#### **1.7 Operational Definition of Terms**

The following terms have been defined based on their usage in this study:

**Mass-Media:** These are channels of simultaneous dissemination of information either written or verbal to a dispersed audience through the mass media such as television, radio, and newspapers.

**Election:** Election is a process of voting to choose someone to be a representative in government. It can also be seen as a process of governmental change through a ballot system.

**Democracy:** Democracy is a form of government by the people in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them under a free electoral system.

According to Abraham Lincoln, democracy is a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people."

**Political participation:** This refers to the act about be part of a political movement or taking part in political activities

**Campaign:** This refers to the fight, or crusade for or against a cause.

**Electorate:** An individual that is 18 years or above and is considered eligible to vote.

**Political Party:** A *political party* is an organized group of people, often with common views, who come together to contest elections and hold power in the government. Examples of political parties include People's Democratic Party (PDP) and All Progressive Congress (APC).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Review of Related Literature**

##### **Evolution of Broadcasting**

The Radio Broadcasting started in Nigeria in the year 1933 and the very first Radio Distribution System was installed in Lagos (Kalejaiye 2009). It was governed by the Department of Post And Telegraphs. The primary goal of the radio system was to serve as the BBC reception base. In 1935, the system was changed to the Radio Diffusion System, which later served in the Second World War. However, the history of television broadcasting in Nigeria started in 1959 (Kalejaiye, 2009). The Western Region of Nigeria was a pioneer in television broadcasting. It managed to create the first TV signal in Nigeria. The Western Nigerian Television's aim was to create a platform for regional schools, which had shortages in teacher personnel. The Eastern Regional Government established its TV broadcasting system in 1960. The principal goal was to assist formal education in the region. Consequently, The Northern Regional Government created its TV system only in 1962. It was named as the Radio Television Kaduna. The reasons for its creation were the same as in the Eastern and Western regions. Still, all these TV broadcasting stations later abandoned their initial goals and became commercial (Uche 2011). It is worth stating here that up until 1992, all running TV stations were under the control of the Federal Government. According to the Decree number 38, they established the National Broadcasting Commission, which demonopolized the ownership right of the Federal Government over TV stations. It was the first time in the history of broadcasting in Nigeria when TV and Media got private owners.

Today, the government controls and regulates most of Nigeria's broadcast media through the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). On the other hand, the federal government owns stations affiliated with the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN),

individual states control other stations, and still others are privately owned. Similar to the market for radio broadcasts, the federal government owns two stations affiliated with the National Television Authority, various states have their own stations, and private operators broadcast by satellite. Nigerians also obtain news via Voice of America, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and Deutsche Welle (Kalejaiye 2009). However, today there are many privately owned television stations across the country.

In contrast to the broadcast media, the print media are dominated by private publications, a situation that is more amenable to criticism of the government. Television and radio broadcast stations currently operational in Nigeria are: 83 AM, 36 FM, and 11 short-wave radio stations and 116 television broadcast stations (40 cable stations) (Aliagan 2011).

Election is a formal process of selecting a person or group of persons for public office or of accepting or rejecting a political proposition by voting. Elections are the central institution of electoral processes and democratic governments. This is because in democracy and electoral processes, the authority of the government derives solely from the consent of the governed (Adibe, 2015). The principal mechanism for translating that consent into governmental authority is the holding of free and fair elections. All modern democracies hold elections, but not all elections are democratic. Right-wing dictatorships, Marxist regimes, and single-party governments also stage elections to give their rule the aura of legitimacy. In such elections, there may be only one candidate or a list of candidates, with no alternatives. Such elections may offer several candidates for each office, but ensure through intimidation or rigging that only the government-approved candidate is chosen. Other elections may offer genuine choices--but only within the incumbent party and these are not democratic elections (Adibe 2015).

Kur (2005), scholar and former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, has offered this definition: "Democratic elections are not merely symbolic....They are competitive, periodic,



inclusive, definitive elections in which the chief decision-makers in a government are selected by citizens who enjoy broad freedom to criticize government, to publish their criticism and to present alternatives." Thus, democratic elections are competitive. Opposition parties and candidates must enjoy the freedom of speech, assembly, and movement necessary to voice their criticisms of the government openly and to bring alternative policies and candidates to the voters. Simply permitting the opposition access to the ballot is not enough. Elections in which the opposition is barred from the airwaves, has its rallies harassed or its newspapers censored, are not democratic. The party in power may enjoy the advantages of incumbency, but the rules and conduct of the election contest must be fair.

Democratic elections are periodic. Democracies do not elect dictators or presidents-for-life. Elected officials are accountable to the people, and they must return to the voters at prescribed intervals to seek their mandate to continue in office. This means that officials in a democracy must accept the risk of being voted out of office. The one exception is judges who, to insulate them against popular pressure and help ensure their impartiality, may be appointed for life and removed only for serious improprieties and all these processes constitute the electoral process.

In electoral processes, democratic elections are inclusive. The definition of citizen and voter must be large enough to include a large proportion of the adult population. A government chosen by a small, exclusive group is not a democracy--no matter how democratic its internal workings may appear. Democratic elections are definitive. They determine the leadership of the government. Subject to the laws and constitution of the country, popularly elected representatives hold the reins of power. They are not simply figureheads or symbolic leaders.

Finally, democratic elections are not limited to selecting candidates. Voters can also be asked to decide policy issues directly through referendums and initiatives that are placed

on the ballot. In many democratic countries for example, state legislatures can decide to "refer," or place, an issue directly before the voters. In the case of an initiative, citizens themselves can gather a prescribed number of signatures (usually a percentage of the number of registered voters in that state) and require that an issue be placed on the next ballot--even over the objections of the state legislature or governor.

### **The Media and Elections**

The media in Nigeria from time immemorial have been in the forefront of democracy, politics, and elections. Infact, current elections are now regarded as three-way alliance that involves the voter, the contestants and the media, with the media acting as the link between the other two. According to Chibuike and Fafiolu (2015), the media extends its role further by not only surveying and bringing the day's events to the public and private attention, but also interprets the events' meanings and putting them into context, and at times speculating about their consequences. The media also tell people which issues and activities deserve particular attention to be ranked highly on the public's agenda of political concerns. This importance is indicated through cues as banner headlines, front-page placements in newspapers. Frequent coverage also implies significance, of which stories placed in the front section are regarded as more salient and accessible to readers than those in other sections, such as sports or business (Ngara and Esebonu 2012).

In addition to the traditional tools of communicating electoral messages like television, radio and newspapers are the latest application of new media technologies like online social media to enhance reach and interactivity. Omoera (2010) observed that the media was at the forefront of the agitation for electoral reforms, reporting irregularities and malpractices that characterized the 2003 and 2007 elections and called for immediate actions after elections. But while the 1999 elections were not free nor fair, the 2003 General Elections were characterized by fraud, miscounting, rigging and malfeasance. In addition, the

election was not issue-oriented; the political parties lacked well thought-out programmes and manifestos, the executive lord over the other two arms through actual disrespect of ruling or threat of impeachment and blackmail (Chibuike and Fafiolu 2015).

The media also played a crucial role in the emergence of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan as the elected president in 2011. Everything worked well for Jonathan in the run up to the elections. Jonathan is an Ijaw, one of the minority ethnic groups in the Niger-Delta region of Nigeria. For a long time, the people of the Niger-Delta had advocated for the control of crude oil following years of massive environmental degradation and gross underdevelopment of the Niger-Delta region. Jonathan's humble beginnings story caught the attention of millions of Nigerians through the media. In his nation-wide campaigns, he often spoke about his "grass to grace" story. He actively engaged millions of Nigerian youths through the active use of the social media notably Facebook. The Facebook platform bridged the communication gap between the political leadership and the ordinary Nigerians. Jonathan's closest rival, General Muhammadu Buhari (ret'd) was portrayed in the media as a rigid personality, an old-fashioned ex-military dictator and religious fundamentalist who cannot lead a modern Nigeria. It was not surprising that Jonathan emerged as the clear winner of the presidential election in 2011. However, the tables turned upside down in 2015 and 2019 when Buhari emerged the president of Nigeria and the mass media contributed to this turn around.

According to Ngara and Esebonu (2012) the duties of the mass media extend to the following:

1. making the people and government informed;
2. providing a means of communication among the people;
3. serving as watchdog on the activities of government, government officials and members of the public in general;

4. providing a voice for the people by giving the strong, weak, rich, poor, young, and old the right to express their views irrespective of how primitive, sensible or irrational the view may be;
5. serving as a trend setter as a medium for socialization and social engineering;
6. a market for the presentation of ideas and opinion;
7. a vehicle for change;
8. a medium of enormous influence on people's views, attitudes, judgments, lifestyles and values;
9. a means of entertainment and relaxation; and
10. helping the people in the making of an informed decision.

### **Broadcast Media and Elections**

The degree to which incumbency is viewed as a compulsory privilege to next office holding is becoming worrisome in Nigerian politics. Previous researches suggest a categorization of views tilting towards three different but related opinions. First group of scholars have argued that the apparent advantage of incumbency factor is really a selection effect which means that there is no causal link between incumbency and re-election. According to this group, office holders and challengers are simply not comparable types of candidates; incumbents are ex ante better politicians (Jacobson and Kernell, 1981). Others have argued that it is incumbents' actions in office and records of service, which help their probability of re-election (Fenno, 1978). According to Trounstein (2009), both of these views are encouraging; regardless of the reason for winning, the re-election of incumbents reflects the success of representative democracy. A third, less optimistic possibility is that incumbents, once elected, become entrenched regardless of their performance in office (Key, 1949). In this view, incumbents implement or take advantage of institutional structures that decrease the contestability of the electoral arena.

Distinguishing among these causal processes is difficult because re-election is the observational equivalent for all three. Just noting high re-election rates cannot help to untangle the source of the advantage, but doing so is crucial for evaluating the success of democracy. A lack of competitive elections is not, in and of itself, problematic (Buchler, 2007). But, if winning is disconnected from quality or from voter approval then constituents may lack meaningful representation and may be unable to control their government. As a result less policy responsiveness is expected when incumbents are protected by institutional structures. The “incumbency advantage” typically refers to the increase in vote share a party can expect from running an incumbent versus a non-incumbent. Trounsine (2009) use the term more vaguely to refer to the higher probability of winning enjoyed by incumbents compared to non-incumbents. It suffices to mean that incumbency is the assumed privilege a present office holder has over his/her opponent including the monopoly of the electronic channel of communication in the society.

The mass media should make election possible and easier by engaging in its functions of enlightening, informing, and entertaining the people (Pate, 2003; Aliede, 2003; Okafor, 2000). The mass media are expected to advance national interest and promote certain key values and behavioural patterns within a given society. Supporting the above assertion, Ekeanyanwu (2007) asserts that the media exist as an organ of information sourcing and dissemination, educational promotion, surveillance, social enlightenment and mobilization. These functions set the media apart as an important link/factor in the relationship between the government and the governed and make them a sine qua non to societal growth and development. McNair (2002) aptly pointed out that “in democratic political systems, media function both as transmitters of political communication which originates outside the media organization itself and as senders of political messages constructed by journalists”.

The only way the public can monitor the activities of their elected representative is through the fair and accurate reporting of events by the media. If the public has the hope that the media are capable of reporting government activities well, interest and participation in the political system begins to nose dive and when this happens, it becomes almost impossible to have a free, fair and credible election. It is therefore, expected that the mass media should be involved pre-election awareness which include voter registration, electioneering campaign, actual voting and postelection activities.

According to Hallin and Mancini (2004), “the mass media are assuming many of the information that political parties once controlled. Instead of learning about an election at a campaign rally or from party canvassers, the mass media have become the primary source of campaign information. There has been a tendency for political parties to decrease their investments in neighbour-to-neighbour canvassing, rallies and other direct contact activities, and devote more attention to campaigning through the media.

This investment in the media is primarily meant to control the political narrative. According to Ekeanyanwu (2015, p. 167):

What is the connection between the media, politics, and democratic practice that seems to make the link tight? The connection between the media and politics is very obvious and strong. The role of the media in politics is no longer debatable as many democracies all over the world regard the media as instruments of political mobilisation and sensitization. In advanced societies particularly, the mass media are actually an integral part of political life, serving for most people as their major and sometimes, only link with the government and a major source of information to correlate events in their environment. The media also provide their audiences the information they need to make sense of political issues, which helps them to make political judgments based on their political attitudes and perceptions. The mass media also play important roles in the society or social system. That is why no known government can do without the mass media. In addition to providing information about the political process, the mass media can confer status and legitimacy on political leaders and issues. This is known as status conferral function of the mass media.

The growth of electronic media, especially television has tended to diminish the role of the party. The electronic media also make it easier to communicate events and issues

through personalities. Swanson (2004) notes that in place of or in addition to traditional campaign practices such as rallies of the party faithful, political parties and candidates relied on the sophisticated use of the mass media to persuade voters – the “consumers” of political communication to support them at election time, and they offered campaigns that feature the appealing personalities of party leaders.

Television provides an 'aesthetic' platform for the presentation (airing) of political advertising and electioneering campaign messages. Norris (2004) asserts that “fair access to the airwaves by opposition parties, candidates, and groups is critical for competitive, free and fair elections.” He points out that it is particularly important that state-owned or public television stations should be open to a plurality of political viewpoints during campaigns, without favouring the governments. Corroborating these positions, Swanson (2004) asserts that “editorial independence, freedom from close government supervision and censorship, and the like, create credibility for newscasters everywhere.” According to Abati (2006), government-owned Nigerian Television Authority with nationwide branches was particularly notorious for unequal coverage of candidates during election periods. Newscasters were openly sycophantic, making State governors whose states had no television or radio stations prior to their assumption of office to immediately set up their own stations to court such media sycophancy.

Owolabi (2008) conducted a research study on the topic: “media ethics and the issues in the Freedom of Information Act in Nigerian democracy” using historical research methods to find out that FOI act is neither a substitute for good governance nor does it address the fundamental problems of the rich-poor divide. It is only a potent tool that certainly improves transparency and accountability rating of our nation. The public records which were, hitherto shrouded in secrecy will now be made available for public scrutiny, thus creating an enabling environment for fraud prevention and corruption control. The study

therefore recommended that the practice of journalism in Nigeria should be immediately professionalized like law, medicine, and engineering and all the quacks in the rank and file of the media should be weeded out.

Ekeanyanwu (2008) also conducted a study on the “News flow controversy: the global media coverage of Nigerian democracy”. Ekeanyanwu's study found that the news flow controversy is real and there exist imbalances and inequalities in global news flow particularly from the developed world to third world. Nigeria as a third world nation, despite all its efforts to correct its bad international reputation and image, unfortunately is still a victim of this treatment by the global media. The study therefore recommended that media channels that have global reach should be established in Nigeria. This will help secure a voice for the third world to be able to actively compete with the west for the attention of the global audience.

Frame in communication has been defined variously and extensively in literature. One of the earliest and most cited definitions of frame is by Entman (1993) thus:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (p. 52).

This definition explains what journalists do when they consider the appropriate angle from which to present a story. Their presentation in a particular pattern, form or shape determines the news narrative, which represents perceived reality about the issue in the news. Intentionally or inadvertently, the reality projected about the issue has functional implications at the receivers' end: defining what the issue is, determining the cause of the event, shaping moral judgment of the issue and/or suggesting what solutions there are. Framing is defined by



Entman, Mathes and Pellicano (2009) as “selecting some aspects of perceived reality and constructing messages that highlight connections among them in ways that promote a particular interpretation” (p. 176). This idea is in consonance with the explanation that news could be considered as a chip of diamond, the side within a person’s view at a time determining his description of the object. The journalists’ perceived reality, dictated by his personal and professional views of issues in the news, shapes the ways they construct news messages. More importantly the patterns of construction and presentation are connected to the way interpretations are projected by the mass media. Such patterns, if they become persistent among networks of professionals, represent framing as a media function - intended or unintended.

Framing in journalism can be classified into generic and issues-specific (Aalberg *et al*, 2011; de Vreese, 2005). Generic framing transcends thematic limitations but applies to different issues or topics, time and cultural contexts (de Vreese, 2005). It is a type of framing that relates to structural attributes of news applicable to different issues (Mathes *et al*, 2009). Such frames that are inherent in the journalistic conventions of news reporting are generic in nature, for instance news values (prominence, oddity, human interest and consequence), news structure (the inverted pyramid), news angle and the use of journalese (terms or words that help reporters to save space in news packaging). Journalistic conventions tend to be general among reporters, however variations may occur due to quality of training, personal factors and organizational guidelines (house style, editorial policy) all of which combine to account for variations in news framing. Issue-specific framing relates to how specific issues are presented in news in a way to define the problem surrounding the issue, suggest judgment and provide remedies in respect of the problem (Oriola, 2017). It includes conflict, consensus, economic consequence, morality and responsibility, outlook, horserace, trend, policy exploration, reaction, reality check, exposure of wrongdoing and personality profile frames.

Framing has attracted concerted empirical attention in political communication in recent times. Ross and Bantimaroudis (2006) conducted a study aimed at examining frame shifts in news coverage about the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack with particular focus on how newspapers portrayed or framed government elites- Yasser Arafat and Ariel Sharon. Findings of the study showed that the coverage of Arafat and Sharon by *The New York Times* varied from a monthly average high of 56 articles to a low of 14 articles, showing a significant change in the quantity of coverage after the September 11 attack. Results also showed that the newspaper generally framed Arafat as an enemy and Sharon as a friend of the US, a pattern that represented a shift from the initial six-month framing of both as friends of the US. Another study on framing of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack in the US conducted by Papacharissi and Oliveira (2008) reported that the selected US newspapers engaged in more episodic framing while the UK newspapers used more thematic framing of terrorism. In the UK newspapers, diplomatic reportage of the issue was more prominent while the US papers used presentations and evaluations of military strategies in their coverage.

Slothus and de Vreese (2010) reported that the prospect and consequence frames pushed opinions in opposing directions on both the conflict and consensus issues. Opinions are more supportive on welfare policy in the pro-frame than in the con-frame, just as in the case of trade agreement among participants exposed to pro-frame than those exposed to con-frame. Also, political party attachment was instrumental to framing effects as opinions among Social Democratic Party voters tended to be more affected by frames sponsored by their party than when the same frames were promoted by Liberal Party. The same trend was observed in respect of Liberal Party supporters.

In Nigeria, Fadairo, Fadiro and Aminu (2014) examined the coverage of corruption news by major newspapers and reported that frequency of reportage of corruption cases in

year 2010 recorded the highest percentage with the *Nigerian Tribune* ranking first on the coverage of corruption. In all, prominence was given to inside-page articles in all the three newspapers but *The Guardian*, reported the highest in the front-page. Majority of the corruption articles were treated in the news category with the *Nigerian Tribune* having 42.4%. More than half of space allotted to corruption articles was one-quarter page while the *Nigerian Tribune* recorded the highest space allotment to full page stories. The politics/governance sector ranked first in the focus of anti-corruption coverage with a total of 522 news items (57.2%), followed by agriculture, transportation and energy sectors in that order. Also, the sector whose stories were treated as the most prominent was the politics/governance sector.

Agu (2015) conducted a study focused on the language and style of newspaper reportage on the theme of corruption story about the unspent 300 million naira of the Federal Ministry of Health in 2007, which indicted Iyabo Obasanjo, the daughter of former President, Olusegun Obasanjo. The study discovered that some journalists reported the corruption issue objectively, distancing themselves from the stories while some brought personal biases and emotions into their stories. Lamidi and Olisa (2016) reported that selected newspapers adopted positive, negative and neutral frames in reporting the APC Change campaigns but there was more concentration on the positive frames than others in the coverage, with *The Punch* adopting the positive frame more than *The Guardian*. The primary factors that determined the patterns of newspaper framing were proximity, prominence and oddity, while the secondary factors were opposition status, individual interest, profit-making interest and political affiliation.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study is pinned to the Cultivation theory

Cultivation theory was propounded by George Gerbner and Larry Rose in 1980. They assert that the mass media especially television, exerts a tremendous influence by altering individuals perception of reality. The theory went further to explain that among modern media, television has acquired such a central place in daily life. Put in a more classic description, the television set has become a key member of the family; the one who tell most of the time.

Miller (2005) argues that the purpose of the Cultural Indicators project was to identify and track the "cultivated" effects of television on viewers. They were "concerned with the effects of television programming (particularly violent programming) on the attitudes and behaviours of the American public." The primary proposition of cultivation theory states that the more time people spend 'living' in the television world, the more likely they are to believe social reality portrayed on television", Cohen and Weimann (2000) affirm that Cultivation leaves people with a misperception of what is true in our world.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Design of Research**

This design of the study has to do with the framework adopted in preferring solution to an identified research problem. In of this, the researcher adopted survey methodology for this study.

Over time, survey has been proved to be the most effective in tackling problems in the social and behavioral sciences. Nwodu (2006, p.67) buttressing the relevance and importance of the survey research design is of the view that survey method focuses on a representative sample derived from the entire population of study. Baran (2004, p.358) maintains this method works on the premise that a given population is too large for any researcher to realistically observed all the elements in the population under scrutiny. Asika (1991, p.29–30) submits that a researcher using this method goes into the field and selects all relevant elements out of the entire population. The above form the reason for utilizing survey research in this study.

#### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population of study of this research was people of Etsako West Local Government. According National population Commission, as cited by Wikipedia (2017) Etsako West Local Government has total population of 197,609. The people of Etsako West are largely Farmers, Traders, with a good number of them in the public and civil service.

#### **3.3 Sample Size**

Many a time, an entire population would not be easy to study due to time and resource constraints. The usual approach in this situation would therefore entail taking sample. Considering the fact that the population of the area would be too bogus, sample size of 400

respondents were selected for this research population. A sample of 400 was drawn from the population using the Taro Yamane Sample calculating formula. The formula is:

Where:

$$\frac{n = N}{1+N(0.5)^2}$$

Where

n = Sample

N = Population

0.5 = allowable error

$$= \frac{197,609}{1 + 197,609 \times (0.5)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{197,609}{197,610 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{197,609}{494.025}$$

$$n = \underline{400}$$

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques

The purposive sampling technique was employed to select the sample size of the study. According to Ikeagwu (1998, p.189), “the basic assumption behind purposive sampling method is that, with good judgment and appropriate strategy, one can hand– pick the cases to be included in the sample that is satisfactorily in relation to ones needs”

### 3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The research instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. A questionnaire consists of questions relating to the aims of the study and the research questions to be verified (Nwanna 1990 p.121). The questionnaire for this study contains two sections demographic and psychographic sections. The demographic contained the personal data of the respondents while the psychographic questions examines the logical and carefully selected questions

aimed at sourcing reasonable and accurate answers from the respondents such that can help solve the research problem.

Also it is made up of closed-ended and open ended questions with the former forming a greater percentage since the researcher intends to elicit a higher degree of measurable data.

### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

Quantitative data generated in the study were analyzed in frequencies, percentages and presented in tables. In analyzing the data of the study two major steps were taken include:- Description based on the characteristics of the study sample and description based on thematic analysis:

Step I: Description based on characteristics of the study sample which involves background information of the sample under study is usually the first stage in data analysis. Such variables include sex, age, educational qualification and occupation of the residents. Frequency distribution table and percentage were used in describing the variables.

Step II: Description based on thematic Analysis is the second stage of data analysis involved the description of The Nigerian press agenda setting and good Governance in Nigeria was done using frequency distribution, tables. And the number of respondents who indicated similar answers was coded using simple percentages.

$$\frac{\text{Actual Response}}{\text{Total Sample Size}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Preamble

In this study, the statistical data from the respondents were collected, classified and presented in table form, frequencies and percentages. This was done in line with the research questions raised in the study. The demographic data of the respondents were presented first. This was followed by psychographic data.

Out of the 400 copies distributed, 326, representing 81.5 per cent were duly completed and returned while 74 copies representing 18.5 per cent were not returned.

#### Section B: Presentation of Demographic Data

**Table 1: Sex of respondents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	116	35.6
Female	210	64.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From Table 1, it was observed that 64.4% were female while 35.6 % were male in the study

**Table2: Marital status of respondents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Single	212	65
Married	90	27.6
Separated	10	3.1
Divorced	8	2.5
Widowed	6	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>100.0</b>



Information from table 2 above shows that 65% are single, 27.6% is married while the separated, divorced and widowed respondents represented 3.1%, 2.5% and 1.8% respectively. This shows that the number of single respondents outnumbered other groups.

**Table 3: Occupation of respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Civil servant	206	63.2%
Private enterprise	120	36.8%
Total	326	100%

Table 3 above shows that majority of the respondents representing 63% are civil servants while 36.8% are into private enterprises.

**Table 4: Educational distribution of respondents**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
HND/First Degree	204	62.6%
Masters Degree	106	32.5%
Ph.D	16	4.9%
Total	326	100%

Table 4 indicates that all respondents have high educational requirements. The least educational level comprises respondents with First degree /HND (62.6%), while 32.5% with Masters Degree and 4.9% have Ph.D. from the foregoing, it is clear that the respondents can attest to their claims on the options provided for each question.

**Table5: Respondents' view on frequency of Exposure to broadcast media**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
Very High	212	65
High	90	27.6
Cant Tell	10	3.1
Low	8	2.5
Very Low	6	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table five showed that respondents are frequently exposed to broadcast media. This is because 212 of the respondents or 65% said their frequency of exposure to broadcast media is very high. This means that the respondents frequently use the broadcast media as a means to access information.

**Table 6: Respondents' view on the effectiveness of broadcast media in reporting 2023 primary election**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
Very Effective	212	65
Effective	90	27.6
Can't Tell	10	3.1
Little Effect	8	2.5
Very Little effect	6	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table six shows that broadcast media were very effective in their coverage of the 2023 party primaries. This is because 65% of the respondents said the broadcast media were very effective in their coverage of the 2023 party primaries.

## **4.2 Discussion of Findings**

This study examined audience perception of broadcast media framing of political party primaries in Nigeria.

Research Question One: What is the level of exposure of Edo residents to broadcast media messages?

Findings show that Edo residents are highly exposed to broadcast media messages. This is based on the fact that available data showed that Edo residents highly relied on broadcast media for information. This uphold previous studies. According to Chibuike and Fafiolu (2015), the media extends its role further by not only surveying and bringing the day's events to the public and private attention, but also interprets the events' meanings and

putting them into context, and at times speculating about their consequences. The media also tell people which issues and activities deserve particular attention to be ranked highly on the public's agenda of political concerns. This importance is indicated through cues as banner headlines, front-page placements in newspapers. Frequent coverage also implies significance, of which stories placed in the front section are regarded as more salient and accessible to readers than those in other sections, such as sports or business (Ngara and Esebonu 2012).

In addition to the traditional tools of communicating electoral messages like television, radio and newspapers are the latest application of new media technologies like online social media to enhance reach and interactivity. Omoera (2010) observed that the media was at the forefront of the agitation for electoral reforms, reporting irregularities and malpractices that characterized the 2003 and 2007 elections and called for immediate actions after elections. But while the 1999 elections were not free nor fair, the 2003 General Elections were characterized by fraud, miscounting, rigging and malfeasance. In addition, the election was not issue-oriented; the political parties lacked well thought-out programmes and manifestos, the executive lord over the other two arms through actual disrespect of ruling or threat of impeachment and blackmail (Chibuike and Fafiolu 2015).

Research Question Two: How often do Edo residents expose themselves to broadcast media reports on 2023 party primaries?

Findings showed that Edo residents were frequently exposed to broadcast media messages on 2023 political party primary. For instance, table five showed that respondents are frequently exposed to broadcast media. This is because 212 of the respondents or 65% said their frequency of exposure to broadcast media is very high. This means that the respondents frequently use the broadcast media as a means to access information.

Research Question Three: What is the perception of Edo residents of broadcast media coverage of 2023 party primaries? Table six shows that broadcast media were very effective

in their coverage of the 2023 party primaries. This is because 65% of the respondents said the broadcast media were very effective in their coverage of the 2023 party primaries. This is in line with the findings of several studies such as: Lamidi and Olisa (2016) reported that selected newspapers adopted positive, negative and neutral frames in reporting the APC Change campaigns but there was more concentration on the positive frames than others in the coverage, with *The Punch* adopting the positive frame more than *The Guardian*. The primary factors that determined the patterns of newspaper framing were proximity, prominence and oddity, while the secondary factors were opposition status, individual interest, profit-making interest and political affiliation.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This study examined Edo residents' perception of broadcast media framing of political party primaries ahead of the 2023 elections in Nigeria. The study's main objective was to examine how Edo residents view or perceive broadcast media coverage of political parties primaries. This is with a view to determine if they see broadcast media to perform up to expectation.

In order to carry out the above effectively, the survey methodology was adopted while the questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The simple percentage was used to present and analyse data.

Result showed that Edo residents were highly exposed to broadcast media messages on 2023 political parties' primaries. Further findings showed that respondents have a positive perception of the broadcast media with regards to how they covered the 2023 political party primaries.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

No doubt, the findings of this study have revealed that the broadcast media audience has a positive and a friendly perception of the broadcast media coverage of 2023 political parties' primaries. This study has established that the broadcast media gave adequate and holistic coverage to political parties' primaries. Therefore, the Edo residents have a positive attitude towards media reportage or framing of political parties primaries. This means that the media were up and doing in their expected roles.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

1. This study hereby recommends that journalists should be mindful of the framing devices – words, phrases, illustrations and display – used in constructing news stories about political campaigns. This is because such devices have implications on interpretation, perception, opinion and voting actions.
2. Balanced coverage should be given to parties in elections to allow for leveled playing ground and objectivity should be ensured in election coverage for reporters to purge themselves of taking sides in the horserace that characterize politics.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

Department of Mass Communication,  
Auchi Polytechnic,  
Auchi

**Dear Respondents,**

#### **REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

I am a graduate student of the above named department/university, conducting a research on "**Audience Perception of Broadcast Media framing of political party primaries in Nigeria.**"

Please be assured that the information you give will be treated in strict confidence.

Thanks.

Yours sincerely,

**Emonyon Otibhor Thelma**

## APENDIX 11

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**INSTRUCTION:** Kindly tick the appropriate box

#### Section A: Respondents' Demographic Data

##### 1. Sex of Respondents

Male	
Female	

##### 2. Respondents' Age Distribution

18-24	
25-30	
30-35	
40-45	
50 and Above	

##### 3. Marital Status of Respondents

Single	
Married	
Divorced	

##### 4. Respondents' Occupation

Employee	
Self-Employed	
Unemployed	
Student	

#### Section B: Psychographic Data

##### 5. What is the level of exposure of Edo residents to broadcast media contents relating to 2023 parties primaries?

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##### 6. How often did Edo residents assess broadcast media content on 2023 party primaries?

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7. What is the perception of Edo residents of broadcast media coverage of 2023 party primaries?

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