

**A REVIEW OF THE ROLES OF THE MASS MEDIA
IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT:**

**A Content Analysis of
The New Nigerian and The Guardian Newspapers**

BY

MUSSAH K. KAMARA

PGD/GEO/2000/2001/183

**BEING A DESSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY,
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA
IN ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

MARCH 2002.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mother, Mrs. Masian T. Kamara who died on exile in 1991.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank the Almighty Allah who have made it possible for me to have successfully completed this program.

My thanks go to my friendly supervisor who worked assiduously and critically in producing this dissertation, May the Almighty Allah reward him here and the hereafter.


I also extend my thanks to Abdullah Sarnoh for his advice, cooperation and words of encouragement. And to my brothers and colleques Alhaji Abdulwasie Adesina and Abdullah Orire for their cooperation and understanding during this period of study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	i
Dedication	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Declaration	v
Certification	vi
CHAPTER ONE	
Introduction	1
Overview in Functions of the Media	2
Background of the Study	3 – 4
Statement of the Problem	5 – 6
Literature Review	7 – 9
Genesis of Media Bias and Advocacy	10 – 14
Genesis of Environmentalism	15 – 19
CHAPTER THREE	
Methodology	20 – 22
CHAPTER FOUR	
Data Analysis and Interpretation	23 – 24
CHAPTER FIVE	
Findings and Recommendations	27 – 29
References	30
Biobliography	31

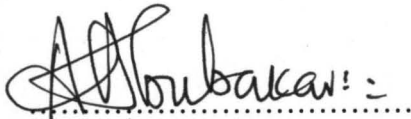
DECLARATION

I, Mussah Kamara of Department of Geography, School of Science and Science Education, Federal University of Technology, Minna do solemnly declare that this research work presented for the award of Post Graduate Diploma in Environmental Management has been carried out by me under the supervision of my supervisor Dr. Abubakar A. S. of the Department of Geography, Federal University of Technology Minna, Niger State, Nigeria.

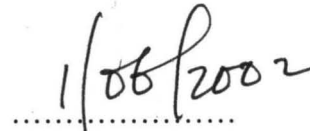

~~Mussah Kamara~~ 15-04-02

CERTIFICATION

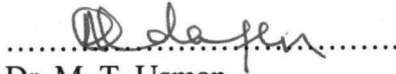
This is to certify that this project work, titled "A Review of the roles of the Mass Media in Environmental Management: A content analysis of the New Nigerian and The Guardian newspapers", was carried out by Mussah K. Kamara (PGD/GEO/2000/2001/183) as a requirement for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma in Environmental Management, Department of Geography, Federal University of Technology, Minna. It has been read and approved.



Dr. Abubakar A. S
Project Supervisor



Date



Dr. M. T. Usman
Head of Department



Date

.....
Prof. J. A. Abalaka
Postgraduate School

.....
Date

CHAPTER ONE

1.0

INTRODUCTION

Natural resources are our environmental capital. As with any form of capital, poor management will lead to its dissipation while good husbandry will augment its usefulness.

Environmental management – Is management of activities within tolerable constraints imposed by the environment itself and with full consideration of ecological factors. The objective is to meet basic needs within the potentials and constraints of environmental systems.

Managerial skills are usually available but not always used because environmental information is not often analysed into forms useful to managers. Sometimes resources to implement management decisions are not supplied or the political will to grapple with other than rhetoric is lacking.

It is based on this, the research decided to examine the roles of the Nigerian media on the dissemination of environmental information as the watch dog of the society.

1.1

OVERVIEW FUNCTIONS OF THE MEDIA

It has been established by communication researcher that the mass media on modern society have “three basic functions to perform: educating, informing and entertaining with other functions serving as secondary and supplementary”.² They are seen as controllers of knowledge we have of ourselves, other and the society at large; shapers and directors of our opinion and attitude to harmonise them with the accepted norms and values of the society. They defined our behaviours, roles, and responsibilities as individuals and as groups”.³ These ascribed functions become more important when

one considers the unique position that newspapers, in particular, occupy in our society acting as platforms for the expression of plural voices.

In his study of the role of the mass media in Liberal democracy, Ralph Miliband observed that:

- Even where, as the case of radio and television, agencies of communication are public institutions, or mixed ones, they are not simply the mouthpieces of the government of the day and exclusively the organs of official policy or opinion. Oppositional views are also heard and seen”.

However, while the mass media are expected to perform their functions, they are at the same time being subjected to various forms of constraints and pressures which, in effect, deter them from pursuing their objectives. This interplay of influence was further highlighted by Miliband as continued:

- The nature of contribution which the mass media make to the political climate is determined by the influence which weight most heavily upon them. There are a number of them all working in the same direction. These influences include ownership and control of the means of mental production, advertisers, governments, and their agencies and the ideological orientations of media personnel 5.

Being an institution within a social structure, the mass media can not operate in a vacuum. Their continuous interaction with other institutions in the society has an important bearing on the way they handle their role. In a capitalist society like ours, the mass media messages are commodities like all other consumable products to be bought and sold. They are therefore, packaged, highly coloured, directed and wove to suit, the interest of capitalist; all stories, features and editorials are architecturally planned and designed to compliment and reinforce the existing power relations, mode

of production and distribution of pattern of property relations. And deviation from such is viewed as unwanted and out of tune; a deviant act to be rejected.⁶

Media messages are so sensationalised to the detriment of the people. The individuals procedures, editors and journalists underscore the purpose of their entertainment function overlooking the content of their out put which is by no means free from political and ideological connotation of a definite kind. The media perpetuate the interests and ideas of the dominant class under the guise of entertainm^rnt.⁷

From the foregoing discussion, it can be discerned that the media in capitaliset societies are nothing more than a component of what Althusser called the “ideological state apparatus”⁸

Perhaps, this is how the mass media operate in Nigeria.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Although the history of conservation or environmental management is as old as mankind, the use of the word in the contemporary context is relatively recent. Over the years conservation has acquired many connotations: to some people it has meant the protection of wild nature, apart from man; to others the sustained production of useful materials from the living resources of the Earth-e.g. fisheries, wildlife, forests, agricultural croplands – along with the wise use of fuels and minerals. But by the 1970s achievement of the highest sustainable quality of living for mankind by the rational utilization of the environment had become the definition of conservation that was most widely accepted by such organizations like International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

The pattern that emerged over the 1970s and 1980s was the recognition that major environmental threats were posed by globally powerful institutions, such ass

multinational corporations and multilateral development banks such as the World Bank, whose operations reach every city, village, field and forest worldwide.

The multiple environmental concerns that emerged from the grassroots, including the forest and water crisis, toxic and nuclear hazards and so on have been marginalised. Thus, the global Environmental Facility (GEF) set up at the World Bank addresses only four environmental issues: 1) a reduction in green house gas emission; 2) protection of biodiversity; 3) a reduction in pollution of international waters; and 4) a reduction in Ozone layer depletion.

The environment is composed of numerous subsystems, which operate interdependently. Man is served by all systems and in making use of them alters or impairs their functioning.

The growing complexity of human organization and human activities has given rise to equally complex environmental problems. Human settlements, rural and agricultural activities, industrialization, transportation and recreational demands are all areas where policies with an environmental outreach need to be implemented.

1.3 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In order to draw the bottom-line between the roles of the mass media and environmental management, the following questions need to be considered:

1. What roles can the media play in environmental awareness?
2. What benefits to derive from environmental management?
3. What impact the media have on environmental management?

1.4 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is to examine ways and means the mass media can play on environmental management and protection.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study derives from the main focus of the study. The roles of the media in environmental awareness in accordance with its ascribed role as originally known and upheld has made it necessary to investigate further the basic determinant as the "Fourth Estate of the Realm".

It is significant in the following functions:

1. Promotion and awareness
2. Enlightenment
3. Education and entertainment
4. The roles of the media have the potential of tampering with people's attitude thereby creating favorable and unfavorable impression on their minds about environmental management and protection.

1.6 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Environment – May be defined as the sum of all external forces or conditions acting on an organism or community of organisms.
2. Media – In this study is referring to the channel of mass information such as newspapers and magazines.
3. Environmental Management – Is the management of activities within tolerable constraints imposed by the environment itself and with full consideration of ecological factors.

CHAPTER TWO

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this research is to examine the roles of the Nigerian Mass Media in environmental management and protection, the communication methodology employed is content analysis.

Therefore, it is deemed necessary to study and review relevant and related literatures to environmental management and protection, the media and research methodology in general.

Wimmer et al. (1994) provided theoretical guidelines on conducting a content analysis. According to the author the book was written "to be a first step in the process of learning about mass media research".

Content analysis is one of the scientific methods used in mass media research because it involves systematic and objective evaluation of information. The working definition of content analysis of the authors was that of Kerlinger (1986) which has three (3) basic concepts viz; systematic, objective and quantitative.

After discussing the procedures of conducting content analysis the book discussed some ways in which these techniques can be applied. One of these ways in assessing the image of a particular group in the society. According to the authors:

- Ever growing numbers of contents analysis have focused on exploring the media image of certain majority or otherwise notable groups. In many instances these studies are conducted to assess changes in media towards these groups, to make inferences about the media's responsiveness to demand for better coverage or to demand for better coverage or to document social trends.

The authors then gave examples of such researches like that of Barber et al (1990) who studied the coverage of African U.S. representatives in daily newspapers, while

Green wald (1990) analysed the coverage of women in the business section of two (2) metropolitan newspapers.

Unfortunately, the authors did not discussed in detail the limitations of content analysis at the end of the book.

Sobowale (1985) studied the influence of ownership of Nigerian newspaper coverage of national issues. The reason he gave for studying the two events was: ... their national appeal, the political overtone which they bore and the probable adverse effect their unrestrained publicity could have on the image of the military regime.

The above assertions, is exactly true of media coverage on environmental management. Sobowale (1985) chose six papers based on their circulation, ownership and place of publication as his population. These were Daily Times, The Nigerian Tribune, Daily Express, - all privately owned at that time. The New Nigerian, Daily Sketch and The Nigerian Observer owned by different states and regional governments. The research tested three hypotheses: (i) private newspapers will provide more information than government papers on the two events; (ii) events less favourable to the image of the government will more likely be ignored by the government newspapers while the privately owned newspapers will focus more attention on them (iii) adverse information will generally be played down in government newspapers than in private newspapers.

For this study, "the six papers were content analysed for their coverage". This according to the author the methodology used while the stories were categorized as favourable, unfavourable and neutral. The research found out that there was no appreciable difference in the number of stories which the private and government newspaper carried on the events. So the first hypothesis is not supported. The government papers used significantly higher proportions of favourable stories than the

private used significantly lower proportions of unfavourable items on the two events than did the private newspapers. The second hypothesis has been shown to be supported, but there is no evidence to support the third hypothesis that unfavourable information will be down played more by government newspapers than by private papers. The research conducted suggested important questions which should engage the attention-of communication – researchers in Nigeria such as how the journalist's perception of personal benefit (self interest) affects his professional performance. Also the issue of ethnic affinity seems a problem that those studying the job performance of journalist, particularly in a developing, heterogenous and multilingual society cannot gloss over.

Sobowale, however suggested that:

- To inform and educate, there is a need for us to redefine our concepts of news in such a way as would enable us to interpret events in a way that will take cognizance of the totality of our population. We must understand that we are in a developing economy and our strategy must include modality for lifting our population out of squalor and poverty. Any glance at the major newspapers reveals a systematic and rather crude bias against trade union movements; strikes by workers if reported are rarely given sympathetic or even reasonable treatment. Often, their causes are totally ignored whilst the possible consequences are magnified. There is a sense in which much of this is predictable, for the press has always been politically partisan?

Early researches in mass communications were stimulated mainly by the earlier held beliefs about media power and effects, 2. Perhaps due to the conditions and circumstances under which media available by then were utilized for specific purposes and the consequences of their application. In their quest for explanations on

the assumed power of the media, some scholars in this field like Mytton 3, Klapper 4, Elliot and Golding 5 have conducted researches on the genesis of media bias and advocacy; and the relationship between proprietary control and editorial independence.

1.8 THE GENESIS OF MEDIA BIAS AND ADVOCACY

Tracing the genesis of media bias in Nigeria cannot be complete without linking it with the history of evolution of the press in Nigeria generally. When Henry Townsend established his first newspaper in Abeokuta in 1859, it was not without reasons. Part of these reasons and perhaps the most important was to facilitate his evangelisation of the citizens 6. Basing his assertion of power of the early findings of communication researchers, Townsend saw the press as an important and an effective vehicle for socialization and indoctrination. For the greater part of its period of existence, Iwe Irohin was mainly concerned with coverage of Christian missionary activities and other related issues within its vicinity?

Moving into the 1930s which the most remarkable phase in the evolution of newspapers in Nigeria, the press became not only partisan but also bias in favour of the indomitable independence struggles:

According to Ujudu Sherif:

- The period marked the emergence of aggressive newspaper dominance of party struggles, newspaper dominance of party press and the proliferation of sectional and tribal press.

If Ujudu's assertions is anything to go by, one will be tempted to say that the period between the two World wars (1920s – 1940) was the real starting point of press advocacy in Nigeria, because it marked the period, when despite the difference in the political orientation of their proprietor, most Nigerian newspapers identify

themselves with a common cause. Their unflinching support for the independence struggles and incessant attacks on the personality of the colonizers was something unprecedented prior to that period.

But then Ujudu Sheriff (1989) himself seemed to have been trapped by the conventional multipurpose function of the mass media as advocated by some scholars. For the newspaper to be seen both as advocates of sectional and regional interests of their owners and as supportive of independence struggle, leaves one in doubt as to the purpose of establishing them. If those newspapers performed these dual roles, certainly, either must be accidental and unintended.

Nevertheless, it may be argued that each of these newspapers was set up for specific purpose but along the line, they serve other milder roles which, in the end, became more suitable to the conditions of the society as at that time. This postulation was vindicated by Charles Sharp, the first expatriate Managing Director of the New Nigerian when he said:

- The creation of the New Nigerian was political; of this there can be doubt. But there are other reasons: by 1963 the regional government of Northern Nigeria was aware that it was losing a battle of propaganda in Nigeria 9.

By comparison, Charles Sharp's 1988 confession has some consistency of sequence with Ujudu's assertion. If by 1963 Nigerian press was involved in political partisanship from which the North was cut off due to its lack of a medium, it therefore means by implication that this partisanship can not be unconnected with the party and sectional press outlined by Ujudu Sheriff (1987). The linkage between the two revelations became more obvious when one considers the fact that political parties in the First Republic were formed along sectional and regional lines. Each party had its leaders and staunch supporters from a single geographical location.

However, it should be not only limited to politics or political affiliation. These are other constraints and pressures which define and determine the level and direction of press partisanship. Adamu Ciroma 1988 in his survey of journalistic objectivity has identified one of those determinants of their function or role, when he stressed that:

- Every medium is established for a purpose and it is the right of the owner(s) to set down the purpose to be pursued and the objectives to be achieved. The owner(s) tell(s) their editors what political line they must adopt in any given situation. The editor has only the freedom to accept the political decisions governing his continued employment. It is interesting that this situation obtains in capitalist society and military dictatorship 10.

From the above statement it can be deduced that among the determinants of press partisanship is proprietor. The factor of ownership and control, therefore, plays a vital role in defining the tone and direction of coverage events by newspapers. Proprietors have consistently and purposive by stuck to the axiom "he who plays the piper dictates the tune". Being the owners of the newspapers and employers of the media personal including the editor, the reporters and even the executives, the proprietor ensure that they set the principles upon which their media and those who operate them pursue their goals. Proprietor influence on content can be exerted directly or indirectly. But in most cases the latter is preferred so as to obscure the intention of the proprietors and in order to hood wink the audience and the personnel into believing that the paper has some degree of independence from proprietor interference.

Where the influence is indirect, the proprietors do not determine the editorial policy or employ censorship but they make decisive suggestions and recommendations to their editors with some underlying interest which more or less promote their views or reinforce their political line. This is the method applied mostly

by newspaper ownership and some capitalist societies, as Ciroma points out, the control is direct. Miliband's disclosure of the operation of media channels in the U.S.A. has highlighted this trend as he observed that:

“... in Axel Springer's empire he (Axel) runs his papers like a monarch” 12.

What Miliband's observation signifies is that newspaper proprietors in capitalist society and military dictatorship exert direct pressures on the content of their newspapers. They employ those whom they think ill serve as at least succumb to their interests. Where this is unrealisable the editors are threatened with queries or even dismissal in order to win their hearts and patronage. Of more disastrous consequences in the control of private newspapers by governments which is very common in military dictatorship of the Third World Countries.

Under this dispensation, the rulers find it necessary to exert pressure upon the press so that their views, opinions and policies will be promoted. A clear picture of the situation was given by Osmo Wiio when he postulated that:

- Most Third world countries require permits for the publication of newspaper or magazine and in some countries these permits must be renewed annually ... Many Third World Countries license journalists and in some countries citizenship is a requirement for ownership of media: news prints, press, inks, and other necessary supplies of equipment for a news operation are government supervised 13.

The wisdom in the above statement is that newspaper and other communication media are constrained not only by their owners but also by the constituted authorities; those managing the affairs of the environment in which the media operate and this kind of control is the most disastrous and the severest since it will have a direct influence on both the personnel and the audience of these communication media.

Concomitant to these pressures and constraints is the ideological orientations:14

- i. the leftist - those whose views are considered dissenting because of their strong opposition to the status quo.
- ii. the conservative - those with strong conservative commitment. They are the praise - singers of those in government (in capitalist society).
- iii. the in-between - those who claim to be neutral. They back neither side but their sympathy is always with whoever the situation favoured. They constitute a party of trouble-avoiders.

Going by the above classification, the Nigerian press cannot be exonerated from blame for the unbalanced reporting that it presents and interprets to the public. Therefore, the issue of objectivity is thrown into dust; a mirage; an ideal to be aimed at. How can a journalist be objective, one ask, when and where his ideological orientation and affiliation is in conflict with that of the individuals or group on whom he is reporting?

For objectivity to be achieved, the two sides to a conflict or an issue must be heard and quoted.

According to Tony Momoh:

- "the most important responsibility of the press is to promote and defend social justice. Accurate and unbiased reporting of the news; independence commentary; freedom to speech. All these are values and objectives well worth having. But they are ultimately meaningless unless they are subordinated to a far higher goal which, in my view, is to ensure that public and private conduct is directed towards the achievement of the greatest possible measure of justice in society. What you are expected to acquire here are the skills of detail observation, accurate

description, intelligent analysis and sensible commentary. But these are merely skills which, in themselves, are virtually neutral in values unless they are informed by an ethical imperative. And that ethical imperative is this; always to bend you intelligence and training towards the enhancement of social justice”.

1.9 GENESIS OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

Environmentalism, in the social sciences, any theory that concerns the importance of environmental factors in the development of culture and society.

The theory of environmental determinism states that the physical milieu of a people, including natural resources, climate and geographic accessibility, is the major determining factor in the formation of their culture. Determinism thereby rejects history and tradition, social and economic factors, and any other aspects of culture as explanation of social development.

Environmental possibilism, an opposing doctrine, suggests that habitat acts only to create possibilities from which man may choose. In its most extreme form possibilism rejected even environmental influence on the form that choice took. The theory failed to recognise that possibilities are distributed unequally over the world.

While causal relations are no longer thought to be as clear-cut as believed by some early environmental determinists, cultural phenomena often cannot be fully understood without consideration of environmental factors. Contemporary environmentalists recognised that physical surroundings are only part of a total environment that includes social and economic factors, cultural tradition and reciprocal influences between societies and their environment.

The pattern that emerged over the 1970s and 1980s was the recognition that major environmental threats were posed by globally powerful institutions, such as multinational corporations reach every city, village, field and forest worldwide.

Instead of extending of environmental concern and action, the recent emergence of a focus on 'global' environmental problems has in fact narrowed the agenda.

The multiple environmental concerns that emerged from the grassroots, including the forest and the water crisis, toxic and nuclear hazards and so on have been marginalized. Thus the Global, Environmental Facility (GEF) set up at the World Bank addresses only four environmental issues: 1) a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; 2) protection of biodiversity; 3) a reduction in pollution of international waters and 4) a reduction in ozone layer depletion.

'Global environmental problems' have been so constructed as to conceal the fact that globalization of the local is responsible for destroying the environment which supports the subjugated local peoples. The construction becomes a political tool not only to free the dominant destructive forces operating worldwide from all responsibility but also to shift the blame and responsibility for all destruction on the communities that have no global reach.

Consider the case of ozone depletion. CFCs, which are a primary cause of ozone depletion, are manufactured by a handful of trans-nationals, such as Dupont, with specific locally identifiable manufacturing plants. The rational mechanism to control CFC production and use was to control these plants. That such substances as CFCs are produced by particular companies in particular plants is totally ignored when ozone depletion becomes transformed into a global environmental problem. The producers of CFCs are apparently blameless and the blame laid instead on the potential use of refrigerators and air-conditioners by millions of people in India and China. Through a shift from present to future, the North gains a new political space in

which to control the South. 'Global' concerns thus create the moral base for green imperialism.

Extraction of surplus and the exploitation and destruction of resources have left people without livelihoods. Lacking access to resources for survival, the poor have been forced to generate economic security by having large families. The collapse of social cohesion and economic stability has provided the ground for ethnic conflict.

Instead of identifying the cause of these multifaceted problems as global domination of certain narrow interests of the North, however, these problems are selectively transformed from consequence to cause. Poverty and population are identified as causes of ethnic conflict.

The roots of the ecological crisis at the institutional level lie in the alienation of the rights of local communities to actively participate in environmental decisions. The reversal of ecological decline involves strengthening local rights. Every local community equipped with rights and obligations, constitutes a new global order for environmental care.

The real environmental issue is survival. Survival is, of course a very real issue and is mirrored in the whole ascent of mankind. Man has had to carve his niche on Earth. He has been an endangered species until recent times (and still is in some parts of the world). He continues to be a predator as well as a beneficiary of nature's largesse. Environmental hazards have constantly accompanied Man in his relatively short period on this planet.

Underlying environmental dilemma is the fact that so much is written about the problems and so little about possible solutions. Solutions are possible. They are generally known in outline at least. But, remarkably, the institutional mechanisms to

phase them into the human framework are often primitive. In parts of the world they are still crude and undeveloped.

Environmental problems do not disappear at the wave of a wand. Solutions always cost something in time, effort and money. The dilemma is: will those who clamour for, and benefit from, a cleaner environment with potable water, sanitation and ecological stability vehemently oppose paying their share of the cost?

In an evolutionary sense the developed countries are at the start mainly with waging war on dirty air, polluted water, noise, congestion, outmoded housing, local shortage of energy. In contrast developing countries are in various stages of aspiring to this "pinnacle of success" – another dilemma.

Developing countries are primarily agriculturally or natural resource based with small industrial sectors. Exploding populations and crowding into low-grade housing or shelter are often normal situations. Exploitive agriculture, pastoral pursuits, forestry, hunting, fishing or mining of natural resource have caused environmental damage, frequently on an increasing scale. Developing countries wish to get as quickly as possible to the living standards of developed countries. To do this their governments must accelerate the use of natural resources. The dilemma is: how to do this without getting into the environmental crisis situation of most developed countries? Lack of knowledge of the physical environment and its characteristics is not the basic reason for lack of progress in achieving a good standard of environmental management. Of much greater significance is the lack of means and experience at the institutional and organizational level of government within which decisions are made and enforced locally, nationally and internationally.

One major conclusion of the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was that there need be no inherent in compatibility between

environment and development when they are seen in realistic long-term perspectives. This is reflected in the term "eco-development" coined by Maurice F. Strong, when he was Executive Director of the United Nations Environment programme (UNEP), to describe the search for new and continuous harmony between development and environment.

Natural resources are our environmental capital. As with any form of capital, poor management will lead to its dissipation while good husbandry will augment its usefulness. It is essential to realise that there are two classes of natural resources: (a) Non-renewable (b) Renewable.

Non-renewable resources, such as mineral ore, can be consumed like most forms of capital to generate income. They may be part of a country's patrimony. Where natural resources are lacking, the local deficiency may be made up by imports, some times traded in exchange for other resources, often renewable ones.

Renewable resources are those which can be managed to generate income in perpetuity. Forests, fisheries and wildlife are examples. Soil is a renewable resource in part, especially if reference is to its fertility. If the natural capital in the form of renewable resources is eroded, so is its capacity to generate a sustained income. Soil stripped of its nitrogen or phosphorus capital can no longer yield as much food. Forests depleted year by year lose their productivity. It should be clear that continued unwise use can make a renewable resource as valueless as a worked-out mine.

CHAPTER THREE

1.10 METHODOLOGY

- What is needed is, therefore, to evolve a method of content analysis which is adopted to the ideas of politics and governments as a system which enables us to carry out a comparative examination of papers coverage of it over a fairly lengthy period of time.

In this chapter, the researcher attempts to convey largely in statistical terms, the methodologies applied in the collection of data. The selected data will determine the amount and proportion of news on the Nigerian media coverage of environmental issues and the direction of such news negative or positive conveyed by the selected newspapers.

Above is the reason why the researcher has chosen the technique of content analysis as its methodology.

1.11 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Media as an institution in the society, it is believed, could only be understood by putting them in their proper position. They are an institution in the society whose function is constantly and consistently regulated and controlled by other institutions. Hence, the political, economic, social and cultural systems in the society within which the media operate must be considered.

The researcher therefore, employed the holistic approach with the following assumptions in mind, viz:

1. There is direct, though sometimes obscured connection between media operations and the political, economical, social and cultural systems in the spectrum of operation.
2. Media systems could only be understood within the context of their position in the society.

3. Society consists of social, economic or political classes which are in constant conflict and institutions in the society do not assume neutrality in the conflict: they must take sides depending on which class enjoys power.

1.12 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Since the concern of this research is to examine, assess and appraise the nature of Nigerian media coverage on environmental issues and the nature and manners the issues are perceived, presented and interpreted by the press and to establish the factors responsible for that, it is assumed that the researcher has to study the contents of newspapers during a time frame of two years from January 2000 to December 2001.

The population of this research will be The New Nigerian and The Guardian newspapers. The two papers were chosen for their circulation, ownership and wide readership. Again, the two papers are government and privately owned. The New Nigerian, a public owned outlet belonging to the Federal Government would favour the establishment (government) views.

The Guardian is privately owned by an individual, this researcher believes would have more degree of independence in reporting.

1.13 SAMPLING

In this research, systematic sampling method is used in selecting the issues of The New Nigerian and The Guardian Newspapers respectively for two years, Mondays and Thursdays of each month with an interval of three days.

In all, four issues of each of the two newspapers were studied in each month during the two years of study. This gives a total of ninety six issues for each of the newspapers and one hundred and ninety two issues for the two newspapers.

1.14 MEASUREMENT PROCEDURE

The contents of the newspapers were analysed quantitatively using frequency count. Units of analysis were editorials, feature stories, front and back stories and direct news stories. It is assumed by this researcher that the more frequent the appearance of reports on environmental management and their placement by individual newspapers, the greater the importance attached and the attention given to the issue. This will help to determine the direction of such frequency and the underlying goals of the papers in respect of the report in question.

The basis of the survey was simple present (headlines, contents, and captions) of any of the chosen categories. This is not significantly less reliable than the tedious method of counting column inches. Any single entry in the newspaper which deal with any aspect of the environmental issues was considered as a mention provided that it is among the categories mentioned earlier in this chapter.

In an attempt to measure the importance attached and the space devoted to the environmental issues by the two papers, other two topical issues of the time – The introduction of Shariah in the northern part of Nigeria and September 11th terrorist attacks on the U.S. World Trade Centre in New York and Washington Dr.- were selected.

The coverage given to these issues was compared with the Nigerian media coverage on environmental issues taking their frequency counts as a measure of space and importance. The percentage of the total frequency of each category was determined as a measure of favourability of unfavourability of coverage. Also, the percentage of the total frequency of each issue was determined as a measure of space and importance.

CHAPTER FOUR

1.15 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- The unbalanced reporting an distribution result from three basic factors: constraints of resources, ever-reliance on wrong informants with little knowledge of the issue or with distorted version of reality and the existence of the your nalist's socialization into a set of rules of the game which lays down what press reporting of events is about and how it should be reported.

In this chapter the data generated from the study are presented and interpreted with a view to providing acceptable and convincing answers to the research questions in the first chapter. Of these, will be answered by the data collected from the study. To provide answers to those research questions, a total of one hundred and ninety two issues of the two newspapers – The New Nigeria and The Guardian were sampled and content analysed. Ninety six issues of each were selected covering a period of two years. The content categories analysed were: editorials, feature articles, front page stories and direct news stories (hard news). Each of the categories was analysed and assessed to find out its favourability or otherwise to environmental issues or the Federal Government of Nigeria. In so doing, the choice of words by individual newspapers was noted.

1.16 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data collected showed that The Guardian Newspaper carried more stories on environment issues than The New Nigerian. In terms of frequency count of reference, the issue of environment ranked third to the September 11th Terrorist Attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Shariah crisis in the northern part of Nigeria in both papers. From a total of 320 references to foreign issues in The New Nigerian, 10 were on environmental issues which represent 10% of the total references.

The Guardian on the other hand, made 25 references to the environmental issues our of a total of 390 references. The Guardian had more direct news and stories

on the environmental issue than the New Nigerian. But both carried little editorial and feature stories.

In the case of the New Nigerian, the frequency counts for the content categories showed that it carried lesser stories, feature stories and no editorial and picture stories. The preponderance of editorials and front page stories in paper is important. These two categories are ranked as the most prominent in terms of placement because the editorial represents the paper's policy while the front page placement indicates degree of newsworthiness of events.

However, in the case of The Guardian, carried no editorial and front page stories on environmental issues. With regards to the placement of the news items in The Guardian, the 25 news reports on environmental issue carried by the paper were all inside the paper's pages.

New Nigerian on the other hand, had a total of 10 news reports on the environmental management and protection.

Finally, the two papers had similarity in news placement on the inside pages.

Table of page placement of news reports on environment management and protection in the two dailies

Page Placement	New Nigerian	The Guardian	Total
Front	0	0	0
Back	0	0	0
Inside	10	19	29
Grand Total	10	25	35

Compiled by Mussah Kamara

The data shows that the direction of coverage of The Guardian, a privately owned newspaper had more favourable news items than the New Nigerian. The Guardian had neither favourable feature story nor favourable editorials. It has five favourable inside page stories which is more than the New Nigerian. The Guardian had no favourable picture stories while the New Nigerian also had none. Moreover,

about half of The Guardian's favourable news reports fall under the direct news category.

In the case of news coverage of environmental issue, the New Nigerian had lesser news reports than The Guardian.

Finally, the New Nigerian being a public owned newspaper, carried more favourable news items on the environmental issue than the private owned newspaper –The Guardian.

1.17 ANSWERS TO RESEARCH QUESTION

In this section, the research questions advanced are interpreted and answered based on the data collected.

Question one: Which of the selected papers devoted more space and attached more importance to the coverage of environmental management and protection?

Although the study did not measure the amount of space (in terms of column inches or centimetres) devoted to content categories studied, it can however be stated that the frequency of appearance of news items on environmental issue in the two papers may likely affect the amount of space allotted to the news items. In this case, table 1 provides the answer to the question.

As show in table 1, The Guardian newspaper carried slightly more reports on environmental management and protection than the New Nigeria. Hence, The Guardian devoted more space (determine by frequency of appearance of items) to the environment, while the New Nigerian attached more importance (determined by placement of items) to the environment.

From the analysis of contents, some of the issues of the two papers, the presentation of the environmental management and protection by the two papers

could be said to be anything but fair and objective as far as environmental issue are concerned.

CHAPTER FIVE

1.18 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENTATIONS

From the study of the contents of the newspapers sampled, the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, the researcher was able to investigate and answer the research question raised by the study.

1.19 FINDINGS

1. The Guardian devoted more space to environmental issues. This is an indication of the fact that privately owned newspapers often exercise more degree of freedom in their coverage of issues than the government or public-owned press.
2. Downplaying the root-causes of and the circumstances surrounding environmental pollution and degradation are due to two factors: the ideological orientation of the media professionals; and the media heavy reliance of official information from manufacturers, government officials and oil companies. The second factor results from the reflection of the elite values in the report and the consequent manipulation of the press to the service of the dominant ideological view of the environment.

1.20 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study did not in any way attempt to go into all the media (print and electronic) in Nigeria in ascertaining the Nigerian media coverage on environmental issues.

The limitations of this research can be summarised as follows:

1. Scope: The scope of the study is limited; only two national dailies selected and analysed. In this regard, the validity and scope of the study is reduced, making detail analysis of issues accurate generalization almost impossible. The researcher's enemy in this regard was time. It could not be easy to attempt a

detailed analysis of issues within two years. The external validity of the study would have been strengthened if a longer period had been covered.

2. The study is limited to the print media alone.
3. Media professionalism was not investigated, factor influencing press coverage of issues.

1.21 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, this researcher recommends the followings:

1. The Nigerian media (newspapers) should allot more space to public opinion on environmental management and degradation such as the oil companies, erosion and the desertification which are affecting the nation. And in so doing they should be allowed some degree of freedom to express their views on environmental pollution and protection in order to keep the public inform of the true situation. Government should inform that public interest in paramount.
2. Media should not be lop-sided in their selection of news events. Journalists should be free to select and cover events for their own merit and endeavour to give stories places they deserve. All of these make reports fair, balanced and objective.
3. Journalists should be guided by their professional ethics, in the discharge of their duty. They should that they can not report objectively unless they listen to the two sides in a dispute. Moreso, in crisis period, journalists should visit scenes, interview victims and actors and verify factors for their reports to be objective and balanced. In other words, journalist must be given more rights to access information to avoid fabrications and misinterpretation.

1.22 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. The scope of this study and the period under study must be increased by future researchers in this area.
2. Influence of media professionalism and proprietary control on the coverage of environmental crisis is worth investigating.

1.23 REFERENCES

1. Adamu Ciroma. "To whom is an editor responsible?" Sunday New Nigerian. 18th September 1988 pp. 7 - 8
2. Graham Mytton. Mass Communication in African. London: Arnold: 1983 p. 76.
3. Harvey Cox and David Morgan. City Politics and the Press (London: Camb. University Press. 1974): p. 120.
4. James Curran et al (ed.): Mass Communications and Society. (London Arnold and Open University Press. 1977) pp. 96 – 7.
5. Jack G. Beale. The Manager and the Environment. New York. Pergamond Press. 1972 p. 4 – 6
6. Joseph T. Klapper. The effects of Mass Communication. (Glence; Free Press. 1960 p. 61.
7. Karl Marx and Frederic Engels, The German Ideology (trans, R. Pascal) (London: Lawrence and Vishart, 1938), p. 39.
8. Louis Althusser, Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus (1971). P. 128, in James Curran (ed.) Op cit, p. 335.
9. Philip Elliott "Media Organizations and Occupations: An Overview": in James Curran (ed.) Op cit pp. 145 – 50.
10. Ralph Miliband. The State in Capitalist Society. (USA Basic Books Inc. Publ., 1969): p. 219.
11. Ujudud Sheriff, "Journalism on Trial". Sunda Triumph, 24 May. 1987 p. 7.
12. Wolfgang Sachs, Global Ecology. Canada, Fernwood Publications, 1993.p 40. 149 and 224.

1.24 BIBLIOGRAPH

Akinfeleye, R.; The State of Nigerian Press Freedom Under four different regimes; Lagos: TV Journal Publication, 183.

Althusser, L. Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus, (1971); in Curran J. (ed.), Mass Communication and Society, London: Arnold and Open University, 1977.

Becket, F.; Press and Prejudice, London: Oup, 1977.

Coker, I. Seventy Years of Nigerian Press, (Lagos: Daily Times Publishers, 1952)

Cox, H. and David M. City Politics and the Press London: Cambridge University Press, 1974.

Curran, J. et al (ed.); Mass Communication and Society, London: Arnold and open University Press, 1977.

Duyile, D. Mass Media Communication in Nigeria, Ibadan: Sketch Publishers, 1979.

Hilary, N.; All Freedom is at stake, Philip, C.H. (ed.); The Third World and Press Freedom, New York, 1978.

Leonard, L.; Emergence of Free Press, New York: Oup, 1985

Mackintosh, J.P.; Nigerian Government and Politics, Evanston, Illinois; New World University Press, 1966.

Mill, C.W.; The Power Elite, London, Longman, 1969

Nuhu, M.; "Influence of ownership of print media on the coverage of public issues: A case study of SFEM", Unpublished dissertation, BUK, Kano, 1988.

Siebert, F.S. et al; Four Theories of the Press, Urbana: Chicago University of Illinois Press, 1956.

Wimmer, Red and Dominic, J.R.; Mass Media Research: An Introduction (2nd edition), California: Wardsworth Publishers, 1987.