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Full Length Research Paper

Politeness in media talk shows: The case of media panel discussions in Ghana

Kwasi Sarfo-Adu* and Cynthia Elizabeth Osei

Department of Liberal Studies, Faculty of Business and Management Studies, Kumasi Technical University, Kumasi, Ghana.

In human communication, the communicators involved in the interaction have an obligation to show politeness to each other for a successful conversation. Non-observance of politeness in a communicative act such as panel discussions has the potential to infringe upon the public self-image of the addressees. Situated in Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory (PT), the paper sought to explore the kinds of politeness strategies employed by discussants in media panel discussions (MPDs) in Ghana. Accordingly, twenty episodes of MPDs were recorded from media stations and content analyzed based on B&L's model. The results indicated that in most of the cases (43.35%), panelists marked politeness by addressing the positive face of their interlocutor (s) as against (38.93%) occurrences of negative face, with Face Threatening Acts (FTAs) on record (without redressive actions) recording 15.70%. The findings suggest that Ghanaian MPDs are characterized by positive politeness. The results of the study have sociological implications for media talk in Ghana. When panelists become aware of the importance of the face needs of their interlocutors, they will avoid embarrassments and incendiary language that threatens the face wants of discussants in interactions.

Key words: Politeness, face, positive politeness, negative politeness, FTA.

INTRODUCTION

Media talk comes in various forms such as confrontational television talk shows, open-line talk shows, advice-giving broadcast, news interviews, and political panel discussions (Hutchby, 2005). According to Hutchby, these discussions apart from educating, informing and entertaining individuals also influence people's lives and perceptions of individuals, groups, institutions, beliefs and the world at large. In all these, panelists involved in the discussion are obliged to show politeness to one another to ensure a smooth interaction. What is more, viewers or listeners are sometimes allowed to be part of the programmes through phone-ins or text messages, where they comment on issues being discussed or comment on the demeanor or choice of words of the panelists. To this end, panelists have to be mindful of the feelings of the party who may be present or not. It is, therefore, assumed that being aware that politeness is a conversational imperative, panelists employ various linguistic politeness strategies to address the face wants of their interlocutors. Sometimes the participants in an interaction may be familiar with each other, so there is solidarity and its attendant symmetric relation as "equal to," "practise the same profession as," and "coordinate with" the other (Babatunde and Adedimeji, 2009, p. 86).

*Corresponding author. E-mail: k.sarfoadu@yahoo.com. Tel: +233-0244539298.

As a result, the discussion is sometimes punctuated with jokes, laughter and teasing while participants still maintain respect for each other. Conversely, where participants are not known to each other there is social distance between them; and the discussions are characterized by "near-formality" culminating into deference and decorum in the use of language. But whether there is social distance or not between panelists, the participants are aware of the need to show politeness to each other.

In the Ghanaian context, some level of linguistic politeness has been explored on various topics and genres (Akpanglo-Nartey, 2017; Ofusuaa and Bosiwah, 2015; Edu-Buandoh, 2011). Collectively, these studies expand the awareness of the kinds of strategies employed in the achievement of linguistic politeness among certain aspects of the Ghanaian culture. However, little or no scholarly attention has been paid to how panelists in media talk programmes mark politeness. This state of affairs deprives people of the knowledge and understanding of the kind of politeness strategies favoured by panelists in Ghanaian MPDs.

The purpose of this investigation, therefore, is to explore the types of politeness in Ghanaian MPDs and establish the sub-strategies used to mark politeness. Two fundamental questions that guide the study are: 1. "What is the dominant politeness strategy employed in Ghanaian MPDs?" 2. "What sub-strategies do panellists employ to negotiate politeness in Ghanaian MPDs?" To answer these questions, a corpus of twenty live episodes of MPDs from radio and television stations were tape recorded and analysed for utterances signalling politeness. We assume that in so far as Ghanaian society or culture is characterized by we-feeling towards one another, MPDs will be dominated by positive politeness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Politeness

There is no gainsaying that the fundamental principle of politeness and face permeates all cultures. It is for this reason that politeness and face work have attracted scholarly attention over the last three decades, engendering theories, models or frameworks for the study of politeness in different cultures and genres. The basic concern of these theories and models is how participants in an interaction show linguistic politeness.

Theories on politeness

Brown and Levinson

Brown and Levinson's "Politeness Theory" (henceforth, PT), first published in 1978 and revised in 1987, offers

illuminating insights into linguistic politeness. PT which arguably follows the publication of Leech (1983)'s PP can be regarded as having attracted the most attention in politeness studies (Kuang and Maya, 2013; Cutrone, 2011; Edu-Buandoh, 2011, Gilks, 2010; Vilkki, 2006; Wagner, 2004; Watts, 2003; Kitamura, 2000). The theory is based on Goffman's face work and Grice's "Conversational logic" (Wagner, 2004). Brown and Levinson argue that every individual possesses two types of face needs: positive face and negative face.

Positive Face is the need to be appreciated, approved, accepted and recognized. They suggest that when there is a disagreement positive face is threatened.
Negative Face, on the other hand, is the expectation that one will not be imposed upon, will not be impeded, intruded or put upon. Negative face is threatened when there is a request or an apology

Brown and Levinson further submit that human interaction is potentially dangerous and antagonist in the sense that participants are likely to commit FTAs. An FTA is committed when the hearer's need to maintain his/her self-image or be recognized and respected is infringed upon by a speaker. To deal with FTAs, discussants adopt face-saving strategies which are the pivot around which successful interactions revolve. Accordingly, Brown and Levinson propose strategies for performing FTAs in interactions.

i. Do the FTA on record without any redressive actions (considered to be the least polite).
ii. Do the FTA on record with redressive action addressing positive face.
iii. Do the FTA on record with redressive action addressing negative face.
iv. Do the FTA off record

Doing the FTA on record means there is no attempt by the speaker to mitigate the impact of the FTA. Such a situation is likely to shock, embarrass or make the addressee feel uncomfortable, and it is mostly used among people who know each other very well. A speaker who knows his audience closely may also employ bald on-record strategies irrespective of the fact that the audience may be shocked or embarrassed. It is considered the least polite strategy. Consider the following examples.

"*Come over here and help me solve this problem*".
"*Switch off your mobile phones*"

In the above examples, the speaker does not do anything to mitigate the inherent command in the utterances. This stems from the fact that the addressee might be a close friend. Closely associated with positive face and negative

face are positive politeness and negative politeness.

Positive Politeness is the strategy where the speaker attempts to minimize the threat to the hearer's face by employing polite manners. People who know each other very well employ positive politeness to show friendliness, and solid recognition of the hearer's need to be respected as seen in the following example:

I know you are in a hurry, but I would be glad if you could spare me just two minutes of your time.

Negative Politeness strategy is used when the speaker assumes that his/her utterance is likely to impose on the hearer, impede his freedom of autonomy or intrude his privacy. In many instances there is an inherent social distance or awkwardness in the situation. When negative politeness is employed, the accompanying awkwardness or embarrassment is weightier than what is in bald on-record or positive politeness. Certain requests and apologies are potential threats to the negative face of the addressee as in the following example.

Sorry to bother you, but could you draw your chair backwards?

In this example, the speaker does not intend to impose on the hearer. We therefore agree with Wagner (2004) that "in performing an apology the speaker acknowledges the addressee's face-want not to be offended" (p.23).

Off-record (indirectness) employs indirect language in order not to impose on the hearer. By so doing the speaker avoids a direct FTA to get his message across. A speaker adopting the off-record strategy may:

Give hints: "*You left the door open.*"
Be vague: "*Perhaps there is a mix-up somewhere.*"
Be sarcastic or joking: "*Fascinating, what solomonic wisdom he has!*"

Many believe that B&L's politeness theory serves as a benchmark for studies in politeness. According to Gilks (2010), it is one of the most influential frameworks on politeness to emerge from sociolinguistics. Vilkki (2006) affirms the influence of the model thus, "B&L's theory of politeness has been the most influential framework of politeness so far, and it provides an important basis for the discussion of the notion of politeness and face" (p.324).

However some researchers have interrogated and debunked the universality of Brown and Levinson's theory. For instance, Kitamura (2000) suggests that Brown and Levinson's list of politeness strategies mainly cover very limited type of interaction, and that their examples comprise single utterances pertaining to clear communication goals like asking to borrow a book or

giving advice while ignoring, "any interaction such as simply enjoying a casual conversation, which does not involve a predetermined goal" (p.2). Cutrone (2011) as well contested the universality of the theory and argued that contrary to Brown and Levinson's categorization of Japan as a negative politeness culture, the frequent speech overlapping backchannels of the Japanese are not regarded as affecting the negative face of their interlocutors; rather such behavior is regarded as accentuating the positive face of the interlocutors. The foregoing is ample testimony of how linguistic politeness keeps on stoking intellectual thinking, with Brown and Levisohn's theory taking centre stage either being approbated or contested.

Geoffrey Leech

In 1983, Leech postulated "Politeness Principles" (henceforth, PP) which many regard as "the most appropriate for practical solutions, the most reasonable, and the most influential politeness theory" (Wang, 2009, p. 289). PP is derived from the "Cooperative Principle" (Grice, 1975). In the Cooperative Principle, Grice proposes four maxims to regulate conversation: Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner. The Gricean Maxims were, however, criticized on grounds of not having universal application to all conversations, and more important, all cultures.

To plug the hole in the Gricean Maxims, Leech came out with his PP to supplement, fine-tune, rescue and advance Grice's thought (Wang, 2009). Leech (1983) defines politeness as "social goals of establishing and maintaining comity" (p. 104). PP provides an avenue for the explanation of how politeness operates in an interaction and it concerns the relationship between self and other in a conversation, where "self' refers to the speaker (S) and "other" the hearer (H). Leech maintains that in a conversation, we should: "Minimize (all things being equal) the expression of impolite beliefs, and … maximize (all other things being equal) the expression of polite beliefs" (p.81). Leech summarizes PP into six maxims similar to the four maxims of the Cooperative Principle. These are Tact Maxim, Generosity Maxim, Approbation Maxim, Modesty Maxim, Agreement Maxim and Sympathy Maxim (p.132).

Lakoff

Lakoff (1973) regards politeness as a system of interpersonal relations which aims at facilitating interaction in order that the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in conversation could be minimized. She postulates three rules: (1) distance (2) deference and (3) camaraderie for the avoidance of conflict because "if

societies did not devise ways to smooth over moments of conflict and confrontation, social relationships would be difficult to establish and continue, and essential cohesion would erode" (p.106). Lakoff proposes some maxims to guide conversation: *Be brief, Be clear, Be polite*. Others are *Don't impose, Give options* and *Be friendly*. Lakoff submits that one person tells another something the other does not want to hear; one person refuses another's request; one person ends a conversation before the other is quite willing to go.

Collectively, the aforesaid theories do not only uphold the significance and contribution of politeness to successful communication, but they also provide helpful insights into politeness as a pragmatic phenomenon.

Empirical studies

A large number of studies have been done on linguistic politeness across cultures, varied disciplinary angles and institutions to provide helpful insights into politeness strategies. For instance, using Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis, Seyyed et al. (2016) investigated the kinds of politeness strategies used by Iranian EFL learners in a class blog. The study found that students employed positive politeness in both Student – Instructor interaction and Student – Student interaction. It has also been found out that researchers have a preference for negative politeness in the analysis and discussion sections of research articles in English (Agbaglo, 2017). In a similar study Akpanglo-Nartey (2017) identified the use of the imperative in making requests in Ga and English by children to indicate equality. Ofusuaa and Bosiwah (2015) on their part employed ethnographic research approach to investigate how the Akyems of Ghana make polite request. The result was that generally indirectness is used in making polite requests among the Akyems, and also age, gender and socio-economic status influence request making. In an earlier study, Edu-Buandoh (2011) also explored syntactic structures used as politeness markers in Ghanaian media panel discussions and found out that the syntactic structure, *Let me,* is a peculiarly Ghanaian politeness marker. Likewise, a study by Pinto (2015) investigated (im)politeness strategies in televised debates in the 2014 Brazilian presidential election and claimed that the mediator and candidates' use of different linguistic strategies was influenced by contextual aspects such as the audience, political ideology and unequal relations. Similarly, Stodulkova (2013) conducted another study on television talk show to investigate the influence of gender in discourse among adult middle and upper middle class from the United Kingdom and the United States. Stoduka concluded that female discourse is more polite than male discourse while British in general are more polite than Americans. Again, American men are comparatively less

polite than their British counterparts. It has also been found out that both British and Egyptian sports media analysts had a preference for positive politeness than negative politeness (Hamed, 2014). However, Egyptian participants employed more positive politeness while the British used more negative politeness strategies. Another study by Kuang and Maya (2013) showed that front counter staff in Malaysian private hospitals employed more impolite openings in interactions, but polite closings at the end of transaction.

Taken together, these studies provide helpful insights into the strategies used for the achievement of politeness in varied and many cultures and perspectives. However, as seen from the literature, and from the Ghanaian perspective, not much is known about the kinds of politeness strategies employed in media talk programmes. The present study is, therefore, undertaken particularly to unearth the kinds of politeness strategies employed in Ghanaian MPDs, and generally to contribute to the ongoing intellectual discussion about how politeness is achieved in various cultures and genres.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed largely the qualitative descriptive approach in that in a study of this nature, natural data are preferred because it is only natural data that reveal what happens in interaction (Golato, 2002). Accordingly, MPDs were recorded from radio and television talk programmes and analysed using Brown and Levinson's politeness theory discussed earlier. Their theory is chosen because it is "the most influential framework of politeness so far, and it provides an important basis for the discussion of the notion of politeness and face" (Vilkki, 2006, p.324) Among scholars who used B&L's model in their studies to validate or dispel politeness principles in various cultures and genres are Kuang and Maya (2013), Kedves (2013), Cutrone (2011), Vilkki (2006), Wagner (2004), Watts (2003), among others.

Data

Twenty episodes of MPDs were recorded from GTV, Metro TV and TV Africa and Luv FM from March 2014 – June 2014. Purposive sampling, was used to select the episodes because the medium of expression is English as opposed to most of the MPDs which are done in indigenous languages. The topics ranged from politics, education, religion, sports, entertainment, health and the economy among others. These stations were selected based on their popular discussion programmes such as "Breakfast Show", "Talking Point", "Good Morning/Evening Ghana" "Morning Show" and others. The inclusion of a radio station was informed by two reasons. First, it was to test the generally-held opinion that panelists in radio discussions are usually more emotionally charged because they are not seen by listeners (Goker, 2013). As a result language used is characterized by impoliteness and by extension FTAs. Secondly, Luv FM was chosen because it is the only radio station in Kumasi (where the data were recorded) that broadcasts its programmes solely in English. The station's programmes, "The Diary" and "Newsfile", which are transmitted live from their flagship station Joy FM in Accra, (Ghana's capital city) have a wide listenership owing

Table 1. Summary of MDPs recorded from various stations.

Station	No of panellists	Programme	No of episodes
GTV	17	Breakfast Show	2
		Counselling Session	1
		Talking Point	1
		GTV Sports	1
		Kapito Show	1
TV Africa	13	Media Today	3
		The Rundown Show	1
Metro TV	11	Good Morning Ghana (GMG)	3
		Good Evening Ghana (GEG)	2
Luv FM	14	The Diary	3
		News File	2
Total	55		20

Source: From Data.

to the topics discussed and the calibre of participants that appear on the programmes. In all, a total of 55 individuals were involved in the 20 episodes, lasting between 1 – 3 h each. Table 1 gives a summary of the programmes recorded from the various stations.

As indicated in Table 1, in all a total of 55 participants took part in the 20 episodes. Out of these episodes, 6 MPDs were recorded from GTV, 4 from TV Africa, and 5 each from Metro TV and LUV FM. Six MPDs were recorded from GTV owing to the fact that being a state-owned media institution and covering the whole nation, they have more discussion programmes than the other stations which are private and arguably focus more on entertainment and maximizing profit.

Data Analysis Procedure

The data were manually transcribed, followed by numbering of the sentences. We then did a content analysis of the data based on Brown and Levinson's theory. To achieve this, we adopted utterances signalling politeness as the unit of analysis. We then coded the manifest content which would be later represented in quantitative terms. Next, we assigned labels such as "familial term", "solidarity", confession", hedging", "disrespect", "apology" and the like to the utterances already underlined. The labels were then categorized into three broad areas for the frequency of occurrences of various politeness strategies. The categories were positive politeness, negative politeness and FTAs which were again sub-categorised for sub-strategies. Before the categorization and sub-categorization, a scrupulous cross-check was done on the list of all the occurrences. Some changes were made where some utterances were found not to belong to the category in which they were first put. Again, where an utterance contained both positive and negative politeness and an FTA each was categorized separately. The reason was that the focus was on utterances constituting the phenomena under investigation rather than the number of sentences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question sought to find out the dominant politeness strategies employed by panelists in Ghanaian MPDs. The results showed that panelists have a preference for positive politeness. The results are presented below in a tabular form. The study identified a total of 452 occurrences of utterances considered as politeness remarks. Out of these, positive politeness strategies constituted 45.35% while negative politeness recorded 38.93%, with FTAs (without redressive actions) recording a frequency of 15.70%. Table 2 provides quantitative analysis of the three categories.

As Table 2 indicates, overall, there were 452 utterances marking various forms of politeness. Out of these there was a high preponderance for positive politeness strategies over negative politeness and FTAs

For the purposes of comparing the two major politeness strategies: positive and negative politeness in MPDs, the following hypothesis was tested.

H_o: There is no difference between positive and negative politeness strategies.
H_1: There are more positive politeness strategies than negative politeness strategies.

Table 3 presents a one-sample test of the analysis. Since the p – values are less than the significance level (0.05) the indication is that there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis that there is no difference between positive and negative politeness strategies. This means

Table 2. Frequencies of occurrences of positive politeness, negative politeness strategies and FTAs.

Type	Frequencies	Percentages
Positive politeness	205	45.35%
Negative politeness	176	38.93%
FTAs (without redressive actions)	71	15.70%
Total	452	100

Source: From Data.

Table 3. One-sample test: Comparing positive and negative politeness.

Variable	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
Politeness	50.08	451	0.000	1.70	1.64	1.77
Positive politeness	23.99	204	0.000	2.62	2.40	2.83
Negative politeness	25.27	175	0.000	2.43	2.24	2.62
FTAs	16.89	70	0.000	2.07	1.83	2.31

that positive politeness strategies are employed more than negative politeness strategies at 95% confidence level. We can therefore conclude that Ghanaian MPDs have a fondness for positive politeness over negative politeness, thus answering Research Question 1.

A major reason that may account for the high preponderance for positive politeness in Ghanaian MPDs is that in quite a number of the programmes, the participants knew each other; so the barrier of formality, social distance and power gave way to intimacy, friendliness, jokes and the like. For example, during the recording it was observed that in as many as 13 out of the 20 episodes the participants knew each other. Therefore, they established common ground with other by showing solidarity, inclusiveness, group membership among others, in line with B&L's observation that positive politeness is used mainly among discussants who are familiar with each other, and probably are very well-known to each other.

It is instructive to state that while Edu-Buandoh (2011) identified the syntactic structure, *Let me,* "as a peculiarly Ghanaian politeness marker" (p.156), the present study also identified the NP *my brother* as a peculiarly familial term used to mark positive politeness in Ghanaian MPDs. The obvious reason is that in most of the interactions, the participants were mainly males. Whether this is a deliberate action by the producers of the various programmes or not could be explored in another study.

Research Question Two sought to identify the prevalent sub-strategies used to negotiate politeness in Ghanaian MPDs. The results showed that media panelists favoured familial/kinship terms for the achievement of positive politeness and utterances signaling apology or asking for forgiveness to achieve negative politeness, while they showed more disagreements in the performance of FTAs.

Table 4 shows the frequencies of various sub-strategies used in the achievement of politeness.

In Table 4, panelists employed six different sub-strategies to perform positive politeness as against five and four for negative politeness and FTAs respectively. Of these, familial terms (31.21%) topped the sub-strategies under positive politeness while apology (30.11%) and disagreements (38.02) ranked highest among the sub-strategies under negative politeness and FTAs respectively.

Another significant finding was that the results of the study do not support the popular opinion that radio discussions are more emotionally charged and by extension characterized by a high frequency of FTAs because the listeners do not see the panelists (Goker, 2013). Even though there were FTAs in the five radio discussion programmes recorded as part of the study, the panelists were largely emotionally disciplined.

The next section discusses some of the various sub-strategies for achieving linguistic politeness in Ghanaian MPDs. The discussion and analysis are based on Brown and Levinson's politeness theory. For space constraints few strategies are selected for the analysis.

POSITIVE POLITENESS

Familial terms

These are address terms related to kinship. In the

Table 4. Sub-strategies used in the achievement of politeness in Ghanaian MPDs.

Positive politeness			Negative politeness			FTAs		
Sub-strategy	F	%	Sub-strategy	F	%	Sub-strategy	F	%
Familial terms	64	31.21	Apology	53	30.11	Disagreement	27	38.02
Solidarity	52	25.36	Deference	48	27.27	Criticism	20	28.16
Agreement	33	16.09	Questioning	35	19.88	Order	16	22.53
Confession	25	12.16	Request	26	14.77	Disrespect	8	11.26
Hedge opinion	17	8.29	Indirectness	14	7.95			
Commiseration	14	6.82						
Total	205	100	Total	176	100	Total	71	I00

Ghanaian context such terms as *brother, sister, mother, father* etc. have extended meanings to cover people to whom one is not biologically related. Thus, the use of such terms is influenced by the Ghanaian culture, and discussants use them freely in many interactions. The fact that in the study these terms placed first in the positive politeness strategies shows their depth and spread of usage among educated Ghanaians, and extending them into MPDs is a matter of satisfying a communicative need.

In Extract 1, a leading member of the main opposition party, J.B. takes on government for piling up debts and messing up the Ghanaian economy.

Extract 1

J.B: *It's sad to hear a minister acknowledging that they are not confident. They have done surgical inquisition as to how come we incurred those debts and whether or not those debts went into productivity. I think that it's unfortunate. We have not managed ourselves well.*

Host: *Okay.*

DM: *I have listened to <u>my brother</u> very carefully. He's just made some good points. But he's very wrong on a number of things. A lot of things have been misconstrued (*MTV: "GMG"*).*

Even though, DM disagrees with J.B. on a lot of things he says, he (DM) is aware that J.B. is a fellow panelist, and above all a colleague politician, so he uses a kinship term "my brother" to reflect this group membership. Thus, the strategy adopted by DM to address the positive face of JB ties in with B&L's in-group identity marker.

Extract 2

Host: *Let me start with our sister and mother. (*TV Africa:

"Media Today")

Here, the host invites the only female member of the panel to begin the turns. The structure "our sister and mother" is not only an expression of close affinity and endearment, it is also a familial expression which the host uses to show fellow feeling culturally. This addresses the positive face wants of the female panellist more than, for example, "Let me start with the woman among us."

Commiseration

B&L considers commiseration as a human-relations wants, where a speaker shows sympathy by consoling someone who has suffered an unfortunate experience.

In Extract 3, the speaker, a Chairman of a Commission of Enquiry, expresses sympathy for the addressee (a Minister of Sports) who sobs out his defence in an allegation of embezzling public funds when he led the Ghana senior national football team to a World Cup tournament.

Extract 3

Don't be emotional Honourable …. Relax, relax, relax …don't be emotional, don't be emotional. Would you need two minutes? Counsel, would you need two minutes? Don't be emotional, okay, don't be, Honourable. No, no, no, relax Honourable. We are helping mother Ghana. Don't worry, don't worry, relax, relax, relax (GTV, GTV Sports)

The speaker offers comfort to mitigate the addressee's sorrow in a series of repetitions couched in imperatives. These imperatives should not be seen as an imposition on the face needs of the addressee. Rather they should be seen as a form of encouragement to make him emotionally stable. The inclusive pronoun *we*, in *we are helping Ghana*, is a strategy by the speaker to establish common ground with addressee who is a witness in the

enquiry. Just as the speaker is helping Ghana by leading the investigations to establish the truth or otherwise of the allegation, the witness is also helping Ghana in appearing before the Commission to establish same.

Solidarity

According to B&L solidarity could be expressed by S claiming common ground with H by indicating that there is some sort of affinity between them in terms of group membership, values, attitudes, knowledge, interests and goals. In the data, forms such as *my colleague/friend/co-panellists*, and other terms of inclusiveness like *we, us, our* and first names were used to indicate solidarity.

Extract 4

Host: *Hon. A.P.*

Guest: *Now to come back to the question you just posed, my honourable member and his colleagues in parliament on the other side, the opposition side, were having fears; but I think now following from what the commission is doing, the fears are unfounded.* (MTV, "GMG)

Guest is an MP in the ruling party. The host invites him to respond to what the other guest, who is also an MP but from the main opposition party had said earlier. The fact that both are MPs is recognized and acknowledged by Hon A.P. As a result, he uses *my honourable member*, to establish common ground with his colleague MP by demonstrating group membership, regardless of their differences in opinion on the subject of discussion. In that case he performs a face-saving act. If he had referred to his colleague as "the opposition MP" that could have threatened the positive face of the MP from the other side of the political divide. ,

NEGATIVE POLITENESS

This is used to address the negative face of the hearer because there is the awareness on the part of the speaker that the hearer does not want his freedom to be hindered; neither does he want his actions to be impeded.

Apology/Asking for forgiveness

B&L consider apologies as a negative politeness strategy because they indicate "respect, deference, and distance rather than friendliness and involvement" (Wagner, 2004: 23). When a speaker makes an apology or asks for forgiveness it means he wants to make up for an action

previously committed and which infringed upon the face wants of the addressee. Sometimes too a speaker knowing very well that what he is about to say will threaten the face of the addressee can offer an apology beforehand. In such a case, the FTA addresses the negative face of the speaker. There were quite a lot of occurrences of such instances. Examples of apologies used were "I'm sorry", "excuse me", "forgive me', and 'let me apologise". Let's consider the conversational fragment below.

Extract 5

Host: *We have heard that some teachers in basic schools interviewed couldn't put their sentences together. I'm sorry. Erm is it not also true that some students who are poor, it has some correlation with the quality of teachers they had right from the beginning*?

Guest: *Poor teaching is a big problem. If a teacher doesn't know what they are doing, definitely the children wouldn't know what they are doing. (*GTV: "Counseling Session")

The guest is a professional teacher turned professional counselor, and for the host to suggest that some teachers could not speak English fluently was enough to wound the pride of the teacher-counselor. Hence the host has threatened the negative face of the counselor who has a teaching background, so he apologizes to restore equilibrium between him and the addressee (Leech 1983). Thus, the speaker uses apology as a damage repair strategy.

Extract 6

There is a company that is converting erm, erm, erm, latrine into gas. Forgive me those who are eating". (TV Africa: "Media Today")

Speaker renders an apology for her use of the word "latrine" because it is considered socially offensive, especially on radio. Even before uttering the word "latrine" she prefaces it with a hesitation marker *erm, erm, erm*, showing her awareness of the fecal matter the word conjures in the mind; hence, she appeals for tolerance from "those who are eating" and at the same time watching the programme. Her appeal for forgiveness is a redressive action to address the negative face of viewers.

FTAs

According to B&L, FTAs are acts or strategies that

threaten the positive or negative face of one's interlocutor. This section discusses one strategy: *on record/ bald on record* which B&L consider as the least polite strategy. Sub-strategies used included "disagreement", "criticism", "order" and "disrespect". The following examples typify their usage in the data.

Disagreement

One of B&L's politeness principles is "seek agreement" and "avoid disagreement". This principle is on the same wavelength with Leech's (1983) "Agreement Maxim" which runs as follows: "Minimize the expression of disagreement between self and other; maximize the expression of agreement between self and other". Disagreement is usually expressed in assertive/ representatives illocutionary act. The first part of the maxim was flouted by participants as the following examples illustrated.

Extract 7

Host: *Have we lost our African values?*
Guest1: *Yes.*
Host: *When was that*?
Guest 1: *Years ago*.
Guest 2: <u>*No, no, no, that's a lie.*</u> *But when we say that African values are broken,* <u>*that's a lie*</u>.
(TV Africa: "The Rundown Show")

In the exchanges, Guest 2 vehemently disagrees with Guest 1 that African values got lost years ago. In his disagreement, he performs an FTA on record without redressive action, and this is a threat to the negative face of Guest 1. Again Guest 2 impugns lies on the part of Guest 1, and this also smacks of impoliteness on the part of Guest 2.

Criticism

This is a situation where a speaker expresses disapproval by saying someone or something is wrong. As explained earlier, in MPDs this usually occurs when there are participants from opposing parties, especially the ruling party and the largest opposition party. In most cases, there are criticisms and counter-criticisms between these parties. In their bid to outdo the other, they perform bald on record FTAs, threatening each other's negative face as seen in Extract 8.

Extract 8

Guest 2: At some point, the first citizen of this republic

said … halt the payment that you are doing to this man because it has come to my notice that it is undeserving. Yet you ignored that call by the first citizen of this republic. You decided to ignore all his instructions and went ahead to pay WY. I think that the state has lost enough. This smacks of corruption! (TV Africa: "Media Today")

The speaker who is from one of the opposition parties criticizes government appointees for wrongfully paying a huge judgment debt to a man, against the instructions of the President. He does not take into consideration the negative face wants of the government spokesperson on the panel; hence he failed to provide a redressive action to minimize the FTA.

Showing disrespect

According to B&L, when a speaker's choice of words shows blatant disregard for a person or an institution, for whatever reason, it smacks of disrespect; and in linguistic politeness such disrespect constitutes an FTA (without redressive action). Extract 9 below is an illustrative example.

Extract 9

To me when it comes to the media, to me the most useless institution is the National Media Commission (TV Africa: "Media Today").

The panellist shows disrespect for the National Media Commission (NMC), the regulatory body responsible for exercising an oversight role regarding responsible journalism and other related issues regarding media ethics in the country. Interestingly, the panellist himself is a journalist, who takes on the NMC for dereliction of duty. By showing disrespect to a state-owned body, the panellist is also engaging in incendiary language that NMC cautions journalists against. By his disrespect, he becomes part of the problem of bellicose utterances by some journalists, on air. Again, his utterance is a serious FTA to the face want of the NMC member on the panel. The speaker could have provided a redressive action to mitigate the FTA.

CONCLUSION

The study has proffered illuminating insights into the various strategies (and sub-strategies) used in the achievement of politeness in Ghanaian MPDs. Drawing on PT , the study found out that 43.35 % of discussants marked politeness by addressing the positive face of their interlocutor (s) as against 38.93 and 15.70% for negative

politeness and FTAs, respectively. These results provide a basis to conclude that Ghanaian MPDs have a preference for positive politeness. The study also found out that kinship or familial terms are used in marking positive politeness. In this sense, the study deepens our knowledge and understanding of how panelists in Ghanaian MPDs show awareness of the face wants of one another. Against this backdrop the study adds to empirical studies on the ongoing conversation about the kind of linguistic politeness employed in certain cultures and in certain genres.

The findings of the study have some implications for media talk in Ghana, and further research. Panelists in media talk must be mindful of the face wants of one another in order that they could select linguistic choices that address the positive or negative face wants of fellow panelists for the achievement of successful interactions.

It would also be interesting to explore a gender-based comparative study regarding which of the genders in Ghanaian media panel discussions has a preference for which politeness strategies when the panel is composed of both male and female. Such a study will be in sync with Stodulkova (2013)'s study which investigated the influence of gender in British and American television talk-shows, and found that female discourse is more polite than male discourse.

All in all, there is no naysaying that politeness is observed by participants in their daily communication. However, whether or not one type of politeness strategy dominates the discussion could be known only through research; and this is what this paper has sought to do.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Oil, gas and goodwill: Assessing press coverage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities

Aiyesimoju Ayodeji Boluwatife[1] and Olasanmi Kehinde Ayodele[2*]

[1]Department of Mass Communication, College of Social Sciences, Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Osun State, Nigeria.
[2]Public Relations Unit, Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Osun State, Nigeria.

Oil, being the mainstay of Nigeria's economy has continuously generated controversies at various levels, particularly between government, exploration companies and host communities. One useful method of dousing such tension is to display a sense of empathy, creating some level of ownership mindset in natives and residents of host communities and the nation at large. This study probes into the volume of coverage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by selected newspapers; the directions given to the reportage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by the selected national dailies and issues of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities that received the greatest coverage by the selected national dailies. Content analysis, employing multi-stage and purposive sampling techniques was utilized for this study. Editions of The Guardian, The Nation, Vanguard and Punch for the year 2016 were analysed for this study. Data collected using the coding sheet was analyzed using Chi-Square and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This study posits those stakeholders and practitioner in NNPC's Public Relations and CSR arm should proactively engage the media, to boost confidence and goodwill in the oil and gas industry, thereby minimizing potential conflicts and mitigating the effects of lingering ones.

Key words: Corporate social responsibility, goodwill, public relations, newspaper coverage, oil and gas.

INTRODUCTION

As continuously reported in the local media, destruction of farmlands, water bodies, air and oil pollution, to mention a few have caused varying concerns in the happenings of the oil and gas industry vis-à-vis the preservation and sustainability of their host communities and environs. The environmental impacts of their activities include deterioration of natural resources and traditional infrastructures (Isiaka, 2010)

The Environment Impact Assessment Act in Nigeria of 1992 is as yet defined by environmental issues, impromptu development and expanding issues of homegrown and mechanical garbage removal and contamination. Monetary advancement exercises, particularly in the oil and gas area, speed up the deficiency of dirt and deforestation, loss of living space, loss of species and loss of biodiversity, just as

degeneration of wetlands. Water deficiencies and floods lead to the decay of metropolitan ecological quality and assume a significant part in the transmission of transmittable infections. Debasement in the water area is another significant part of natural corruption around the world, particularly in agricultural nations, including Nigeria (Onyenekenwa, 2011).

Corporate social responsibility as stated by Eleanor (2015) is taken by numerous firms, organization, industries as a tactic to global growth that brings ethical issues to the fore. It focuses on consideration of the social and environmental impacts of business activity and how they can be mitigated. It is viewed as one of the techniques where organizations attempt to make a positive effect on society while working with more prominent pressure upon the commitments an organization has to the locale, especially for beneficial exercises.

It is further described as a social agreement between the business and a community, whereby the community permits the business to operate within its jurisdiction to obtain jobs for residents and revenue through taxation and other means agreed upon by concerned parties (Adebisi, 2017).

For as much as the organization, corporations, corporate bodies, firm and other companies practice the corporate social responsibility concept, little credence is giving to such related activities in the newspaper. Since newspapers can be used to modify and shape the attitude or opinions of its reader and can also be used as a veritable tool for aiding development in the country, this study seeks to conduct an assessment of newspaper coverage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities. This study aimed to determine the coverage pattern of newspaper reporting given to CSR activities carried out by the oil industry in Nigeria.

Statement of problem

Geipel (2016) recounting the words of Rhys (2012) stated that "CSR is usually more about what a company is not doing, rather than what the company is. The meaning of this is that whatever a firm, industry or organization takes from any society for her existence and survival, no matter the quantity of what is taken, there should be a corresponding symbiotic form of relationship by way of contributing to the overall success of the society. This can be achieved through the execution of germane projects that would be of great benefit to where it, that is, where the organization is currently domiciled in. The organization's giveback game to society should be commensurate to what is taken. The above is the whole essence of corporate social responsibility; contributing to the positive image of an organisation.

The print media, especially newspapers, as stated by Odunlami and Soremekun (2013) have been identified as

one of the most effective means of communication. This is due to its unique features of reader control, exposure and permanence. Apart from that, it is a reliable channel being used by policymakers, government and organization to reach their audience to achieve their communication objectives. In a publication dated December 8, 2016, with the headline "CSR in Nigeria: The untold role of International Oil Companies (IOCs) in national development" on Vanguard Newspaper, it was stated that one of Nigeria's leading Oil producers in the country, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) cooperated with Mobil Producing Nigeria (MPN) Joint Venture (JV) undergrad grant which made available to Nigerian students from all walks of the nation, while 50% of this sum or N2 billion went to students from Akwa Ibom state, being the state facilitating the majority of the organization's exercises in Nigeria.

Likewise, over N57 million has similarly been spent on the NNPC/MPN JV secondary school grant targeted at impoverished students from Akwa Ibom State throughout the most recent four years while over N1 billion has been spent on the NNPC/Esso Exploration and Production Nigeria Limited (ExxonMobil auxiliary organization) global postgraduate grant to Nigerian students two decades ago.

As stated, by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (2016), the competition is considered as a formative interaction to energize greatness in the midst of secondary school students throughout the nation as they are considered future of this extraordinary country. The choice is essential for its corporate social responsibility and facilitation of its mission to impact the lives of Nigerians from a positive perspective.

Aside from the aforementioned, not many CSR activities of the oil industry have been given proper coverage in the newspapers. This study will take a cue from the coverage of NNPC's CSR activities in a bid to assess Nigeria's media coverage of the oil and gas industry.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine newspapers' coverage of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities of a key player in Nigeria's oil and gas industry – the Nigerian National Petroleum Commission (NNPC). Other objectives of this study are to:

1) Examine the volume of coverage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by the selected newspapers.
2) Examine the direction given to the reportage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by the selected national dailies.
3) Find out issues of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities that received the greatest coverage by the selected Nigerian national dailies.

Research questions

The following research questions have been drawn to pilot the study to a justified conclusion. They bother on the coverage patter of Nigeria's Oil industry. It is as follows:

1) What is the volume of coverage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by the selected newspapers?
2) What direction is given to the reportage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by the selected national dailies?
3) What issues of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities received the greatest coverage by the selected Nigerian national dailies?

Significance of the study

Researchers in media studies, organizational communication, human communication as well as other facets of mass communication will find the study uniquely useful as its contents might provoke a need for new concepts of academic and professional research. To organizations, firms and other companies looking to embark on the concept of corporate social responsibility, this study will lay good groundwork for them to thrive in their various host communities in which they are domiciled. Finally, this study will serve as a useful tool; a road map to be used by the media in the coverage of CSR related activities in Nigeria and beyond.

Scope of the study

This study is concerned with Newspaper Coverage of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) The scope of this study are four Nigerian newspapers; The Guardian, Punch, Vanguard and The Nation. According to nigerianfinder.com, the selected newspapers are among the first 10 newspapers in Nigeria. Supporting this claim, naij.com revealed that The Guardian newspaper is described as one of the earlier published newspaper publications in Nigeria which attracts international readers. The Punch newspaper is one of Nigeria's most prevalent newspapers because of its presentation and performance style. The Nation newspaper publishes clarifies news while the Vanguard newspaper is one of the most prominent owned newspapers of Nigeria by a private individual. The newspaper is noted for her dedicated nature to national issues by way of coverage which also spans the East, Niger-Delta, the North, and the Southwest. Newspaper editions between January 1, to December 31, 2016 are the study period.

Conceptual review of literature on CSR

There has been so much debate among scholars about the nature and purpose of corporate social responsibility which is today, becoming a fast-rising tool in ensuring effective community/organizational communication or relation. Corporate Social Responsibility also referred to as "CSR" is described as functions or activities carried out by organizations in their respective location to ensure a peaceful cohabitation between the organization and members of the public were in its domicile. The media, with relation to this study, the Print media, been serviced with the surveillance function are expected to cover all areas to give verified information to the public.

Corporate social responsibility

Corporate social responsibility is a means of discussing the extent of obligation a business has to its immediate society; a way of proposing policy ideas on how those obligations can be met as well as a tool by which the benefits to a business for meeting those obligations can be identified (Amole et al., 2012). According to Adamolekun (2005), CSR has grown from the mere buzzword of the 1960s and 1970s to its present critical and pervasive reality such that corporate bodies that are not practicing it may be unwittingly toying with their reputation and probably their bottom line. Corporate social responsibility has many names depending on the intent of the user organization and the purpose such as corporate citizenship, corporate social investment, good citizenship, stakeholders' capitalism, enlightened self-interest, corporate accountability, community relations, sustainable development and many more. However, the aims and objectives of CSR are the attempts by corporate bodies to develop a convivial relationship with their host communities.

While the idea of corporate social responsibility is well developed in several other parts of the world such as America, Britain, France and Canada the developing countries are yet to brace up to the new challenges and opportunities it offers. Corporate social responsibility has developed over the years to such levels today that organizations are now required to report it in the same way they audit and report on their financial performances.

In Nigeria, corporate social responsibility is still very much at a teething stage. To a considerable extent, it can be regarded as a fad for big organizations such as banks, manufacturing, oil and gas and telecommunication companies which talk so much about CSR just to create an image of socially responsible entities whereas they are far from being so. Companies that grosses as much as N1 billion after tax in profits annually cannot be said to practice CSR with token scholarships, sales bonanzas, obscure community projects that may not amount to 1% of their profit. Indeed, many of them are involved in charity philanthropy and sponsorship which are regarded as less altruistic and commensurate to the benefits derivable from the communal resources and the dangers the people are exposed to. The reason for this is not

farfetched as it could be situated in our history of dictatorial and much-compromised governments, coupled with government-dominated businesses.

Today, things are beginning to change as democracy has given the people back their silenced voices which enable them to demand their rights. The happenings in the industrialised areas of the country as well as the Niger Delta region have shown that corporate Nigeria would from now take CSR very seriously. It is expected that the internationally accepted standards of setting 10% of profit after tax for CRS activities would now begin to apply. There are a few multinational companies that have taken CSR seriously enough to commit a reasonable percentage of their earnings (5 - 10%) to corporate giving and other philanthropic activities. Among such companies that are aiming at international CSR performance are Unilever, British Tobacco and Shell Petroleum Development Company and Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

What distinguishes Philanthropy (Charity) from Corporate Social Responsibility? Although these two concepts are frequently mistaken for the other, they exhibit fundamental differences in terms of objectives, targets, cost, impact and regularity. Over the decades, the concept of CSR has continued to grow in importance and acceptability. Corporate social responsibility otherwise known as a social investment (Ephraim et al., 2015) is variously called corporate conscience, corporate citizenship, social performance or sustainable responsible business.

Whatever name called, the term corporate social responsibility, is described as a management concept wherein firms, organisations, industries infuse the concerns of the environment and its social aspects into the operation and interactions with their their social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with interested parties. Corporate social responsibility is a company's prompt response to a community's (especially the community playing host to the company) interest which could be social, physical (environmental), cultural or economic (Ephraim et al., 2015).

Adequately executed CSR activities can be highly influential in enhancing access to capital and markets, additional sales and profits, operational cost cutting, improved productivity and quality, efficient human resources base, improved brand image and reputation, enhanced customer loyalty, better decision making and risk management process. Proponents argue that organisations generate more long-term revenue in profits by operating with a perspective; while critics hold that CSR detracts from the economic role of business.

Managerial issues in CSR

Perspectives fluctuate on this issue of corporate social responsibility. This has given rise to diverse thought patterns on the subject matter hence, various ways of thinking exist. The principal way of thinking accepts organizations through their administrators as specialists of investors are by commitment expected to expand the current worth of the firm through an increment in benefit, (Bateman and Snell, 1999). This view is upheld by the way that economic performance is organizations' primary social responsibility along these lines, where organisation do not prioritise investors, as the main commitment, they would not be in the situation to satisfy the general public; particularly as benefit as re-investment factor is needed to speed up financial development.

The contention on the side of corporate social responsibility adds that firms, industries, organisations have a more extensive scope of duties that stretch out past the creation of labor and products at a benefit. These organisations has normal or fake characters who are individuals from the general public are normally and by commitment expected to be really and mindfully engaged with the local area and bigger ecological turn of events and substance programs (Bateman and Snell, 1999). Adjusting these restricting perspectives concerning corporate social responsibility is the way that organizations should accomplish more than improve creation factors like usefulness, development and benefit as intentional and purposeful endeavors are made at overseeing hazard factors like contamination, assets, squander, innovative perils, risky items and public security (Farrell and Fraedrich, 2016).

In all manner of operation, corporate social responsibility improves corporate notorieties and piece of the pie as it draws in more managers and workers, and makes connections between advertising and exposure, given that associations are seen, frankly, and reasonable when mix-ups are conceded, expressions of remorse are rapidly, truly and truly made and exercises are performed to compensate for botches, (Handy, 2002; Turban and Greening, 1997).

Supporters of corporate social responsibility stress the way that business openings and benefit are created dependent on orderly and vivacious endeavors of organisations at discovering answers for social issues, (O'Toole, 1991). It likewise saves organisations from lawless acts and feelings that can lessen corporate deals development and bookkeeping returns over some time.

Public issues of corporate social responsibility incorporate general wellbeing and security, energy preservation, public strategy, natural issues, association openly, social gifts and local area relations. In Nigeria, given the low degree of subjective education, absence of admittance to data and nonattendance of the act of open-book the board framework; Oko and Agbonifoh (2014), featured the public issues of corporate social responsibility with extraordinary regard for the common habitat and its administration. These public issues, consequently, structure the premise of assessing these

organizations as illustrative of firms in the oil business in Nigeria.

Oil communities in the Niger Delta

The Niger Delta area of Nigeria is located in the Southern area of the nation and is lined toward the south by the Atlantic Ocean and the east by Cameroun. The district possesses a surface space of around 112,110 square kilometers. It addresses roughly 12% of, Nigeria's all out surface region and passing by the 2006 populace registration, its populace is put at more than 28 million occupants. The example of settlement in the district is generally controlled by the accessibility of dry land and the idea of the landscape. Low alleviation and extremely helpless waste are the essential components liable for the diminishing number of enormous settlements in the district (Opara, 2008).

The Niger Delta is perhaps the biggest wetland on the planet. It covers a space of around 70 thousand square kilometers and is noted for its sandy beach front edge hindrances, saline mangroves, freshwater, lasting and occasional bog spills backwoods just as a marsh tropical jungle. The entire region is navigated and confused by numerous waterways, streams, streams, channels, and brooks. The waterfront line is pounded over time by tides of the Atlantic Ocean while the terrain is exposed to systems of flood by the different waterways, especially, River Niger. The Niger Delta comprises of nine states which, make up the southern international zone in Nigeria. The area is transcendently possessed by minority ethnic gatherings like Ijaws, Itsekiris, Urhobos, Ibibios, and Edos (NDDC, 2004).

The oil sects in the Niger Delta are those communities that play host to global oil organizations. They are not different from other areas of Nigeria. The bungle of brooks implies that individuals rely upon water for their subsistence. Any oil organization that looks for a comfortable life for individuals of her locale should consider its host networks live on a wetland where cultivating and fishing are the significant wellsprings of job. These oil communities include some part of Delta state, Rivers state, Edo state, Ondo state and a few pieces of Akwa Ibom State and its environs. A portion of these oil networks incorporate Okirika, Ogoni, Bonny, Kegbara-Dere, Erema, Perukele, Elele Alumini, Rumuekpe Port Harcourt, Akabuka, Amah, Ubeta, Ibeno, Opobo, Igbokoda among others.

The deficiency level in the communication of the Niger Delta is higher than what is obtains in Nigeria (Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), 2004). George (2004) points out the fact that the lead community is one that is embodied with the following characteristics:

1) Situated near an oil terminal which is under the careful gazes of furnished security agents.

2) Presents a clear picture of neediness and hopelessness by somewhere around 95% of its occupants.
3) Depends on water transport due to poor or no frontage road whose wharf is incapacitated and risky for water transport.
4) Drinking water is provided by an oil organization for a couple of hours daily.
5) The people group school needs fundamental conveniences as its most apparent gear are a chalkboard and seats.
6) There are numerous youthful and vivacious school leavers and dropouts who are considered unpracticed and unfit for work in the oil organization who thus, are enlisted into the developing aggressiveness in the area that consistently stands up to the security specialists.
7) The normal water and the air are contaminated by the outflow of harmful water brought about by vaporous flare and adjoining oil establishments.
8) Farming which is the customary wellspring of work and the significant wellspring of business for individuals from the local area is made unimaginable due to oil slicks.

Many years of political and financial minimization that arose from the disregard of the Niger Delta area by progressive governments, and the underlying wavering of global organizations to address their social obligation and add to social advancement revered neediness in the districts. The approaches of global oil organizations have been a significant wellspring of winning viciousness in the oil networks of Niger-Delta, (World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2001).

To brace this point, George (2004) states that this area is portrayed by

1) Mass killings emerging from regular conflicts between networks (between local area conflicts) and conflicts among networks and security powers.
2) Hostage-taking the staff and property of oil-creating organizations are regularly focuses of prisoner taking.
3) Large scale burglary of oil and loss of huge measures of income.
4) Sabotage and disturbance of activities of oil partnerships.

Enyia (2000) opined that "the neighborhood objectives of intense destitution in the Niger Delta locale of Nigeria have put a few obligations on oil organizations working nearby. The troublesome territory of these networks and the low or complete absence of government presence as far as suitable activities, make the region unstable and individuals fierce, with its specialist Community Relations necessities".

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)

was set up on April 1, 1977. The Corporation, with added responsibilities to its exploration activities was given forces with functional interests in refining, petrochemicals and product transportation coupled with marketing. NNPC built processing plants between 1978 and 1989 in Warri, Kaduna and Port Harcourt and assumed control over the 35,000-barrel Shell Refinery set up in Port Harcourt in 1965.

In 1988, the NNPC was marketed into 12 vital business units, covering the whole oil industry operations: exploration and production, gas development, refining, distribution, petrochemicals, engineering, and commercial investments. At present, the auxiliary organizations include:

1) Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC)
2) The Nigerian Gas Company (NGC)
3) The Products and Pipelines Marketing Company (PPMC)
4) Integrated Data Services Limited (IDSL)
5) National Engineering and Technical Company Limited (NETCO)
6) Hydrocarbon Services Nigeria Limited (HYSON)
7) Warri Refinery and Petrochemical Co. Restricted (WRPC)
8) Kaduna Refinery and Petrochemical Co. Restricted (KRPC)
9) Port Harcourt Refining Co. Restricted (PHRC)
10) NNPC Retail
11) Duke Oil

NNPC, with the above-mentioned subs is controlled by the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), an office inside the Ministry of Petroleum Resources. The DPR guarantees consistence with industry guidelines; measures applications for licenses, rents and allows, sets up and authorizes natural guidelines. The DPR, and NAPIMS, assume an exceptionally critical part in the everyday exercises all through the business.

Nigeria is positioned as the 10th oil producer, as of November 2006, the 6th biggest oil exporter among OPEC individuals. The country's seven hydrocarbon-bearing bowls hold 35 billion barrels demonstrated stores of generally sweet raw petroleum, NOGIO (2006). In any case, the more noteworthy portion of Nigeria's hydrocarbon stores is gas. With 184 trillion cubic feet (tcf) of sweet gas, Nigeria has the seventh biggest gas storage on the planet. Gas is a generally new measurement in the Nigerian oil and gas industry. In spite of the fact that related gas was found with the main oil discovers, gas was for long not discovered to be productive to abuse.

Kupolokun (2006) expressed that the gas subsector was projected in 2006 in a matter of seconds to frame a focal board of Nigeria's financial and industrialization technique, just as the key development region for NNPC, and one of the bases for the internationalization of its

tasks. The nation additionally runs a joint improvement zone (JDZ) with the island nation of Sao Tome and Principe, bearing about 4b barrels of rough in the Bight of Biafra, yet the Obasanjo government gives NNPC no job in this endeavor aside from giving office space in the company's Abuja bunch central command.

NNPC is a coordinated oil and gas organization, entirely claimed by the Federation. It is a holding organization with 11 completely possessed and two part of the way claimed auxiliaries or corporate specialty units (CBUs). It additionally has a developing number of corporate divisions or corporate procedure units (CSUs). Staff strength has contracted radically since 2003, when it was around 17,000, to around 9,000 in the primary quarter of 2007.

The company's income base gets principally from the returns of an everyday assignment of unrefined, the size of which is audited occasionally. It remained at 44,000 b/d as of March 2006. This incorporates maybe the vague amount of NNPC lifting's, the returns of which NNPC uses to pay petrol benefits charge for PSC project workers and to reimburse credits. Furthermore, 445,000 b/d of unrefined are apportioned for refining in the enterprise's auxiliary treatment facilities available to be purchased in the homegrown market. The enterprise pays a fixed total for this unrefined, regardless of the overall market cost. Incomes from refined items and rough deals address around 90% of NNPC's incomes.

The organization's significant accomplices have been Shell, Chevron, Texaco, Mobil, Agip, Elf, and Total or their archetype organizations. Toward the finish of 2004, these organizations together delivered more than 90% of Nigerian rough. Numerous more modest native organizations do investigation and creation procedure on a sole danger premise. Since the beginning of the Obasanjo organization in 1999, an expanding number of concessions have come under the control of non-Western IOCs; Chinese, Korean, Indian, Indonesian in both upstream and downstream areas, with NNPC, quickly contracting associations with the unpracticed players.

Theoretical framework

Framing theory

This study utilized framing theory as its theoretical foundation. This theory posits that the media is capable of creating the frame with which media audiences understand issues being reported by introducing news items within a predefined context. Frames can be designed to enhance understanding or are used as cognitive routes to link stories to the bigger picture. Going by Weaver (2007), there is a clear conceptual intersection between the concept of framing and press coverage. Hence, the application of this theoretical

Table 1. Selected Nigerian dailies.

S/N	Selected Nigerian dailies	Selected year (2016)
1	The Guardian Newspaper	365 editions
2	Punch Newspaper	365 editions
3	Vanguard Newspaper	365 editions
4	The Nation Newspaper	365 editions
	Total	1, 460 editions

Source: Author's field work 2016

concept to this study. The idea of framing is similar to the second level of agenda-setting which explores the relative salience of attributes of issues, as McCombs (2005) and Ghanem (1997) as described in detail. It is against this backdrop, this study examines the press coverage and framing of stories around oil and gas.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes content analysis as the research design for this study. Ate (2013) stated that content analysis examines the text, graphics and images in selected newspapers in elements like news-stories, opinions, letters-to-the-editor, editorials and cartoons". This study emphasized front and back pages, as well as inside pages of the four, selected Nigerian dailies intending to examine NNPC CSR related stories and other related CSR stories that do not reflect NNPC.

The essence of such devout is to examine issues on CSR that received prominence and to ascertain the extent of coverage of CSR related activities by the papers under study.

Analysis of direction of manifest which consists of editorial matters (news stories, editorials, opinion, articles, feature articles, letter-to-the-editor, pictures and cartoons); position or placement of story items, depth/length of the story and major key players/element in the news was done quantitatively while textual analysis of the items which deals with language, style and bias was done quantitatively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Population of study

The study population is the 2016 edition of The Guardian, Punch, Vanguard and The Nation newspapers. Therefore, the population for this study is exemplified in the Table 1. The total population for this study was 1, 460 editions of the selected Nigerian dailies (Table 1).

Sample size

The monthly sample of the selected newspaper was arrived at through the content sampling technique of Stempel (1952) cited by Ate (2013). Stempel (1952) conducted content sampling on separate samples of 6, 12, 18, 24 and 48 issues of a newspaper and discovered

that there was no significant difference in terms of having compared the average content of each sample. Through the above guideline, this study sampled the entire editions of the selected newspapers totaling 1460 editions.

Sampling technique

Four privately-owned Nigerian national dailies, The Guardian, Punch, Vanguard and The Nation newspapers were sampled for this study purposively. The choice of these newspapers was predicated on the fact that they circulate in the country and cover most states of the federation. This simply means that the total sample population for the study is the 1,460 editions of the selected newspapers.

The multi-stage sampling procedure was used in determining the sample size for content analysis for this study. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2011) in Ate (2013), most content analysis in mass media involves multi-stage sampling".

The first stage involves the sampling of newspapers. The Guardian, Punch, Vanguard and The Nation newspapers were randomly selected. The second stage of the multi-stage sampling procedure involved the selection of the specific issues to be used in the content analysis. Three hundred and sixty-five (365) editions of The Guardian were selected for the year 2016; the same approach was applied to the other three (3) papers; Punch, Vanguard and the Nation newspapers. Therefore, the total number of editions selected for the analysis is 1, 460.

In selecting the dates of the edition for the samples, the purposive sampling technique was adopted using the criterion of CSR-rich editions and ensuring that all the days of the week are adequately represented.

In answering research 1: What is the volume of coverage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by the selected newspapers? This Table was used.

Table 2 shows that there is a significant difference in the volume of coverage by Newspapers as the Chi-square calculated is significant at the 0.05 level. Most issues fall within the category of long (55.6%). 59.0% of the issues on the economy are long. 69.6% of crime

Table 2. A cross tabulation of coverage by volume.

Coverage	Space			Total
	Short	Medium	Long	
Economy	8	17	36	61
	13.1%	27.9%	59.0%	100.0%
Crime	3	4	16	23
	13.0%	17.4%	69.6%	100.0%
Corporate social responsibility	1	3	10	14
	7.1%	21.4%	71.4%	100.0%
Organizational structure	0	20	8	28
	0.0%	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
Total	12	44	70	126
	9.5%	34.9%	55.6%	100.0%

Source: Author's field work 2016.

Table 3. Direction by issue coverage.

Issue coverage	Direction			Total
	Favourable	Not favourable	Neutral	
Economy	20	3	38	61
	32.8%	4.9%	62.3%	100.0%
Crime	0	18	5	23
	0.0%	78.3%	21.7%	100.0%
Corporate social responsibility	4	1	9	14
	28.6%	7.1%	64.3%	100.0%
Organizational structure	10	2	16	28
	35.7%	7.1%	57.1%	100.0%
Total	34	24	68	126
	27.0%	19.0%	54.0%	100.0%

X^2=65.166 df=6, P<0.05.
Source: Author's field work 2016.

coverage is long, 71.4% of corporate social responsibility is long while 28.6% of coverage of organizational structure is long. The organizational structure has a largely medium space (71.4%).

In answering research 2: What direction is given to the reportage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by the selected national dailies?

Direction differs by issues as the chi-square calculated is significant at the 0.05 level. Most reports on the economy are neutral (62.3%), while a favourable report on the economy constitutes 32.8%. 78.3% of the coverage on Crime is unfavourable as 21.7% is neutral. 64.3% of reports on Corporate social responsibility is neutral, 28.6% is favourable and only one report is unfavourable. 57.1% of coverage on organizational structure is neutral (Table 3).

In answering research 3: What issues of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities received the greatest coverage by the selected Nigerian national dailies?

There is no significant difference in the volume of coverage of Nigeria's oil industry CSR activities by Newspaper as the chi-square calculated is not significant at the 0.05 level. From the responses in the table above, the largest share of issue coverage goes to reports or coverage of NNPC role in the economy (48.4%) and the organizational structure accounts for 22.2%. This is followed by Crime (18.3%). CSR activities account for 11.1% of coverage (Table 4). The CSR activities of the

Table 4. Cross tabulation of issue coverage by Dailies.

Dailies	Issues				Total
	Economy	Crime	Corporate social responsibility	Organizational structure	
Guardian news papers	16 66.7%	1 4.2%	4 16.7%	3 12.5%	24 100.0%
Vanguard newspapers	13 36.1%	10 27.8%	4 11.1%	9 25.0%	36 100.0%
Punch newspapers	11 55.0%	5 25.0%	3 15.0%	1 5.0%	20 100.0%
The Nation newspapers	21 45.7%	7 15.2%	3 6.5%	15 32.6%	46 100.0%
Total	61 48.4%	23 18.3%	14 11.1%	28 22.2%	126 100.0%

X^2=16.017 df=9, P>0.05.
Source: Author's field work 2016.

NNPC are the least covered of the activities of the organization.

Conclusion

This research work examined how the selected newspaper covered NNPC's CSR activities in Nigeria. It is a content analysis of four three privately-owned newspapers, The Punch, The Nation, Vanguard and the Guardian in the coverage of NNPC's CSR activities in Nigeria and it yielded the following conclusions that most stories about NNPC were not adequately presented as there were more stories about the organizational activities of NNPC by the four selected newspapers.

The findings in this study support the observations that, activities on corporate social responsibility were not adequately covered. The media need to re-orient and re-position themselves. The frame and set agenda for public discussion. It was observed that reports on corporate social responsibility were not adequately reported as most issues reported in the newspapers. The reports indicate the central position of the NNPC to the Nigerian economy, ever since the discovery and exploitation of oil, as well as the establishment of the NNPC, the organization has played a vital role in the upstream and the downstream sectors.

Since results presented in this study indicated that newspapers' reportage on NNPC's CSR activities are low and gave high prominence to news on the economic activity and moderate in-depth report of news stories on other issues, it would be pertinent to conclude that newspaper coverage of corporate social responsibility in the country has been impressively low, generally. This is because, on its part, newspapers have not succeeded in providing the people with information that bother on CSR. Findings from this study indicate that news stories on CSR activities of NNPC were at 11.1%, a considerably low reportage.

Since CSR benefits companies through improved image and reputation, improved trust and understanding, larger and more prominent profile, better market position, more business, increased attractiveness to potential recruits, cost savings and increased efficiency, risk management, benefits company culture; every corporate organization should set up an effective and efficient unit to ensure that CSR programs portray economic responsibility, legal responsibility, ethical responsibility, philanthropic responsibility, charity principle, stewardship principle, and environmental friendliness to the community. This act or acts should be given proper reportage in the media.

CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflicts of interests.

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