

## PHOTOGRAPH FRAMING INFLUENCE ON NEWSPAPER READERS' EMOTION OF VIOLENCE REPRESENTATION

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### **Abstract**

*Photographs are representations of images used for communication on newspapers. They evoke readers' feelings and excite emotions on the presented issue. How newspaper readers in Onitsha respond to photographs dealing with violence, like the Fulani herdsmen attack on Agatu communities in Benue State, is investigated in this study. The survey research method was used to evaluate the reactions of 369 respondents, determined through the Topman's formular, to the violence depicted in Sun and The Guardian newspapers. It was found that clarification of information stimulated consumption desire for photographs; photographs that aid news stories in the intensification of media experience aroused the greatest emotion than those that stand alone. Content presentation perspective was found to influence readers' attitude towards the presented issue. Public agenda arising from the photographs aroused emotional dispositions. It was recommended that caution should prevail in presenting violent photographs, capable of inciting reprisal reactions. Objectivity is also advocated in balanced reporting of violence with photographs because sensationalism could impede national security resulting from emotions*

**Key words: Photograph, framing, emotion, violence.**

### **Introduction**

Violence is a contraption in a normal society. It is characterized by destruction to lives and property, arising from a conflict between parties. The parties are identifiable entities which can represent individuals or organized groups. Disagreements in opinion or interest seem to be the major causes of conflict, which snowballs from a mere verbal vituperates to escalated destructions, inimical to human desires in a decent society. It means, therefore, that conflict is a bi-polar pull which position parties at opposing ends as depicted by interest (Owuamalam, 2007). It is a signifier of what human feelings represent on a given issue among persons, as members of a dynamic society.

The Burkain Pentad (Akpan, 1995) shows a progression of violence as arising from a given subject. It graduates from rising action to defined positions in the first instance. If the conflict is not resolved, then the following action rises to crisis where violence becomes an avenue for interest expression. In that situation, "contentious issues lead to confrontation" (Owuamalam, 2016).

The extent of violence visited on humanity, therefore, becomes news since human interest is excited. "News is information about events, people, or issues that the public wants or needs to know" (Levin 2000, p.16). It is the aroused interest that stimulate emotions expressed by those who learn about it. Photographs readily provide the needed information which helps to explain a violent experience. It means that such photographs represent the said violence and its toll on humanity, like in the case of the conflict between Fulani herdsmen and Agatu communities in Benue State, where lives and properties were claimed to be lost. It is through photographs that the nature and extent of devastation can be seen and evaluated by newspaper readers.

There are two kinds of photographs used in newspapers. The first is 'stand alone' which according to Udeze and Ngwu (2003), refers to nothing other than pictorial content as presented. The "Page 3 Girl," contained in the *Sun*, is a vivid example. It calls attention to the subject in the photograph and is also open

to various interpretations, based on the generated emotion of the content assessor. The other type of photographs is the one that accompanies a news story in order to clarify an experience or satisfy information need. It is this type of photograph that interests the current study.

Photographs play a journalistic purpose in news presentation (Mencher, 1997). Facts are presented through photographs as evidence of what has occurred. This view lends credence to the concept of seeing is believing (Bruder, 2007). It is the visual impact of photographs that attracts attention to the presented violent issue as to arouse interest in its assessment, based on knowledge of association with reality. It is therefore, a measure of emotion excited and its nature that determine audience response (Miller, 2002). The import is that the intervening analytical indices, whether subjective or objective, facilitates overt expressions as behaviour, which is perceived vividly as emotion.

Emotion is the response expressed on contact with photographic content which expresses the feeling of the newspaper readers on the violence represented by the photographs. It is how the readers' response on seeing a violence photograph, representing the Fulani herdsmen conflict in Agatu village in Benue State, as reported in the *Sun* and *The Guardian* that became the focus of this study. The essence is to investigate how the ascertained responses explain human attitudes and behavioural change, in a violent situation.

However, human reaction to photographs is based on the perspective of presentation. For instance a photograph taken with the camera above the subject tends to produce a dwarfed image and reduces the strength of the presented subject, unlike one taken with the camera below the subject but raised to capture the entire image. In the second photograph, the subject is enhanced with strength and capabilities open to various interpretations. If the camera is placed literally horizontal to the subject, the obtained image is neither dwarfed nor enhanced hence, results in a perceived objectivity in representation. The communicative nature of the photographs representing violence, therefore, is dependent on how the image is framed, in order to achieve emotion in the newspaper reader. The understanding explains why this study became interested not only in finding if violent photographs attract newspapers readers' attention to the raised issue but sought to establish whether photograph framing influences readers' emotion. It is believed that where stimulation of emotion is ascertained, then how such media content help in information need satisfaction for the consumer could then be explained.

### **Statement of the Problem**

How to present facts without stirring emotions that could result in reprisal attracts is a problem in using photographs to represent violence in newspapers. The dilemma is an issue in photojournalism, as applicable to newspapers. The thin line between objectivity and subjectivity in news reporting finds relevance in photograph, i.e. representation of violence, as presented for readers' consumption. It implies that the perspective adopted in providing the used photographs can influence how the presented images are interpreted. It becomes necessary, therefore, to ascertain how the photographs about violence in Agatu communities in Benue State are reacted to, as response on the subject, by newspaper readers.

In July, 2017, a crisis was reported about a violent clash between Fulani herdsmen and Agatu villagers in Benue State. Various newspapers were consumed to obtain the details. Photographs were used by the newspapers to establish claims of violence. Do the photographs reflect what actually took place in the communities? What was the impact of those photographs on the newspaper readers? Did their reactions represent expressed emotions, based on their exposure to the photograph contents? The answers need to be obtained so as to know if photograph framing has any influence on how newspaper readers respond emotionally to images presented as representation of violence.

### **Objectives of the Study**

Three objectives were set for this study as follows:

1. To find if photographs representing violence in Agatu attracted newspaper readers attention in Onitsha metropolis and why.
2. To determine if reactions to the photographs were based on how the images were represented.
3. To ascertain if any link exist between how the readers reacted to the photographs and how the images were represented.

### **Research Questions**

The three research questions which guided this study were as follows:

1. What level of newspaper readership attention in Onitsha is drawn to photographs representing violence at Agatu?

2. How were readers' feelings manifested as a result of the presented perspective of used photographs?
3. What is the linkage between how the photographs were framed and readers' emotion expressed on the violence?

### **Research Hypothesis**

One hypothesis was formulated to be tested in this study as follows:

H<sub>0</sub>: How photographs were framed did not condition newspaper readers' emotion towards the violence at Agatu.

H<sub>1</sub>: How photographs were framed, conditioned newspaper readers' emotion towards the violence at Agatu.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study was limited to two newspapers read by residents of Onitsha metropolis. The newspapers were *Sun* and *The Guardian*, particularly their editions in July, 2017. Only photographs representing the violence in Agatu, resulting from the conflict between Fulani herdsmen and Agatu community members were used in the study. Adults of different demographic classifications participated in this study, provided they fell within the selected study units, in the area of study.

### **Justification for the Study**

This is an enquiry designed to ascertain if the second level of agenda-setting, presented as content framing effect by McCombs, Shaw and Weaver, (1997) applies to communication with photographs representing violence in newspapers. According to Miller (2002, p.262), "first-level agenda setting deals with the objects on the media and public agendas while second-level agenda setting considers attributes of these objectives. At this level, the media not only suggest what the public should think about but also influence how people should think about the issue". The import is to understand if newspaper readers' emotion is conditioned by how the photographs on violence were presented for consumption. It, therefore, probes the influence of perspective presentation as a probable cause of opinion formation and attitudinal change, as to ascertain the significance of media framing on content consumers' emotion. The study, then fits into the class of explanatory study as research in contemporary times.

Research abound in film violence particularly among children. Those studies used images presented as an illusion of motion (Owuamalam, 2007) since they are not static but dynamic. The progression of emotion and its effect on attitudinal and behavioural change are easier to observe and measure than if the incoming communication were static like in photographs. It becomes necessary to understand if a similar impact should be expected from presented still photograph interpreted from the repertoire of the consumer's experience but aided by the information accompanying it as text knowledge about how photographs influence the emotion of assessors, particularly on a static medium like the newspaper, different from the dynamic nature of the electronic medium such as television or film ought to be obtained. It is the said intellectual vacuum arising from a probable near absence of how photographs in newspapers influence emotions that makes this study unique.

It is trite to assert that photographs attract attention on presentation. The reason for such attention may be traceable to different suggestions based on who is involved. It is, however, unknown how the framing of photographs communicate effectively in the achievement of meaning, whose interpretation generates emotion that conditions attitude and behavioural change. It is to know the "how" of presentation and its consequence on emotion, as a predisposing element in interest arousal that makes this study necessary.

The result will no doubt aid in understanding how emotion is excited, so as to be able to determine how readers' response is likely to be in a given communication situation, involving the representation of violence, through the use of photographs. Such a knowledge would be rewarding to persuaders who may wish to use photographs in newspapers to achieve a specific objective. It will also be beneficial to development communication, since the photograph can create awareness or reinforce opinion and belief. It is the aesthetic and intellectual values of photographs as a communication approach that needs to be appreciated.

This study is justified since there is a paucity of literature related to how photographic framing influences the emotion of its assessor. What makes the desire to react to the presented images needs to be known and understood, so that caution could be considered by news editors in the use of photographs in dealing with contentious conflict situations, involving violence. The study therefore, is expected to contribute substantially to photojournalism literature so that reporters, scholars and researchers will access

an empirical evidence to know how photographs, particularly those that represent violence, influence emotion and predispose attitude and opinion change on a raised issue.

### **Conceptual Discussion**

Pleasure and displeasure are involved in media content interpretation. The experience arises from the evaluation of media content structure and composition (Shoemaker and Reese, 1991). According to them, “content reflects social reality (mass media as mirror of society)”. It is the reporter’s socialization and attitude in the society that determines what is presented as media content for consumption. This view explains why Oskamp (1997) refers to news as “second-hand reality,” since it is dependent on what the reporter desired to be presented to society. Such content is society determined, based on the realities and events at the moment. Luhmann (2003) believes that the diversity in content appreciation is a result of how reality is perceived by the content provider. This view explains what provides the content which informs consumer on the supposed reality, as perceived by the source.

The experience enables the determination of needed elements, capable of conveying information which society needs (Mattelart, 2003). It is such a consideration that makes photographs useful, in the sharing of news experience, as presented in newspapers. Nwabueze (2009, p.2) explains that “every definition of news recognizes that something has to be selected, written and published or aired through a mass medium for audience consumption before it can become news”. The explanation gives credence to Nwodu’s (2006, p.4) assertion of the News Agency of Nigeria that “news is the report of an event which both the editor and the reporter consider good enough for publication”. The expressed views, therefore, provide an insight into what is news, like the Fulani herdsmen clash with members of Agatu communities in Benue State. It is the excitement of emotion, caused by presentation of destroyed property as a clarification of facts that calls attention to photographs used in conveying the meaning of violence.

The photographs contain images of destroyed properties which signify violence. The violence is claimed to have arisen from human conflict in interest, which the accompanying texts provided as a complement. It is the holistic consumption of the newspaper presentations (headline, text and photograph), that generate the fuss which is expressed as emotion by the content consumer Ezekiel and Ezekiel (2007). Attention is drawn to the photograph as evidence of “what has happened”. It stimulates interest in knowing why it happened from a human interest perspective. It also meets the accountability requirements of the media from society as a factual report and a responsibility to inform society on happenings as a social responsibility action by the newspaper.

Newspapers are print publications containing occurrences within the society and presented for audience consumption. The audience constitute persons who interact with newspaper contents as source of information, knowledge and for entertainment. They disperse or leave the media source at the end of satisfying their respective needs for attending to the content (Owuamalam, 2007). It means that newspaper readers as content consumers approach the publication with a subjective consideration and leave it with an objective knowledge (McQuail, 2005). How the reader responds to the content suggests whether content effect has excited the emotion. It means, therefore, that emotion is a valid effect of media content consumption. Zillmann (1991 a) affirms that effects explained as emotion are dependent on the individual who is exposed to the content, the presented content details and the context of occurrence and happenings. On that score, “the basic premise that contact with the media influences emotions is undoubtedly true” (Miller, 2000 p.251) becomes notable. It is therefore, an investigation as to the context for using photographs and their perspectives in presentation that defines the relevance of this study where contact with photographs representing violence in newspapers are assessed for its influence on readers’ emotion.

Emotion is a strong feeling resulting as the affective aspect of consciousness (Borchers, 2002). It is a conscious mental reaction, subjectively experienced as a strong feeling. It is usually directed towards a specific object and typically accompanied by physiological and behavioural changes in the body. Those changes result in twitched faces or laughter, anger and fury or endorsements with clapping, depending on the individual’s response to the presented content. It is a feeling that affects our behaviour, human relations, and performance at work Ashkansy and Daus (2002). Jordan, Ashkansy and Hartel (2002) likened emotion to feelings and expound the types of feelings as “happiness, surprise, fear, sadness, anger and disgust”. Lussier, (2005, p.167) described feelings as ‘subjective, usually disguised as facial statements, neither right nor wrong but behaviour is’.

Communication “is the most important function of photographs. Photographs may communicate emotions as well as facts. They inform and express.” (Levin 2000, p.175). Photographs provide visual appeal as attention-getting device, hence its use in newspapers. The essence is to use photographs to lend credibility to the presented news story since what is seen is more believable than what is read. It probably shows the

violence it represents in a more vivid form than any illustration can provide hence, the arousal of human interest and the excitement of emotions.

In this study, the photographs accompanying violence at Agatu is subjected to readers' assessment, so as to determine how they resonate according to individual expressions. Such a determination would explain why the newspaper readers responded the way they did, on seeing the violence photographs. It became necessary, therefore, to aggregate and evaluate such feelings, in order to ascertain if any link can be established between the photographs and expressed emotion.

The application of photography in print media definitely has a long history. The era of photojournalism was the successor of an era of use of illustrated images (artist's drawings) in newspapers. As early as 1590, illustrations by John White were appearing in *Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*. Similarly, some illustrated newspapers started in the 1850s began to flourish with the American Civil War (1861-1865). They included *The Southern Illustrated News*, *Harper's Weekly* and Frank Leslie's *Illustrated News* (Bittner, 1989, p.132-133).

These artists' illustrations were evidently the forerunners of modern photojournalism. Bittner (1989, p.132) comments on this point as follows:

Despite the changes in the development of still photography in the 1800s, photographs were not used in the daily production of the newspaper until later. The roots of photojournalism grew from the work of artists, not photographers. Although the War Between the States, the Civil War, spotlighted sketch artists' contribution to mass communication, especially because of the widespread use of their work in newspapers, this era was by no means the first to bring the artists to the attention of the reader.

However, it was the Rumanian painter, lithographer and photographer, Carol Szathmari who took pictures of the Crimean War (1853-1856) that is acclaimed as the first photojournalist. Other early breakthroughs included the first halftone picture reproduction by *The Daily Graphic* of New York on March 4, 1880.

But the "golden age" of photojournalism came between 1930 and 1950s. This era witnessed vibrant application of photography in journalism. Bittner (1989) observes that this period witnessed the coming on the scene of publications like *Picture Post* (London), *Paris Match* (Paris), *Arbeiter-illustrierte-Zeitung* (Berlin), *Life* (USA), *Look* (USA), *Sports Illustrated* (USA), *Daily Mirror* (London), and *The New York Daily News* (New York). These newspapers and magazines "built their huge readerships and reputations largely on their use of photography and photographers such as Robert Capa, Alfred Eisentaedt, Margaret Bourke-White and W. Eugene Smith became well-known names" (Bittner, 1989, p.12).

With these breakthroughs of the 20th century, pictures came to take their place of prominence in print journalism. Greatly boosting this change is the progressive advancements in the science of photography. Mbah (2010) thus notes that marriage of photography and journalism has become complete today; and that this has been monumentally boosted by technological innovations in photography and electronic data processing. All this has "has brought digitization and computerization into photography, thus widening the possibilities in photojournalism In fact, pictures have definitely become an indispensable part of journalism whose relevance has stood at par with that of texts" (Mbah, 2010, p.15).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study adopted two major theories in explaining details related to photographic framing influence on newspaper readers' emotion, as applicable to violence representation. The first is a theory of media and society referred to as media framing as second level of agenda-setting. The other is a theory of media processing and effects, known as empathic reactions to media content. It is in the realm of theories of the media and emotion. A brief explanation of the selected theories are as follows:

The basic concept that the media "may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about" (Cohen, 1963 p.13), explains the concept of agenda setting. The implication is that issues are significantly made prominent for audience consideration. This explains why McCombs (1972) classified agenda setting as "media agenda," "public agenda" and "policy agenda." It is the progression from one category of set agenda to the other that signifies the importance which photographs representing violence can exert on the newspaper reader. It is seen on the

newspaper, its content discussed and raises emotion as reaction leading to the establishment of policies. It is therefore, how they think about it that suggest an influence on content consumers.

According to Miller (2002, p. 262), “the concept of framing is central to consideration of second-level agenda setting. It suggest that framing is a process through which the media emphasize some aspects of reality and downplays other aspects.” The investigations of Cakeshita (1997) and Ghanem (1977) provide empirical evidence of how framing applies to media content influence. It is the void created by a paucity of knowledge on how the perspective of photographic representation of violence in newspapers as framing, “will work as effect process,” (McQuail 2005, p.511), that made this study’s perspective, desirable. Therefore, the influence which photographic framing has on newspaper readers’ emotion needs to be understood and clarified. It is such a desire to know that stimulated on interest in framing, as the subject of enquiry in this study, using the Fulani Herdsmen attack on Agatu community, as its basis of assessment.

Also, the empathic reaction to media content was considered as an offshoot of theories of the media and emotion. This theory, initiated by Zillmann (1991 a and b) does not only deal with “the general and nonspecific emotion, aroused by media contact, but also considers the emotional responses that are more content specific,” such as to what photographs on violence, mean to newspaper readers. It became necessary to understand the “distinction between cognitive dimensions of empathy and affective dimensions of empathy (Tamborini, 1996).

Here, how newspaper readers in Onitsha in Anambra State were able to take the place of Agatu community members of Benue State, needs explanation as a cognitive emotion. It is, however, distinct from the emotional concern for destruction symbolizing violence on the property of others from the presented photographs as the effective dimension of emotion. Both aspects of emotion therefore became researchable.

The import of empathic reaction to this study is an explanation of how the of photographs used in the newspapers, to show destruction of properties in Agatu, were able to stir emotions in the newspaper readers who make contact with the photographic contents. At first, the emotion of the readers would be aroused to the “unusual,” and facilitate a probing experience to know what has happened. The text accompanying the photographs helps in explaining the cause of seen destructions caused by violence in the crisis at Agatu. The newspaper reader puts him or herself in the shoes of those whose houses were destroyed, in their appreciating of the consequence of such a violent situation. This experience explains why human interest drives content consumption and enables consumers to feel for others, as a cognitive reaction. It also explains why they show concern for the affected, as an affective consequence to such contact with photographs representing violence in newspapers (Tamborini, 1996).

### **Method of Study**

The interview research method was used in this study since it was the reaction of the individual as newspaper readers to content consumption that was needed for data collection. The method was used as a quantitative method through the opinionaire as recommended by Best and Khan (2006). The opinionaire uses set interview questions in written form to evaluate the extent of response to specified issues, related to the study. This approach enables a generalization to be made so as to whether photographs representing violence influence newspapers readers’ emotion based on its framing.

### **Population of Study**

Onitsha metropolis was the area of study. Its population is finite at more than 100,000 persons. The commercial nature of the city makes accuracy in population doubtful at any given time due to the rapid influx and exodus of persons from the area, on daily basis. Besides it was the population of newspaper readers resident in Onitsha that was vital to this study. There is no authentic population of the said readers, like fur *Sun* and *The Guardian* in the area. It is important to note that circulation figures for the said newspapers in the area would not amount to population of readers since each copy has a primary, secondary and so many others who come in contact with the copy.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The Topman’s formular was used to determine a sample size for this study since the population of those who read *Sun* and *The Guardian* was not provided. The study, therefore, decided to ask 60 persons in Woliwo whether they read *Sun* and *The Guardian*. It was found that while 28 (46.66%) claimed they read the newspaper, 32 (53.33%) said they did not. The Topman’s formular was therefore used as follows:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

Where Z = value on Z-score table at 95% agreement or 1.96

P = positive response = 46.66% = 0.47  
 q = negative response = 53.33% = 0.53  
 e = margin of tolerable error, placed at 5% or 0.05.

The obtained sample size at 383 was found to be similar to that for an infinite population exceeding 150,000, based on Cozby's (2004) formula. The study, therefore, was conducted with a sample of 383 persons in Onitsha metropolis. See Appendix I for Sample size calculation.

### Sampling technique

The sampling technique was used to group persons into their respective residential areas in the city as clusters. The cluster, therefore, served as study units from which four out of the existing 12 units were selected at one representing three other units. The random without replacement method was used in the selection of the four needed clusters (Gurenvitch, 2005). This probability sampling method, gave each cluster an equal opportunity of being selected (Asika, 2002). The selected clusters were, Woliwo, GRA, New American Quarters and Odoakpu. Surprisingly, the selected clusters as study units reflected the status and nature of the study area, from the highly educated and class-conscious to the less privileged and trading communities.

### Measuring Instrument

The opinionaire was designed, containing 8 short questions posed to elicit quick responses. Only four closed-ended questions were asked to crystalize focus while the other six were open-ended as to provide free expressions.

The pilot study approach was used in validating and testing the reliability of the used tool for data collection. The correlation coefficient formula was used to determine reliability through a pretest and post-test method, within 14 days interval. The similarity of results showed a positive value at 2 from a decision point of 0. It shows that the opinionaire was reliable in measuring what it was designed to measure.

### Data Analysis

The simple percentage method was used to answer the posed research questions, while the weighted mean approach, appropriate to the used opinionaire, was adopted to test the hypothesis, in respect of the quantitative approach. Also, views articulated by the 36 selected interviewees or 10.64% of the sample size of 383 were documented, analyzed and then-after, summarized as presented in this study report. Details of the sample copy of the opinionaire used in the interview (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000) is presented at Appendix II.

### Answering Research Questions

The three research questions posed in the study were as follows:

#### Research Question One

*What level of newspaper readership attention in Onitsha metropolis is drawn to photographs representing violence at Agatu,*

Item 1 in the opinionaire was used to answer the posed question above. Collected data were analyzed and documented as follows:

Table 1: Readers; attracted by used photographs

Readers' Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	223	58.22
No	54	14.10
Can't remember	106	27.67
Total	383	99.99

*Source: field data, 2017*

The table above shows that those who said that photographs on the violence at Agatu on the newspaper pages attracted their attention were about four times (4.13) or more than those who claimed not to have seen it. Those attracted to the photographs were also, more than those who were not, added to those who did not remember seeing it by about 1.39 times or a difference of 63 persons or 16.45%. It means that the photographs attracted substantial attention to the represented violence on the newspapers.

Again, interest arousal was used to determine the extent to which emotion may be excited on the violence as represented in the photographs, used in the newspapers. Item 2 in the opinionaire was used to obtain the required data which were analyzed as follows:

Table 2: Interest arousal level of used photographs

Readers' Response	Frequency	Percentage
Aroused	281	73.37
Not aroused	44	11.49
Can't say	58	15.14
Total	383	100.00

Source: field data, 2017

Result from table above shows that more than two-thirds of the readers or nearly three-quarters at 73.37% were aroused by the content of the used photographs on violence at Agatu. The figure represented 6.38 times of the number whose interest was not aroused and 4.85 times of those who held no definite opinion. It means that the photographs representing violence at Agatu aroused readership interest in the issue represented.

The study sought to know why the photograph aroused substantial interest in the readers. Item 3 was used to determine the reasons. Collected data were analyzed as follows:

Table 3: Reason for interest aroused

Readers' Response	Frequency	Percentage
Photos attracted attention to the unusual like violence	98	25.59
Valuable property was seen as destroyed	110	28.72
What could happen to the owners of the destroyed houses	83	21.67
How the victims can be helped to rebuild their houses	92	24.02
Total	383	100.00

Source: field data, 2017

The result above shows that while the unusual as newsvalue commanded one-quarter of readers' interest, more than one-quarter was aroused on seeing destroyed property. It shows that the unusual explained by destroyed property accounted for more than half of the responses or 54.31%. This human interest consideration, was further exacerbated by the consequence of the seen destruction, as felt by more than one-fifth and less than one-quarter of the newspaper readers as respectively. It means that the perceived consequence, as an affective consideration, aroused as much as 45.69% of the readers' interest as humans.

## Research Question Two

*How were readers' feelings manifested as a result of the presented perspective of used photographs.*

Item 4 in the opinionaire was used to answer the above question. Collected data were analyzed as follows:

Table 4: Level of readers' emotional excitement

Readers' Response	Frequency	Percentage
Excited	252	65.70
Not excited	36	9.40
Indifferent	95	24.80
Total	383	100.00

Source: field data, 2017.

Result above shows that whereas about two-thirds of the newspaper readers in Onitsha were excited by the presented photographs, less than one-tenth was not while about one-quarter was indifferent. It shows that the excited were more than both the not excited and indifferent by a margin of 31.50%. It implies that the level of readership emotional excitement to the used photographs amounted to a significant level of nearly one third of the respondents.

Again, item 5 in the opinionaire was used to determine what caused the excitement. Data collected was analyzed as follows:

Table 5: Response for readership emotional excitement.



Readers' Response	Frequency	Percentage
Brutal destruction	93	24.28
Man's inhumanity to man	101	26.37
Result of violence	98	25.59
Basis for reprisal reaction	91	23.76
Total	383	100.00

Source: field data, 2017.

Result from above table shows that disgust with human action on others, accounted for 76.24% or more than three-quarters of newspaper readers, while the others, less than one-quarter, were emotionally excited to see what could lead to a retaliation, as response to the destruction. It means that two major reasons were advanced for the aroused feelings of newspaper readers as sense of loss and fear of reprisal.

Item 6 was therefore, used to understand if how the photos were presented had any influence on the newspapers readers' feelings. Data collected were analyzed as follows:

Table 6: Framing influence on readers' feelings.

Item 6	Response						Total	Mean value $\bar{X}$
How the photos on the violence at Agatu were presented in the newspapers, moved my feelings.	Code	SA=5	A=4	UD=3	D=2	SD=1	15	$\frac{1199}{383}$ = 3.13 $\bar{X} = 3.13$
	Frequency	42	119	104	83	35	383	
	Code value result	210	476	312	166	35	1199	
	Percentage	10.97	31.07	27.15	21.67	9.14	100.00	

Source: field data, 2017.

Result from table above shows that more than two-fifths or a total of 42.04% of the readers was moved by how the photos presented the violence on the newspapers, while less than one-third or 30.81% was not. It means that more persons were influenced by the perspective of presentation than those that were not influenced at 30.81% by a difference of more than one-tenth or 11.23%. Also, it is noteworthy to find that those who held no opinion, accounted for more than one-quarter, or 27.15%. Again, the calculated mean value of 3.13% was found to be more than decision point value of 3.0 hence an agreement that the readers' feelings were influenced by the perspective of photograph representation of violence.

### Research Question Three

*What is the linkage between the photographs and readers' emotion, expressed on the violence?*

Item 7 in the opinionaire was used to obtain the exact feeling of newspaper readers to the photographs they saw, representing violence at Agatu. The data obtained were collated, analyzed and documented as follows:

Table 7: Words used to show obtained readers' emotion

Readers Response	Frequency	Percentage
Barbaric	96	25.07
Wicked	114	29.76
Inconsiderate	92	24.02
Unfortunate	81	21.15
Total	383	100.00

Source: field data, 2017.

Result from the table above shows that those who felt bitter with the content they saw accounted for a total of 54.83% or more than half the newspaper readers, while slightly less than one-quarter felt that the destruction was inhuman and the others, about one-fifth, felt more reserved on the violence. It means that the photographs generated a strong negative feeling about what the readers saw on the newspapers.

Again, item 8 in the questionnaire was used to understand if the expressed feeling originated from interpretations given to the consumed newspapers. Obtained data were analyzed as follows:

Table 8: Relationship between feeling and presentation perspective

Item 8	Response	Total	Mean value $\bar{X}$
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My expression of feeling is based on how the photos were presented in the newspapers showing violence at Agatu.	Code	SA=5	A=4	UD=3	D=2	SD=1	15	$\frac{1173}{383}$ = 3.06 $\bar{X} = 3.06$
	Frequency	56	137	98	59	33	383	
	Code value result	280	448	294	118	33	1173	
	Percentage	14.62	35.77	25.59	15.40	8.62	100.00	

Source: field survey, 2017.

Result from the above table shows that half of the newspaper readers or 50.3% claimed that the expression of their feelings were based on what they saw, as used in the photograph, while less than one-quarter did not believe so. It means that those whose feelings were aroused by how the photographs represented the violence at Agatu were more than those who were not by a significant difference of 25.90% or one-quarter of the readership. Also, the result shows that other intervening factors may have resulted in how the newspaper readers felt other than the slant of the photographs. Such factors need to be further investigated.

### Hypothesis Testing

The only hypothesis in the study was tested using the weighted mean approach or the Likert scale (Wimmer and Dominick, 2000), as best suited for opinion analysis (Best and Khan, 2006). The formular used was:

$$\bar{X} = \frac{SA + A + UD + D + SD}{NR}$$

Where  $\bar{X}$  = calculated mean value

SA = strongly agree

A = agree

UD = undecided

D = disagree

SD = strongly disagree.

The decision point as to whether the hypothesis would be accepted or rejected was placed at 3.0. It means that values greater than 3.0 accepted the alternative hypothesis  $H_1$  and rejected the null,  $H_0$ . The reverse means that any value less than 3.0 accepted the null ( $H_0$ ) and rejected its alternative ( $H_1$ ). Values 1-5, were assigned to the codes on a decoding order from SA to SD.

The formulated hypothesis was therefore tested as stated:

### Testing Study Hypothesis

$H_0$ : How photographs were framed did not condition newspaper readers' emotion towards the violence at Agatu.

$H_1$ : How photographs were framed conditioned newspaper readers' emotion towards the violence at Agatu.

Item 6 as shown at Table 6 was used to test the above hypothesis. It was seen that the calculated value was more at 3.13 than the decision point value of 3.0. It implies that  $X = 3.13 > 3.0$ . The import was that the null hypothesis  $H_0$ , was rejected while its alternative,  $H_1$  was accepted, showing that how photographs were framed conditioned newspaper readers' emotion towards the violence at Agatu.

Again, item 8 in the opinionaire was used as presented at Table 8 above, to test the hypothesis above. It was seen that the calculated mean value  $X$  was 3.06, greater than the decision point value of 3.0. It shows that  $X = 3.06 > 3.0$ . The import was that the alternative hypothesis,  $H_1$  was accepted. It was proved, therefore that how photographs were framed, conditioned newspaper readers' emotion towards the violence at Agatu.

### Discussion of Findings

The study found that photographs representing violence attracted newspaper readers' attention to the pages where they appeared like the ones used in showing the violence at Agatu. The accompanying text situated the violence as a crisis involving Fulani herdsmen and members of Agatu community. The photographs served as attention getting device, used to attract readership attention to the effect of the said violence. This finding was in line with how the unusual becomes an issue of public discourse and concern as news element (Mencher, 2004). Such a strategy is used like in fear appeals in advertising (Ozoh, 2014)

and in propaganda (Agbanu, 2012). The essence is to raise an issue to the fore (McCombs and Shaw 1972) and generate public interest to discuss the issue (McCombs, 1981).

The attracted attention arouses interest in the photograph representing the violence at Agatu. Such an interest stimulated different kinds of feelings on the newspaper readers. The feelings were found to be both cognitive, in relation to an understanding of what has happened and affective to the extent of how the violence would have affected the victims, as an affected aspects of emotion (Tamborini, 1996). Irrespective of how the newspaper reader felt, it was established that a general emotional excitation was achieved by the photographs resulting in the empathy or otherwise, as an expression of feeling (Zillmann, 2000).

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The study showed that photographs used in newspapers, served both as attention-getting device for readership, as well as proving the basis for expressing human feelings. The photographs raise issues to public glare and stimulate a discourse that can lead to policy formulation, like the current grazing bill in Benue State and the one proposed nationally at the National Assembly. The essence of such a policy arising from the cognitive and affective aspects of emotional expressions is to forestall any future occurrence which could generate adverse emotional responses.

### **Recommendation**

Ethical consideration should guide photographic framing in the representation of violence. It was seen that fear for a reprisal action was expressed in the findings. It means that caution must be considered in the use of photographs when representing violence in newspapers. Again, a further investigation is needed to ascertain other intervening factors that inhibit the arousal of feelings as emotion even when in contact with violence representations in newspapers.

### **Contribution to Knowledge and Research**

This study is unique in two major aspects. It dealt with still photographs unlike the dynamic ones seen in movies. It means that the generation of meaning is more tasking for a “lifeless” means of communication. This experience is different from the newspaper when compared to the film.

Again, so much literature abound in the effect of photographs used in films, on a specific audience, particularly, within the realm of entertainment as a communication platform. This study shows that photographs can also stir emotions, outside the realm of entertainment. It means that an additional literature has been contributed in the field of photojournalism’s influence on presented content consumers.

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**APPENDIX I  
SAMPLE SIZE CALCULATION**

The Topman's formular was used as follows since no population was given or the exact figure, know:

$$n = \frac{Z^2pq}{e^2}$$

where n = calculated sample size

z = value on Z-score table at 95% validity

p = positive value

q = negative value

e = margin of accepted error.

The study sampled the opinion of 60 newspaper readers in Woliwo cluster, in Onitsha metropolis. Thirty-two persons or 53.33% (0.53) claimed to have seen the violence at Agatu in *Sun* and *The Guardian* as represented by used photographs while 28 persons or 46.67% (0.47) said they did not see it. The margin of tolerable error was placed at 5% (0.05). the figures were applied to the above formular as follow:

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.53 \times 0.47}{(0.05)^2} \\ &= \frac{3.84 \times 0.53 \times 0.47}{0.0025} \\ &= \frac{0.9565}{0.0025} \\ &= 382.62 \quad \mathbf{383} \end{aligned}$$

It means that the calculated sample size used in the study was **383**.

**APPENDIX II  
OPINIONAIRE USED IN THE STUDY**

1. Were you attracted to the photograph showing the violence in Agatu in the *Sun* and *The Guardian* newspapers?
2. Was your interest aroused to see the photographs' content?
3. Why did you feel like seeing the photographs?
4. Were you excited about the photographs?
5. What aroused your feeling in the photographs?
6. How the photos on the violence at Agatu was presented in the newspapers, moved my feelings.
7. How would you describe what you saw in one word.
8. My expressed feeling is based on how the photos were presented in the newspapers.