

The Media and Reportage of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria

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Abstract : The mass media was a force to reckon with in the struggle and attainment of Nigeria's independence in 1960 and since then, the Nigerian media has carved a niche for itself in performing its traditional role of education, information, entertainment, shaping of opinions and swinging of views of the society on knotty national issues. Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria which emerged from an unnoticed, negligible and quiet beginning, has turned out daring, monstrous and unstoppable. This paper examines The Media and Reportage of Boko Haram Insurgency in Nigeria and to suggest strategies the mass media could adopt in combating this form of terrorism. Data for the study were collected from a variety of sources including the print and electronic media. The major observation of this study is that the mass media have an enormous role to play if Boko Haram's activities are to be combated. It argued that even though the media houses are just doing their job - reporting the incident(s) as they occur, thus keeping the citizens abreast of facts; the rate at which news keeps coming regarding the activities of the sect has portrayed the media as information dissemination and terror campaign spread. It also argued that the ceaseless reporting has not translated to a decrease in the activities of the sect or increase in the level of government actions to check the insurgency. However, the information being disseminated is enlightening the populace and also creating an atmosphere of panic and insecurity. It further argued that the media should move beyond mere recitation of events to providing the public with knowledge needed to make things better. This is because the sect has been accorded too much undeserved and unnecessary publicity while the government on the other hand has been portrayed, albeit indirectly as a weak organization incapable of handling the 'more organized' Boko Haram. The study, concluded that, to effectively address the problem of this form of terrorism in Nigeria, the media have to brace up to the task of uncovering activities of the sect in appreciation of their watch-dog role.

Keywords : Boko Haram, insurgency, mass media, Nigeria

Conference Title : ICCFMS 2016 : International Conference on Communication, Film and Media Sciences

Conference Location : Cape Town, South Africa

Conference Dates : November 03-04, 2016