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**ATINER's Conference Paper Series  
MED2016-2020**

**"Bias on the side of Truth":  
Cultural Influence and the Framing of Fuel  
Policy Crisis in Nigeria, 1999 -2007**

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This paper should be cited as follows:

**Torwel, V. (2016). "'Bias on the side of Truth': Cultural Influence and the Framing of Fuel Policy Crisis in Nigeria, 1999 -2007", Athens: ATINER'S Conference Paper Series, No: MED2016-2020.**

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Tel: + 30 210 3634210 Fax: + 30 210 3634209 Email: info@atiner.gr URL:  
www.atiner.gr  
URL Conference Papers Series: www.atiner.gr/papers.htm  
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ISSN: 2241-2891  
24/10/2016

**"Bias on the side of Truth": Cultural Influence and the Framing of  
Fuel Policy Crisis in Nigeria, 1999 -2007**

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**Abstract**

*A recent study, which examined the ideological construction of the fuel policy crisis in three Nigerian news magazines found a hegemonic consensus in how journalists in the three news magazines framed the key actors in the crisis and their policy positions. Building on the findings of this study, this article examines the context within which those journalists, even though working in and for different news magazines, defined the key actors and their policy options in similar hegemonic terms. Depth interviews with the journalists who wrote the stories of the fuel policy crisis were conducted to gain insight into the cultural/ideological environment in which the journalists produced the stories of the crisis. The study found opinions of journalists who wrote the stories of the fuel crisis consistent with the ideological hegemony in the news stories of the fuel policy crisis. This finding, at first, seemed a clear case of bias, conspiracy, or an extension of individual opinions of journalists. But a close analysis revealed that the responses of the reporters who constructed the fuel policy crisis were part of a collective cultural influence on the journalists.*

A recent study, which examined the ideological construction of the fuel policy crisis (1999 – 2007) in three Nigerian news magazines involving the Nigerian government and Nigeria Labor Congress (hereafter NLC) found a hegemonic consensus in how the three news magazines framed the key actors in the crisis and their policy positions (Torwel, 2011). The three news magazines used cover pages, captions, story leads and headlines to delegitimize the government's fuel policy position and portray the government as working against the people's interest; while the NLC was legitimized as fighting for the welfare of ordinary Nigerians. Building on the findings of that study, this article examines the context within which those journalists, though working in and for different news magazines, defined the key actors and their policy options in similar hegemonic terms. Depth interviews with the reporters who wrote the stories of the fuel policy crisis were conducted to gain insight into the cultural/ideological environment in which the journalists produced the stories of the crisis. The interviews were analyzed in an inter-textual analysis with the stories of the crisis to provide a context for understanding the influence of cultural/ideological environment on media content and behavior of journalists who covered the fuel policy crisis between 1999 and 2007.

### **Theory of Cultural Influence on Journalists**

The theory of cultural/ideological influence on journalists is discussed in this section to provide a guide to this study. The theory of cultural influence on journalists is premised on the assumption that the reality-defining practices of the news media do not happen in isolation. According to this theory, journalists are not "objective bearers of truth, but makers of a product shaped through a variety of social forces" (Berkowitz, 1997, p. xiv), which range from the most micro to the most macro and operate at different levels of strength in shaping media content (Torwel, 2013). And placed on a hierarchical level these social forces are subsumed by the ideological or cultural environment in which journalists produce news stories (Reese, 2001, p. 179).

In *Cultural Meanings of News*, Berkowitz (2011) introduces the theory of cultural influence in the argument that "journalists as people living and working within the culture of a newsroom, a media organization, and a society ... produce artifacts that represent key values and meanings" of cultures they operate from (p. xii). Berkowitz (1997) adds that influence on journalists happens within the routine of news work as reporting news involves strategic processes and in order to expedite the reporting effort, journalists typify occurrences based on a general narrative structure that best applies (p. 321). In this way, the cultural influence on journalists operates, seemingly, at the subconscious level as the influence comes from the dominant ideology or cultural air within a given society. The dominant ideology or cultural air are the unquestioned and generally unnoticed background assumptions in society through which reporters gather and interpret news events and issues (Schudson, 2000).

Studies have shown that the interpretive aspect of news making is inherently ideological as the interpretation of events and issues by reporters is influenced unconsciously by the cultural environment of the society they operate from (Morley, 1981; Thetela, 2001). Binder (1993) identifies the cultural environment of society as "beliefs and values the larger culture takes for granted" (p. 756). And it is these beliefs and values from the larger culture or society that provide the framework journalists employ in reporting and interpreting sociopolitical issues. In this way, news texts are not just products of individual news organizations but are cultural products underwritten by the values and beliefs of the wider culture or society. That is why Gramsci (1971) suggests that investigation into the root of hegemonic meanings in media texts should look at the wider context of society. According to Gramsci (1971), "the relationship between the intellectuals (i.e. journalists in this sense) and the world of production is, in varying degrees, 'mediated' by the whole fabric of society and by the complex of superstructures, of which the intellectuals are the functionaries" (p. 12).

Zelizer's (1997) idea of journalists as an interpretive community offers another insight into the question of cultural influence on journalists. The idea of journalists as an interpretive community points to cultural influence on journalists beyond individual news organizations or professional ideologies. Studies have shown that the interpretations journalists bring to news events are very often not influenced by their news organizations but are largely underwritten by the prevailing ideology within a cultural environment (Schudson, 2000).

Within the US society, Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad (1998) identify capitalism, anticommunism, and male worldviews/values as examples of cultural ideologies that influence the framing of news stories by U.S. journalists. A study of the coverage in the *New York Times* of student demonstrations in South Korea in 1980 and in China in 1989 by Kobland and colleagues (1992) found anticommunist ideology influential in the framing of the two events. Despite the clear similarities of these two incidents, the authors found that in covering the demonstrations in South Korea, *New York Times* portrayed the Korean government actions against the demonstrators as "an understandable response to the threat imposed by the demonstrators' rebellious insurrection" (cited in Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998, p. 135) The report of the demonstrations at Beijing's Tiananmen Square, on the other hand, emphasized the legitimacy of the demonstrators' goals and the efficacy of their means, while describing the Chinese government as cruelly repressive.

In Nigeria ideologies of ethnicity and regionalism (north/south divide) are identified as major influences on framing of news events. Ethnicity and regional considerations define, particularly, political news and influence journalistic interpretation of news events. Ette (2000) attributes the influence of ethnicity on the Nigerian press to the intensity of ethnic and regional rivalry in Nigerian politics. According to Ette (2000) the different units that make up Nigeria still owe their primary loyalty to their ethnic/regions groups. And given that the press is the site where emerging political contests are enacted, the Nigerian press has become an arena for

ethnic and regional rivalry. According to Eribo (1997), there is a general commonsense identification in the Nigerian press with ethno-regionalism, particularly, when there is a national political issue or debate at stake. Thus, studies of the newspaper press in Nigeria have indicted it for partisanship along regional and ethnic lines (Adebanwi, 2004; Adebanwi, 2002; Agbaje, 1990; Ekwelie, 1986; Ette, 2000; Jibo & Simbine, 2003; Nwachuku, 1998; Oyeleye, 2004).

But despite this seemingly partisan nature of Nigerian newspaper press, other studies have found the same Nigerian press, especially the news magazines, outgrowing partisan considerations in matters relating to political integrity and fiscal probity and, thus, performing democratic functions (Obadare, 1999, p. 38; Ibelema, 2003; Olorunyomi, 1996; Olukotun, 2004a; Olukotun, 2004b). The contradictory findings of these studies have shown the complex nature of the Nigerian press whose performance cannot be measured solely by, or reduced to, one social influence. An exploration of the influence of the cultural/ideological environment on Nigerian journalists applied in this study, therefore, provides another framework for understanding and explaining the behavior of Nigerian journalists in the political arena. As we have argued and shown through literature in this section, news is a cultural commodity produced by reporters who are immersed in their culture and who must rely on their societies "cultural grammar" to make sense of news events and issues (Bird & Dardenne, 1997, p. 341).

### **Method: Depth Interviews**

Depth interviews were used to collect data for this study. Depth interviews with editorial staff of the three newsmagazines provided context for interpreting the cultural influence on how the fuel policy crisis and the major actors were constructed. The interview method was employed "to create a listening space where meaning could be constructed through an inter-exchange and co-creation of verbal viewpoints in the interest of scientific knowing" (Miller & Crabtree, 2004, p. 185). The depth interview method was particularly useful in this study since it is "a field research data-gathering process designed to generate narratives that focus on fairly specific research questions" (Miller & Crabtree, 2004, p. 188). Thus, the interview questions focused exclusively on the different levels of social influence on the reporters who covered the fuel policy crisis.

The focus of the interview questions on levels of social influence on the reporters was theoretically informed. Since the depth interview method used in this study focuses on exploring "research themes" (Miller & Crabtree, 2004, p. 191), the interview questions sought, particularly, to understand the influence of organizational, professional, and ideological factors on how the three newsmagazines constructed the fuel policy crisis. The interviews also tried to probe the beliefs of the reporters who covered the fuel policy crisis on a number of subjects including the role of the media in democracy; who should make decisions about policy issues; and how to objectively report controversial issues. This provided an insight into the role of these

conditions of production in how the fuel policy crisis was constructed and interpreted by reporters from the three news magazines. Although

## **Analysis**

### *Summary of the News Stories and Interviews with Reporters*

Generally, all the three magazines portrayed the Nigerian government as being insensitive to the plight of Nigerians for increasing fuel prices and they represented NLC as fighting for the people against the government's cruel fuel policy. The magazines combined pictures, captions, story leads, headlines, and cover pages, and interpretation of the fuel crisis to construct meanings that served the political interest of the NLC as against that of the government. While, each of the news magazines tried to adhere strictly to the journalistic standards of balance and fairness, there were instances that the reports appeared to be advocating for particular positions. This is explained by the broader cultural framework of the news organizations in which the stories were constructed. As shown through inter-textual analysis in this section, the dominant meanings in the stories of the fuel crisis are reflected in the opinions of the journalists who wrote the stories.

### *Journalists' Ideological Positions on the Fuel Price Hikes*

The construction of the fuel crisis in the three news magazines generally delegitimized the fuel policy by portraying the policy as anti-populist. The reports investigated the government's arguments for removing fuel subsidies and increasing fuel prices and showed that they were false. Also the reports highlighted the negative effects of the price increase on the life of Nigerians and argued that the price increase benefited only the cabal in power and their cronies.

An analysis of the interviews shows a similarity between the image of the price increase in the texts of the fuel crisis and the opinions of journalists who constructed the texts. When asked about his opinion on the fuel policy, a reporter and associate editor at *Tell* magazine explained that he thought the policy was just to make some people rich because fuel importers were allowed to fix any price they wanted.

And so the government has allowed them to exploit the masses. But that was not part of the agreement initially with NLC. The agreement with the NLC was that all the refineries must be working before the government can deregulate the market. Because without functioning refineries the people importing the fuel will decide any price they want. And so, the government is just making the rich richer and the poor poorer (Dele, 2006).

Two arguments against the fuel policy are reflected in this reporter's statement. First, the policy is portrayed as of no benefit to the people, but they are in fact exploited by it. Second, the fact that the refineries are not working is highlighted and this seems to be tied to the problem of fuel crisis.

When asked what informs his editorial decision in selecting stories, op-ed or letter for publication, a senior editor at *Newswatch* magazine explained that basically decisions were based on what the magazine thought was good for the society.

If we discover that something is going wrong, and it is running counter to the direction that the society should go, of course, it becomes a critical point of focus for us. We will investigate and find out what is actually happening to be able to help the public to know the true position of things. So whenever we sit down to consider stories, letters and other things we are going to publish in the magazine, we are guided by the fact that society should move in a direction that will benefit every member; and as a result of that we publish stories we consider will contribute to the realization of that goal of society (Attah, 2006).

The above response provides an explanation to why the Nigerian government actions were thoroughly investigated by these news magazines. Investigation seems to be a sacred duty the magazines have towards society.

The reports of the fuel policy crisis also de-legitimized the fuel policy by highlighting the negative effects of the price increase on Nigerians while marginalizing the long term benefits the government said the fuel policy will achieve. In reacting to an allusion that in covering contentious political issues reporters are biased in favor of one party, a reporter at *NewsWatch* provided an explanation that gave an insight into why the negative effect of the fuel price hikes were selectively highlighted and not the benefits:

We are reporters, and so we tell what people are saying. We do not impose our views or opinions. We are in the center just trying to amplify what the two parties are trying to do. But in doing so, we also explain the implications of certain actions. For example, if a certain group says it is going to destroy the country tomorrow, as part of the analysis we will tell the people in that report what the implications of destroying this country will mean for all of us (Omo, 2006).

The above response indicates that the reporters who covered the fuel crisis were not deliberately biased in favor of the NLC, but it was their duty to investigate and explain the implications of the fuel policy introduced by the government. But this explanation by itself alone is too simplistic, as it does not explain why the journalists chose to highlight the negative effects and not the positive. The selective emphasis on the negative effects might be explained by the general picture among these journalists of the fuel policy as not in the interest of the people explained above.

#### *Journalists' Ideological Positions on the NLC and Fuel Strikes*

The stories of the fuel crisis were constructed around carefully selected sources and images that legitimized and promoted the NLC as working in the interest of every Nigerian. The fuel strikes and the NLC were legitimized in three ways. First, the reports portrayed the strikes as the last resort given the government's unwillingness to dialogue with the NLC on the fuel policy. Second, the reports gave support to the fuel strikes by portraying them as a last resort and a necessary action to curtail president Obasanjo's authoritarian tendencies in policymaking. Third, the NLC is portrayed as representing the common interest of Nigerians.

#### The Government is Unwilling to Dialogue on the Fuel Policy

The image of the dictatorial nature of the government of Obasanjo in policymaking is reflected in the following responses by journalists from *The News*,



*Tell* and *Newswatch* to the question, "How should issues of public policy be handled by the government?" According to a reporter at *The News* there are many things the government can use as a sounding board for any policy it wants to make. There are representatives of the people on which policy ideas can be vouched. These representatives can also give the government feedback on what likely reactions will be.

But what happens is that the government does not particularly care. Oh I have this idea whether it sits well with the public or not it is the business of the public. The government does not bother to consult the public whether this thing is good or how it could be altered if it is not exactly in the public's interest (Bala, 2006).

An editor at *The News* did not answer the question but rather complained about president Obasanjo's authoritarian attitude towards policymaking:

It is unfortunate that the present government has a lot of undemocratic elements within it. The president by his actions and inactions has shown that he is not a thorough democrat in the real sense of the word. There are many things he does without recourse to the national assembly, or even sampling the opinion of the people to know whether or not they will support a particular policy. This is what you see the president doing all the time, not consulting widely before taking action (Essien, 2006).

An associate editor at *Tell* explained what he thought was the right way of making policy decisions but also castigated the government's non-consultation attitude. According to him, the government is supposed to take into consideration the effects of its intended policies on the people. And until the government was able to think of the people first, its policies will have problems.

But it is like when the people in government are thinking of a policy the primary motive is what they can get out of it for themselves. So when it gets out they put in all their effort to defend that policy, like we have had people defending the fuel price increase in Nigeria. And we wonder whether those people who are defending this policy on pages of newspapers and television are Nigerians like us (Okon, 2006).

The representation of president Obasanjo's attitude towards policy by the three journalists above corresponds with the image advanced in the stories of the fuel policy crisis, which portrayed president Obasanjo as not adhering to democratic principles in decision making. This demonstrates how the picture these journalists had about how policy should be approached was put into the coverage of the fuel crisis.

#### Strikes are Necessary to Force the Government to Reverse the Price Hikes

By portraying the Nigerian president as authoritarian, *The News* legitimized the fuel strikes as necessary to force him to listen to the people's demands. This ideology is reflected in the interviews also. Responding to an assertion that incessant fuel strikes were sabotaging the Nigerian economy an associate editor at *The News* objected that:

It is not. Because if you want to achieve a particular goal there are sacrifices you make. The alternative is to be against the strike. But if you are against the strike it means you are in support of servitude, which the

government wants to impose on the people through fuel price hikes (Nike, 2006).

A senior editor at *The News* was more direct in his support of the fuel strikes. He argued:

Strikes are legitimate. Whether they achieve 100% success is another issue. But strikes are legitimate as far as we are concerned because that is the only way people can show disapproval for some of these dehumanizing policies of the government (Abakpa, 2006).

If the NLC was not there to mobilize Nigerians against unpopular policies, there would have been more crisis because then people may have lived in suspense for too long and bottled up anger and would have reacted in ways the government would not have been able to handle (Dele, 2006).

All three journalists seem to justify the fuel strikes as a necessary action against the servitude of the fuel price hikes, the dehumanizing policy of the government, and unpopular policies.

### The NLC are Fighting for the Good of All Nigerians

The NLC was presented in the stories of the fuel crisis as having a genuine concern for the plight of Nigerians by resisting the Nigerian government's fuel policy. This ideology is reflected in the opinions of the journalists from *The News*, *Tell* and *Newswatch* who portrayed the NLC as resolute in their desire to see that government actions were in the best interest of the people. To the question, "What is your opinion about the Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC)?" an assistant editor with *The News* responded:

Excellent! Excellent because we have a limp National Assembly, and what the National Assembly has failed to do repeatedly, the NLC has done. The NLC does not have the muscle to change laws, but the NLC has done well in confronting some very funny things which the National Assembly probably would have been bribed to be silent about. Look at the fuel price hikes. The battle was led more than six times by the NLC. So, they are about the strongest opposition because, at least until the last fuel price hikes we have not had anyone now (Nike, 2006).

You will praise them when you know how stubborn this government is, you praise them for even winning some of those battles. They have done well and they have the confidence of the majority of the Nigerians, they have succeeded in mobilizing Nigerians in a large scale. So you will find that anytime there is a crisis like fuel price hikes people look up to the NLC, this is because of the regard and confidence people have in the NLC (Gofut, 2006).

A senior editor at *Newswatch* talked about the recent government move to pass a bill that would split the Nigeria Labor Congress into insignificant units but added that before the bill the NLC was very powerful.

It was the voice of the suffering masses of this country; it spoke for the; it acted for them and also called them out to protest against some unfavorable government policies when there was need to do so. But I believe they can rise again, even with the bill they can still do a lot (Attah, 2006).

In sum, just like the stories of the fuel crisis, these journalists portrayed the NLC's struggle against government policies as a democratic struggle of the entire people of Nigeria.

*Journalists' Ideological Positions on the Role of Media in Democracy*

A general question within the context of the how the journalists viewed the role of the media in democracy also offered some insight into understanding how the stories of the fuel policy crisis were constructed within a wider cultural framework. To the question, what would you describe as the role of the media in democracy, a senior editor at Tell gave the following response:

The media is supposed to act like the Nigerian constitution has asked it to: to hold the government accountable to the people. We have an obligation, not to government, but the people out there, so the duty of the media is to sustain democracy in favor of the people (Abu, 2006).

A reporter at Newswatch responded to the question about the role of the media in democracy by providing the following insight:

As journalists we see ourselves as the conscience of the nation. Because we have access to facts and information, we try to explain to the people what our leaders are doing. When we discover that our leaders are doing the wrong thing, it is our duty to tell them also that what they are doing is against the interest of society. We are the only ones that the society can look up to as far as guiding the society is concerned. I know that there is the judiciary, but the judiciary is limited in a way because they do not have the power of information; they cannot tell it to the world (Omo, 2006).

An executive editor at The News responded that:

The media is like the referee. We observe how different arms of government conduct their affairs and where we think they have gone wrong in the interest of democracy we have a responsibility to tell them so. Because the moment the people lose confidence in democracy, democracy is gone for good; so the media has a responsibility to ensure that we do not get to that stage (Obodo, 2006).

A senior editor at Newswatch responded to the question why he took journalism as a profession by giving an insight into the nature of the journalistic work in general and how it is related to the issue of governance:

There are very few things you can do that will put you in a position to influence opinions and policy. Journalism is one of them, and that's partly the reason why I opted to be a journalist. I want to do something that will give me the opportunity to be able to influence society and policies of government generally, and in a very positive way (Attah, 2006).

*Journalists' Understanding of Objectivity in Reporting*

The cultural environment of the three news magazines came out more clearly when the journalists were directly questioned about objectivity. As a follow up to the answer from most of the journalists that had an obligation to the people, I asked if they did not violate the rule of objectivity in reporting. The journalists defended objectivity, but also provided an insight into the influence on the objectivity rule by the mission of the magazines. A

reporter at The News said the canon was to present the two sides. But he added that:

There is a slogan in this place that we will be biased on the side of the truth. In that way we will be doing justice to our people and our conscience will be clear that we have done the right thing. Whoever is biased on the side of the truth has not done anything wrong (Bala, 2006).

An associate editor at *Tell* was more diplomatic in how the position of the magazine gets reflected in the midst of objectivity:

There was the vexed issue of third term and we had to hear all the sides, those who wanted another term for the president and those who didn't want another term. But after we had written stories presenting the two sides, we also presented the position of the magazine. We did an editorial and that editorial said clearly that Obasanjo should go. So in covering political issues we present both sides and make our own stand known only through editorial (Okon, 2006).

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

This article interpreted the hegemonic meanings from the stories of the fuel policy crisis against interviews with the reporters who wrote the stories to provide an understanding of the role of cultural influence in the framing of political news stories. The study found opinions of journalists who wrote the stories of the fuel crisis consistent with the ideological hegemony in the news stories of the fuel policy crisis. And although at first it seemed a clear case of bias, conspiracy, or an extension of individual opinions of journalists, a close analysis revealed that the responses were not psychological but part of a collective cultural influence on the reporters. Evidence of this collective cultural/ideological influence is seen in the wording of their responses to interview questions. Although each one of them was interviewed individually, the cultural frame was evident in the use of "we" in responding to questions when in fact, they were by themselves and should have used "I". The findings of this study are consistent with studies on the coverage of international political news (Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998; Hallin, 1986) which found the cultural/ideological environment influential in how journalists interpreted ideological conflicts involving the US and foreign governments.

In conclusion, it is important to note that a study of the wider cultural/ideological environment in which journalists operate is an important element in political communication scholarship. News media texts are cultural products and political communication research must approach them from a cultural perspective to fully understand and interpret their political functions in society. The cultural analysis of journalism, which looks at "the larger world in which journalism takes shape" (Zelizer, 2004, p. 175) demonstrates the complexity of meaning construction in the news which is beyond just a mere reproduction of the ideology of the dominant sociopolitical and economic forces in society.

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### **Personal Interviews**

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- Okon, A. (Personal interview, July 5, 2006)
- Omo, A. (Personal interview, July 4, 2006).

### **Appendix: Interview Questions**

#### Demographic/Political

1. What is your ethnic group, state of origin, political affiliation, etc?
2. Which is more important to you: your country or your ethnic group?
3. Given that ethnicity and regional politics are strong in Nigeria, how do you ensure that these affiliations do not influence your reporting on national and political issues?

#### Professional Career and Training

1. What informed your decision to work in a news organization?
2. What duties do you perform in your news organization?
3. What training did you receive towards performing these duties?

4. In the past 12 months, did you participate in training or professional development provided by your news organization?

The Nigerian Government and Political Leadership

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Olusegun Obasanjo is handling his job as president of Nigeria?
2. What do you like or not like about President Obasanjo's leadership style?
3. How do you ensure that your personal opinion about the president does not inform your reporting about him?
4. Some people think that by criticizing leaders, news organizations keep political leaders from doing their job; others think that such criticism is worth it because it keeps political leaders from doing things that should not be done. What is your opinion on this?
5. Do you think the press has been too critical of the Obasanjo administration's policies and performance, or would you say the press has not been critical enough? Why?

Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC)

1. What is your opinion about the Nigeria Labor Congress?
2. Do you think the Nigeria Labor Congress's incessant strikes against government policies are a legitimate way of protest?

News Organization

1. What is your news organization's editorial policy?
2. Does your news organization expect its reporters to strictly follow this policy?
3. How is the policy enforced?

Political Economy

1. What would you consider to be your news organizations main source of funding?
2. Does your news organization depend on any form of subsidy from the government?
3. In general, do you think news organizations are pretty independent or would you say they are often influenced by powerful people and organizations?
4. Do you consider your news organization to be independent of all forms of influences?
5. How would your news organization handle the reporting of contentious political issues that involve its members or financiers and outsiders?

Organizational/Editorial Policy

1. What is your news organization's mission?
2. What is your news organization's policy on coverage of political or contentious issues?

Democracy and the News Media

1. What would you say is the main problem with instituting democracy in Nigeria?
2. Describe how you expect democracy to function?
3. What should be the role of the government and the people in democracy?
4. Given the high levels of illiteracy among the local people in Nigeria do you think the people should still be allowed to make their choices or the government should decide for them?

5. How should issues of public policy be handled? Should public policy be handled exclusively by the government or with the people? Why or why not?
6. What would you describe to be the role of the media in democracy?

Routines of News Reporting

1. What is your major source of news?
2. How much time do you put into one news story?
3. What is the process like? What do you do to put together a story?
4. When putting together a story on a contentious political issue, who do you talk to? Why?

Editorial Decisions

1. What criteria does your news organization use in choosing which stories to report?
2. What informs your editorial decision in selecting stories, op-ed or letters to the editor for publication?
3. What do you look for in articles or stories you choose for publication?
4. Are there any particular constraints you face in going about your work as a journalist, like budget constraints or specific instructions from your superiors?