



Public Perception of Broadcast Media Reporting of Political Issues in Nigeria: A Study of Resource Control, Federalism and Democratic Governance

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ABSTRACT

Background: Nigeria being one of the thickly populated countries in the world has undergone various challenges in the areas of defining the true meaning of federalism, demonstration of good democratic governance and equal sharing of natural resources.

Objective: This study investigated public perception of broadcast media reporting of political issues in Nigeria with special focus on Resource control, Federalism and Democratic governance.

Method: This study utilised descriptive survey and structured interview approaches. Multistage sampling method - Purposive and Simple random- was used respectively. Six states namely Kogi, Ondo, Bayelsa, Bauchi, Nassarawa and Zangfara states were selected from the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. 900 sample size was selected from the overall universe population of 11,074,962. Descriptive Statistics was employed to analyze the data using tables, frequencies and percentages.

Results: Findings indicated that funds allocated to states were not fully impactful which calls for the need to articulate for better performance and equity. Important areas such as education, health, housing, and power infrastructure are experiencing marginal decline, while the selected states are witnessing irreconcilable ambitious of chauvinistic elites who continue to corrupt the public resources.

Conclusion: Despite the fact that the selected states were bedeviled by series of setbacks based on the respondent responses, Nigeria with its enormous natural endowment should be able to show meaningful federalism antecedents that can indicate genuine attempt to achieve true federalism and democratic governance capable of achieving essential infrastructural development and equity in resource sharing and control.

Unique Contributions: This study has shown the increase efforts of broadcast media in clamoring for equitable sharing of Nigeria's natural resources, genuine plays of federalism and promotion of democratic governance values that are strong enough to better the country. Hopefully, policy makers, communication experts, community leaders, political scholars, ethnic groups and other stakeholders will find this new insight useful in planning the country's policy implementation.

Key Recommendation: Government should strike balance in the distribution of resource allocation while institutions that are responsible for policy making, sharing of resource allocations, implementations and oversight functions should be proactive enough to live up to their expectations by responding to the requests of their citizens. In addition, broadcast media should be encouraged to be more committed in their campaigns for balanced resource control and distribution for societal development.

Keywords: Public perception, Broadcast media, Federalism, Democratic Governance, Resource Control



INTRODUCTION

Nigeria has experienced numerous socio-political and economic challenges since gaining independence in 1960. As one of Africa's most populous and ethnically diverse nations, comprising over 350 ethnic groups with distinct languages and cultures, the country has continually faced complex governance and developmental issues. Over the decades, successive military and civilian administrations have introduced various policies and institutional reforms aimed at promoting national integration, political stability, and socio-economic development. Despite these efforts, many of the country's fundamental challenges remain unresolved. Rather than serving as instruments for inclusive governance and national development, public policies have often been manipulated by segments of the political elite to consolidate political power and advance personal interests. Consequently, initiatives designed to strengthen national cohesion and promote equitable development have yielded limited success. Although constitutional provisions such as the Federal Character Principle were introduced to address concerns over minority representation and promote inclusiveness, ethnic tensions, perceptions of marginalization, and unequal access to national resources continue to threaten national unity.

Since the end of the Nigerian Civil War, few issues have generated as much national debate as resource control, federalism, and democratic governance. These interconnected issues have remained at the forefront of political discourse, influencing intergovernmental relations, ethnic mobilization, and public policy. Persistent agitations over the ownership, control, and equitable distribution of natural resources have continued to shape political debates and regional demands across the country, thereby limiting Nigeria's developmental potential and international competitiveness. Historically, demands for equitable resource distribution date back to the colonial period and have remained significant in post-independence Nigeria. Perceived inequalities in the allocation of national resources have often reinforced ethnic divisions and intensified political competition. The concentration of political and economic power among dominant elite groups has further complicated efforts to achieve equity, accountability, and balanced national development.

Adams (2011) argues that Nigeria's multi-ethnic composition presents significant governance challenges that require deliberate institutional responses. Similarly, several scholars have observed that many political and ethnic conflicts in Nigeria are rooted in perceived inequalities in resource distribution and political representation (Okpeh, 2003; Omu, 2008; Vaande, 2011; Salawu & Hassan, 2011). These observations underscore the need for governance structures capable of effectively managing diversity while ensuring fairness and inclusiveness. To address these challenges, successive governments have introduced various constitutional and institutional mechanisms. One such initiative is the establishment of the Federal Character Commission under the provisions of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended). The Commission was created to promote equitable representation in public institutions and foster national unity. More broadly, Nigeria adopted the federal system of government to accommodate its ethnic, cultural, and regional diversity. Nevertheless, debates concerning the effectiveness of Nigerian federalism continue to dominate academic and political discussions.



Abubakar (2003) maintains that every federation evolves according to its unique historical and socio-political realities, arguing that Nigeria must develop a federal structure capable of meeting the aspirations of its diverse population. However, the operation of federalism in Nigeria has often been shaped by elite interests, shifting political alliances, and struggles over resource allocation. Hembe (2003) contends that the weaknesses inherent in Nigeria's federal arrangement have undermined democratic consolidation and sustainable national development.

Democracy, in its ideal form, promotes equality, justice, accountability, popular participation, and equitable access to public resources. According to Nnoli (2008), democratic governance should guarantee justice, protect ethnic diversity, and uphold fundamental human rights. However, these democratic ideals remain only partially realized in many developing countries, including Nigeria. Persistent ethnic divisions, insecurity, corruption, social inequality, and uneven resource distribution continue to undermine democratic governance (Ayinla, 2008).

Furthermore, Nigeria's democratic experience has frequently been characterized by political intolerance, suppression of dissenting opinions, widespread poverty, inadequate infrastructure, insecurity, human rights violations, and weak institutional accountability. These persistent governance challenges have heightened public concerns regarding the effectiveness of democratic institutions and the role of the media in promoting transparency and accountability. Against this background, this study investigates public perception of broadcast media reporting on the politics of resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to examine how audiences perceive broadcast media coverage of these critical national issues and the extent to which such reporting contributes to public understanding, political accountability, and democratic development.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate public perception of broadcast media reporting of political issues in Nigeria, with particular reference to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance. The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the extent of broadcast media reporting of issues relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria.
2. Assess public perception of broadcast media reporting of resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria.
3. Determine the nature of broadcast media reporting of issues relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria.
4. Evaluate the level of fairness, balance, and objectivity exhibited by the selected broadcast media in their reporting of resource control, federalism, and democratic governance.
5. Identify the challenges confronting the selected broadcast media in reporting issues relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria.



LITERATURE REVIEW

Politics and the Resource Control in Nigeria

History of derivation and distribution of resources in Nigeria has been so controversial, conflicting and contentious ever since oil became the nerve centre of the economy. Derivation in this context indicates that if any mineral discovered in any federating state is excavated and exploited, it allows given back to such state part of the gains depending on the parameter of distribution, remaining are usually directed to the federation account to be utilized for development (Akinsanya, 2007). Thus, the 1999 constitution provide that 13 percent of such revenue goes to the real source while the other 87 percent accrues to the federation account. Mimiko and Adeyemi (2005), state that the contentious issue of derivation has undermined development and find nation building wanting. The agitation for credible resource control in Nigeria would put an end to political elites who always gain unfair share of the natural resources irrespective of attendant environmental degradation coupled with other noticeable hazards. The absence of a parameter for measuring fair distributive system in Nigeria is a defect to any action addressing the issue concerning resource control. According to Salawu and Hassan (2011), the lack of standards is conspicuous in relation to the sharing formula regarding the benefits and the natural resources of the nation. However, the clamour for resource control equitable distribution must be enshrined in the country's polity.

Over the decades, the failure of succeeding government in Nigeria led to the escalated conflicts among different ethnic divide, social groups and political elites who consistently demanding for resource control especially those from the oil producing areas in the federation. According to Ifeka (2001), the situation has in various areas antagonizing the unity, growth and socio-economic integration of the country. These resource control involve resources that are difficult to come by and also allocatable, appointments into government public offices, revenue mobilization, allocation and distributions are major parts of resource control. In the time past, different places such as Niger Delta region, environmentalists, governors, youths and others agitated for equity in the resource control. Governors of the South-South Geo-political zones in Nigeria also agitated strongly about the bias and inequality experienced on resource control distributions. Enuke (2007), describes the action as reckless, bad dehuman and insensitives on the part of the people at the realm of power. The scholar frowns at the failure of the Nigerian federation to sincerely meet the yearnings, aspirations and needs of the majority and minority few where the national revenues are derived.

Most of these resources such as oil, gold, precious stones, wild life, bitumen, lithium and others are natural endowments having natural potentials of economic value as well as contributing to national development. Edu (2007), opines that the resource control is controversial and contentious in history of Nigeria, it remains the major national question that is capable of ensuring fair play, justice and unity among Nigerians. According to Idemudia and Ite (2006), the happenings in Niger Delta is a testament of the demonstration of anger by youths who are jobless and are denied of basic needs of life such as good employments, roads, primary health care, provision of portable water and sound educational facilities among others, while fund allocated were diverted to personal use by political elites. In light of this, the allocation and distribution of



resources is dependent on the leaders who wield power to determine the entrenchment of networks that would facilitate predation of national resources.

Imasuen (2011), indicates various efforts of government to balance the uneven distribution of Nigerian resources, few among them are the institution of the federal character principle, revenue allocation formulas, boundary adjustment policies and implementation of the National Youth Service designed to foster unity and integration among Nigerians. Aside from the way forward, there are still threats such as complex ethnic configuration, coup d'état threats outbreaks of ethnic violence and incessant agitation for fair share allocation of resources amongst others. Overall, rather than being united for nation's development, Nigerians political class and general public are busy waging religious and ethnic rivalry, stop marginalization from contending ethnic groups that are struggling for control over resources. Nigerians must come up with their decisions and develop own institutions revolves round our local experiences, since the challenges of resource sharing have being responsible for much emotions, conflicts, tensions, stresses and violence in the country.

Federalism in the Nigeria's Context

Countries like Nigeria who is full of culture, customs, arts, economic endowment and diverse political permutations, true federalism must show genuine attempts to regulate relationship among Nigerian groups. In addition, the angle at which a country's federal system takes usually reflects its historical experiences, identities, and unity in diversity. Elaigwu (2002), avers that each federating unit within a sincere federal system should have its powers and functions guaranteed to strike a compromise between local peculiarities and the national integration. Federalism advocates argued for the need for adequate devolution of power such that the local government areas and states are effectively saddled with the responsibilities handled by the federal government. Nigeria federalism is special because it is the combination of some regional and ethnic sub-division of a country that eventually resulted to a single unit.

The year 1954 remains indelible in the hearts of Nigerians, when the Nigeria became a sovereign state. In addition, nationalists and colonial government unanimously agreed on federalism as the foremost system capable of allowing power sharing among the two amalgamated region (southern and northern protectorates). To the nationalist movements, the arrangement would eventually terminate the colonialists iron grip government and permit them to realize their dreams of becoming independent while the British government saw it as the formula that is good enough to facilitate regional development as the country grows in governance (Akinsanya, 2006).

Since then, Nigerian leaders challenges were those that are on daily basis combating national integration, meanwhile the federalism formula was adopted as a significant strategy for terminating the long awaited colonial rule. Since independence, Nigerian leaders had aspire to practice democracy but there are setbacks like ethnic complex configuration and consistent instability. For instance, there have been avalanche of coup d'état, civil war, ethnic/religious clashes, threat of resurgence, youths restiveness, incessant agitations for resource control, banditry, terrorism, political conflicts and ethnic militias. Nonetheless, Nigeria has not divided but remained an entity with the aim of designing an expedient strategy to promote national



integration. National integration is, therefore, the state action plans for creating viable political environment, building national unity capable of giving meaningful life to people that shared common values, resources, cultures and other key aspect of Nigerian natural endowment.

The military intervention in Nigeria seriously demeaned and vandalized the federal system both at the national and sub-national levels of government. The uniform men government vandalized and degraded the federal system by refusing to accommodate the country diverse ethnic constituencies. Suberu (2005), contends that style of Nigeria's federalism enhances instability. Thus, normal federalism should not allow any region to be subordinate to another, all tiers of government must be coordinated, co-equal as well as harnessing its resources for development purpose. Moreover, each region must know that the issue of resource control is a compelling necessity for the practice of true federalism. Conclusively, it behooves on Nigerians to practice and promote real federalism that is reliable and efficient enough to free different region from problems that are whittling down the succeeding government to develop the nation. One of these challenges is the consistent ethnic/religious conflicts that necessitated stringent calls for the creation of state police, allow the federating units to exercise certain authorities and the adoption of fiscal practices (Alubo, 2008).

It is, therefore, imperative that laws, re-structuring, constitution amendments, equity in resource control formula and viable human right system are vital processes in the running of federalism. These are reliable mechanisms of managing different ethnic units in the process of nation-building. In essence, the various challenges confronted by the Nigeria's federalism project could be better if the laws in the 1999 constitution are addressed for fair justice and virile political representation.

Democracy and the Politics of National Development

The concept of democracy is generally described as the government of the people by the people and for the people. This term does not easily lend itself to a particular definition but used in different perspectives by scholars. Ochonogor (2009), states that democracy is all about bridging class-gaps, creation of equal opportunities and combating emerging challenges. According to Nnoli (2008), democracy is also said to be operational in a society when justice and equity is promoted among diverse ethnic groups in the society. However, democracy cannot be seen as successful if the parameters of national development are not in sight. The concept of national development deals with the process which involves the betterment and progress of people in a given society. Nonsin (2001), believes that the concept involves fundamental changes in the institutional and ideological apparatus of society, of course, the strengthening of such apparatus usually help member of society to develop capacity for efficient management of their internal affairs for their welfare and development. In this context, if this development is to become a reality in Nigeria, the natural resources must be equally shared or distributed among various ethnic groups.

The only noticeable challenge of Nigerian democracy is the conflicts at various levels of different ethnic groups and region. These conflicts masquerade as religious, political, ethnic, gender and socioeconomic factors. Thus, Nigerian leaders are so engrossed with these problems to the extent that they don't know how to intervene so as to avert stepping on toes (Adesoji,



2011). This altercation affects the democratic governance and now becomes a major challenge to national development particularly in the area of conflict resolution in Nigeria. Coincidentally, the ugly situation has enhanced menace of different security concerns such as banditry, kidnapping, terrorism, baby factory syndrome, ritualism, cultism and a host of others, that largely ravaging the heterogeneous Nigerian society. Regrettably enough, this perennial situation of inter-ethnic conflicts tends to have become the negative parameters for defining democracy in Nigeria and by extension in Africa. Based on growing yearning for separate ethnic identity as condition to achieve different goals accomplishment in denial of true nationality, the struggle becomes hazardous and sometimes violent especially in a situation where the majority is in control of the instrumentality of power and governance while natural are concentrated in areas dominated by the ethnic minority.

Meanwhile, Nigeria has engaged and experienced series of conflicts arising from different contentious issues spanning from how best to distribute the seemingly sectional wealth for national development and for better life of different ethnic groups in the country. Undoubtedly, the incessant conflicts have thwarted government programmes as well as hindering national development and thus constitute a major set-back and challenge to leadership including national development.

Broadcast Media Reportage of Nigeria's Politics of Resource Control, Federalism and Democracy

Uniqueness of broadcast media lies in its specific focus and critical analysis of democratic process in Nigeria. Overtime, there has been a strong connection between the media and the conduct of politics and other important areas attached to the process. Despite the fact that the broadcast media usually have a complex relationship with those at the corridor of power and by extension the entire political system, they usually ensure compliance as well as finding ways to satisfy their audiences to whom they always provide information and views according line with the profession ethical conduct, high sense of judgment.

Fundamentally, the broadcast media institutions do provide information daily to aid the steady and rapid development of the citizens as well as other political responsibilities such as the resource distribution and control. This kind of national issue should be handled by the broadcast media using their intellectual lens to promote peace and tranquility among the different region. For instance, arguments and conflicts emanated from the national debates concerning federalism, democracy, resource distribution and control should be reported with fairness and objectivity. Broadcast media should be guided with sound decisions that would bring about rapid growth and development in Nigerian society. According to Odey (2007), the key goal of the media is to serve the society by educating the public, performing oversight functions on the ruling class, organizing democratic debates for political, and socio-economic, development.

In other words, broadcast media and other media organizations are saddled with the responsibility to constantly disseminate information capable to sustain people-oriented federalism and consciously evolve democracy that nurtured in the principles of rule law. Momah (2007), agrees that the media are like the double-edged sword strong enough to maintain social equity, facilitating radical alternatives. The broadcast media should be driven to achieve



development in their news content and programme presentations. In fact, research has proven that most of the avoidable crises that we have suffered in this country like that of the resource distribution and control were not based upon the nature of the events, but the manner at which such incidents were reported.

The media must not allow sensationalism in news coverage, especially when such reports have the potentials to undermine the country national interest. Broadcast media should not support the pull-down syndrome, nor should they forbid constructive criticism of government programmes and activities, published or aired should be with the determination towards advancing the economic and political progression of the country. Thus, national interest should be manifested where different ethnic groups live together as one nation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the Agenda-Setting Theory, Framing Theory, and Perception Theory. These theories were selected because they collectively explain how broadcast media determine the salience of political issues, shape public understanding of such issues, and influence audience perception of media messages relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria.

Agenda-Setting Theory

The Agenda-Setting Theory was developed by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972) following the seminal observation of Bernard Cohen (1963) that *"the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about."* The theory posits that although the media may not directly determine what people believe, they significantly influence the issues the public considers important by the amount of attention they devote to those issues.

The theory assumes that people rely heavily on the media for information, particularly on complex public issues that they cannot directly observe. Consequently, issues that receive sustained and prominent media coverage are more likely to be perceived by the public as important. Through repeated emphasis, the media shape the public agenda by directing attention to selected issues while giving little or no attention to others.

In the Nigerian context, debates surrounding resource control, federalism, and democratic governance have remained prominent partly because of sustained media attention. The frequency and prominence with which broadcast media report these issues influence how citizens perceive their importance and relevance to national development.

This theory is relevant to the present study because it explains how broadcast media prioritize political issues and shape public awareness of resource control, federalism, and democratic



governance. It provides a useful framework for understanding the extent to which media reporting influences public perception of these issues.

Framing Theory

Framing Theory explains how the media organize and present information in ways that influence audience interpretation of events and issues. According to Entman (1993), framing involves selecting certain aspects of a perceived reality and making them more salient in communication so as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation.

Journalists routinely decide which facts to include, which to emphasize, and which to omit in the process of constructing news stories. Consequently, media framing significantly shapes how audiences understand political and social issues.

Griffin (2006) observes that framing provides the context within which audiences interpret news events. News stories may be framed episodically by focusing on specific events or individuals, or thematically by presenting broader social, political, or historical contexts (Iyengar, 1991). While episodic framing emphasizes isolated incidents, thematic framing encourages audiences to consider structural causes and long-term implications.

Scholars have argued that framing is an unavoidable aspect of news production because every news report reflects editorial decisions regarding emphasis, selection, and presentation (Ajaegbu, Alao, & Oloyede, 2018, citing Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 2000).

In reporting issues relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance, broadcast media inevitably frame these issues from particular perspectives. Such framing influences how audiences interpret government policies, political actors, and national debates. Therefore, Framing Theory provides an appropriate framework for examining the nature and presentation of broadcast media reports on these political issues.

Perception Theory

Perception Theory was advanced by Berelson and Steiner (1964) and explains how individuals receive, interpret, organize, and assign meaning to information obtained from their environment. The theory assumes that individuals do not merely receive media messages passively; rather, they actively interpret such messages based on their previous experiences, beliefs, values, attitudes, and expectations.

The theory identifies four major processes that influence perception.



Selective Exposure refers to individuals' tendency to expose themselves to media messages that are consistent with their existing beliefs, interests, and values while avoiding information that contradicts their viewpoints.

Selective Attention suggests that individuals pay greater attention to aspects of media messages they consider personally relevant or consistent with their needs and interests.

Selective Retention explains that individuals are more likely to remember information that aligns with their existing beliefs, values, and psychological needs, while information perceived as irrelevant is often forgotten.

Selective Perception refers to the tendency of individuals to interpret media messages according to their personal beliefs, experiences, cultural background, and expectations, resulting in different interpretations of the same message by different audiences.

The relevance of Perception Theory to this study lies in its explanation of why audiences may interpret broadcast media reports on resource control, federalism, and democratic governance differently. People's awareness, socio-political experiences, educational background, and ideological orientations shape how they perceive media reports and ultimately influence their attitudes toward these important national issues.

Relevance of the Theories to the Study

Collectively, the Agenda-Setting, Framing, and Perception theories provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for this study. Agenda-Setting Theory explains how broadcast media determine the prominence of political issues; Framing Theory explains how those issues are presented and interpreted through media content; while Perception Theory explains how audiences receive, interpret, and respond to such messages.

Together, these theories provide an appropriate framework for understanding the relationship between broadcast media reporting and public perception of issues relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive survey and structured interview approaches. Descriptive survey according to Wimmer and Dominick (2006), attempts to explain current attitudes based on the available demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, occupation, ethnicity, religion and others. The study used multistage sampling method. These researchers purposively selected six states across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria who had immensely benefited over the years from the country's politics of resource control and federalism dichotomy namely Ondo State, Bayelsa State, Nassarawa State, Kogi State, Bauchi State, Zamfara State. In addition, these states were also selected based on how valuable the deposited mineral resources are as compared



to other states in the same geo-political zone. Stratified sampling was utilized to pick three local Government Areas from each of the selected states. Kogi (North Central) – Ankpa, Ajaokuta and Yagba West Local Government Areas, Ondo State – Ilaje, Odigbo and Owo Local Government Areas, Bayelsa State – Southern Ijaw, Brass and Ekereme Local Government Areas, Bauchi State – Toro, Alkaler and Ningi Local Government Areas, Nassarawa State – Awe, Wamba and Toto Local Government Areas, Zamfara State – Anka, Mara and Bukkuyum Local Government Area.

The population of this study is hinged on 2022 National Census Population results of selected Local Government Areas. Kogi State – Ankpa (358,000), Ajaokuta (122,432) and Yagba West (149,020). Ondo State – Ilaje (445,200), Odigbo (356,800) and Owo (341,400). Bayelsa State – Southern Ijaw (572,732), Brass (274,100) and Ekeremor (431,950). Bauchi State – Toro (617,800), Alkaleri (586,200) and Ningi (387,192). Nassarawa State – Awe (174,600), Wamba (72,894) and Toto (119,077), Zamfara State – Anka (142,280), Maradun (210,852) and Bukkuyum (211,633). The overall universe population of this study is 11,074,962.

Simple Random Sampling method was employed to select 50 respondents from each of the 18 Local Government Areas across the six geo-political zones totaling 900 respondents as sample size. Descriptive Statistics was adopted to analyse the data collected from the respondents using tables, frequencies and percentages.

Table 1: Respondents by Age

	Value	Frequency	Percentages
18 – 25 years	1	92	10.2%
26 – 45 years	2	326	36.2%
46 – 55 years	3	275	31.0%
55 and above	4	207	23.0%
TOTAL		900	100%

Source: Field Research, 2026

Table 2: Respondents by gender

	Value	Frequency	Percentages
Male	1	568	63.1%
Female	2	332	37.0%
TOTAL		900	100%

Source: Field Research, 2026

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on if the resource distribution funds allocated to the selected states have an impact

	Value	Frequency	Percentages
Strongly Impactful	1	132	15.0%
Impactful	2	206	23.0%
Average	3	322	36.0%
Not Impactful	4	199	21.0%
Neutral	5	51	6.0%
TOTAL		900	100%

Source: Field Research, 2026



Table 4: Distribution of respondents on those important needs that are not yet satisfactorily developed in the selected states

	Value	Frequency	Percentages
Road Infrastructure	1	151	17.0%
Security	2	135	15.0%
Education	3	142	16.0%
Health	4	128	14.2%
Housing	5	101	11.2%
Power Infrastructure	6	110	12.2%
All of the above	7	133	15.0%
TOTAL		900	100%

Source: Field Research, 2026

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on the negative effects of exploration of natural resources in the selected states

	Value	Frequency	Percentages
Deprivation of socio-economic needs	1	152	
Ethnic Conflicts	2	148	
Youth restiveness	3	89	
Unemployment	4	220	
Oil Spills	5	188	
Corruption	6	103	
TOTAL		900	100%

Source: Field Research, 2026

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study provide important insights into public perceptions of broadcast media reporting on resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria. The demographic profile of the respondents showed that the majority were adults within the economically and politically active age brackets. Specifically, respondents aged 26–45 years constituted the largest proportion (36.2%), followed by those aged 46–55 years (31.0%), while respondents aged 55 years and above accounted for 23.0%. Those aged 18–25 years represented 10.2% of the sample. This age distribution suggests that the respondents possessed the maturity and experience necessary to provide informed opinions on the issues investigated.

The study also recorded a higher proportion of male respondents (63.1%) than female respondents (37.0%). Although this imbalance reflects the willingness of more males to participate in the survey, it also highlights the need to encourage greater female participation in future studies to ensure broader representation of public opinion.

With respect to the impact of resource allocation on state development, the findings indicate that respondents generally perceived the funds allocated to the selected states as only moderately impactful. While 15.0% considered the allocations to be highly impactful and 23.0% viewed



them as impactful, the highest proportion of respondents (36.0%) rated their impact as average, whereas 21.0% believed they were not impactful. These findings suggest that although government allocations contribute to development, their impact falls short of public expectations. This perception points to concerns over poor implementation, inadequate accountability, and inefficient utilization of public resources. The findings reinforce the need for stronger financial oversight, transparency, and prudent management of public funds to ensure that allocated resources translate into tangible developmental outcomes.

The study further revealed widespread dissatisfaction with the level of infrastructural development across the selected states. Respondents identified deficiencies in critical sectors such as road infrastructure, security, education, healthcare, housing, and electricity supply. These findings suggest that despite substantial public expenditure over the years, essential social services remain inadequate. The persistence of these developmental gaps reinforces public concerns regarding governance effectiveness and equitable distribution of national resources.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that respondents perceive the exploitation and management of natural resources as contributing to several socio-economic challenges, including unemployment, oil spills, ethnic conflicts, corruption, and youth restiveness. Among these, unemployment (24.4%) and oil spills (21.0%) emerged as the most frequently identified consequences. These perceptions underscore the belief that the benefits derived from Nigeria's abundant natural resources have not translated into improved living conditions for many citizens. Instead, respondents associated resource exploitation with environmental degradation, social discontent, and governance failures.

Overall, the findings support the argument that effective democratic governance and genuine federalism require equitable resource distribution, transparent leadership, and responsible management of public resources. The study equally underscores the strategic role of broadcast media in informing citizens, promoting public accountability, and stimulating national discourse on issues relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance.

CONCLUSION

This study examined public perception of broadcast media reporting on resource control, federalism, and democratic governance in Nigeria. The findings indicate that although broadcast media continue to report these important national issues, respondents perceive that the benefits of resource allocation have not been adequately reflected in infrastructural development and improved welfare across the selected states. Persistent deficiencies in education, healthcare, road infrastructure, housing, electricity supply, and security continue to fuel public dissatisfaction with governance and resource management.

The study also established that respondents associate poor resource management with unemployment, corruption, environmental degradation, ethnic tensions, and youth restiveness. These challenges undermine the objectives of democratic governance and weaken public confidence in Nigeria's federal system. The findings therefore suggest that achieving sustainable



national development requires greater transparency, accountability, and equity in resource allocation and utilization.

Ultimately, Nigeria's abundant natural and human resources provide a strong foundation for national development. However, these resources can only yield meaningful developmental outcomes when managed within a framework of genuine federalism, democratic accountability, equitable distribution, and responsible governance. Broadcast media must continue to perform their watchdog role by providing balanced, objective, and investigative reporting capable of promoting transparency, informed public discourse, and good governance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government institutions responsible for resource allocation, policy formulation, implementation, and oversight should strengthen transparency, accountability, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that public funds are utilized effectively for sustainable development.
2. Federal and state governments should ensure equitable distribution of national resources by prioritizing investments in critical sectors such as education, healthcare, road infrastructure, housing, electricity supply, and security.
3. Anti-corruption agencies and oversight institutions should intensify efforts to curb the misappropriation and diversion of public funds through effective monitoring, regular audits, and strict enforcement of accountability measures.
4. Broadcast media organizations should sustain objective, balanced, and investigative reporting on issues relating to resource control, federalism, and democratic governance. By providing credible information and holding public officials accountable, the media can contribute significantly to policy reforms, public enlightenment, and the promotion of good governance in Nigeria.

Ethical Clearance

Ethical approval was not required for this study because it was based entirely on secondary data obtained from publicly available reports and documents. No human participants were directly involved, and no identifiable personal data were collected.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this study.

Author's Contribution

Obaren Thomas Igabor & Clement Oribhabor conceived and designed the study, collected and analysed the data, interpreted the findings, prepared the manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. The author accepts responsibility for the content and similarity index of the manuscript.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Disclosure

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author used Artificial Intelligence (AI) for language editing, grammar correction, readability improvement, and formatting assistance. All AI-generated outputs were carefully reviewed, revised, and verified by the author, who accepts full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets supporting the findings of this study were obtained from publicly available reports published by the Federal Ministry of Environment, the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the World Bank, and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). Additional information is available from the author upon reasonable request.

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