Full Length Research

Content Analysis of Hate Speech in the 2019 General Elections in Three Nigerian Newspapers

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Abstract: All over the world, hate speech represents a form of threat to damage the lives of individuals and increase the sense of fear in entire communities. The recent trend in journalism malpractice in the country is the dissemination of hate speech and vulgar language. In this perspective, the study examined the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in the *Daily Trust*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspapers. The variables of frequency, location, direction as well as journalistic genre were used to examine the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers. Stratified random sampling by days of the week was used to select the editions in the three newspapers. Critical Race Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis were used as theoretical framework. Based on the findings, the study discovered that the manifestation of hate speech was more frequent in *Daily Trust,* follow by *The Guardian* in the 2019 general elections. The findings reveals that the manifestation of hate speech by the selected newspapers in 2019 general elections was significantly high in the inside pages than front and back pages. The paper also found that the manifestation of hate speech by the selected newspapers was in neutral direction in the 2019 general elections. The study concludes that hate speech is a globally-endorsed paradigm and the press, as an important institution in the democratic process plays a key role during elections. As the Fourth Estate of the Realm, the press provides the platform for narratives and discourses in the service of elections, political negotiations and other features of the contestations among politicians and other civil organisations involved in election administration.

Keywords: Direction: Frequency: Hate Speech: Journalistic Genre: Prominence.

1.0 Introduction of the Study

Hate speech is a social problem that if not monitored could lead to far greater consequences including war, public disorder and disrupt the stability and peaceful coexistence of the nation (Pohjonen & Udupa, 2017: Alakali *et al.,* 2017). In Nigeria today, hate speech has become very prominent most especially in the political sphere and it is a strong instrument that can lead to total disintegration of a nation. Apparently, media practitioners tend to be callous concerning their role as peacemakers, rather they serve as machinery for promoting disunity, igniting crisis and triggering of hatred among members of the society. In general, description of hate speech tend to be wide, sometimes even extending to embody words that are insulting of those in power or minority groups or demeaning of individuals who are particularly visible in the society. At critical times, such as during election campaigns, hate speech may be prone to manipulation; accusations of promoting hate speech may be traded among political opponents or used by those in power to curb dissent and criticism (Alakali *et al.,* 2017; Ogbuoshi *et al.,* 2019; James *et al.,* 2021).

This could be the reason why Aondover and Muhammad (2018) observed that the recent trend in journalism malpractice in the country is the dissemination of hate speech and vulgar languages. The press fell to the trap of reporting hate speech by quoting directly from interviews, press statements, advertorials and sometimes from alleged online sources. Despite the fact that some guiding journalism codes of ethic, such as the Nigerian Media Code of Election Coverage (NMCEC) and even members of the society rejected the use of such messages, hate speech still filled the media landscape. Arguably, hate speeches tend to be more on social media among social media users than conventional media because of absent of gate-keeping. However, the prevalence of hate speech on the traditional media is also becoming worrisome in Nigeria. This is because apart from undermining the ethics of journalism profession, it is contributing in bringing disaffection among tribes, political class and religion or even among friends in the society. Alakali *et al.* (2017) observed that Nigerian public is inundated with negative media usage, such as character assassination and negative political campaigns at the expense of dissemination of issues that help them make informed choices.

This perhaps explains the position of Rasaq *et al.* (2017) that in Nigeria, particularly, the effects of political activities, which show hate speech have become more vivid in the successive democratic dispensation than the previous years. The deeds of politicians have only amplified the situation negatively and keeping the citizens more divided now than ever signals a great source of anxiety to Nigerians at home and in the Diaspora. As noted by Pate and Oso (2017), Nigeria is a multicultural nation of diverse people, multiple identities and colorful outlooks. It has a population of about 200 million people, 400+ ethnic groups, 2 major religions, aside from other traditional religious groups, dozens of political parties, 36 federating states and additional complex platforms of diversities. The Nigerian multicultural setting is characterized by diversity, heterogeneity and pluralism in the cultures, orientations and attitudes of the people. In other words, it connotes diversity as a fact of life on the grounds of sex, cultural practice, ethnic origin, religious affiliation, ideological stance, political leaning, level of social development, place of habitation and so on. Within this context, this study examined the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in the *Daily Trust, The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspapers.

1.1 Problem Statement of the Study

Nigeria is a country of about 200 million people, it is hugely diverse with complex structural, systemic and existential challenges that produce tensions and threats, which in some cases, explode into violence, terror, hatred and irredentist tendencies that affect security, order and peaceful conduct of individuals, groups and communities. The country has fought a civil war, experienced a devastating insurgency (Boko Haram) and battling numerous conflicts, extreme terror and violent crimes in the Niger Delta, kidnappings, armed robberies, hired assassinations and high profile financial corruption, drug and human trafficking (Pate & Jibril, 2018; Ogbuoshi *et al.,* 2019; NPC 2020; Nwokoro, 2019). All of that make the society tense, dangerous and conflict ridden with implications on journalism, its practice, professionals, freedom, performance and credibility.

Rasaq *et al.* (2017) pointed that various analysts and media contributors have noted the role of the newspapers in helping to curtail hate speech and its many effects. It is in this context that the current role played by some newspaper organizations, particularly popular newspaper outfits in the country, in the name of political campaigns becomes worrisome. It is also apparent in the literature that newspapers can enhance citizens in the discussion of issues at the local, national and international levels. This portends a lot for democracy, a system of government that thrives on the principles of popular participation and diversity of views and opinions in the public sphere (Auwal, 2018; Nwokoro, 2019; Ibraheem *et al.,* 2019). Thus, one would expect that the potentials of newspapers are tapped effectively in the interest of accountability that would help to entrench democratic ethos but rather, evidence has shown over the years in the manifestation of media promotion of hate speech, especially in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria.

Thus, newspaper organization, more than any other outfits have more responsibility and need to understand that they have a moral, legal and social obligation to protect the lives of Nigerians, through their actions or inactions. These have thrived for years unchecked in the country. How well this has augured with the herculean task of democratic consolidation is a subject of serious research and worth investigating. Hence, the current study seeks to investigate the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria, considering that politics is a game of numbers and lowering a person's or group's patronage through media reportage of discriminatory expressions could have negative consequences on electoral victory. Hence, this study examined the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in the *Daily Trust, The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspapers.

1.2 Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to analyse the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in the *Daily Trust*, *The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspapers. The following are the objectives of the study:
1. To examine the frequency of hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers.
2. To find out the dominant location for the placement of stories with hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers.
3. To identify the direction of stories on hate speech in the 2019 general election by the selected newspapers.
4. To find out the journalistic genre in which hate speech in the 2019 general elections appeared in the selected newspapers.

2.0 Literature Review of the Study

Pohjonen and Udupa (2017) developed the concept of "extreme speech" to critically analyze the cultures of vitriolic exchange on Internet-enabled media in India and Ethiopia. While online abuse is largely understood as "hate speech," the study makes two interventions to problematize the presuppositions of this widely invoked concept. First, extreme speech emphasizes the need to contextualize online debate with an attention to user practices and particular histories of speech cultures. Second, related to context, is the ambiguity of online vitriol, which defies a simple antonymous conception of hate speech versus acceptable speech (Odera, 2015; Rasaq *et al.,* 2017; Pate & Jibril, 2018; Shu'ara, 2021). The study advances this analysis using the approach of "comparative practice," which complicates the discourse of Internet "risk" increasingly invoked to legitimate online speech restrictions. From the cases of India and Ethiopia, the textured nature of online abuse and invective language belies the presuppositions of umbrella concepts, such as hate speech as well as the celebratory discourse of online subversion.

Rasaq *et al.* (2017) examined the effects of political activities in developing countries and particularly Nigeria and the study found that hate speech has become more vivid in the successive democratic dispensation than the previous ones thereby keeping the citizens more divided. Though, on the issue of hate speech in the provisions of Nigeria Constitution, Nigeria Electoral Act and Journalism Ethic Code are clear, but the question is where to draw the line between political statement, hate speech and the responsibility of the media. The study used Critical Discourse Analysis approach to investigate hate speech in Nigeria particularly in Nigeria's 2015 general election, which has become possible helix of violence. Based on the discourse, it is clear that hate speech was the focal point and the instrument of campaign. Therefore, the parade of hate speeches in several newspapers analyzed showed that media was used by politicians to stoke up hatred and stimulate violence among ethnic and political groups during the electioneering periods as well as in the daily life.

Ibraheem and Garba (2019) observed that in various jurisdictions including Nigeria, preference, especially by governments, is given to legislative framework to counter hate speech and fake news. The study found that the anti-fake news and hate speech campaign will be better appreciated if it is resituated into the broad innards of the struggle of re-constructing Nigerian. African community lives around the organising ethos of society, of access, accountability, political cultural and economic inclusion, but above all of democracy. The study recommends that there is a need for government and related stakeholders to encourage the setting up of fact-checking mechanism to authenticate editorial materials meant for public consumption. The findings of the study are significant to this study since it examined the framework to counter hate speech and fake news.

Ogbuoshi *et al.* (2019) used qualitative research method using in-depth interview to elicit background and detailed information as related to the menace of hate speech and fake news reporting on the political stability of Nigeria. Non-probability sampling techniques was adopted from the 6 geopolitical zones of Nigeria, a political elite was purposively selected from each state in the zone, making a total of 36 purposively chosen interviewees. Based on the findings of the study, majority of the interviewees are in agreement that hate speech is now a common phenomenon in the present day society and that it is mostly made to achieve some sinister goals. The study also found that hate speech and fake news is a dangerous trend that must be critically looked into. Thus, the study is relevant to this study because the study examined the menace of hate speech and fake news reporting on the political stability of Nigeria.

Nwokoro (2019) used survey design to examine hate speech in Benue and Delta states. The study used purposive and stratified techniques using Taro Yamane formula to arrive at a sample size of 400 respondents in each state, questionnaire were administered to respondents from18 years above. The study was based on counteracting hate speech and violence in violence-prone states through the radio with particular emphasis on a futuristic perspective of Benue and Delta States. The findings indicated that the extent to which hate speech can accumulate before violence is developed and exhibited depend on the individual's temperament. More of the respondents are of the view that such can take a long time while the remaining number of respondents said violent behaviour is developed and exhibited within a short period of time.

Lucas and Targema (2018) investigated the nature of readers' comments on online news sites in the country, their place within the context of hate speech rhetoric and their implication on democratic consolidation in the country. The study used Social Responsibility Theory and quantitative and qualitative content analytical methods to investigate the manifestation of hate speech in online readers' comments. From a sample of 250 comments (10% of the population) from ten stories on prominent online news platforms in Nigeria, findingsed reveal that although quantitatively, positive comments dominate the study population, qualitatively, the trend of discussion is disturbing, as commentators employ the use of hate language, verbal assault, name calling, insults and derogatory words to describe subjects.

3.0 Theoretical Review of the Study

The study is situated within the theoretical framework of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Critical Discourse Analysis Theory (CDAT). The CRT provides a compelling structure by which media concepts and hate speech can be analyzed and understood. According to Odera (2015) CRT indicates that media use phrases sponsored by politicians that refer to other opposition groups from descriptions that are not merely rhetorical, but pedestals on which hate speech flourishes. Theoretically, critical race theory underscores that violent political rhetoric is capable of producing the same psychological dynamics as violent entertainment (Rasaq *et al.*, 2017; Ogbuoshi *et al.,* 2019; Aluko *et al.,* 2021).

Thus, the nexus between the theory and the study is that the theory provides a compelling structure by which media concepts and hate speech can be analyzed and understood. This indicates that media use phrases sponsored by politicians that refer to other opposition groups from descriptions that are not merely rhetorical but pedestals on which hate speech emanate (Ogbuoshi *et al.,* 2019; Omidiora *et al.,* 2019). Arguably, some literature challenged the dominant ideology of Critical Race Theory on the basis of race and racism, social construction of race, storytelling, and counter storytelling as well as the notion of white supremacy. Despite this debate among scholars, the study considers the theory apt.

On the other hand, CDAT also provides a reality that can be represented either truthfully or falsely in language. The theory assumes that it is possible to represent reality in an unmediated, neutral form; critique is then based on whether the ideal is attained or not. Neutral representations are opposed to ideological representations, which are deemed to 'distort reality' (IPC 2015; Lucas &Targema, 2018). Ideology is, accordingly, conceptualized in negative terms, as the opposite of 'truth'. Critical Discourse Analysis Theory (CDAT) described and analyzed how the structure and content of the text encodes ideas and the relation among the ideas itself that is present in the text, systematically (Aondover & Muhammad, 2018). Here, it connotes how hate speech and language, dialects, and acceptable statements are used in a particular medium across different audience. The theory looks at discourse among people who share the same speech conventions. It also refers to the linguistics of language use as a way of understanding interactions in a social context, specifically the analysis of occurring connected speech or written discourse like All Progressive Congress (APC) presidential candidate is a fundamentalist- Clarke (*This Day*, Jan. 17, 2015, page 15).

Furthermore, Fairclough in Omidiora *et al.* (2019) argued that social practice has various orientations economic, political, cultural, ideological, and discourse may be implicated in all of these without any of them being reducible to discourse. The author further stated that in this line, discursive practice is constitutive in both conventional and creative ways: it contributes to reproducing society (social identities, social relationships, systems of knowledge and belief) as it is, yet also contributes to transforming society. In this context, the theory is apt to this study as it provides a reality that can be represented either truthfully or falsely in language, which often result to hate speech.

4.0 Research Design of the Study

The design is taken from the positivist approach, which believes in the quantitative data. The study employed content analysis as the method of data generation. It is an approach used in social science to examine the manifest content of media messages. According to NPC (2020) three hundred and ten Nigerian newspapers exist in the country. Therefore, the population of the study constitutes the 310 newspapers in Nigeria. The sampling technique is stratified sampling (Ajagbe et al., 2021). Since the sampling technique is stratified sampling by days of the week, it means that the three newspapers under investigation formed the sample size of the study. Below are the sample editions that were studied from the three newspapers:

    January Editions: (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26,) = 9 days
    February Editions: (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26,) = 9 days
    March Editions: (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26,) = 9 days
    April Editions: (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26,) = 9 days
    May Editions: (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26,) = 9 days
    June Editions: (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26,) = 9 days

The sampling interval starts from second edition of each month, as January has 31 days, February 28, March 31, April 29, May 31 and June 30. Therefore, the scale for rating the sampling is as follow: (2)+3=(5)+3=(8)+3=(11)+3=(14)+3=(17)+3=(20)+3=(23)+3=(26) in all the months. This means two months was selected before the 2019 general elections, two months during the 2019 general elections, and two months after the 2019 general elections to determine the manifestation of hate speech by the three newspapers.

The papers are selected because they are among the 12 national papers, which mean they share certain characteristics. The study considered the following units of analysis: political news, editorial, cartoons, and advertorial.

1. *Political news*: these are stories on politics that contains hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers.
2. *Editorial*: this is a newspaper's column that has some elements of hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the three newspapers.
3. *Cartoons*: are illustrations, which consist of image or photograph that portrayed hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers.
4. *Advertorial*: these are paid contents that have elements of hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers.

The content categorisation are based on the indicators that are used to identify what constitute hate speech like offensive, hateful, incisive, pungent, and sarcasm as developed by (Auwal, 2018; Ajagbe et al., 2021) and moderated by the current study. These forms of hate speech were read, and carefully placed to the following categories:

a. *Offensive:* comments that attack personalities in the 2019 general elections as published by the selected newspapers.
b. *Hateful:* comments that are insultive of ethnic, religious or regional groups in the 2019 general elections by the sampled newspapers.
c. *Incisive statement:* comments that call for violent attacks against individuals, members of a particular ethnic group or region in the 2019 general elections by the three papers.
d. *Pungent:* comments that are targeted to a person, which are inform of criticism or humor in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers.
e. *Sarcasm:* these are utterances that are calculated to mock a person or group in the 2019 general elections as published by the three papers.

The data gathering instrument in this study is coding sheet. Coding is a visible surface in a text, for example, the researcher count a number of time or phrase that appears in a written text. The study adopted content validity whereby experts in the field of communication ascertained the comprehensiveness and adequacy of the coding sheet (Ajagbe et al., 2021). Two coders were trained and trusted to code the selected editions. Data generated was presented using cross-tabulation, frequency, and percentages.

5.0 Findings and Discussion of the Study
Table 1: Frequency of Hate Speech in the 2019 General Elections

Newspapers (2019)	*Daily Trust*		*The Nation*		*The Guardian*		Total	
Offensive	58	19.2	48	18.2	62	21.7	168	19.8
Hateful	70	23.2	69	26.2	81	28.4	220	25.9
Incentive	57	18.9	50	19.0	45	15.8	152	17.9
Pungent	51	16.9	46	17.5	44	15.4	141	16.6
Sarcasm	66	21.8	50	19.0	53	18.6	169	19.9
Total	302	100	263	100	285	100	850	100

(*Source:* author's computation, 2021).

Table 1 examined the frequency of hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers. Based on the data, the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in the *Daily Trust* accounts for 19.2% (n=58) offensive, 23.2% (n=70) hateful, 18.9% (n=57) incentive, 16.9% (n=51) pungent, and 21.8% (n=66) sarcasm. *The Nation* records 18.2% (n=48) offensive, 26.2% (n=69) hateful, 19.0 (n=50) incentive, 17.5% (n=46) pungent, and 19.0% (n=50) sarcasm. *The Guardian* has 21.7% (n=62) offensive, 28.4% (n=81) hateful, 15.8% (n=45) incentive, 15.4% (n=44) pungent, and 18.6% (n=53) sarcasm. The overall hate speeches in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers point 19.8% (n=168) offensive, 25.9% (n=220) hateful, 17.9% (n=152) incentive, 16.6% (n=141) pungent, and 19.9% (n=169) sarcasm. This means that in the 2019 general elections, hate speech stories were more in the *Daily Trust*, followed by *The Guardian*. Based on the indicators that were used to identify what constitute hate speech in the study, hateful speeches were dominant in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers.

This underscores the findings by Oriola (2019) who found that comments deemed as offensive employed hate speech, threats, abusive language and assassination of character are evident in the print media, especially in the 2015 general elections.

Table 2: Dominant Location for the Placement of Stories with Hate Speech in the 2019 General Elections

Newspapers (2019)	Daily Trust		The Nation		The Guardian		Total	
Front Page	42	13.9	39	14.8	53	18.6	134	15.8
Inside Page	254	84.1	218	82.9	223	78.2	695	81.8
Back Page	6	1.10	6	2.3	9	3.1	21	2.5
Total	302	100	263	100	285	100	850	100

(*Source:* author's computation, 2021).

Table 2 ascertained the dominant location for the placement of stories with hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers. The rating scale of front page, inside page, and back pages was used to determine the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections. The data shows that in 2019 general elections, *Daily Trust* has 13.9% (n=42) hate speeches on the front page, 84.1% (n=254) in the inside page, and 1.10% (n=6) at the back page. *The Nation* has 14.8% (n=39) on the front page, 82.9% (n=218) in the inside page, and 2.3% (n=6) at the back page. Additionally, *The Guardian* has 18.6% (n=53) on the front page, 78.2% (n=223) in the inside page, and 3.1% (n=9) at the back page. In all, the three newspapers have 15.8% (n=134) stories with hate speech on the front page, 81.8% (n=695) in the inside page, and 2.5% (n=21) at the back page. This means that the manifestation of hate speech is significantly high in the inside page compare to front and back pages in the 2019 general elections. Based on the rating scale, the manifestation of hate speech stories were dominant in the inside pages by the selected newspapers. Corroborating, the IPC report (2015) also revealed that many of the news reports at the 2015 presidential campaign had dangerous and outrageous headlines in the inside pages of Nigerian newspapers.

Table 3: Direction of Stories on Hate Speech in the 2019 General Elections

Newspapers (2019)	Daily Trust		The Nation		The Guardian		Total	
Positive	97	32.1	85	32.3	97	34.0	279	32.8
Negative	106	35.1	81	30.8	86	30.2	273	32.1
Neutral	99	32.8	97	36.9	102	35.8	298	35.0
Total	302	100	263	100	285	100	850	100

(*Source:* author's computation, 2021).

Table 3 identified the direction of stories on hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers. The data indicates that in the 2019 general elections, *Daily Trust* has 32.1% (n=97) on the positive direction, 35.1% (n=106) on the negative direction, while 32.8% (n=99) on the neutral direction. *The Nation* has 32.3% (n=85) on the positive direction, 30.8% (n=81) on the negative direction and 36.9% (n=97) on the neutral direction. Also, *The Guardian* has 34.0% (n=97) on the positive direction, 30.2% (n=86) on the negative direction while 35.8% (n=102) on the neutral direction. This means that the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers was on the neutral direction within the period of the study.

Table 4: Journalistic Genre for Hate Speech in the 2019 General Elections

Newspapers (2019)	*Daily Trust*		*The Nation*		*The Guardian*		Total	
Political News	254	84.1	218	82.9	252	88.4	724	85.2
Editorial	9	2.10	9	3.4	8	2.8	26	3.0
Cartoons	29	9.6	20	7.6	14	4.9	63	7.4
Advertorial	10	3.3	16	6.1	11	3.8	37	4.3
Total	302	100	263	100	285	100	850	100

(*Source:* author's computation, 2021).

Table 4 examined the journalistic genre in which hate speech in the 2019 general elections appeared in the selected newspapers. In the 2019 general elections, *Daily Trust* accounts for 84.1% (n=254) on political news, 2.10% (n=9) on editorial, 9.6% (n=29) on cartoons while 3.3% (n=10) on advertorial. *The Nation* has 82.9% (n=218) on political news, 3.4% (n=9) on editorial, 7.6% (n=20) on cartoons while 6.1% (n=16) on advertorial. *The Guardian* has 88.4% (n=252) on political news, 2.8% (n=8) on editorial, 4.9% (n=14) on cartoons, and 3.8% (n=11) on advertorial. This means that the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections was high in *The Guardian*, followed by *Daily Trust,* and *The Nation.* The implication of the data is that most of the hate speeches manifested in the political news and some appeared in the cartoons within the period of the study. This coincided with the assumption of CRT, which indicates that media use phrases sponsored by politicians that refer to other opposition groups from descriptions that are not merely rhetorical, but pedestals on which hate speech flourishes.

Table 5: Rank Order Correlation between the Three Newspapers
To determine the variable studied under the three newspapers, a Pearson Product-Movement correlation was used as shown in the table below to validate the categories.

Categories	$DT(x)^1$	X^2	$TN(Y)^1$	Y^2	$TG(x)^1$	X^2	XY
Hateful	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sarcasm	2	4	4	16	2	4	8
Offensive	3	9	3	9	3	9	9
Pungent	5	25	2	4	4	16	10
Incentive	4	16	4	16	5	25	16
N = 5	Σx= 15	Σx²= 55	Σy= 14	ΣY²= 46	Σx= 15	Σx²= 55	ΣXY= 44

DT= *Daily Trust*, TN= *The Nation* and TG= *The Guardian.*
N = 5, Σxy = 44, Σx = 15, Σx² = 55, Σy = 14, Σy² = 46

The Formula $\quad r = \dfrac{N\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{[N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$

$$= \frac{(5 \times 44) - (15 \times 14)}{\sqrt{[(5 \times 55) - (15)^2][(5 \times 46) - (14)^2]}}$$

$$= \frac{220 - 210}{\sqrt{(275 - 225)(230 - 196)}}$$

$$= \frac{10}{\sqrt{50 \times 34}}$$

$$= \frac{10}{\sqrt{1700}}$$

$$= \frac{10}{41.23}$$

$$= 0.24$$

The correlation score of 0.24 showed that there is a high correlation among the variables studied in the three newspapers. This simply showed that there is high degree of variability in the manifestation of hate speech in the *Daily Trust, The Nation* and *The Guardian* newspapers. These also reduced or possibly eliminated the impact of extraneous variables as regards to the manifestation of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in relation to the location of the selected newspapers.

6.0 Conclusion of the Study

This study is a content analysis of hate speech in the 2019 general elections in Nigeria. The study established that hate speech is a globally-endorsed paradigm and the press, as an important institution in the democratic process plays a key role during elections. As the Fourth Estate of the Realm, the press provides the platform for narratives and discourses in the service of elections, political negotiations and other features of the contestations among politicians and other civil organisations involved in election administration. However, problems associated with election reporting and media role in political contestations and machinations, particularly on the African continent, have been a recurrent clog in the wheel of politics in Africa. For instance, in Nigeria, since the 1950s up to the early 1980s, spiralling into the Fourth Republic that started in 1999 and beyond, several election problems that were rooted in perceived mishandling of the electoral process by the media has occurred in the country. The 1965 parliamentary and 1983 general elections were faced by conflicts with accompanying widespread violence, which resulted in military interventions.

Based on the findings, the study discovered that the manifestation of hate speech was prevalent in the *Daily Trust* in the 2019 general elections by the selected newspapers. The findings of the study revealed that hateful speeches were dominant in the 2019 general elections. The findings reveal that the manifestation of hate speech by the selected newspapers in 2019 general elections was significantly high in the inside pages than front and back pages. The study also found that the manifestation of hate speech by the selected newspapers was in neutral direction in the 2019. Arising from the findings, the study concluded that the level of hate speech in Nigeria witnessed before, during and after the 2019 general elections is worrisome, particularly when one views communication (hate speech) as having the capacities and infrastructures of threatening the country's collective existence. Thus, communication scholars should continue to explore into this area of hate speech to the strengthening of theory, methodology and the general knowledge base on the subject.

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