

Framing of the 2015 Electoral Campaign Issues by Selected Nigerian Newspapers

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to find out the issues prioritized by the print media during the 2015 election period amidst the numerous campaign messages from different politicians and political parties. Anchored on the Agenda Setting theory, the paper argues that there was a paradigm shift where the power to say “what to think about” was rather exercised by the politicians rather than the mass media to the masses/electorates. Using content analysis; news reports, features and editorial contents of selected newspapers were analysed. The paper found out that the issues promoted by the papers were not good for democracy and national development. Manifest and latent contents indicated that dominant campaign messages were mostly along ethnic

sentiments, political rivalries, opposition politics, and hate messages against issue-based political discourse. The paper recommends that journalists should re-appraise and attach significance to issues that best guide the electorate's thoughts for candidates with the best leadership prospects and national interest.

Keywords: Mass media, Print media, Political campaign, Election, Agenda setting, Framing