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## Still, Echoing his Master's Voice? Print Media Coverage of Chatham House Political Lectures by Nigerian Politicians

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## Abstract

The Nigerian print media has deep-rooted ties with British media, a legacy of the colonial relationship between Nigeria and Britain. This influence prompts crucial questions about the autonomy of the Nigerian media, particularly in its agenda-setting prowess and potential entanglement in a colonial mindset. This paper aims to explore whether the British media still acts as the master – after over six decades of political independence – for Nigerian media, by focusing on the coverage of Chatham House political lectures by Nigerian politicians in print media. To achieve this goal, the paper employs content analysis as the methodology, concentrating on the coverage of selected presidential candidates' lectures in two prominent newspapers – *This Day* and *Guardian* – during the 2014/2015 and 2022/2023 periods. Commonly found words in both newspapers include "colonial," "campaign," "elections," "jamboree," "voters," "inferiority," and "leaders." The prevalent themes encompass "waste of resources," "global recognition," "neo-colonialism and imperialism," "international relevance and validation" and "unreciprocated actions". This study aspires to fill a significant gap in academic research, shedding light on an area with limited scholarly exploration. It delves into the potential influence of British media on Nigerian media, offering insights into the framing of political lectures by newspapers, and concluding that the Nigerian media and the political class still rely on Western validation in many instances.

**Keywords:** *Chatham House, Nigeria, Britain, Colonialism, Election, Media Agenda Setting*

## Introduction

The profound influence of colonialism on the Nigerian media industry remains undeniable. With Nigeria under British colonial rule from 1901 to 1960, the British media's agenda and perspectives dominated the discourse, leaving a lasting impact on the prioritisation and agenda-setting of the Nigerian media. This influence, although still present, has sparked crucial questions about the autonomy and independence of the Nigerian media, particularly in terms of agenda-setting (Crowley, 2016).

The British media's impact on the Nigerian media is evident in the shaping of narratives about Africa and Nigeria. Accusations that the British media promotes negative stereotypes and portray Africa as a land of poverty, disease and conflict, have led to the internalisation of these narratives by the Nigerian media, perpetuating such representations in their reporting (Crowley, 2016). This points to the enduring influence of British media perspectives on how issues affecting Africa and Nigeria are presented. Furthermore, the British media's agenda-setting prowess has played a role in determining how the Nigerian media prioritises issues. The tradition of framing issues and focusing on specific aspects of a story by the British media has influenced the Nigerian media, often leading to a replication of the same agenda-setting patterns and a tendency to ignore issues more relevant to the local context (Chimombo, 2000; Anninos, 2010).

Despite significant strides towards independence in recent years, the Nigerian media continues to grapple with remnants of colonial influence, manifesting in what is referred to as a colonial mentality. This persistence of a colonial outlook is characterised by a belief in the superiority of Western culture and a disregard for local customs and traditions (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). The colonial mentality is sustained by several factors. Firstly, many media organisations in Nigeria are owned by Western corporations, dictating editorial policies and influencing the media's direction (Okome, 2010). This dependence on Western interests further drives the agenda-setting and priorities of the media. Secondly, the reliance on Western sources of information, such as wire services and international news agencies, reinforces the colonial mentality, providing a skewed Western-centric perspective on issues affecting Africa and Nigeria (Crowley, 2016).

The role of media in shaping public opinion and influencing political decisions is crucial in any modern state. Recognising media as the "fourth estate" emphasises its role in holding governments accountable and influencing societal values. Despite the media's potential to be a powerful force for change and activism, the debate persists on whether Nigerian print media is entirely free from British media influence, particularly in agenda-setting on issues affecting Nigeria. The study aims to determine the extent to which the Nigerian media, especially the print media, is liberated from the agenda-setting prowess of British media and whether it is still entwined in the web of colonial mentality.

This paper aims to make a content analysis of the print media coverage of the Chatham House lectures by Nigerian presidential candidates, to ascertain if the Nigerian media is still echoing the master's voice (seeing as the British media is widely considered the progenitor of Nigerian media).

### **Problematising the Chatham House Debates by Nigerian Politicians**

The influence of the British media on its Nigerian counterpart, particularly through agenda-setting power, has been a significant force in shaping public opinion and discourse. This influence is particularly evident in the British media's selection of issues to cover and how they frame those issues, perpetuating stereotypes and negative representations of Africa and Nigeria (Adeyanju, 2018).

Despite the challenges posed by this influence, there have been notable strides in the Nigerian media landscape. An increase in locally owned and operated media outlets in recent years has aimed to challenge the dominance of foreign media and present a more balanced view of events and issues in Africa and Nigeria (Adeyanju, 2018). These outlets have sought to counteract the negative narratives perpetuated by the British media and shed light on positive developments and innovations in these regions. However, there remains an unconscious reliance on the British media for relevance and validation. This reliance is a focal point of a research study aimed at determining whether the British media serves as the progenitor or master for the Nigerian media, with a

specific emphasis on the print media's coverage of Chatham House political lectures by Nigerian politicians.

The study delves into a previously under-explored aspect of media coverage – politicians presenting their manifestos and campaign plans at foreign fora, especially the rush to do so at Chatham House election circles. The choice of Chatham House as a focal point in the lead-up to the 2023 presidential election campaign in Nigeria raises questions about the existence of alternative platforms, such as the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) in Lagos or the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies in Kuru. In exploring the dynamics of politicians presenting their manifestos at Chatham House, the study considers the historical context. In 2015, the All Progressives Congress (APC), an opposition party, defeated the ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) in a major federal election in Nigeria. The APC's presidential candidate presented his candidacy at Chatham House, sparking questions about whether opposition politicians perceived the platform as a game-changing one. Dr. Reuben Abati noted that speaking at Chatham House became a "badge of honour" for Nigerian politicians (*The Cable*, January 19, 2023).

In the 2023 election cycle, Chatham House became the preferred platform for almost all major contenders, excluding Atiku Abubakar of the PDP. The APC's presidential candidate, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu; Peter Obi of the Labour Party and Dr. Rabiu Kwankwaso of the New Nigeria People's Party all chose Chatham House to promote their candidacies. These appearances received extensive coverage from the Nigerian media, especially print and social media. Almost all the other major Nigerian newspapers – *ThisDay*, 'The Chatham House Effect', January 17, 2023; *The Punch*, 'Chatham House Pilgrimage: Nigerian Politicians Seek Relevance in Foreign Lands', January 23, 2023; *Vanguard*, 'Presidential Candidates and Chatham House Runs', January 20, 2023; *Daily Trust*, 'Chatham House: Is UK Centre Turning To Nigerian Politicians' Ritual Spot?' (January 21, 2023); *Premium Times*, 'NigeriaDecides2023: Political Parties Justify Chatham Appearances', February 8, 2023; *The Republic*, January, 30; *Daily Independent*, 'Comparative Analysis of Tinubu, Buhari's Chatham House Presentations', December 15 and 22, 2022, among others, ran an editorial on the Chatham House phenomenon.

While the British media's influence on the Nigerian media is undeniable, there are signs of progress towards a more independent and balanced representation. The study on the Chatham House phenomenon provides a deeper understanding of the dynamics at play, shedding light on the complexities of media coverage in the context of Nigeria's political landscape.

### **Chatham: What Manner of House?**

Chatham House, also known as the Royal Institute of International Affairs, established in 1920, serves as a London-based non-profit think tank. Operating independently, it engages with governments, the private sector, and civil society to foster debates on global developments, becoming a preferred platform for those seeking to amplify their voices within a respected context. In an article titled "Why

Nigerians Continue to Speak at Chatham House" (*The Republic*, January 30, 2023), Afon Dike argues that speakers often visit Chatham House to attain 'legitimacy' associated with Western recognition. *The Guardian* newspaper dedicated a two-day editorial to the Chatham phenomenon, questioning its propriety and challenging the necessity for presidential candidates to address Nigerians abroad, who lack voting rights. While acknowledging the potential benefits of international connections, the editorial suggests that the Nigerian embassy could serve as an equally suitable venue.

Chatham House, positioning itself as integral to the study of transition complexities since the 1960s, has not sustained a pivotal role in Nigeria's politics during subsequent military regimes and brief democratic periods. Nevertheless, Nigerian politicians find Chatham House appearances beneficial, gaining visibility and projecting an image of 'legitimacy' and 'transparency' to reinforce their credibility. Despite a significant Nigerian population in the UK and a similar demographic in the United States, the appeal of Chatham House to political candidates may be rooted in a vestige of the colonial era, acknowledging Britain's influence on Nigerian domestic politics. Chief Sunny Onuesoke attributes Nigerian politicians' preference for Chatham House to 'neo-colonialism'.

Ironically, Nigerians in the diaspora, despite appearances at Chatham House, are not allowed to vote in Nigeria's elections. During his visit to Chatham House on January 17, 2023, the chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC), Professor Mahmood Yakubu, disclosed that a policy for diaspora voting is ready, pending necessary legal amendments to support it. The 1999 constitution and the 2022 Electoral Act currently restrict voter registration and participation to within the country (*The Republic*, 2023).

### **British Neutral Media Platforms Vs Suspicion of Neo-Colonialism?**

Persistent concerns about the freedom of the press in Nigerian media outlets stem from their ownership structures, with historical ties to political figures shaping editorial agendas. Notable instances include Chief Obafemi Awolowo establishing the oldest surviving private newspaper in 1949 to promote the Action Group's agenda and Chief MKO Abiola's *National Concord* serving as the mouthpiece for the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). President Bola Tinubu's ownership of *The Nation* newspaper and Dr. Raymond Dokpesi, an ally of PDP presidential candidate Atiku Abubakar, creating *African Independent Television* further underscores this connection (Adaugo & Roper, 2021).

A significant motivator for Nigerian politicians seeking a 'neutral forum' is the perceived lack of impartiality in the national media landscape, as highlighted by Isaac Adaugo and Chris Roper (2021). The Buhari administration's preference for foreign institutions over national ones is evident in instances like Bola Tinubu choosing to avoid the *Arise TV* debate but actively participating at Chatham House, despite being ill-prepared.

While neutral forums exist within the country, such as universities and other free spaces, Chatham House stands out due to its international recognition. However, Afona Dike (2022) argues in a Republic online newspaper article titled "What Has Chatham House Got to Do with Us?" that civil society organisations and social media within Nigeria could serve as more useful tools for fostering meaningful debates and holding politicians accountable. Dike emphasises that social media can be a platform to question candidates who spurn national fora, challenging their commitment to engaging with the electorate.

Dike suggests that Chatham House might be playing an unfairly outsized role in Nigeria's politics, receiving imprimatur from foreign press and the British establishment. He contends that seeking a 'neutral forum' outside Nigeria reflects a deep mistrust of the country. In a divided landscape, the colonial power is perceived as a mutual arbiter, reminiscent of the pre-independence era when crucial meetings were often held in London.

The reliance on foreign platforms like Chatham House raises questions about the perceived lack of trust in national institutions and the significance of these foreign imprints on Nigerian politics (Afon Dike, 2022).

### **Interplay Between British Media, African Politics**

The intricate interplay between British media and African politics, particularly in Nigeria, reveals a complex legacy shaped by colonial history. The British colonial rule from 1901 to 1960 left an indelible mark on the Nigerian media landscape, with enduring influences on narratives, priorities and a persistent colonial mentality. One significant impact is evident in the framing of narratives about Africa. The British media has been accused of perpetuating negative stereotypes, depicting the continent as synonymous with poverty, disease and conflict. This portrayal has seeped into the Nigerian media, reflecting a lingering colonial mindset that influences their reporting (Crowley, 2016).

Beyond narrative framing, the British media's agenda-setting prowess has dictated the priorities of the Nigerian media. The tradition of focusing on specific aspects of a story has led the Nigerian media to follow a similar pattern, often neglecting issues more pertinent to the local context (Chimombo, 2000; Anninos, 2010). While the Nigerian media has made strides toward independence, the colonial mentality persists. This outlook, characterised by a belief in the superiority of Western culture, continues to influence how the Nigerian media reports on issues affecting Africa. The media's reliance on Western sources, often dictated by Western corporations that own many Nigerian media organisations, reinforces this colonial mindset (Okome, 2010).

The colonial mentality becomes evident in the selection of information sources, perpetuating a skewed and Western-centric perspective on African issues. This reliance impedes the media's ability to provide a nuanced and diverse representation of the local context (Crowley, 2016). Despite these challenges, the media remains a potent force in shaping public opinion and influencing political

decisions. In the context of Nigeria, media outlets play a vital role as the "fourth estate," holding governments accountable and providing a platform for diverse voices (McChesney, 1999). However, the colonial relationship between Nigeria and Britain raises concerns about the extent of British media influence on Nigerian priorities. The ongoing debate suggests that Nigerian print media is heavily influenced by British media, leading to prioritisations that may not align with local needs.

This influence is seen through the lens of "cultural hegemony," a concept introduced by Gramsci (1971) to describe the imposition of superior class cultures, ideologies, and norms on a subordinate class. The fear is that the British media's representation of Nigerian issues impacts how these issues are covered within the Nigerian media. Additionally, the discussion extends to the realm of "post-colonialism," exploring the implications of colonialism on society, culture, and identity. Fanon (1963) and Said (1993) argue that understanding this legacy is crucial for decolonization efforts. In the context of Nigerian media coverage of Chatham House political lectures, this perspective becomes particularly relevant in challenging the dominance and influence of neo-colonialism. In reclaiming its narrative since gaining independence in 1960, the Nigerian press faces the ongoing struggle against lingering colonial influences. The media's evolution reflects a commitment to free, fair, and credible news dissemination while challenging the remnants of neo-colonialism in their coverage of events like Chatham House political lectures (Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2007).

### **Theoretical Underpinning**

The work is grounded in the Agenda Setting Theory, emphasising the dynamic between media coverage and the public's perception of crucial issues. According to this theory, media coverage plays a pivotal role in shaping the audience's understanding of important matters, with increased coverage leading the audience to perceive the issue as more significant (Baran and Davis, 2009). This concept, ingrained in our culture for nearly half a century, highlights the media's power to present images to the public (Uwom and Oloyede, 2014). Scholars like Lang and Lang (1959) and Klapper (1960) have delved into this theory, affirming the mass (print) media's substantial impact on shaping public perceptions of important issues.

Agenda Setting essentially involves how the news media influences public awareness and concern about specific topics (Asemah, 2011). It grants the media the ability to selectively curate what the public sees and hears, effectively simplifying the understanding of events in our environment (Sanchez, 2002). The media assumes a crucial role in determining the importance of issues through various cues, such as the lead story on page one, front page display and headline size. As a vital source of information, the media is tasked with reporting on issues in a manner that can sway public understanding, relevance, validation, and action (Radu and Banjac, 2012). Media exposure, even if brief, holds the potential to impact specific decisions. By selecting and omitting stories, the media provides cues to the audience on which issues should be deemed significant (Felix, 2018).

Exposure to various media outlets, including news, features, and editorials, can contribute to a more profound understanding of the issues at hand.

### **Methodology**

This paper employs a comprehensive research approach integrating content analysis and semi-structured interviews. Content analysis, a systematic method for examining written, spoken, or visual communication, serves as the primary tool for decoding and categorising data to unveil patterns and themes (Krippendorff, 2004). Content analysis aims to fathom the messages inherent in the data and address research queries about communication (Neuendorf, 2016). With applications across various disciplines like sociology, psychology, marketing and communication studies, content analysis yields both quantitative and qualitative data, presenting a valuable asset for researchers scrutinising communication systematically (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

The study adopts a mixed research design to analyse the coverage of Chatham House lectures by selected presidential candidates in *ThisDay* and *Guardian* newspapers from November 2014 to January 2015 and November 2022 to January 2023. This methodological choice involves numerical data recording, frequency analysis and qualitative scrutiny of words and themes in the selected newspapers. This approach facilitates a holistic understanding of the media content under investigation.

Purposive sampling is employed to select two newspapers, *ThisDay* and *Guardian*, out of approximately 14 widely circulated newspapers in Nigeria. The selection is based on nationwide distribution, accessibility, reliability and a broad focus on general topics, including politics, international relations, policies and public administration. Given the impracticality of analysing all newspapers in the population, this sampling technique ensures a manageable yet representative subset. The chosen period encompasses 184 editions each of *ThisDay* and *Guardian* for both 2014/2015 and 2022/2023, totaling 368 editions. A search strategy, focusing on headlines related to Chatham House and Nigerian presidential candidates' lectures or trips, narrows down the selection to 16 editions of *The Guardian* and 20 editions of *ThisDay*.

The unit of analysis in this study involves various categories of media content, such as news stories, articles, editorials, and special reports. The data collection encompasses media organisation, story placement, and story type classification (favourable, unfavourable, or neutral). A code sheet is utilised to gather and analyse data based on parameters like coverage frequency and presentation format. The researchers employ additional sources such as textbooks, internet resources and journals for supplementary data. The coding sheet aids in the systematic observation and analysis of content, transforming raw data into a standardised format for comprehensive analysis. Furthermore, qualitative analysis is applied to interpret reoccurring themes in the content.



## Results

This section presents the data obtained from the content analysis. Recall that the purposive sampling technique was used to identify 16 *Guardian* newspapers and 20 *ThisDay* newspapers analysed in this paper.

Table 1 below illustrates the frequency and distribution of topics or themes (variables) in which reports on Chatham House Nigerian presidential candidates' lectures are categorised. From the table, approximately 31.25 per cent of the *Guardian* newspapers' coverage focuses on electioneering campaigns, while only 20 per cent of *ThisDay* is centred on the same theme. Concerning neo-colonialism and imperialism, 12.5 per cent of *Guardian* newspapers embody such themes, whereas 30 per cent of *ThisDay* newspapers contain the same theme. The jamboree theme, reflecting issues related to wasting resources or misplaced priority, is reported at the same percentage (25 per cent) for both *Guardian* and *ThisDay* newspapers.

**Table 1:** *Subject Categories of Report Variables*

Variables	<i>Guardian</i>		<i>ThisDay</i>		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Electioneering campaigns	5	31.25	4	20	9	25
Neo-colonialism/Imperialism	2	12.5	6	30	8	22.2
Jamboree/Waste of resources/Misplaced priority	4	25	5	25	9	25
Global recognition/International relevance	3	18.75	2	10	5	13.9
Validation and Inferiority complex	2	12.5	3	15	5	13.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

As for the themes of global recognition, international relevance and validation, approximately 18.75 per cent of *Guardian* newspapers discuss these issues, while the inferiority complex is covered at 12.5 per cent. In comparison, only 10 per cent of *ThisDay* newspapers carry global recognition, international relevance and validation themes and 15 per cent report on inferiority complex.

**Table 2:** *Page Placement of Reports*

Variables	<i>Guardian</i>	<i>ThisDay</i>	Total
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	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Front Page	8	50	12	60	20	55.6
Inside Page	7	43.75	8	40	15	41.7
Back Page	1	6.25	Nil	0	1	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 above outlines the page placements or designations of the report coverage in newspapers on Chatham House Nigerian presidential candidates' lectures. According to the table, approximately 50 per cent of the *Guardian* newspapers' coverage on the issue is positioned on the front page, while 43.75 per cent are designated as inside stories, and only 6.25 per cent of the reports are placed on the back page. In contrast, 60 per cent of the reports published by *ThisDay* on the same issue are allocated to the front page, with only 40 per cent placed on the inside page and 0 per cent on the back page.

**Table 3:** *Categories of News/Report Contents/Coverage*

Variables	<i>Guardian</i>		<i>ThisDay</i>		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
News stories	5	31.25	5	25	10	27.8
Feature Articles	2	12.5	3	15	5	13.9
Editorials	2	12.5	2	10	4	11.1
Opinions	5	31.5	7	35	12	33.3
Advertisements	0	0	0	0	0	0
Columns	0	0	0	0	0	0
Interviews	2	12.5	3	15	5	13.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4:** *Space Allotted for Published Reports*

Variables	<i>Guardian</i>		<i>ThisDay</i>		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Over Full Page	0	0	0	0	0	0
Full Page	10	62.5	12	60	22	61.1
Half Page	5	31.25	7	35	12	33.3
Less than Half Page	1	6.25	1	5	2	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 provides insights into the space allocation for the reportage of Nigerian presidential candidates' lectures at Chatham House. As indicated in the table, none of the newspapers dedicated an entire page to the coverage of this issue. *Guardian* newspapers exhibit 62.5 per cent full-page reportage, while *ThisDay* features 60 per cent coverage of the issue. Half-page reportage accounts for 31.25 per cent of *Guardian* editions and 35 per cent of *ThisDay* editions. Additionally, 6.25 per cent of *Guardian* newspapers report less than half, compared to 5 per cent of *ThisDay* newspapers.

### **Interviews**

The most recurring responses from interviewees have been summed in the table below:

**Table 5:** *Interview Responses and categorization of respondents*

Alphanumeric Codes	Responses	Categorization
A1	"British media has a significant influence on Nigerian print media. Many Nigerian newspapers and magazines rely heavily on syndicated news and articles from British media outlets. This influence shapes the news agenda and narrative framing in our publications."	Print Media Practitioner
B2	"While there is some influence from British media, Nigerian print media has become more independent in recent years. We prioritise local news stories and voices, and the British media's impact is not as strong as it used to be."	Print Media Practitioner
C1	"The influence of British media on Nigerian print media is evident in the way legal issues are covered. British legal perspectives often dominate the analysis and interpretation of Nigerian legal cases, reinforcing a colonial mindset and undermining our legal system."	Legal Practitioner
D2	"Although there might be some influence, Nigerian legal practitioners are increasingly taking charge of legal discourse in the print media. We have local legal experts who provide insights on Nigerian legal matters, reducing reliance on British perspectives."	Legal Practitioner
E1	"British media plays a significant role in shaping the political narrative in Nigerian print media. Their coverage of Nigerian politics often sets the agenda and influences public opinion. It is crucial for us to critically analyse and challenge their narratives."	Political Analyst
F2	"While British media does have an impact, the political discourses in print media are in some cases within local context and analysis, offering alternative perspectives to British media's coverage."	Political Analyst

<b>G1</b>	"Having lived in Nigeria and currently in the UK, I have noticed the dominance of British media in Nigerian print media. Their narratives heavily influence public opinion and, sometimes, feels like we are still under their control."	Nigerian Living in the UK
<b>H2</b>	"As a Nigerian living in the UK, I can see that British media does have an influence, but it is not absolute. Nigerian print media has made progress in amplifying local voices and stories, reducing the impact of British media to some extent."	Nigerian Living in the UK
<b>A3</b>	"The influence of British media on Nigerian print media is undeniable. British media organisations often dictate the news agenda and their narratives heavily shape our reporting. We need to be cautious about perpetuating a colonial mindset."	Print Media Practitioner
<b>B4</b>	"While British media has some influence, Nigerian print media has made significant strides in asserting its independence. We have diversified news sources and prioritise local issues, reducing the impact of British media's agenda setting."	Print Media Practitioner
<b>C5</b>	"I believe that the influence of British media on Nigerian print media has declined over time. Nigerian journalists are becoming more critical and are actively challenging dominant narratives, providing more balanced coverage."	Print Media Practitioner
<b>D3</b>	"The influence of British media on Nigerian print media is still pervasive, especially in legal matters. Many Nigerian legal practitioners often refer to British legal frameworks and rely on British perspectives, undermining our legal system."	Legal Practitioner
<b>E4</b>	"While there might be some residual influence, Nigerian legal practitioners have made efforts to reclaim our legal narratives. We are seeing more indigenous legal analysis and commentary in Nigerian print media, reducing the dependency on British perspectives."	Legal Practitioner

<b>F3</b>	"The influence of British media on Nigerian print media cannot be underestimated. Their coverage of Nigerian politics sets the agenda and often frames political discourse, affecting public opinion and policy debates."	Political Analyst
<b>G4</b>	"While British media does exert some influence, Nigerian political analysts have become more vocal in challenging dominant narratives. We provide local context and engage with critical analysis, offering alternative viewpoints to counterbalance British media's influence."	Political Analyst
<b>H3</b>	While it is true that the British media has impacts on the Nigerian media landscape, such impacts are no longer as enormous as they used to be as the Nigerian media are becoming more assertive.	A Nigerian living in the UK
<b>I4</b>	"Nigerian voices and narratives are increasingly represented and there is a growing sense of autonomy in the media landscape."	A Nigerian living in the UK

## Discussion of Findings

The content analysis findings, as presented in Tables 1 to 4, shed light on the print media coverage of Nigerian Presidential candidates' lectures at Chatham House in London, UK. Examining the number of editions carrying this reportage (36 editions) in comparison to the total editions for the specified periods in *Guardian* and *ThisDay* (368 editions) reveals a relatively low percentage of 9.8 per cent. This could be attributed to publications closely preceding or following Chatham House lectures, indicating that the coverage aligns with the heightened popularity of Chatham House-related issues during this timeframe. The essence of agenda-setting, elucidated by Sanchez (2002), underlines the media's role in shaping public perception by selectively presenting information. Despite the relatively low coverage, the critical analysis focuses on understanding the purpose of such reportages. This is pivotal in determining whether the Nigerian media still echoes the master's voice, considering the British media as its progenitor.

The analysis delves into subject categories, encompassing electioneering campaigns (25 per cent for both newspapers), neo-colonialism and imperialism (22.2 per cent for both), jamboree and misplaced priorities (25 per cent for both), global recognition and international relevance (13.9 per cent for both), and validation with an inferiority complex (13.9 per cent for both). The coverage demonstrates a recurring trend of Nigerian politicians seeking association with Chatham House, with the newspapers noting a self-promoting and narcissistic tone in their presentations. The theme of global recognition highlights a pervasive trend of turning Chatham House appearances into a "badge of honour," exemplified by figures like Ahmed Bola Tinubu and Peter Obi. Contrary to Anninos (2010), the coverage doesn't necessarily echo the master's voice. The analysis explores Chatham House's role as a listening post for the British establishment, suggesting that Nigerian politicians might need to "donate" for speaking opportunities, fostering a tone that aligns with the British media as a progenitor.

Examining subject categories further, the analysis critically explores Nigeria's relationship with Britain, emphasising the colonial mentality exhibited by politicians favouring Chatham House over the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA). The media questions whether engaging the large Nigerian diaspora in the UK directly, considering their concentration, would be a more effective political outreach strategy. The newspapers express strong critiques regarding Chatham House speeches, questioning their contribution to global recognition and international relevance for Nigerian politicians. There's a suggestion to engage with Nigerians in the diaspora, but not necessarily within Chatham House, aligning with Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013).

In the context of neo-colonialism and imperialism, *ThisDay* exhibits mixed feelings about Tinubu's address, appreciating the content but questioning the choice of audience and location. The media suggests that politicians, citing concerns about crime domestically, opt for speeches at imperial locations instead of locally organised debates, portraying Chatham House as imperial and neo-colonial.

The expressed opinions argue that underdevelopment in Nigeria stems from a mentality rooted in historical colonialism. Chatham House lectures are viewed as contributing to the perpetuation of subservience to the West, challenging the negative misrepresentation of Nigerian affairs noted in Crowley (2016).

Interview responses mirror McChesney's media imperialism theory, highlighting the dominance of media agencies in weaker nations by powerful states. However, a counter view posits that media institutions in former colonies are challenging dominant powers' cultural narratives, in line with Said (1993). The theory of cultural hegemony is evident in some responses, while others suggest efforts to challenge and disrupt structures and ideologies traceable to colonialism, aligning with Mignolo (2007). Lastly, opinions indicate that the British media's influence on the Nigerian media landscape may be fading, with print media increasingly representing diverse domestic perspectives and narratives.

The content analysis offers a comprehensive exploration of Nigerian print media coverage of Chatham House lectures. The analysis goes beyond the quantitative aspects, delving into the qualitative dimensions of the reportages and providing valuable insights into the relationship between the Nigerian and British media landscapes.

## **Conclusion**

The enduring legacy of British colonial rule in Nigeria has undeniably left an indelible mark on the country's media landscape. The British, during the colonial era, introduced and established the initial modern media outlets in Nigeria, including newspapers and radio stations. This foundational development played a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of the media industry in the nation. Additionally, the British-implemented educational system, with a focus on teaching the English language, has had a lasting impact on Nigerians' communication abilities and expressions through media channels.

Nigeria's media landscape is characterised by diversity, encompassing various organisations and platforms such as traditional print media, television, radio stations and online media. This diversity facilitates the representation of different perspectives and interpretations in the coverage of political events. The reporting on Chatham House lectures by Nigerian presidential candidates, for instance, reflects not only the specific media outlet's viewpoint but also the interests of its audience and the political and economic considerations it serves.

While acknowledging the profound influence of colonial history on Nigeria's media industry, this research study emphasises that the legacy of colonial rule continues to affect how the media prioritises and reports on issues, especially those concerning Africa and Nigeria. However, it asserts that the Nigerian media is not entirely subsumed by the British media agenda or trapped in the web of a colonial mentality. Instead, significant strides have been made toward independence and freedom. The ongoing trend towards autonomy should be



sustained to ensure a media landscape that is truly reflective of Nigeria's diverse perspectives and evolving identity.

### Recommendations

The Nigerian media faces the imperative of persistently championing a nuanced and diverse portrayal of Nigeria and Africa, steadfastly resisting the sway of Western interests and the vestiges of colonial mentality in its operational ethos. While upholding this commitment, there exists an opportunity for the Nigerian media to enhance its technical capabilities by borrowing technical know-how and adopting practices that transcend mere agenda-setting and narrative framing. This augmentation should encompass a broader spectrum of media practices, ensuring a comprehensive and technically proficient approach that aligns with the evolving landscape of global media.

### Suggestion for Further Studies

Additionally, future research endeavours should extend their focus to encompass various media formats, including television (visual), radio (audio) and new media platforms such as social media (Twitter (now X), Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc.). Relying solely on print media may present limitations in achieving a comprehensive perspective that can be generalised to the entirety of the Nigerian media landscape. This necessity arises from the distinct nature of print media practitioners and organisations, often managed or controlled by entirely different entities. Exploring the same or analogous issues across diverse media forms will contribute to a more holistic understanding of the media dynamics in Nigeria.

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