

# **MEDIA REPORTS, MISCONCEPTION OF SAFETY AMONG SOUTHERN NIGERIANS AND THE REALITY IN THE NORTH EASTERN NIGERIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Media plays key role in shaping public opinion and influencing individual perception. It is considered the watchdog of society responsible for reflecting upon, and dissecting, the society's trending issues. Be it safety and security, social welfare, corruption, politics and the economy, *vis a vis* the policies that regulate the populace. The media sets agenda for societal discussion through its daily reports. This paper's aim is to examine the security situation in the North eastern Nigeria through recourse to media propaganda in the southern part of the country, the goal being to reassess what the southerners have taken for granted about the security and safety in the North eastern Nigeria. To achieve this, the study utilizes both primary and secondary data (interviews, print, broadcast and internet material), which is analyzed through the Agenda-Setting Theory lens. The finding of this study reveals that there has been misinformation regarding the security situation in North Eastern Nigeria; interviews conducted in the course of this study suggested that the misinformation affects the perception of people in the Southern Nigeria. They simply believe that northeast is a "no-go area," laced with bombs, bandits and kidnappers. However, this study dispels the perception that "No safety in North Eastern states," especially Adamawa State. Adamawa is populated with peace - loving and communally friendly people: very kind and accommodating to law-abiding indigenes and visitors alike, in the face of situational insecurity reports about the North East. At present, Adamawa is not a dangerous place to venture to, based on the picture of insecurity reports galvanized by both local and international media organizations in the past. As such, the paper concludes that insecurity in the northeastern Nigeria is being exaggerated by various media outlets, as not every inch of space in the North East is full of bombs, terrorists and kidnappers

**Keywords:** Media reports, Perception, Misconception of safety, reality of safety in northeastern Nigeria

## **1. Introduction**

Whatever is reported by either a local or global media organization could cause harmony or fear in the minds of people living in a society. That is why the media is referred to as the "Fourth Estate of the Realm" (Burke, 1797). Media is regarded as the fourth arm of a democracy, and considered as the most powerful one among the other three, namely; the executive, legislature and judiciary. Hence, there is a saying that 'the pen is mightier than the sword' as it has power to cause crises or revolution in any society through what it reports. For this reason, it is not surprising how the genesis of insecurity in the North Eastern states of Nigeria occasioned by the activities of Boko Haram has been affecting the perceptions of many people in the southern region of the country and global community about the danger involved in travelling to the region, over the years. This is based on the "Agenda Setting Theory" of the mass media traceable to its beginning as far as 1922, when Walter Lippmann expressed his concern on the vital role that mass media can do in influencing the setting of certain image on the public's mind (Lippmann, 1922). Lippmann posits how mass media can set a particular agenda which can influence the opinions of the public. But, he did not classify it as "Agenda Setting Theory" in his published book.

As time went by, after Lippmann's propounding that media set agenda for public discussion, the concept of "Agenda Setting Theory" became well known among communication scholars. Other notable researches that made the theory popular in media studies included the works of McCombs and Shaw (1972). The duo showcased their works on the ability of mass media

*American University of Nigeria, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference Proceeding, November 6-9, 2024, e-ISSN: 3027-0650*

influences on voters' opinion during a 1968 presidential campaign. It is on the foundation of the duo's research, that the mass media industry began to have knowledge about the percentage of members of the public who constantly referred to information provided by the media.

In this vein, Matsaganis and Payne (2005) say Agenda Setting Theory has greatly attracted scholarly interests of over 350 researches galvanized after McCombs and Shaw's findings since 1972. The genesis of these is no doubt from the grass root works of Lippmann (1922); Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet (1948); Lazarsfeld and Merton (1964); Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee (1954); Cohen (1963); McCombs and Shaw (1972); Funkhouser (1973); and of course Cobb and Elder (1983). Till date the theory remains relevant in the fields of communication and sociology.

The Agenda Setting Theory which began as an explanation of how the mass media affects to change the pattern in political behavior during elections (Cohen, 1963), later inspired and led to the development of hundreds of explorations among media scholars on how the mass media primes and frames issues for their audiences. Not only limited to such, the discussion also covers on how the mass media colours a particular event for their media audiences (Matsaganis and Payne: 2005). Therefore, the mass media role in shaping the mindset of people living in the Southern part of Nigeria about the activities of Bokoharam, bandits and kidnappers from recent past years till date is worth highlighting at this point of the paper.

There are various media reports about how the North East insurgency began from the time Bokoharam became a somewhat global daily news by nearly all media houses in Nigeria and the entire world and became an issue of scholarly discussions over the years.

For instance, a book titled "Boko Haram: Islamism, politics, security and the state in Nigeria" published by IFRA-Nigeria, African Studies Centre (2021) gives insight about the genesis of Bokoharam and other criminal activities that have given the North Eastern region of Nigeria, a negative image of insecurity over the years. The book is focused on the first attempt to understand Boko Haram in a comprehensive and consistent way. It examines the early history of the sect and its transformation into a radical armed group. It analyzes the causes of the uprising against the Nigerian state and evaluates the consequences of the on-going conflict from a religious, social and political point of view.

Dunn (2018) article titled "The impact of the Boko Haram insurgency in Northeast Nigeria on childhood wasting: a double-difference study" throws light on the history of Bokoharam and its effects on Northeast folks with special focus on its adverse consequences on children. It also beams on other regions of the country where pockets of conflicts have been commonplace over the years in a subtheme, Nigeria and Boko Haram which says:

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country and among its most diverse with over 400 ethnolinguistic groups. The country is affected by several conflicts based on overlapping ethnic, religious, political and regional divisions including over resources in the Niger Delta, Christian-Muslim divides in the middle of the country, and most recently, the rise of Islamist groups in the north, most importantly, Boko Haram. Boko Haram ('Western education is a sin') was founded around 2002 in Maiduguri, the capital of Borno state and largest city in Northeast Nigeria. At least at its inception, the main tenet among its followers was regime change in Nigeria as they believe democratic and secular rule is in contradiction to Shariah.

Historically, Dunn (2018) points that in July 2009, the Boko Haram uprising began in Bauchi and spread to other northern states, leaving hundreds of followers, Nigerian law enforcement officers, and civilians dead. The following year, attacks in the Northeast and other parts of the country including bombings, mass shootings, and executions began to rise.

In May 2013, the president declared a state of emergency in the states of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa. For this study, these states are defined as "conflict affected" and are compared to Bauchi, Gombe, and Taraba (the "non-conflict states"). People in the non-conflict states have certainly been affected by the crisis, but the entire population of Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states are considered directly impacted by the Boko Haram insurgency, and portrayed a timeline of violent deaths attributed to events involving Boko Haram, which serve as a proxy for the intensity of the conflict. The timeline also shows July 2009 as a hard date for the start of the crisis in its highest violent form.

In the same vein, Cambridge University Press (2020) article titled “Boko Haram, youth mobilization & jihadism” gives vivid insight into the history of Bokoharam and other criminal activities in the North East that has brought insecurity to innocent Nigerians living there. It points out that the terrorist group is not actually fighting for Islam but for selfish reasons. In its punctuation of the terrorists as an anti-Islam and anti – people’s interests group, the Cambridge (2020) says:

Better known under the nickname Boko Haram (‘Western education is sacrilege’), the ‘Sunni Community for the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad’ (*Jama'atu Ahlis-Sunnah Lidda'awati Wal Jihad*) emerged as a sect in the Borno region of north-east Nigeria, bordering Niger, Chad and Cameroon. In March 2015, one of the factions of the group paid allegiance to Daesh (ISIS) and decided to be called the Islamic State in West Africa (*Wilayat Gharb Ifriqiyah*). Some in the media have presented this insurgency as part of a global jihad or, in the Nigerian context, a clash of civilization between Muslims and Christians. But the reality on ground has been quite different. Muslims have been the main victims of the group for a simple demographic reason: they are a majority in the north-east of Nigeria and civilians bear the brunt of the conflict. In fact, Boko Haram has attacked both Muslims and Christians. If the group has sometimes targeted Christian minorities, it has mainly killed Muslims who rejected its doctrine or cooperated with the security forces.

From the foregoing, it clear that Bokoharam has killed more Muslims than other religious disciples while claiming to be fighting a jihad. It boils down to the fact that the terrorist group was only using religion as a cover to attack innocent folks, irrespective of the type of religions they have been practicing.

To protect the life and property of innocent citizens in the North East, based on the realization of this common terrorist threat, the folks fostered the sense of national unity that propelled both Muslims and Christians to stick together to protect themselves through cooperation with the military personnel assigned by the Nigerian government to tackle the terrorists to restore the rule of law to the region. Hence, at present, Boko Haram, or what remains of it, is very fragmented, and it is important to look beyond the sentiment of religious fanaticism to analyze properly the grass root dynamics that explain how the sect mobilized combatants. The group has gone through four principal phases of recruitment, mainly in the region of Borno: firstly, a period of Islamic preaching (*da'awah*) under Mohammed Yusuf between 2003 and 2009; then, a descent into terrorism under Abubakar Shekau from 2010; a transformation into a guerrilla movement after the declaration of emergency rule in North-East Nigeria in 2013; and finally a spatial expansion of attacks after the launch of an international coalition made up of Nigerian, Nigerien, Chadian and Cameroonian armies in 2015.

After the clear annihilation of the terrorist group leaders, a new dimension of insecurity began such as banditry and kidnapping in the North East. All these have been copiously reported by the media, which is the reason many Southerners are still bearing in mind over the years and sees the region as a danger zone which none of their loved ones should travel to, despite the evidence of relative peace that has returned to the North East, especially in Adamawa State.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted in this paper is Agenda – Setting Theory. The theory discusses about how the mass media influences in making a certain issue a public agenda. The public agenda is the main focus or prime issue which the members of the society or public are concern about. The term Agenda Setting Theory is first used by McCombs and Shaw (1972). This theory shows the relationship that exist between what the media put forward as an issue and the media audiences or the public’s reaction or attributes to such issue (Littlejohn and Foss: 2009).

Moreover, the theory has inspired and developed hundreds of latter explorations on how the mass media primes and frames issues for their audiences. Not only limited to such, the discussion also covers on how the mass media colors a particular event for their media audiences (Matsaganis and Payne: 2005).

From the foregoing, the theory is related to how the Nigerian media has been reporting about insecurity that influences the discussion and perception of the country’s southern region populace about the dangers posed by bandits in the North East and why it is unsafe to travel or venture to go there. Hence, many southern Nigerians think everywhere in the north is unsafe. But

*American University of Nigeria, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference Proceeding, November 6-9, 2024, e-ISSN: 3027-0650*

there is relative peace and safety in some northern states such as Adamawa, whose folks are very friendly and peaceful to a large extent.

### 3. Literature Review

Mellows and Holmes (2021) in a report titled “Boko Haram and Banditry: Northeast Nigeria’s Deteriorating Security Situation,” document that “on the evening of February 23, 2021, suspected Boko Haram militants fired rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) at several densely populated areas of the city of Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State. Some 16 people were killed, including children playing in a playground, and nearly 60 were injured. This shocking cost to human life is becoming a frequent occurrence, bringing trauma and fear to a region that has endured varying levels of armed conflict since 2009. Over the last 12 years, the Boko Haram insurgency and the Nigerian government’s military counter-response have killed tens of thousands of civilians, displaced millions, and led to a massive humanitarian crisis.”

Furthermore, the article posits that while Boko Haram is considered Nigeria’s biggest security threat, the group is not the only treat that citizens in the north face on a day-to-day basis. Another WASL member Dr Fatima Akilu, the Executive Director of Neem Foundation warns that other insurgent groups have started operating there “making an already complex situation dire”. Furthermore, armed criminal groups, locally known as “bandits” are preying on populations in the northwest and increasingly in the country’s northeast with vicious attacks on local communities including carjacking, highway robbery, kidnapping, rape, and murder. The ‘bandits’ employ dehumanizing practices– using men as “pillows”, forcing them to lie beneath their wife, or other female relatives, during brutal gang rapes. In a video recording which the peace activist describes as “too raw” to be shown, bandits are heard saying to each other “you can have two wives, which do you want?”, while selecting women to abduct from communities. The descriptions paint a picture of lawlessness; a region of ungoverned spaces where this extreme violence has become almost a daily occurrence.

Nonetheless, Iyora (2023) in a report titled "Rivalry among Boko Haram's factions compounds violence in Northern Nigeria," published by Al Jazeera, talked about splintered groups of Boko Haram and the dangers they pose to innocent folks living in northern Nigeria. In the report, the media organization points out that in recent years, local authorities in northwest Nigeria have been raising the alarm about the operations of Ansaru, one of its former factions, alongside bandits in Kaduna, which sits as a connector between the region and central Nigeria.

However, according to Iyoha (2023), the group, Ansaru reappeared in 2019 as an Al-Qaeda franchise in Nigeria after years of being underground, absorbing former JAS fighters who fled the northeast due to offensives in the Lake Chad area by a multinational force comprising Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria.

Ansaru offered to protect vulnerable Muslim-majority communities like Damari from marauding bandits, a strategy analysts say was meant to garner support in their fight against the government. It worked, and Ansaru gained the people’s trust but established a proto-state and instilled fear in residents.

In another development, Akinyetun (2021), write-up titled "Banditry in Nigeria: Insights from Situational Action and Situational Crime Prevention Theories," published by Accord, an online media platform talks about the activities of "Bandits" operating in the Northern part of the country, which further make many Southern Nigerian folks wonder whether there is any where safe to live in the North.

The article says: “Insecurity in Nigeria is a recurring phenomenon that threatens the well-being of its citizens. The multipronged occurrence constitutes a bane to development and leads to the proliferation of crime. As a multifaceted quandary, insecurity assumes varying dimensions in different geopolitical zones. The South West is plagued by a surge in cybercrime, armed robbery, kidnapping, domestic crime, extrajudicial killings, herder-farmer conflicts, ritual killings, and banditry. The South East is a haven for ritual killings, commercial crime, secessionist agitation, kidnapping, herder-farmer clashes, attacks by unknown gunmen, and banditry. The South-South remains threatened by militancy, kidnapping, and environmental agitation. The North East has been subject to a humanitarian crisis lasting over a decade and caused by the Boko Haram insurgency and the Islamic State in West Africa Province. Meanwhile, the North West is enmeshed in illegal mining, ethnoreligious killings, and banditry. It is, therefore, an axiom that insecurity in Nigeria has assumed a disproportionate geopolitical stance and that it has claimed thousands of lives and extensive damage and loss of property.”

*American University of Nigeria, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference Proceeding, November 6-9, 2024, e-ISSN: 3027-0650*

The article further says that, "Even though the incidence of banditry in Nigeria is beginning to attract scholarship, the theoretical expositions remain embryonic. This article fills the gap by offering explanations for the occurrence of banditry in Nigeria through Situational Action Theory (SAT). This is done bearing in mind that an understanding of the motivating factors of crime provides insights and potential solutions. Furthermore, the available literature largely fails to characterize the phenomenon adequately and tends to offer vague solutions. The article thus proposes practical solutions through the strategies of Situational Crime Prevention (SCP). The article presents an overview of banditry in Nigeria and SAT, as well as discussing mitigating the challenge of banditry through SCP."

In this vein, the document explains that the situational stance advanced theory by SAT rests on four major elements: the person (psychological make-up, experience, and so on), the setting (the environment an individual is exposed to), the situation (choices resulting from interaction with the setting), and action (the person's behavior). SAT explicates the notion that factors that induce crime are the same for all people, regardless of their age and criminal career stage. The theory argues that people's propensity to commit a crime is different, just as environments also vary. The setting an individual finds himself in, determines whether a crime will be committed or not. For example, an individual who struggles as a result of multidimensional poverty and finds himself in an environment without guardianship, but with certain escape options and resources, is likely to commit crime. Crime occurrence, therefore, is the interaction between an individual's crime propensity and the setting's criminogenic incentive. A person with a low crime propensity – due to a strong moral rectitude and/or the presence of government authority – will be less susceptible to criminogenic incentives, while a person with a high crime propensity is less likely to resist crime inducement.

To buttress the fear associated with travelling to the North East and some other areas in the North prone to Boko Haram attacks and bandits' activities, an organization known as Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) advises people against travelling to the North East and some states in Northern Nigeria as if everywhere in the region is a mine field.

#### **4. Effects of Insecurity**

Alemika (2015) in a paper titled "Prevalence, Pattern and Consequences of Insecurity in Nigerian Cities" points that "The relationship between, security, growth, poverty reduction and development has received significant attention from researchers, international development assistance agencies and national governments. The security-development nexus has largely been investigated within the context of civil war or intra/inter-state conflicts (Stewart 2004)." This is very true because humans need peace and security to plan positively and make good results. Without safety and security no society can prosper.

However, the insecurity encountered in Nigerian cities has arisen more from criminality, especially armed robbery and ethno-religious conflicts, often rooted in competition for the control of state power and economic resources. OECD (2007) states that insecurity constitutes barriers "to political, economic and social development". Further, as an OECD-DAC Report has argued, "security and development are linked. Insecurity, crime and violent conflicts are among the biggest obstacles to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; they also destroy development" (OECD 2007). The Report observed that security is important 'to the well-being of the poor' and 'supporting poor people's physical security is vital part of reducing poverty' (OECD 2007).

There is no doubt that conflicts have diverse effect on the economy, including poverty reduction. Among such effects are gross reduction in actively taking part in productive economic activities; wasting of human and material resources; diminishing in investment and use of scarce resources hitherto meant for social services and infrastructural development to conflict-mitigation (Stewart 2003, 2004).

#### **5. The Negative and Positive uses of media (Broadcasting, Print and Internet)**

Messanga and Tajeugueu (2021), points out the negative use of broadcasting by some journalists to cause crises in the society they operate in, by using propaganda. The two scholars posit that "Propaganda is the dissemination of information for the purpose of influencing the opinions of others. It is a control and compliance instrument used by the dominant group (Fitzmaurice, 2018; Malhan and Dewani, 2020; Sanz, 2018). RTLm relied on this strategy to encourage Hutu to believe in

*American University of Nigeria, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference Proceeding, November 6-9, 2024, e-ISSN: 3027-0650*

the threat represented by Tutsi. The words of the journalist Karamira, made on April 22, 1994, illustrate the concern to influence opinions. He emphasized the role played by the CDR militia in managing the conflict with the Tutsi rebel movement of the RPF.” This points out the negative use of the media by some journalists who overhype some issues and cause fear and crisis among folks. This practice is not ideal for the objective use of the media. The original aim of the media (broadcasting and print) should be imbibed by professional journalists in the following subthemes, with the exception of using it to cause fear and disunity or insecurity in the society.

## **5.1 Broadcasting as a tool of murder**

The role of public radio in the Rwandan genocide is a deeply disturbing and tragic aspect of the events that unfolded in 1994. Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) was a prominent radio station in Rwanda at the time, and it played a significant role in fueling hatred, inciting violence, and contributing to the mass killings during the genocide. Here's an overview of how public radio was used in the Rwandan genocide:

1. **Propaganda and Hate Speech:** RTLM, along with other media outlets, became platforms for spreading propaganda and disseminating hate speech against the Tutsi ethnic minority. RTLM hosts and guests used dehumanizing language, stereotypes, and false narratives to portray the Tutsis as enemies, calling for their elimination and promoting ethnic tensions.
2. **Incitement to Violence:** The radio broadcasts on RTLM actively encouraged the majority Hutu population to engage in violence against the Tutsis. The hosts and callers advocated for the killing of Tutsis, providing explicit instructions, and broadcasting lists of targeted individuals. They labeled Tutsis as "cockroaches" and called for their complete extermination.
3. **Mobilization and Coordination:** The radio served as a powerful tool for mobilizing and coordinating the genocidal acts. It disseminated messages that called upon Hutu citizens to participate actively in the killings, providing locations, strategies, and even specific instructions on how to identify and murder Tutsis. The radio played a significant role in organizing roadblocks and other checkpoints where Tutsis were targeted.
4. **Psychological Impact:** The constant and pervasive hate speech broadcasted on public radio had a profound psychological impact on the population. It created an atmosphere of fear, suspicion, and hostility, leading to increased polarization and a breakdown of social cohesion. The messages on the radio further reinforced pre-existing prejudices and fueled the escalation of violence.

The devastating consequences of the role played by public radio in the Rwandan genocide cannot be overstated. The incitement to violence, hate speech, and propaganda broadcasted by RTLM contributed to the dehumanization and systematic targeting of Tutsis, resulting in the deaths of approximately 800,000 people in just 100 days.

It is important to note that the use of public radio as a tool for spreading hatred and inciting violence is not limited to the Rwandan genocide. Throughout history, similar instances have occurred in various parts of the world, emphasizing the critical need for responsible and ethical media practices, as well as the importance of media literacy and the promotion of tolerance and understanding.

## **5.2 Broadcasting as a tool of information**

Radio played a crucial role in broadcasting the progress of the Second World War and served as a primary source of news and information for people around the world. Here are some key aspects highlighting the value of radio during this significant historical period:

1. **Timely and Direct Reporting:** Radio provided near-real-time updates on the progress of the war, enabling people to stay informed about the latest developments. Radio broadcasters reported on battles, military movements, and strategic decisions, providing a sense of immediacy that print media couldn't match. This direct reporting helped create a shared understanding of the war's progression among listeners.
2. **Mass Communication:** Radio is a mass medium that reached a vast audience, both domestically and internationally. Unlike other forms of media at the time, such as newspapers, which required literacy and access to printed materials, radio was accessible to a broader population. It became a unifying force by transmitting news and updates simultaneously to millions of people, fostering a sense of national and global community.
3. **Propaganda and Morale Boosting:** Radio serves as a powerful tool for propaganda during the war. Governments used radio broadcasts to shape public opinion, bolster morale, and rally support for their respective causes. National leaders and military figures delivered speeches over the radio to inspire their citizens and troops, emphasizing the importance of unity, sacrifice, and victory.
4. **War Correspondents:** Radio reporters, also known as war correspondents, played a crucial role in providing on-the-ground accounts of the war. These journalists often accompanied troops into battle zones and reported live from the front lines, bringing listeners vivid descriptions of the fighting, the conditions, and the human stories behind the war. Their firsthand reporting provided a deeper understanding of the realities of war to those listening at home.
5. **Censorship and Control:** Governments tightly controlled wartime broadcasting to manage the flow of information and maintain national security. Censorship was used to suppress sensitive military details, prevent the dissemination of harmful rumors, and maintain public morale. However, despite censorship, radio still served as a vital source of information, enabling people to gather news and form their own perspectives.
6. **Home-front Communication:** Radio played a vital role in connecting soldiers and their families during the Second World War era. Through radio broadcasts, families received messages from their loved ones serving in the military, fostering a sense of connection and emotional support. It also provided a means for governments to disseminate information about rationing, war bond drives, and other home-front activities.
7. **Resistance Broadcasting:** In occupied territories during the Second World War, radio was a tool of resistance against oppressive regimes. Underground radio stations, such as the BBC's European Service and Radio Free Europe, broadcasted news and messages of hope, encouraging resistance movements and fostering a sense of resistance and unity among those living under occupation.

Radio's ability to transmit news, provide firsthand accounts, and serve as a source of propaganda and morale-boosting made it an indispensable medium during the Second World War. Its accessibility, immediacy, and mass reach allowed people to stay informed, connected, and engaged with the events unfolding on the global stage.

### 5.3 Broadcasting as a tool of unity.

The Apollo 13 mission, which encountered a critical failure in 1970 while en route to the Moon, is a prime example of how radio played a significant role in uniting the world during a crisis. Here's an overview of the role of radio in the Apollo 13 event:

1. **Emergency Communication:** After an oxygen tank explosion jeopardized the lives of the astronauts aboard Apollo 13, radio communication became the primary means of relaying critical information between the

*American University of Nigeria, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference Proceeding, November 6-9, 2024, e-ISSN: 3027-0650*

spacecraft and mission control at NASA. The astronauts and mission control used radio transmissions to exchange essential updates, troubleshoot problems, and devise strategies to ensure the crew's safe return.

2. **Global Broadcasting:** Radio networks around the world covered the Apollo 13 mission extensively, broadcasting updates and live transmissions from NASA. This global coverage enabled people worldwide to follow the dramatic events as they unfolded, fostering a sense of shared concern and engagement. Listeners around the globe tuned in to their radios to stay informed about the astronauts' well-being and the progress of rescue efforts.
3. **Communication with Families:** Radio played a vital role in facilitating communication between the astronauts and their families during the crisis. Families of the crew members relied on radio broadcasts to receive updates on the status of their loved ones and to offer messages of support and encouragement. Radio became a medium of reassurance, providing a link between the astronauts in space and their worried families on Earth.
4. **Rallying Support and Unity:** The Apollo 13 incident captured the world's attention, and radio played a crucial role in rallying support and fostering a sense of unity among people globally. Through radio broadcasts, individuals expressed their solidarity with the crew, offered prayers, and shared messages of encouragement. This collective support transcended national boundaries, highlighting the shared human experience and our capacity for compassion during times of crisis.
5. **Problem-Solving Collaboration:** Radio communication facilitated collaboration and problem-solving efforts between NASA and various international space agencies, scientists, and engineers. Radio signals transmitted data and technical information, allowing experts from different countries to contribute their expertise and work together to devise solutions for the astronauts' safe return.
6. **Celebration of Success:** When the astronauts successfully returned to Earth, radio broadcasts spread the news of their safe arrival and celebrated the heroic efforts of the crew and the collective achievement of the mission. Radio networks conducted interviews, shared the crew's experiences, and provided a platform for the astronauts to share their stories with a global audience, creating a sense of triumph and unity.

The role of radio in the Apollo 13 event exemplified its ability to connect people, disseminate information, and foster a collective spirit during a critical moment in history. By bridging distances, facilitating communication, and broadcasting updates, radio played an essential part in uniting the world in concern, support, and ultimately celebration as the crew overcame immense challenges and returned safely home.

## 5.4 Broadcasting as a tool of entertainment

The radio play "War of the Worlds" holds a significant place in the history of broadcasting, known for its unique and controversial impact on the public. Originally aired on October 30, 1938, as an episode of "The Mercury Theatre on the Air," the radio adaptation of H.G. Wells' novel "War of the Worlds" was directed and narrated by Orson Welles.

The play presented a dramatized account of a Martian invasion, simulating news bulletins and breaking reports to create a sense of immediacy and realism. It employed a format that blurred the line between fiction and reality, causing panic and confusion among some listeners who mistook it for an actual news broadcast. Here are key aspects to consider:

1. **Realism and Panic:** "War of the Worlds" utilized a simulated news format, with frequent interruptions and urgent updates, to convey a sense of authenticity. Many listeners who tuned in late or missed the initial disclaimer identifying it as a work of fiction believed that the events described were genuine. Consequently, panic ensued, as people thought they were under attack by Martians, resulting in some reports of mass hysteria.
2. **Impact on Broadcasting:** The broadcast of "War of the Worlds" sparked significant public debate about the power and responsibility of the media. It highlighted the influence of radio as a mass medium capable of shaping

*American University of Nigeria, 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference Proceeding, November 6-9, 2024, e-ISSN: 3027-0650*



public perception and causing emotional reactions. The incident prompted discussions on ethics in broadcasting, the need for accurate information, and the potential dangers of media manipulation.

3. **Cultural Significance:** The radio play became a cultural touchstone, symbolizing the potential consequences of misinformation and the blurring of fiction and reality in the media. It demonstrated the power of storytelling and the ability of radio to create immersive experiences that captivate and sometimes deceive audiences. "War of the Worlds" continues to be studied and discussed in media and communication courses, serving as a cautionary tale.
4. **Orson Welles' Legacy:** Orson Welles, the director and narrator of the radio play, gained widespread attention for his innovative and provocative storytelling approach. The broadcast catapulted him to national fame and later paved the way for his illustrious career in film and theater. Welles' use of audio techniques and the performance style of the radio play left a lasting impact on the medium.
5. **Media Regulation:** Following the "War of the Worlds" broadcast, the incident prompted discussions about the need for increased regulation and oversight of the broadcasting industry. Regulatory bodies sought to ensure that broadcasters maintained responsible practices, including disclaimers for fictional content and adherence to guidelines regarding the presentation of news.

While the panic and fear associated with "War of the Worlds" may have been exaggerated in some accounts, the radio play remains a pivotal moment in broadcasting history. It raised important questions about the boundaries of media influence, the balance between entertainment and responsible reporting, and the impact of emerging technologies on society. The legacy of "War of the Worlds" serves as a reminder of the power and responsibility associated with the dissemination of information through broadcast media.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, media is undeniably a seminal part of modern civilization. The media plays integral role in shaping societies, influencing cultures, and connecting people on a global scale. The value of the media transcends physical boundaries and cultural divides. It also empowers individuals and communities by providing access to education, news, and diverse perspectives. However, this paper contextualized the negative side of the media, especially in Nigeria. Being that the media sets agenda for societal discussion through its daily reports in Nigeria, this study established that ill-conceived reports about the security situation in the North eastern Nigeria has caused people in the southern part of the country to believe that all states in the north east are not safe to travel to or reside in. Consequently, the study analyzed interview reports, print, broadcast and internet material about the security situation in the north eastern Nigeria, and its finding established that the propaganda about being unsafe is untrue. Most of the states in the north eastern Nigeria, including Adamawa, are safe over a noticeable period of immediate past years till date. In fact, Adamawa is a peaceful and safe place for all. As such, the paper concludes that insecurity in the north eastern Nigeria is being exaggerated by some media channels, as not every inch of space in the North East is full of bombs, terrorists and kidnappers.

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