

An Exploration of Exclusion Discourse in Selected Nigerian Dailies: A Discourse Analytical Approach

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Abstract

The most communal agitations of the world are commonly and primarily hinged on the social phenomenon called 'exclusion'. In this study, discourse of exclusion was explored in two popular Nigerian dailies: 'The Nation' and 'The Punch'. A very crucial presupposition here is that discourse of exclusion does not arise independent of its background i.e. social exclusion. This paper critically examined the various ways and manners that news items (in the print media) presented the menace called 'exclusion'. Since news reports constitute a type of text, discourse analytical approach, as a discursive model of interpretation, was employed in the analysis of the texts. By implication, the activities of journalists in news-making and news-gathering process, as well as the interpretations of readers (as expected by the writers), in the multi-cultural and multi-ethnic country, Nigeria, were examined. More specifically, this study underscored the fact that the media, in general, and print media in particular, play a crucial role in the framing and ultimate presentation of exclusion in the most populous African nation. It was also found out that both the leader and the led, groups and individuals were presented as engaging in discourse of exclusion in various situations.

Keywords: *Exclusion, inclusion, print media, discourse*

Introduction

The presence and usefulness of the media in the modern society has definitely made it become a crucial domain where all voices, the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the locals and the international, the leader and the led, and so on are heard. The print media especially occupies a strategic place, perhaps a confluence, where different personalities are seen, heard or read about. It is therefore 'a major force in forming public opinion and affecting national and international efforts in different' directions (Bittner, 1989:22). One discourse that permeates this arena is either of inclusion or exclusion, describing two concepts that are conversely related. Discourse of exclusion could be generally described as referring to the use of language in a way that shows any of alienation, oppression, denial of rights or benefits as experienced in different parts of the contemporary society. A cry and call for inclusion in any society is a reaction to and presupposition of exclusion. This discourse has further polarised the country, Nigeria, along the ethnic, political, and government divides. The print news items attest to this situation daily. The news items or reports are considered a type of text by various discourse analysts (van Dijk, 1988). In this presentation, we critically examined the ways in which various items of the selected dailies i.e. reports, special columns, editorials and in some cases, sponsored rejoinders or adverts relevant to the topic for the manifestations of exclusion as a social phenomenon were presented through language. These areas represent the functional genres (i.e. news, commentary, fiction, and advertisement) of the print media.

This paper dwells on the discourse of exclusion, which from the perspective of the lead stories in the print media, for instance, ensues between the state and the public (vice versa) as dominant groups of people in every modern society, Nigeria inclusive. There exists 'credibility (trustworthiness) gap' observed in governments' activities as perceived by the public. Thus, the public feel there is inconsistency in leadership pronouncement/policies and they react by distrusting the accuracy and truth of official statements. Putting the study in the right perspective, it is believed that a language of exclusion is borne out of a feeling of anger, anguish, and a kind of denial to certain rights or benefits at one level or the other on the part of the led while the leader blankets the public as nothing but opposition group or adamant critics. The consequent antagonism produces the discourse of exclusion under examination.

While it is not our intention to treat the news items here as transparent messages with contents analysable in a superficial and quantitative manner, the strategies of the news items as well as their relations to the social (and political) context are of paramount concern to us. In this case, the social context consists of the framings of news items reflecting diverse situations, as well as the interpretations expected of readers in the four-region multi- ethnic African nation – Nigeria. Our attention in this paper is on the use of language by the print media selected in the presentation of exclusion as a threat to social peace and national unity of the country.

Social exclusion is a term used to characterise contemporary forms of social disadvantage. The Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2003) describes the term as a situation in which someone is disallowed to take part in certain activities or events. The term therefore refers to the various processes in which individuals or an entire community of people are systematically blocked from rights, opportunities and resources such as education, housing, employment, healthcare, democratic participation etc which are normally available to members of a society and which are key to social integration. It is equally believed to be the outcome of multiple deprivations that prevent individuals or groups from participating fully in the economic, social, and political life of the society in which they live. At this point, the base meaning of exclusion as a social menace can be described as marginalisation. This concept, in sociology, captures the social process of becoming or being relegated to the fringe of the society which according to the Department of International Development (DFID, 2005:3) refers to a social situation of being disadvantaged.

The term, exclusion, constitutes a palpable manifestation of conflict in a social system. Conflict is present when two or more parties perceive that their interests are incompatible, express hostile attitudes, or pursue their interests through actions that damage the other party (or parties). These parties may be individuals, small or large groups, and countries (Uche, 1989). In his opinion, Lund (1997:2) submits that human interests can diverge in many ways especially over resources; power; identity; and status. This can also result into domestic and dysfunctional conflict. While the former refers to a situation of social change in which differences become significant, leading to articulated, antagonistic positions and polarisation between social groups (Schmid, 2000:16), the latter describes the general confrontations which harm the social structure. This is opposed to functional conflicts which bring about useful social changes (p.14). Although it could be said that the concept, exclusion, originated as a dissatisfaction targeted at the approaches to poverty that focussed on income alone, the term seems to be multifaceted in definition. It is seen to be used in relation to groups or individuals that suffer discrimination, perhaps based on their racial, ethnic, gender, geographic or age characteristics. Generally speaking therefore, the various understandings of social exclusion emphasise different aspects that actually form part of our focus in this work: the groups at risk of being excluded; what people are excluded from, e.g. employment, education, citizenship, respect; and the problems associated with the impact of social exclusion, e.g. low income, poor housing; the processes driving exclusion; and the agents and actors involved.

From the point of view expressed here and the various contributions of analysts, we could conclude that social exclusion is: (1) multidimensional because it encompasses social, political, cultural and economic dimensions, and operates at different social levels. (2) It is also dynamic because it impacts people in various ways and to differing degrees over time. (3) It is relational – it is the product of social interactions which are characterised by unequal power relations, and it can produce ruptures in relationships between people and society, which result in a lack of social participation, social protection, social integration and power.

It is worth noting that the concept of social exclusion's main feature is its focus on process and relations. However, the utility of social exclusion is in the fact that it offers an actor-oriented approach, which specifically points to who is doing what, (and in relation to whom). In addition, it allows us to identify and tackle issues of power and position as they affect daily living of individuals in their interactions (in form of actions or inactions as the case may be). It is along this line that discourse of exclusion is linguistically examined in the two Nigerian newspapers selected for the study.

Nigerian Newspapers and the Exclusion Agenda

The appearance of newspapers and their activities could be traced to two major moments in the history of Nigeria: era of pre-independence covering up to the colonial era and independence times. It is vital to underscore that the colonial times saw the growth of only newspapers floated by private individuals both within and outside the country. Specifically, the history of print media in Nigeria dated back to the 1840s when European missionaries saw the need to establish community newspapers with the sole intention of propagating Christianity. Precisely in 1859, Reverend Henry Townsend published the first Nigerian newspaper called *Iwe Irohin fun awon ara Egba ati Yoruba* (Duyile, 1987). This initiative later gave rise to a flurry of other privately owned newspaper outfits in the pre-independence time. Among the early papers were *The Lagos Weekly Record* (1891-1930), *Nigeria Pioneer* (1914) by Sir Kitoye Ajasa, *The Daily Lagos News* (founded in 1925 by Herbert Macaulay), *The Comet* (by Duse Mohammed Ali in 1932), and *West African Pilot* (by Nnamdi Azikiwe in 1937). Ali's paper was credited with introducing

something unusual, non-partisanship and objective views in the politics of the country, to Nigerian newspapering of the time.

Going by the timing, purpose of establishment, activities of these papers, it becomes crystal clear that they were out against perceived exclusion tendencies as sympathisers or advocates on one side and (co)victims on the other. For instance, The Weekly Record's editorials and Zik's Pilot 'were incisive and pinpointed on the colonial administration' of the period (Uche, 1989: 94). Having been incorporated in 1925, The Daily Times, which was regarded as the newspaper with the largest circulation, became a popular voice of the nationalist movement especially on education. As a result, in a 1934 editorial, the paper opposed the creation of Native Authority schools, which were described as being controlled by stooges of the colonial administration, and advocated independent mission schools as better option. The paper felt that Nigerian masses were being made to suffer exclusion in virtually all sectors. Therefore, The Daily Times equally reacted as the first tertiary institution in the colony, Yaba College, opened in January 1934. The paper described it as: "a grand idea, and imposing structure, resting on rather weak foundations ... we wish to declare emphatically that this country will not be satisfied with an inferior brand [of education] such as the present scheme seems to threaten". (About Us, 'Daily Times' retrieved 2011)

By the end of World War II in 1945, the Daily Times had become outspokenly hostile towards colonial rule. Nigerian Tribune (1949) by Chief Obafemi Awolowo among other regional papers that sprang up at this time (Daramola, 2003) pioneered a general protest against the British colonial rule, a formalised exclusion system by a group against another, and resulted in the eventual attainment of independence in 1960. Meanwhile, some other voices felt being ruled by foreigners was not an aberration. The Nigerian Pioneer, which survived till 1937, did not hide its dedication to and preference for the sustenance of the colonial rule despite all the hues and cries of the majority against the perceived oppression. This posture was not unconnected to the background of the paper's proprietor, a conservative who had been 'socialized in the lifestyle, orientation and beliefs of the British' having had his education in England. (Daramola, 2003:137). As an adherent of colonialism, a system of governance believed by many to exclude indigenes from their rights, Kitoye Ajasa was always in a fierce verbal battle with other nationalist dailies like Weekly Record (controlled by Horatio Jackson) for their anti-colonialist's harangue.

After Nigerian independence, the Nigerian governments decided to do a facelift to their battered public relation by establishing government-owned media houses rather than leaving their publicity in hands of 'image denting' privately owned dailies. Consequently, in addition to Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo (Hausa language) established by the Northern Nigerian Government in 1939, the Eastern Government's Eastern Outlook (1949) which later transformed to Nigerian Outlook (1955), in 1961, the Federal Government's The Morning Post appeared on the news stand, the Western Region Government floated Daily Sketch and Sunday Sketch in 1964, and Northern Government came up with New Nigerian in 1966. With all these dailies in place after independence, the mass media orientation shifted from colonialism as an exclusion type towards reinforcing tribal and sectional loyalties in preference to national unity, identity and integration (Uche, 1989:99). Today, Nigerians choose from dozens of dailies and weekly newspapers published across the country. These include: The Vanguard, The Guardian, The Nigerian Tribune, The Sun, The Punch, The Nation and Newswatch, Concord, Tell, and Weekly Trust. While a good number of these dailies or weekly papers are printed in English, several others employ the Nigerian languages, especially Hausa and Yoruba such as Alaroye (Yoruba) and Rariya (Hausa) as a way of appealing to the various ethnic populations that make up the country. This is not dissimilar to what Bitner (1989) describes as 'The Minority Press'.

The proliferation of newspapers since the colonial times and the practice of indigenising and politicising newspapers in various manners spark nothing but an advertent practice of inclusion of certain people/group at the expense of others being excluded. The Nigerian contemporary dailies no longer lash out at colonialism, their columns and topics no longer focus on white rulers! The newspapers now are preoccupied with issues relating to: government insensitivity; political intrigues; financial mismanagement; poor state of education; sophisticated crimes of kidnapping, armed robbery, etc some of which are captured in the data sourced from 'The Punch' and 'The Nation' for this study.

The Background of 'The Punch' and 'The Nation'

'The Punch' newspaper was founded by two friends, James Aboderin, an accountant and Sam Amuka, a columnist and editor at the Daily Times. Sam Amuka later became the first editor of the Sunday Punch. In

November 1976, a few years after the first print of its Sunday edition, the duo started printing its trademark daily newspaper. Both editions were designed to favour a friendlier apolitical approach to news reporting, combining footages of social events with everyday political news. The paper sustains itself by delving into broad issues that interest a myriad of people. However, during the twilight of the Second Republic, political exigencies inflicted conflicts on its original intentions, Aboderin and Amuka parted ways. The crisis drove Aboderin to join his former foe, MKO Abiola who had left the NPN of Alhaji Shehu. The paper began to take on a political stance, mostly against the Shagari regime. The paper suffered terribly in the hand of the authoritarian regimes that took over later. As a result, in 1990, its editor was jailed for 54 days while in 1993, and 1994, the publishing house was closed on the direction of the nation's ruler.

'The Nation' newspaper was launched on Monday July 31, 2006 as a quality national newspaper published in Lagos, Nigeria. According to a 2009 survey (About Us, 'Daily Times' retrieved 2011), it was the second most read newspaper in Nigeria. The paper's website says it stands for Freedom, Justice and the Market Economy. Its target audience is the business and political elite, the affluent, the educated and the upwardly mobile ('The Independent', 2008). 'The Nation' has printing plants in Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt thereby guaranteeing simultaneous printing of the same edition nationwide, same day at the three strategic locations. Expectedly, this has shot up its coverage as well as national readership and makes it compete favourably with older titles such that it is now ranked as Nigeria's fastest growing newspaper (Nigerian-newspaper.com). The newspaper covers business and economy, public policies, the democratic process and institutions of democracy, sports, arts and culture. The newspaper's primary goal and mission statement suggests ravaging exclusion tendencies pervading the land as reflected in the following:

- To provide the general public with information they need to be free and self-governing in a democratic society.
- To vigorously champion a return to fundamental principles of federalism, believing that it is the arrangement that can best advance the multifarious interests of citizens in a country of many nations and faiths such as Nigeria.
- To serve as an independent monitor of power and hold those entrusted with its exercise accountable. (Nigerian-newspaper.com)

The two papers here have various news items and stories associated with exclusion as a menace. This is explicit from the experiences of the former and older while the mission statement of the latter paints a foregrounded picture of exclusion as a daily experience. From the discussion above, it is evident that the newspaper medium believes it has the mandate to represent the views or yearnings of the populace. In an attempt to fulfil this responsibility, it mediates, in a way, between the most prominent groups of individuals in the Nigerian society i.e. the government and the governed on one hand, and the rich and the poor or the employers and the employees on the other hand.

The Data Source

As mentioned earlier, the data for this work were sourced from 'The Punch' and 'The Nation'. These two Nigerian dailies are relevant to this study because they are widely circulated and read across the northern and southern poles of the country. The two dailies yielded the data (100 items i.e. 50 items from 'The Punch' and 'The Nation' respectively) comprising news items or reports, special columns, editorials and in some cases, sponsored rejoinders or adverts relevant to the topic partially or wholly from September to December, 2012. They were dissected for the manifestations of discourse of exclusion involving denial of right, outright oppression or other forms of injustice either patently or otherwise as observed from the various headings, riders or content of the selected news items and other stories.

The Analytical Framework

The analytical framework employed for this study is the Discourse Analytical Approach (DAA). This became necessary because of our interest in analysing the newspaper items that featured discourse of exclusion in the Nigerian social-political settings. As a result, utterances relating to the subject matter were extracted and illustrated based on their content.

Discourse Analytical Approach (DAA) generally refers to a systematic description of the various structures and strategies of text or talk, and relates these to the social or political context of a people. On many occasions, this approach could be largely content analytical, involving both qualitative and

quantitative studies of stereotypical words or images representing the research topic (Hartmann and Husband, 1974; Cottle, 2000). The method therefore sometimes focuses on overall topics, or more local meanings like coherence or implications in a semantic analysis.

According to van Dijk (1997), the syntactic form of sentences, or the overall organization of a news report may still be examined in detail to arrive at the message underlying such using DAA. Furthermore, the approach could be applied to the study of variations of style, rhetorical devices such as metaphors or euphemisms, speech acts such as promises and threats, and in spoken discourse also the many forms of interaction. These structures of text and talk are systematically related to elements of the social context, such as the spatio-temporal setting, participants and their various social and communicative roles, as well as their goals, knowledge and opinions. In the opinion of various discourse analysts such as Smitherman-Donaldson and van Dijk (1987); Wodak et al. (1990); van Dijk (1991); Jager and Link (1993); McGarry (1994); and van Dijk (1997), elements of discourse analytical approaches (DAA) were adopted in works on racism up to 1990. DAA was adopted for this work because of its ability to reveal the underlying message(s) in any given texts as described by Dijk (1997) since the essence of this study was to account for exclusion-content of the selected news items qualitatively not quantitatively.

Data Analysis

Exclusion discourse is better understood in terms of expression or speech that portends abandonment, denial, alienation/isolation, prevention, dissociation, micro-identity against macro-identity, neglect, keeping or leaving out of, avoidance, distrust, betrayal, indictment, dereliction of duties towards other people and so on. As it is, the discourse of exclusion confirms, suspects, criticises, and condemns practices of exclusion in different forms. The need (or cry) for inclusion is a perceived exclusion by the victims. Therefore, the cry/observation/suggestion/call for a sense of belonging, acceptability, common identity, inclusion, etc denotes discourse of exclusion. It also depicts an outright lamentation against perceived denial, double standard, alienation, repression, and other similar acts that ostracise a person or group of persons.

Discourse of exclusion may come from individuals or groups that actually could be divided into three (3) groups: the excluded: referring to the real victim(s) of exclusion e.g. the ones whose rights are denied, the oppressed/repressed, the isolated, or the ones abused or disappointed; the excluder: referring to the government (at any level), government agencies, community, individuals/groups, etc who in one form or the other ostracise, oppress/repress, or deny other people or groups their rights; and the sympathiser: (otherwise considered as the third party - 3rd party), referring to activists, government agent, court, NGO, religious bodies, the media (especially the print) who make it their duty to decry every act suspected to be an exclusion.

In analysing the data for the realizations of exclusion expressions, it is important to note that the medium from which the data were sourced automatically assume the position of 'sympathiser' as will be noticed in the analysis below.

Table A: Instances of Exclusion in 'THE NATION'

S/N	Date	Title	Text	Groups
1	Sept. 21, 2012	Jonathan stops #5000	President Goodluck Jonathan yesterday bowed to pressure and suspended the proposed introduction of the N5000 banknote. He advised Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi to step down the idea to allow for adequate consultation with the people.	Excluded: masses Excluder: Federal govt.
2	Sept. 27, 2012	Anxiety as Saudi Rejects Nigerian Pilgrims	These pilgrims arrived in Medina on Wednesday but they were disallowed from entering the city because of the same factor (they didn't have a guide like a husband...).	Excluded: women (Nigerians/govt); Excluder: Saudi authority
3	Oct. 30, 2012	Call for more states gathers steam	We have been on this issue of creation of Ijebu State since 1975. The justification for it is abundantly clear. The most worrisome aspect of it was the total neglect of Ijebu community in the state creation exercises that have taken place.	The Excluded: Ijebu community; Excluder: Fed Govt/National Assembly.
4	Oct. 30, 2012	How we court disasters	The governors are also being praised to the skies for offering salvation to victims of the flood	The Excluded: flood

			disaster. Viewed correctly, there is nothing to cheer about. Whatever the Presidency and the governors have done is to assuage the pain inflicted on the victims in particular and the nation in general by their failure to carry out their constitutional duties	victims/Nigerians; The Excluder: Nigerian Governments
5	Nov. 21, 2012 (p.)	Police have failed Nigerians, says Ajimobi	Oyo State Governor, Abiola Ajimobi yesterday justified the call for the establishment of state police. He said the federal-controlled police have failed to maintain internal security in the country.	The Excluded: states/masses; The Excluder: The Police/Fed. Govt.
6	Nov. 23, 2012 (p.10)	Disabled protest non-payment of salaries	Over 5,000 physically challenged persons in Owerri, the Imo State capital, yesterday protested the non-payment of their salaries and allowances by the government.	The Excluded: the physically challenged; The Excluder: state gov't.
7	Dec. 24, 2012 (p.1/6)	Senator accuses governors of opposing constitution review	They (Governors) are opposed to state creation because they believe it will reduce their empires. They are against the removal of immunity because they don't want their atrocities exposed while in office and they are against the autonomy of the state assemblies because they want to enslave them.	The Excluded: Nigerians; The Excluder: Governors
8	Dec. 24, 2012 (p.1/6)	Sambo's taste hikes cost of VP's home to N16b	...well the design of this building was made to accommodate a vice president but now we have another vice president whose culture and religion are different from the intended user or end user of the building	The Excluded: Nigerians; The Excluder: Federal Government.
9	Dec. 28, 2012 (pp1/63)	Okorochoa ordered attack on my convoy, says senator	I am tired of all these abuses and harassment in the state. It is not only in Imo State that they have female legislators. If they could do this to me, what will happen to the ordinary people, this has to stop.	The Excluded: woman-senator; The Excluder: The State Governor /government.
10	Dec. 28, 2012 (p. 2/3)	A banner year for Boko Haram, but not for Nigeria	Nwanko said as long as the North continues to grow poorer, disaffected youth will continue to lash out, or take jobs as militants because they have nothing else to do.	The Excluded: Northerners/youth , and Nigerians; The Excluder: Northern State governments and elders.

Table B: Instances of Exclusion in 'THE PUNCH'

S/N	Date	Title	Text	Groups
1	Sept. 19, 2012 (p.16)	N5000 note'll heighten insecurity-Shinkafi	Director-General of the defunct Nigeria Security Organisation, Alhaji Umaru Shinkafi, has said the introduction of the new N5000 note will worsen the security problems in the country.	The Excluded: Nigerians; The Excluder: Fed Govt/agency
2.	Sept. 19, 2012 (p.18)	Promoting regional economic integration	The North-East and North-West should drop their instinctive hostility to fiscal autonomy while all our elites across the zones and political spectrum should drop the cake-sharing culture and develop a passion for cake-baking. The folly of all tiers of government waiting to share oil revenues has become all too apparent.	The Excluded: state governments/ Nigerians; The Excluder: state gov'ts/governors/Fed. Govt.
3.	Oct. 29, 2012 (p.20)	Rotational presidency can	The arrangement by the ruling People's Democratic Party to rotate the Presidency between the South and North is an acknowledgement of the	The Excluded: some Nigerian regions; The Excluder: Dominating regions/

		stabilise Nigeria	existence of a most disturbing national problem and an effort to provide a practical solution to it.	ethnic groups.
4.	Oct.3, 2012 (p.15)	Video of Jonathan's visit to wife belated	The Action Congress of Nigeria on Tuesday described as a belated attempt the presidency's decision to show on the Nigerian Television Authority the video clip of President Goodluck Jonathan's visit to his wife in Germany.	The Excluded: Nigerians; The Excluder: the President/Federal government.
5.	Nov.5, 2012 (p.5)	Nigeria's itiable governance performance	Be it at the level of local, state or central government, Nigerians suffer the unfortunate fate of being ruled by those whose main ambition is to embezzle public funds.	The Excluded: Nigerian masses; The Excluder: Nigerian Govts/leadership
6.	Nov.9, 2012 (p.18)	Nigeria's housing crisis is getting worse	The alarm raised by experts that less than three per cent of planned housing projects are being delivered annually underscores the nation's dire housing crisis. With over 80 per cent of the population at the mercy of landlords, the Federal Government should move quickly from rhetoric to concrete action to meet this most basic of human needs.	The Excluded: Nigerian masses; The Excluder: Nigerian Govt.
7.	Dec. 14, 2012 (p.2)	Banned parties dare INEC, vow to remain active	The 28 political parties that were deregistered by the Independent Natioanl Electoral Commission's act as null and void. ...He (Jega) has shown that he is no longer capable of managing our electoral process.	The Excluded: political parties; The Excluder: Govt agency/ INEC.
8.	Dec.19, 2012 (p.13)	Don't sweep report under carpet-CAN'	But we have heard of panels of investigation being set up and reports submitted in the country. We hope and pray that the Federal Government will release the report of this one and take action.	The Excluded: Nigerians/Christian body; The Excluder: The Federal Government.

Discussion

The Tables (A and B) above present a quintessence of the discourse of exclusion in diverse forms realisable in the two dailies from which the data were elicited. From the analyses, the most prominent and frequent people suffering exclusion are the masses or Nigerian people alongside the most constant 'excluder' i.e. the government at the local, state, Federal and their respective agencies. At this level, the major cause of the phenomenon of exclusion centres on dereliction of obligations or irresponsible attitudes towards the needs of the citizenry. These are cases of the majority/masses suffering exclusion in the hands of the minority (represented by the governments or their agencies). This reflects in Table A (1,3,4,5,6 and 10) while item (9) Table A sheds light on the possibility of an individual excluding another. Table B (1) depicts an imposition of an ideal or policy contrary to people's expectation of cashless society, as a perceived panacea to inflation. This further explicates other different oppressive tendencies from one group against another. This, of course, is the case in items 2 and 3 where regionalisation is disapproved and encouraged respectfully. Texts 4, 5, 6, and 10 reiterate the irresponsiveness and failing objectives of the Nigerian governments at all levels. Text 10 particularly paints the disturbing picture of the resultant effect of lackadaisicality in governance. The outcry of organisations demanding justice or clamouring for freedom in the nation is captured in texts 7 and 8 of Table B.

Conclusion

From the analysis, it is observed that discourses of exclusion are often subtle and symbolic in nature. Many forms of the new exclusion or racism are discursive. In other words, they are expressed, enacted and confirmed by various texts and talks including everyday conversations, board meetings, job interviews, policies, political propaganda, scholarly articles, and news reports in the press, among others. The discourses of exclusion nowadays appear very much as mere talk, and far removed from the open violence and forceful segregation of the old racism, yet, they may be just as effective to marginalize

and exclude other groups whether in the minority or majority. This is the experience captured by this study through the dailies explored here are in the Nigerian society. Our society experiences discourse of exclusion daily alongside other concepts and phenomena. This often manifests in form of psychological violence that refers to the 'indirect acts of negative influence that aim to affect or arouse fear, or break mental resistance of a target audience by indoctrination (brain-washing), misinformation, propaganda, blackmail or terror'(Schmid, 2000:79). Discourse of exclusion encourages 'separatism' (a group's desire to separate itself from the state to which it belongs (Ibid p.16), and a threat to sense of belonging among the inhabitants of a community. For the desired progress and development to be achievable and lasting, every dynamic modern society that is bestowed with responsible leadership must consciously steer away from exclusion discourse of extremists.

Summary

This paper has been able to explore and analyze the discourse (language) of exclusion as a social menace in Nigeria as expressed in the selected dailies ('The Punch' and 'The Nation'). Through the study, it was discovered that the menace, in form of social exclusion exists, and it is expressed by various groups of people in the society at all fora and every time owing to the structural complexity of the country as a multi-ethnic-cultural republic. By exploring the selected newspapers for the various uses of expressions in English language to bring out manifestations of exclusion in the society, this study has further confirmed the truism that language 'cannot function in isolation', severed from the society (Akande, 2004: 116). Since people are bound to engage in the use of language fulfilling its three popular uses: the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual function (Halliday, 1970), and the media constitute an integral part of the modern society where all discourses also take place, it is recommended that linguists in the various fields delve more into how language, especially English language, is employed in the media at the interpersonal level for a better understanding of various linguistic or social concepts.

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