

## **A comparative study of BRTV and NTA Maiduguri regarding their compliance with Nigeria broadcasting code on religious programming**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The regulation of broadcast religious programming is a critical challenge the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) is facing in Nigeria. In Maiduguri, the capital of the north-eastern Nigerian state of Borno where religion forms a core part of the people's culture, a great deal of Borno Radio Television (BRTV) and Nigerian Television Authority Maiduguri's (NTA Maiduguri) airtime is allocated to Islamic preaching during the Muslim's annual Ramadan fasting. However, there is a dearth of research on whether the airtime those broadcast stations allocate to Islamic programming complies with the NBC code on religious programming. This research gap formed the main research question of this study which was conducted during the second quarter of 2019. Primary data were collected using key informant interviews with five personnel from the two broadcast stations and the Maiduguri office of NBC, while secondary data were obtained through the review of official documents. Key findings showed that the airtime allocated to religious programmes exceeded the 10% NBC limit, BRTV allocated more airtime to religious programmes than NTA Maiduguri and Islamic programmes were allocated more airtime than programmes of other religions. Recommendations on how to improve compliance to NBC's regulations were offered at the end.*

*Peraturan program siaran keagamaan merupakan tantangan bagi National Broadcasting Commission (NBC)/Komisi Penyiaran Nasional di Nigeria. Maiduguri,*

*ibukota Negara bagian Borno, Nigeria Timur Laut di mana agama merupakan bagian inti dari budaya masyarakat, banyak Radio Televisi Borno (BRTV) dan Otoritas Televisi Nigeria Maiduguri (NTA Maiduguri) mengalokasikan jam tayang untuk khotbah Islam selama Ramadhan. Namun, ada kelangkaan penelitian tentang apakah jam tayang yang disiarkan oleh stasiun-stasiun siaran itu untuk program Islami. Kesenjangan penelitian ini membentuk pertanyaan penelitian utama yang dilakukan selama kuartal kedua 2019. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan menggunakan wawancara informan kunci dengan lima personel dari keduanya stasiun siaran dan kantor Maiduguri NBC, sementara data sekunder diperoleh melalui telaah dokumen resmi. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa "airtime" (jam tayang) dialokasikan untuk program keagamaan yang melebihi batas 10% NBC, BRTV mengalokasikan lebih banyak "airtime" ke program keagamaan dari NTA Maiduguri dan program Islam dialokasikan lebih banyak "airtime" daripada program agama lain. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah perlunya kepatuhan terhadap peraturan NBC.*

**Keywords:** *BRTV, Television and Nigerian Broadcast Industry, NTA, Religious Programming, NBC and Nigeria Broadcasting Code.*

## INTRODUCTION

Since when Nigeria was granted political independence in 1960, the guarantee for the freedoms of "religious association, expression and practice" has been provided for in all the Constitutions drafted and promulgated (Adum, Ojiakor & Nnatu, 2019). However, optimistic as this may be, there is one important thing that the Constitutions "have not granted citizens, in a straightforward, uncomplicated manner", and that is the "freedom to own and operate a broadcast medium" (Ukah, 2011, p.39). Nigeria is a multireligious and multicultural society; in a society such as this, "the role of the state concerning religious communication is critical" as Hackett argues,

the role of public religion in a nation-state in political transition [as Nigeria obviously is] ... provides an important insight into the mechanics of religious representation in the mediated public sphere. (2006, p.167)

Despite being an important factor of national identity and cohesion, religion has also been a critical factor of disunity and intolerance among Nigerians. There exists a thorny and protracted history of "mutual suspicion" among various Nigeria's religious and ethnic groups, a factor that is constantly regarded as one of the main reasons that the Nigerian Government has always treaded "a cautious approach to the liberalisation

of the media as well as the role of the state in the strategies of public representation of religion" (Johannes, 2008; Falola & Heaton, 2008, p.238f).

The volatile nature of the Nigerian religious ambience has been indicated as having necessitated "the institutionalisation of a policy of prior restraint on evangelising communities in relation to religious broadcasting" (Bala, 2000, p.107; Ukah, 2011, p.40). Also, the abuse of religion and the use of mass media to stir conflicts have led the government to adopt new policies (see Appendix) about religious broadcasting (Bala 2000).

These are serious factors that cannot be ignored when discussing religious broadcasting in Nigeria. Hence, this paper notes that despite the role played by these factors in influencing the state policy on religious broadcasting, the Government's roles as a monopoliser in the pre-deregulation era and currently, "as a principal player in the media market" are responsible for the ambiguities manifested "in the state policies and politics of deregulation" of the broadcast media industry especially in light of religious broadcasting (see Ukah, 2011, p.40).

The utilisation of conventional broadcast media by religious scholars especially during the Muslim Ramadan fasting period has made them emerged as stakeholders at the

forefront of patronising the media. The media have enormous derivable benefits – making huge turnovers to sustain the operation. The priority intention of every scholar utilising the broadcast media as a channel of communication is to garner more followership to his sect; or create an identity or authority towards understanding what religion entails and how it should be practised.

Taking into cognizance that clients with airtime purchasing power have access to the media, which serve as the only yardstick that guarantees which scholar features on, for example, a television or a radio show and when poses a serious threat to the quality of the broadcast content. Although there is the doctrine of ‘fairness’, which seeks to provide the ‘right of reply’ to other parties, say, aggrieved groups or individuals to counter-narrate allegations or criticisms, not all broadcast media seem to be comfortable with this journalism principle and code of ethics. Available records have shown that many television and radio stations have violated one NBC code or another, particularly codes regarding broadcasting religion and have, consequently, been served with warning letters and even sanctioned.

Considering the powers of broadcast media “to form and influence thought, conduct and actions, it is appropriate and legitimate to prohibit licenced broadcast stations from fomenting and disseminating hate speech and national disunity” (Adum et al., 2019; Ibrahim, Pate & Usman, in press; Ukah, 2011; p.44). However, as powerful as NBC is, considering the powers conferred to it by law, how has it been able to achieve compliance of the broadcast code in the Nigerian broadcast industry? This study was guided by several research questions which, if answered, could provide a further understanding of NBC’s and religious broadcasting in Nigeria. The questions are as follows: Has NBC been able to regulate television broadcasting considering religious programmes and licensing? Are television stations adhering to the NBC code on religious broadcasting? How frequently do BRTV and NTA Maiduguri

broadcast religious programmes? What are the similarities in the mode of the broadcast of religious programmes between BRTV and NTA Maiduguri? Have there been any ethical violations in the broadcast of religious programmes by BRTV and NTA Maiduguri?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The concept of regulation

Characteristically, the broadcast media are powerful especially in the manner they shape public opinion, reaching millions of audiences in voice and image (Dominick, 2009; Okunna, 2005). The evolution and development of Nigerian broadcast industry are historical; and for 60 years, from 1932 to 1992, the state had monopolised the industry, using the broadcast media as tools for political, economic, social and cultural manipulation of the masses. The literature has consistently demonstrated that as much as the broadcast media possesses the potential to stimulate socio-economic development as witnessed in social agricultural developments in South-East Asia (Anifowose, 2013; Ibrahim, 2017), the broadcast media also have the potential to be used as ‘electronic weapons’ to incite violence and cause war as seen in the chronic ethno-religious conflicts in various parts of Nigeria (Adebisi & Salaudeen, 2016; Adum et al., 2019). Because of these and many other reasons, various governments deemed it necessary to keep its monopoly of controlling the broadcast industry. To understand what regulation is, Harvey defines the concept regulation which:

Involves intervention by the state in areas of economic, social or cultural life according to whatever political norms are characteristic of that nation state. Regulations may be issued by presidential decree, by religious prescription or by legislative action within a system of representative democracy. (1999, p.2)

Regulations can be governed directly by government, as it was in Nigeria before 1992 or through statutory outfits invested with some degree of autonomous powers by the government such as National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and the National

Communications Commission (NCC). In the realm of broadcasting, regulation involves the authoritative issuance of permission or the granting of a licence to broadcasting organisations. The cultural norms of the society influence broadcasting regulation which, in turn, “contributes to the shaping of these norms and can at times have a significant impact on the form and content of programmes” (Harvey; 1999, p.3; Ihechu & Okugo, 2013), thus, affecting the economic and management structures or the political economy of broadcasting.

### **Broadcast regulations in Nigeria: The need to maintain standards**

The constitutional provisions for the regulation and deregulation of the electronic media were boosted further by the promulgation of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Decree No. 38 of 1992, which was described as a major policy shift of the government. The Decree was signed into law on 20 August 1992 by the President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida Military Administration and amended by Decree No. 55 of 1999, which was promulgated by then military Head of State, General Abdulsalami Abubakar on 26 May 1999, just three days before he vacated office (Ukah, 2011).

Decree No. 38 that established NBC, outlined its responsibilities the key of which include the following: (i) receiving, processing and considering applications for the ownership of broadcast stations (radio, television, cable, direct satellite, etc.); (ii) regulating and controlling the broadcast industry; (iii) maintaining the principle of equity and fairness in the broadcasting industry; (iv) receiving, considering and investigating complaints from members of the public (private and corporate) regarding broadcast contents and the conduct of broadcasting stations; (v) setting standards about the contents and materials for broadcast; and (vi) establishing a national broadcasting code. Furthermore, the NBC is to intervene and arbitrate in conflicts in the broadcast industry, ensure qualitative manpower development, monitor broadcasting for harmful emission,

interference and illegal broadcast and set and apply sanctions, including revocation of licences of defaulting stations (Malaolu, 2012; Tijani-Adenle, 2019). As spelt out in the law establishing the electronic media regulatory agency, NBC shall:

ensure that a licensed station shall be used to promote national interest, unity and cohesion and that it shall not be used to offend the religious sensibilities or promote ethnicity, sectionalism, hatred and disaffection among the peoples of Nigeria (NBC Decree 38, Section 9(1e)) .... The law setting up the NBC, and its amendment, deployed the concepts of “national interest”, “public interest” and “interest of the public” six times (NBC Decree No. 38 Section 2(n); 4.4; 9(1e); 25(8d); NBC (Amendment Decree No. 55 Section 10(2B); 10(8A)). Nowhere in the text were these concepts defined or given content as legitimate objectives to be safeguarded, protected, or promoted by private broadcasters. Particularly in Nigeria, what amounts to “national interest” often represents the interest of the politician(s) or a certain segment of the political class or elite who evoke the notion rather than the “common good”, the good of the largest segment of the citizenry. Ordinarily, national interest may be conceptualised as any action, circumstances, policies, or decisions that are generally considered to benefit the nation-state as a whole. However, in Nigeria, as historical experience amply shows, the “state” is not often synonymous with the public or the citizens of the nation such that the interest of the abstraction called the “state” becomes co-terminus with what benefits the general public. (Ukah, 2011, p.44)

The so-called national/public interest stipulated in the NBC law also re-appeared in Section 10a, which prohibits the NBC from granting a broadcast licence to a religious organisation. However, as mythical as the concept of ‘national/public interest’ may seem in this law, the law keeps mute over the reasons or justifications for the blanket ban (Adum et al., 2019; Ukah, 2011). This paper argues that this ban is uncalled for in as much as there is an

explicit constitutional provision guaranteeing freedom of expression as well as the provision in the NBC law that explicitly requires applicants for a broadcast licence to “give an undertaking that the licenced station shall not be used to offend the religious sensibilities or promote ethnicity, sectionalism, hatred and disaffection among the peoples of Nigeria” (Ukah, 2011, p.44). Cited in Ukah (2001), Bala (2000, p.107) suggests that:

The decision not to license these [religious] stations may be due to the volatile religious atmosphere in the country, the abuse of religious speech in the past, the excessive politicization of religion, and the constant use of the mass media to heighten tensions. (p.45)

Some of the important aims of the deregulation of the broadcast industry are the democratisation of access and participation (Ibrahim et al., 2019) as well as plurality and diversity. However, this paper agrees with Ukah’s (2011) argument that “the prohibition of ownership of broadcast media by religious organisations starkly sabotages this objective” (p.45).

## **Major approaches of NBC broadcast regulations in Nigeria**

### **a. Regulation through licencing**

A primary function of NBC has to do with the licensing of broadcast organisations. NBC is required by law to make the requirements and procedure for the acquisition of licence public. For instance, NBC (2009) states that “A prospective applicant must have a limited liability company registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission in which Nigerians hold majority shares. Its Memorandum of Association and Article of Association must include broadcasting” (p.1). Because NBC is not independent, its recommendations can be set aside, by the Minister and, or, the President. Section 9 (3) of Decree No. 38 created uncertainty in the process of securing a licence when it states that, “Compliance with the requirements specified in subsection (1) of this section shall not entitle an applicant for the grant of licence” (Nwanze, 2003, p.250). The

provision gives latitude for the licensing laws to be manipulated and for the licensing to be motivated by political considerations (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013; Ukah, 2011).

Furthermore, an area of big concern is licence fees. The fees are expensive that they seemed to be fixed to make it extremely difficult for private broadcasters to obtain the licence, which could affect public access and participation negatively (Ibrahim et al., 2019). Also, a licence duration of only five-year cannot be said to be long enough for the organisations to recoup their investment (Ukah, 2011). This situation can force private broadcast media outfits to over depending on commercialisation which, as Okunna (2005, p.89) citing Popoola (2004) describes the broadcast media as “shying away from their primary responsibilities of educating, informing and enlightening the citizenry...and violates the fundamental rights of people...to receive the right type of information”.

### **b. Regulation through monitoring**

The NBC code stipulates that “Every licence is required to adhere to a minimum of 60% local broadcast content for open television and 80% local broadcast content for radio. The cable/satellite retransmission stations are mandated to reflect a minimum of 20%” (NBC, 2009, p.3). The code further requires that programmes and advertisement for family belt shall be devoid of sex or overt sexual behaviour, nudity, violence, bloodletting, smoking, alcohol, drug abuse, denigration of womanhood, offensive, lewd or vulgar language, expression and presentation, etc. and that family broadcast to be between the hours of 07 pm and 10 pm daily (a period when the family as a unit is presumed to be together to watch television). The code also prohibits the provision of licence for religion broadcasting (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013; Ukah, 2011). The code, however, permits broadcasting of religious programmes with a stipulation that “religious broadcasts shall not exceed 10% of the total weekly airtime of any broadcaster” (NBC, 2016, p.47). These aspects are being monitored daily by the staff of the monitoring department of the NBC, spread across all

state and zonal offices. Figure 1 shows an illustration of how broadcast stations comply with or deviate from compliance with the NBC code on religious programming.

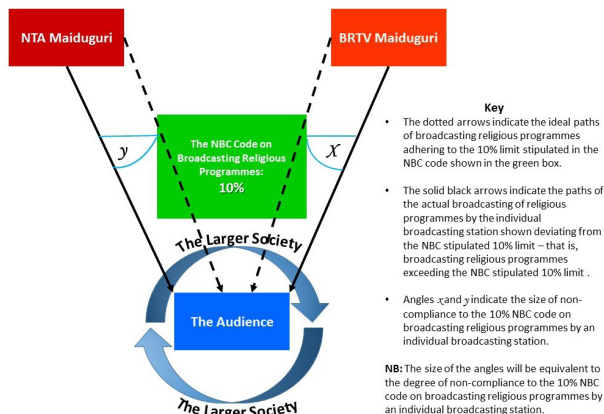


Figure 1: A diagrammatic representation of how broadcast stations comply with or refuse to comply with the NBC code on religious programming.

Source: Authors

Both BRTV and NTA Maiduguri target their programmes to the members of the audience in society. Being regulated by NBC, their religious content is not, statutorily, supposed to exceed 10% of their total weekly broadcasts. The two dotted arrows emanating from the two broadcast stations represent the ideal broadcast paths complying with the NBC code, as can be seen, passing through the green box at the centre (which represents the NBC code zone) towards the audience in the larger society. The larger society, which is represented by two arrows indicating a continuous circular motion refers to communities, villages, towns and cities which the broadcasting stations target their religious programmes at. Besides, the two solid arrows emanating from the two broadcasting stations represent the actual broadcast paths deviating away from the NBC code, as can be seen, by-passing the green box at the centre (representing the NBC code on broadcasting religious programmes zone) targeting the audience in the larger society. On both the right and left sides, between each of the two solid arrows and the green box at the centre are two unknown angles represented by 'x' and 'y' respectively. The size of the angles will determine the degree to which each station deviates away, or

refuses to comply with the NBC code. It is recommended that future research should adopt a quantitative approach to determine the stations' actual non-compliance with the NBC code numerically.

### C. Regulation through Sanctioning

NBC uses four major types of sanctions to punish erring licenced broadcasters who violated either Decree 38 or the National Broadcasting Code. These include (i) licence revocation, (ii) the shutting down or sealing up of a station or transmitter and (iii) the seizure or forfeiture of equipment and suspension of licence (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013, p.16; Ukah, 2011). Another type of sanctioning erring licenced broadcast stations involves a written warning, which is aimed at making the affected station to stop a further violation of the code and deterring future breach of the code. Sanctioning is imposed with a given timeframe the expiration without compliance of which attracts a fine to be imposed. The last type of sanctioning involves fines and stiffer sanctions for not complying with earlier sanctions. However, the offences which can attract these types of sanctions can be not clear. However, the code is silent on what and what constitutes a "serious breach". This scenario suggests the notion that NBC may be biased toward certain interests, which dictate "whether a station should be sanctioned or not", a circumstance that arises when NBC acts arbitrarily or goes against its own rules (Ihechu & Okugo, 2013, p.17).

### Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the Gatekeeping Theory. The Media Gatekeeping Theory focuses on media regulation of information flow. The term gatekeeping was coined by an Austrian psychologist Kurt Lewin in 1947.

In the study of mass communication, the term refers to the process of filtering or blocking unwanted information or messages. The gatekeepers refer to persons who (a) controls access to information; (b) influence decision making and actions; c) having influence. Lewin illustrated the role of the gatekeeper with the role of a mother who determines what is good for her children.

In this case, the gatekeeper is the owner of the publishing firm who influences decision making and action as well as influencing to manipulate information in the firm to conform to his/her interest. The gatekeeper (owners) has to decide what to publish and what not to publish in a publication. Today, Mass Media play a gatekeeping role as they decide what the people should watch, listen and enjoy. The gatekeeping processes are dictated by the owners of the firm. The theory posits that gatekeeping determines not only which information is selected, but also what the content and nature of messages, such as news, will be. The theory describes the powerful process through which events are covered by the mass media, explaining how and why certain information either passes through gates or is closed off from media attention. The rationale for using this theory is hinged on the selection process. Religious programmes are broadcast based on the proprietor's discretion, perhaps the audience and the ability of the sponsors to buy airtime in the broadcast station.

## METHODS

### Research design

A qualitative survey approach was adopted, specifically, the key informant interview approach (Creswell & Poth, 2017) and archival review or analysis (McBurney & White, 2010). As Fontana and Prokos (2007) noted, "Interviewing is one of the most common and powerful ways in which we try to understand our fellow humans" (p.9). The interview approach was chosen because of two key reasons: (i) social science researchers often prefer interview methods to "understand the experiences of their subjects" (ii) interview provided the researcher with the opportunity to understand, first-hand and in their own words, the participants' experiences (Tijani-Adenle, 2019, pp.76-77).

Archival review or analysis involves "answering empirical questions" (Goodwin, 2009, p.372) by using "factual information in existing records" (McBurney & White, 2010, p.228) that have "already been gathered for some reason aside from the research project

at hand" (Goodwin, 2009, p.386).

### Participants and sampling

Using a purposive sampling technique, 5 participants were selected. Selection of the participants was made based on the following criteria: (i) working with the NBC (ii) working in the programmes departments of the two broadcast stations; (iii) was conversant with the NBC regulations codes and/or monitoring broadcast stations' compliance to the code or otherwise; and (iv) was conversant with the programmes production and presentation (i.e., conversant with the programmes schedules) of the broadcast organisations. The participants were management personnel of the Maiduguri office of the NBC, four (two management and two programmes department) personnel each of BRTV and NTA Maiduguri respectively. To ensure anonymity and to facilitate smoother data analysis, each participant was assigned a serial number (see Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Key informant interview methodology was chosen because key informants reveal information from organisational insiders, or stakeholders, i.e., management staff members responsible for policymaking and crafting messages and key stakeholders (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The data were analysed using a thematic approach (Van Dijk, 1993). Cited in Tijani-Adenle (2019, p.88), thematic analysis is:

An independent approach within the qualitative descriptive methodologies" (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013, p.404) that involves identifying similarities and relationships in qualitative data known as "themes and patterns" (Aronson, 1995, p.1) and analysing and explaining their meanings to reflect the "complex relationships across participants' experiences" (Henderson & Baffour, 2015, p.1965).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Four different programmes schedules from NTA Maiduguri and BRTV were obtained. Additionally, Heads of programmes in the two organizations were interviewed, while the Zonal Coordinator of NBC Maiduguri

Office was interviewed.

RQ2 sought to know the religious programmes and their broadcast time (airtime) on both BRTV and NTA Maiduguri. To answer this RQ, the programme schedules of BRTV and NTA Maiduguri for the Ramadan 2019 period and beyond, that is, the second quarter of 2019 (Q2) was obtained and analysed. Tables 1 to 4 show the extracted schedules for religious programmes broadcast on BRTV Maiduguri.

Table 1 shows the programme schedule for the month of Ramadan. Religious programmes occupied the entire schedule.

The programmes were 100% Islamic, even though there were a few pockets of about 30 minutes of news broadcasts periodically. Worthy of note is that there was a break in the transmission that lasts several hours between the morning and afternoon transmission shifts. In the previous Ramadan season, as noted by Imam (*personal communication*, 2019), the break was cancelled because of heavy traffic of sponsored Islamic religious programmes. Sponsors of most of the Islamic programmes during the annual one-month Ramadan period have permanently booked prime times for the religious programmes broadcast.

Table 1: The inventory of religious programmes contained in the programme schedule of BRTV Maiduguri

Title of Programme	Presenter	Time of Broadcast	Duration	Sponsor	Genre
Tafseer from Government House Maiduguri	Sheikh Ibrahim Mustapha Al-Malik	7:00 am	One hour	Free	Recorded
Tafseer from Imam Bukhari Mosque	Sheikh Modu Mustapha	8:00 am	One hour	Unknown	Recorded
Tafseer from Hausari	Sheikh Kabiru Danyaya	9:00 am	One hour	Unknown	Recorded
Tafseer from Umar Ibn Khattab Mosque Bulumkutu	Sheikh Babunu Bukar	10:00 am	One hour	Umar Ibn Khattab Mosque	Recorded
Tafseer from Taha Qur'anic Memorisation Centre	Imam Goni Muhammad Ali Gapchiya	11:00 am	One hour	Taha Qur'anic Memorisation Centre	Recorded
Tafseer from Shettima Ali Monguno Mosque Mafoni	Goni Modu Goni Zarami	12:00 pm	One hour	Unknown	Recorded
Tafseer from Central Mosque	Goni Abba Umar	01:00 pm	One hour	Free	Recorded
Tafseer from Al-Umma Mosque Board of Internal Revenue	Dr Muhammad Abubakar Talha	04:00 pm	One hour	Board of Internal Revenue	Recorded
Tafseer from 1000 Ahmad Jaha Foundation	Late Dr Ali Mustapha	05:00 pm	One hour	Ahmad Babawo Jaha	Recorded
Bayan Kla Asham Mben (Kanuri)	Any prominent scholar	06:25 pm	5 minutes	Free	Recorded
Jawabi Kan Azumi (Hausa)	Any prominent scholar	06:25 pm	5 minutes	Free	Recorded
Tafseer from Al-Amin Daggash Mosque (Hausa)	Sheikh Muhammad Mustapha	08:00 pm	One hour	Al-Amin Daggash Islamic Foundation	Recorded
Tafseer from Ibrahim Saleh Mosque Gwange (Hausa)	Sheikh Ibrahim Saleh	09:00 pm	One hour	Sheikh Ibrahim Saleh Islamic Foundation	Recorded
Tafseer from Indimi Mosque (Hausa)	Dr Muhammad Alhaji Abubakar	10:00 pm	One hour	Indimi Islamic Trust	Recorded
Tafseer from Imam Malik Islamic Centre (Kanuri)	Sheikh Abubakar Kyari	11:00 pm	One hour	Imam Malik Islamic Centre	Recorded
Tafseer from MOGCOLIS Mosque	Sheikh Tijjani Umara	12:00 pm	One hour	MOGCOLIS	Recorded

Source: BRTV fieldwork, 2019



Table 2 contains a breakdown of religious programmes broadcast in BRTV Maiduguri during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2019. A quarter, which is a period of three months supersedes the one-month Ramadan fasting period. In a state with a large population of Christian citizens, surprisingly, even during non-Ramadan periods there is virtually no allocation of airtime for Christian religious programming. Concisely, the data show that during the three months (2<sup>nd</sup> quarter), from Sunday to Saturday every week, there

was at least two to three hours of Islamic preaching programme on air in BRTV each day; and, nearly 50% of the programmes were sponsored – pulling in some ready cash to the station. However, it is not known whether the revenue generated from Islamic and other religious programmes broadcast (if any) during that quarter corresponding to the vast amount of airtime expended. Also, it is not known whether the revenues generated got into the station’s coffers. Future research should examine these issues.

Table 2: The inventory of religious programmes contained in the programme schedule of BRTV Maiduguri during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2019

Title of The Programme	Presenter	Days of Broadcast	Time	Duration	Sponsor
MCAN Da’awah	Alternating members of Muslim Corpers Association of Nigeria	Sunday	09:00 am	30 minutes	Free
Babban Guzuri (Hausa)	Sheikh Muhammad Mustapha	Sunday	01:00 pm	One hour	Ahmed Babawo Jaha
Repeat broadcast Riyadhus Saliheen	Sheikh Abubakar Kyari	Sunday	09:00 pm	One hour	Imam Malik Islamic Centre
Tafseer from Government House (Hausa)		Sunday	11:00 pm	One hour	Free
Tafseer Indimi Mosque (Hausa)	Dr Muhammad Alhaji Abubakar	Monday	11:00 pm	One hour	Indimi Islamic Trust
FOMWAN Da’awah (Hausa or Kanuri)	Alternating FOMWAN members	Tuesday	09:00am	30 Minutes	Free
Tafseer from Al-Ansar Mosque (Hausa)	Dr Yahuza Abdullahi	Tuesday	11:00 am	One hour	Al-Ansar Mosque
Tafseer from Hausari Layin Sarkin Hausawa	Sheikh Kabiru Danyaya	Tuesday	11:00 pm	One hour	Unknown
Islam Today	Ustaz Adebayo	Wednesday	09:00 am	30 minutes	Free
Nur Islambe (Hausa)	Sheikh Muhammad Mustapha	Wednesday	11:00am	One hour	Unknown
Tafseer from Imam Malik (Kanuri)	Sheikh Abubakar Kyari	Wednesday	08:00 pm	One hour	Imam Malik Islamic Centre
Tafseer Daggash Mosque (Hausa)	Sheikh Muhammad Mustapha	Wednesday	11:00 pm	One hour	Al-Amin Daggash Islamic Centre
Fiqh	Alternating Sheikh Yunus and Late Dr Ali Mustapha	Thursday	09:00 am	30 minutes	Free
Islamic Medicine (Hausa)	Mal Ja’afar	Thursday	10:00 am	30 minutes	Free
Islamic Quiz (Hausa)	Alternating	Thursday	04:30 pm	30 minutes	Free
Tafseer from MOGCOLIS (Hausa)	Sheikh Tijjani Umara	Thursday	11:00 pm	One hour	MOGCOLIS
Qur’anic recitation	Alternating	Friday	08:00 am	No specific duration	Free

Title of The Programme	Presenter	Days of Broadcast	Time	Duration	Sponsor
Al'ulamu rashidun (Hausa or Kanuri, live) programme	Alternating scholars	Friday	10:00 am	One hour	Free
You and Islam (Documentary)	Nil	Friday	11:00 am	30 minutes	Free
Babban Guzuri	Sheikh Muhammad Mustapha	Friday	08:00 pm	One hour	Ahmed Babawo Jaha
Tafseer from Shettima Ali Monguno Mosque Mafoni	Goni Modu Goni Zarami	Friday	11:00 pm	One hour	Unknown
Hadith (Kanuri)	Goni Abba Umar	Saturday	05:00 pm	30 minutes	Free
Tarbiya (Hausa)	Dr Muhammad Alhaji Abubakar	Saturday	08:00 pm	One hour	Free
Tafseer from Taha Qur'anic Memorisation Centre	Imam Goni Ali Modu	Saturday	11:00 pm	One hour	Taha Qur'anic Memorisation Centre

Source: BRTV, fieldwork 2019

Table 3 contains programmes broadcast during the 2019 Ramadan fasting period. The data further show that nearly six to seven hours of Islamic programmes were broadcast each day throughout the one-month Ramadan fasting season. That is to say, if the total number of hours the station broadcasts daily was 14 (from 07:00 am to 07:00 pm), then, on average, NTA Maiduguri allocated about 45 to 50% of its daily airtime to Islamic programmes during the Ramadan period; and, obviously, this is extremely more than the 10% of daily airtime stipulated in the NBC code. Traditionally, this is the normal practice in the broadcast outlet annually. This suggests that NTA Maiduguri 'technically' violated the NBC code. However, it is not known if this violation of the code had attracted any form of sanction against the station. Future research should investigate this issue.

Table 3: The inventory of religious programmes contained in the programme schedule of NTA Maiduguri during the Ramadan fasting season

Title of Programme	Presenter	Time of Broadcast	Duration	Sponsor	Genre
Tafseer from Ansar Mosque	Dr Yahuza Abdullahi	8:00-08:55 pm	One hour	Ansar Mosque	Recorded
Tafseer from Imam Malik Centre	Sheikh Abubakar Kyari	10:00-10:55 pm	One hour	Imam Malik Islamic Centre	Recorded
Tafseer from Indimi Mosque	Dr Muhammad Alhaji Abubakar	11:00-12:00 pm	One hour	Indimi Islamic Trust	Recorded
*Tafseer from Government House	Sheikh Ibrahim	06:00-06:55 am	One hour	Free	Recorded
** Tafseer from Maiduguri Central Mosque	Goni Abba Umar	06:00-06:55 am	One hour	Free	Recorded
Tafseer from Al-Amin Daggash Mosque	Sheikh Muhammad Mustapha	10:00-10:55 am	One hour	Al-Amin Daggash Islamic Foundation	Recorded
Tafseer from Izala Jos faction, Gwange Mosque	Sheikh Muhammad Musa Bako	11:00-11:55 am	One hour	Izala Jos faction	Recorded

Title of Programme	Presenter	Time of Broadcast	Duration	Sponsor	Genre
***Jawabi Kan Azumi	Any prominent scholar based in Maiduguri	06:55-07:00 pm	5 minutes	Free	Recorded
**** Bayan kla Ashem mben	Any prominent scholar based in Maiduguri	06:55-07:00 pm	5 minutes	Free	Recorded

Note: Source: Fieldwork, NTA Maiduguri, 2019;

\*\*\*\* The programmes were broadcast interchangeably, with similar synopsis and content, but different broadcast languages.

Table 4 indicates the religious programmes broadcast on NTA Maiduguri after the month of Ramadan. Much less of religious programmes were broadcast during this period. Only four days (Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday) had any religious programme broadcast, with Sunday having two schedules, one for Islamic and the other for Christian religious programmes. According to this programme schedule, only a total of three hours of religious programmes were broadcast every week during the post-Ramadan period in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2019. Interestingly, it is only during post-Ramadan periods that Christian religious programmes have their way on air. Furthermore, every week throughout the non-Ramadan period only one-hour airtime was allocated to Christian religious programmes while two hours were allocated to Islamic religious programmes. Overall, nearly 20% of the total airtime of NTA Maiduguri was allocated to religious programmes during non-Ramadan times, a percentage that exceeds the NBC broadcasting code of 10% by nearly 100%. Interestingly, however, it is only during non-Ramadan times that the station’s adherence or compliance to the NBC code is within the ranges of 15% to 20%, which is closer to the 10% stipulated by the Nigerian broadcast industry umpire, the NBC.

Table 4: The inventory of Islamic programmes contained in the programme schedule of NTA Maiduguri during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2019

Title of Programme	Presenter	Time and Day of Broadcast	Duration	Sponsor
Nasiha in Hausa	Any prominent scholar based in Maiduguri	05:00 pm, every Thursday	30 minutes	Free
Hadith in Kanuri	Any prominent scholar based in Maiduguri	05:00 pm, every Friday	30 minutes	Free
Christian Half Hour	Pastor and members of choir	03:00 pm, every Sunday	30 minutes	Free
No title. However, the synopsis is clear.	Nil	12:00 pm every Sunday	30 minutes	Christ Embassy
Tafseer from Indimi Mosque	Late Sheikh Jaafar Mahmud Adam	05:00 pm, every Wednesdays	One hour	Indimi Islamic Trust

Source: NTA Maiduguri fieldwork, 2019

RQ3: How frequent do BRTV and NTA Maiduguri broadcast religious programmes?

Based on the programme schedule obtained from the two stations, findings reveal that religious programmes have a higher percentage of airtime allocation. In BRTV for instance, out of 18 programmes broadcast in a day (for morning and evening transmissions), 10 programmes are religious (Imam, *Personal communication* 2019). In Ramadan, all programmes except for news, are suspended. Because they have been paid for, religious programmes don’t fail, and repeat versions are avoided, except on rare occasion. Imam attributed this to the fact Borno

is a Muslim state, as such they give priority attention to programmes with Islamic colouration. In NTA Maiduguri as noted by Gana (*personal communication, 2019*), there are only 4 religious programmes: 2 Islamic and 2 Christian.

*RQ 4:* What are similarities in the mode of the broadcast of religious programmes in BRTV & NTA Maiduguri?

Most of the religious programmes are duplicated in both stations. Some bear the same name, synopsis and style. Majority of the Islamic programmes in BRTV are recorded, except for Al'ulamu rashidun which is LIVE and free of charge. In NTA, all the religious programmes are recorded and broadcast free of charge except for a Christian program that has gotten sponsorship from Christ Embassy.

The two stations have allocated time for the broadcast of religious programmes at an odd time that is not prime time. The time is usually not characterized by heavy viewers.

*RQ 5:* Are there ethical violations on religious programmes broadcast on BRTV and NTA Maiduguri?

During Ramadan, the two stations allocate more than 10% of the total airtime to religious programmes. In BRTV for instance, there is no balance in the broadcast of religious programmes. There is no single Christian programme for the Christian viewer. Given the fact that Borno is a secular state with a Muslim majority, however, there is a need for balance.

Imam (*personal Communication, 2019*) told these researchers that since 1992 there has not been any Christian programme on BRTV. Christian issues are only covered in the news. This is not farfetched from staff composition, viewers need and perhaps the absence of sponsors.

NBC had written several letters to BRTV to downplay religious programmes...

In NTA, there seems to be balanced. While Islamic religious programmes are broadcast in Hausa and Kanuri, because viewers and Muslims are predominantly Hausa and Kanuri speakers, Christian programmes are also in English. Each

programme address viewers appeal. Gana (*personal communication, 2019*) notes that the religious programmes are locally produced, and each scholar invited as a guest or discussant in the programmes, comes with his student to serve as an anchor.

Religious broadcast in Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) Maiduguri and Borno Radio Television (BRTV) occupies an important place in programmes schedules. The two television stations place a high premium on their broadcast during Ramadan and beyond. The turnover generated from the broadcast of religious content in Ramadan is significantly higher than any other month. BRTV charges the sum of two hundred and fifty thousand Naira for the transmission of religious content for the period of Ramadan, while outside Ramadan, it charges one hundred and fifty thousand Naira Muhammad, (*personal communication, 2019*).

Mele (*personal communication, 2019*) NTA Maiduguri, on the other hand, charges the sum of five hundred thousand Naira per religious broadcast for the month of Ramadan (though, subjects to bargain), while outside the month of Ramadan, it charges three hundred and ninety thousand Naira for the quarter.

## CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that religious programmes play a key role in managing and sustaining the operations of BRTV and NTA Maiduguri during Ramadan. Airtimes are sold to the highest bidder by the stations. The Ramadan period is a time for making brisk business. Concisely, the findings of this study suggest that in both BRTV and NTA Maiduguri: (1) the airtime allocated to (Islamic) religious programmes was far more than the 10% limit stipulated by the National Broadcasting Commission while BRTV Maiduguri allocated more airtime to religious programmes than did NTA Maiduguri; (2) Islamic religious programmes were allocated more airtime than programmes of other religions; and (3) presumably, because of its being owned by the Borno State Government, BRTV broadcast more Islamic religious

programmes during Ramadan period than did NTA Maiduguri, which is owned by the Federal (national) Government. Therefore, this chapter recommends that: (1) the NBC should review its broadcasting code on religious programmes in such a way that more airtime is allocated for religious programmes during annual religious seasons such as Ramadan and Eid-el Kabir (for Muslims) and Ester and Christmas (for Christians); (2) rather than capitalising on the regulation of programme airtime, the NBC should promulgate a religious broadcast content code that will focus on the actual content of religious programmes (specifically texts, language and meaning) in such a way that the content does not contain malicious and inflammatory remarks capable of undermining the peace in the society.

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