

# ‘Mitigation is global, adaptation is local’: An assessment of the framing of climate change in Nigerian and South African newspapers

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## Abstract

The economic impact of climate change, especially in Africa, is tremendous. As Africans battle with severe weather conditions like floods and droughts, their limited infrastructure is overstretched and, in most cases, cannot withstand the impact. The rains are flooding cities in Nigeria as drought ravages cities in South Africa. When events like these occur, people look to the media for information, and studies have shown that the media can influence public perception of climate change through the way they frame the issue. Using the issue-specific frames of mitigation and adaptation, this study analysed Nigerian and South African newspapers' coverage of climate change. The study spanned 9 months (January–September 2018), and the online editions of The Punch, Leadership, Mail & Guardian and News Everyday were content-analysed quantitatively using tables and frequencies, and qualitatively, using verbatim quotes. A total of 90 stories were obtained from the four newspapers, with the straight news format as the most used story genre. The major sources of news stories on climate change were the reporters, followed by experts/private individuals. The adaptation frame was the most used, showing that the African media understands the need to mobilise citizens locally for a collective fight against climate change.

**Keywords:** Climate change, mitigation, adaptation, newspaper framing, Nigeria, South Africa.

## Introduction

The issue of climate change cuts across geographical boundaries, and it affects humans as well as their sources of livelihood. Given the significant impacts of climate change on peoples and communities, governments around the world have come together to seek solutions to its effects. The annual Conferences of the Parties (COPs) organised by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are, without doubt, a major political event in the context of climate change and the most relevant decision-making body of the convention (Wolling & Arit, 2017). Since its inception, the UNFCCC has organised yearly conferences in a bid to mobilise global action to tackle climate change. In 2010, parties adopted the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF) as part of the Cancun Agreement, where parties affirmed that adaptation must be addressed with the same level of priority as mitigation (UNFCCC, 2021a). In line with this agreement, an Adaptation Committee (AC) was established to promote the implementation of enhanced adaptation actions in a coherent manner as enshrined in the convention. However, the Adaptation Committee came up with its three-year workplan in 2014, identifying the need for the use of

indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation (UNFCCC, 2021a). Prior to this workplan, existing adaptation mechanisms and resources under the Kyoto Agreement designed to mitigate the effect of climate change on Africa (and other developing regions) were formulated with the aim of limiting future carbon emissions rather than addressing the region's vulnerability and lack of resilience to the impacts of climate change on its economies and populations (Lisk, 2009).

In 2015, the Paris Agreement ratified by member states called for global action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. This Agreement mandates countries to develop their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to be submitted every five years as a way of monitoring compliance. The Agreement also stipulates that countries should enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and public access to information. That same year, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted, and Goal 13 specifically aimed to take action to combat climate change and its effects.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2014) report, populations that lack the resources for

planned mitigation experience higher exposure to extreme weather events, particularly in low-income countries. Concerns over the negative impact of climate change have strengthened fears that environmental degradation and demographic pressures will displace millions of people in Africa and create serious social upheaval (Ebele & Emodi, 2016). More developed countries are expected to continue to take the lead by undertaking absolute economy-wide reduction targets, while less developed countries continue to enhance their mitigation efforts and are encouraged to move towards economy-wide targets over time in the light of different national circumstances (UNFCCC, n.d).

In 2011, Building Nigeria's Responses to Climate Change (BNRCC, 2011) estimated that, in the absence of adaptation, climate change could result in the loss of between 2% and 11% of Nigeria's GDP by 2020, rising to between 6% and 30% by the year 2050. These losses are equivalent to between ₦15 trillion (US\$100 billion) and ₦69 trillion (US\$460 billion) respectively. Also, Carter and Gulati (2014) assert that a staggering 86% of South Africa's electricity generation capacity is derived from coal, which is the biggest source of greenhouse

gas (GHG) emissions as far as electricity generation is concerned.

Nigeria has several natural resources, but the most prominent one is crude oil. For decades now, the Nigerian government has not been able to put the refineries in order, as they continue to export crude oil, and then import refined petroleum products into the country. In South Africa, gold and diamonds are the major natural resources, which, like in Nigeria, are being exported in large amounts to boost the economy. In the communities where they are found, industries are established, and people migrate to these areas for jobs, which comes with negative impacts on the environment.

Nigeria and South Africa are part of the Non-Annex I countries as graded by the UNFCCC. This group consists of less-developed countries that are vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, including countries with low-lying coastal areas and those prone to desertification and drought. These countries rely heavily on income from fossil fuel production and commerce. With South Africa relying heavily on coal for power generation and Nigeria's economy depending on crude oil with the attendant gas flaring, both nations contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.

Undoubtedly, climate change issues are global concerns that clearly warrant concerted international response and cooperation (Dodo, 2014), but climate change impacts and adaptation are typically described as regional and local issues (Benzie et al., 2016; NASA, 2021). The goals and processes of adaptation cannot be separated from the nature, status and legitimacy of knowledge claims about the future (Adger et al., 2009). Increased knowledge and learning about the nature, causes and impacts of climate change affect everyday lives as people become more aware of their roles as consumers and are empowered to make ethically informed decisions (UNFCCC, 2021b). Public enlightenment about the nature, causes and impacts of climate change is widely regarded as a basic prerequisite for informed public decision-making and democratic participation (Whitmarsh, 2009).

The media are the most important means by which laypeople obtain information about science (Rahmstorf, 2012) because they have a role to play in empowering people to make informed choices (Shanahan, 2007). Communication scholars and practitioners play a role in describing, predicting, and affecting how we communicate about climate change (Chadwick, 2017) since media coverage exerts an important influence on people

who consume news stories on a wide array of topics (Bruelle, Carmichael & Jenkins, 2012). People often start their day with a fair dose of media exposure provided by newspapers and other media (Lyytimaki, 2012).

Newspapers were previously only in print, but with the advent of the internet and the proliferation of social media, newspapers can now mostly be consumed online. This makes it relevant in this digital age as people can have access to both the print and online versions of the newspapers. Although there are other media of communication, this study will focus on framing of climate change in newspapers. Climate change is already a reality in Africa, and the media can help educate people on adaptation and mitigation strategies that are available to them. The focus of this study, therefore, is on how newspapers in Nigeria and South Africa have reported climate change using the adaptation and mitigation frame.

### **Literature review**

African countries are now vigorously promoting industrialisation through structural economic transformation, which poses challenges to the concurrent reduction of emissions as they strive to address adequate adaptation to changing climatic conditions (Office of the Special

Adviser on Africa, 2016). This approach to climate change industrialisation is worrisome as it comes with human activities that negatively impact the climate system. Currently, anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history as recent climate changes have had widespread impacts on human and natural systems (IPCC, 2014). In a globalised world characterised by daily cross-border flows of finance, goods, resources and people, the impacts of climate change are likely to be felt across borders (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2017). Africa's concern about climate change is more about the links between climate change and contemporary disaster events (droughts, desertification, floods, coastal storms and soil erosion) that threaten lives and livelihoods (Lisk, 2009). With one in four people still undernourished in Sub-Saharan Africa, climate change impacts make it even more difficult for governments across the region to improve food security and help reduce tensions (Maplecroft, 2014).

Some of the key environmental arguments made against globalisation are that it is wasteful and that it allows for the depletion of natural resources on a global scale (Barkin, 2003). Globalisation is manifest through a number of interrelated changes, political barriers to

trade and investments, integration of global financial markets, integration of production activities across international borders, development of global communication systems and the homogenisation of demand for consumer goods across countries (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2000). That is why O'Brien & Leichenko (2000) posit that ongoing processes of economic globalisation are modifying or exacerbating existing vulnerabilities to climate change. Scholars (e.g., Bu et al., 2016; Barkin, 2003) argue that globalisation has contributed to several environmental challenges as people transport goods and raw materials from one place to another. Another argument against globalisation is that it allows for a greater level of depletion of natural resources in less-developed countries than would otherwise be the case (Barkin, 2003).

The issue of adaptation to climate change has been adjudged the best way in which less-developed countries can cope with the challenges of climate change (Benzie et al., 2016), as scientific communities have predicted that mitigation efforts alone would be insufficient in responding to expected impacts of climate change (Huquet et al., 2018). For most people in developing countries, action on climate change looks different than it does in the industrialised world, where reducing

over-consumption is a towering challenge (Dupar et al., 2019). Mitigation involves collective efforts to reduce emissions and increase forest areas, while adaptation refers to the actions that countries will need to take to respond to the impacts of climate change that are already happening while at the same time preparing for future impacts (UNFCCC, n.d.b). That is why Benzie et al. (2016) conclude that mitigation is global, while adaptation is local. However, mitigation has enjoyed more mainstreaming in policy, planning and implementation than adaptation (Huq et al., 2018).

Nigeria suffers from extreme flooding events as South Africa battles with drought, but despite increasing adaptation challenges, economically more developed countries continue to focus on mitigation, while adaptation remains a key priority for more vulnerable, less-developed countries (Duguma et al., 2014). How then can the public be educated on adaptation and mitigation strategies? This can be done via media coverage and framing of climate change. The media can help shape individual perceptions of climate change, which can, in turn, spur actions to combat the effects of climate change on the environment.

Given this situation, there is, therefore, an urgent need to deliver actionable climate change information for sub-Saharan Africa to support planning for climate resilience and adaptation to better inform sustainable poverty alleviation strategies (Senior et al., 2016). However, Kakonge (2012) argues that disturbingly, in countries most vulnerable to climate change, such as those in sub-Saharan Africa, the subject attracts low public interest and is insufficiently covered by the media. In addition, climate change reporting in many sub-Saharan African countries is events-driven, with little or no attempt to link local events to the larger climate change discourse (Ajaero & Anorue, 2018; Kakonge, 2012; Tagbo, 2010).

The communication of climate change from scientists and policymakers to the public via the mass media has been a subject of major interest because of its implications for creating national variations in public understanding of the global environmental issue (Bilett, 2010). This is because the media play an essential role in the construction of social reality, and consequently, the knowledge of what is reported in the media is essential to understanding social attitudes towards significant issues such as climate change (Mercado, 2012).

Media representations are, at the same time, shaped by framings, journalistic norms, and cultural politics of the media economy that are inextricably linked with each other (Luedecke & Boykoff, 2017). The news, according to Happer & Philo (2013), may sometimes appear as a chaotic flow of information and debate, but it is often underpinned by key assumptions about social relationships and how they are to be understood. Echoing this thought, Boykoff & Boykoff (2007) assert that mass media coverage of climate change is not simply a random amalgam of newspaper articles and television segments; rather, it is a social relationship between scientists, policy actors and the public that is mediated by such news packages. The media can achieve this through the way they frame issues.

Framing is based on the assumption that how an issue is communicated in news reports can influence how it is understood by the audience (Scheufele & Tewksbury, 2007). De Vreese (2005) avers that communication is not static but rather a dynamic process that involves frame-building (how frames emerge) and frame-setting (the interplay between media frames and audience predisposition). However, Olausson (2009) contends that frames are often taken for

granted, not subject to any kind of questioning, and are therefore invisible to everyday practice.

The issue of climate change provides an instructive case study for framing research because of its tremendous complexity, transcending economic, political, scientific, and social boundaries across cultures (Boweet et al., 2012). Public perception of the causes, risks, and consequences of climate change ultimately determines many of the political, economic and social responses to it (Munoz & Sommer, 2011). Historically, mass media coverage has proven to be one of the key factors that have shaped and affected science and policy discourse as well as public understanding and action (Boykoff & Roberts, 2007). UNESCO (2013) notes that journalists in Africa have critical roles to play in explaining the nature, causes and effects of climate change and in describing what countries and communities can do to adapt to its impacts. Recognising the role of the media is required in order to build a public and policy agenda that is favourable to mainstreaming environmental concerns into all key actions of society (Lyytimaki, 2012).

It is clear that both science and policy shape media reporting and public



understanding. However, it is also true that journalism and public concern shape ongoing climate science and policy decisions and activities (Boykoff & Roberts, 2007). Studies (e.g., Antilla, 2005; Feldman, Maibach, Roser-Renouf & Leiserowitz, 2011; Weathers & Kendall, 2015; Whitmarsh, 2009; Shehata & Hopmann, 2012; Chetty et al., 2015) have been conducted on media coverage and framing of climate change in several countries in a bid to understand how the media cover climate change and its possible effects on the public. In a study of the framing of climate change in New Zealand newspapers, Chetty et al. (2015) found that the political frame was the most used. Similarly, Shehata & Hopmann (2012) compared US and Swedish press coverage of global warming and found that coverage of climate change in these countries was 'strikingly similar', which, according to the researchers, shows a weak influence of national political elite on how climate change is framed in news coverage. Climate change has also been framed as a public health issue as Weathers & Kendall (2015) found that

the total number of articles on climate change in the US newspapers declined while emphasis on the public health dimension of climate change increased. Furthermore, Antilla (2005, p. 350), in a study of the US newspapers, concluded

that there is a "need for further exploration of current newsroom dynamics and protocols involved in the selection, de-selection, sourcing and framing of climate science news". This is echoed by Whitmarsh (2009), who found that the most common sources of information on climate change were the mass media, specifically television, newspaper and radio.

In Africa, studies like Tagbo (2010), Cramer (2008), Nwabueze & Egbra (2016), Ajaero & Anorue (2018), Batta et al. (2013), Ajaero, et al., (2016), Kayula (2009), Okomo-Okello (2009), Fawode & Olajide (2012) and Ukonu et al. (2012) have examined the coverage and framing of climate change in several African countries. For examples, Cramer (2008), who assessed South African newspaper coverage of climate change, made use of generic frames. Batta et al. (2013) also assessed the use of the issue-specific frame of adaptation and mitigation in reporting climate change in Nigerian newspapers and found that the mitigation frame was the most used.

Despite the above-mentioned studies in Africa, there is a dearth of studies on African media framing of climate change using issue-specific frames of adaptation and mitigation. These frames are important as they can carefully capture



the intended actions advocated for climate change. Nigeria and South Africa are among the African countries that are suffering from the effects of climate change, with huge impacts on the economy. This is not surprising in view of their high dependence on fossil fuels. Given this, it is believed that the mass media in Nigeria and South Africa will naturally be interested in climate change issues. It is through adequate reportage of the issue that the media can educate the public on the causes and possible actions to tackle climate change, thereby bringing to the fore the need to study Nigerian and South African newspapers' framing of climate change using the issue-specific frames.

Consequently, this study analysed newspaper framing of climate change in Nigerian and South African newspapers. It specifically looked at the frequency of coverage, story genres, sources of news stories and the dominant frame used.

### **Theoretical framework**

This study is anchored on the framing theory as propounded by Erving Goffman in 1974. The framing of an issue promotes a particular definition of a theme, selecting some aspects of a perceived reality and making them more prominent in the text (Mercado, 2012). The proponents of the framing theory,

according to Scheufele & Tewksbury (2007), include the sociologist Erving Goffman, the cognitive linguist Lakoff, the communicators Entman and Iyengar, and the economists and psychologists, Kahneman and Tversky. In 1974, Goffman developed a theory of frame analysis that focuses on how individuals learn to routinely make sense of their social world (Baran & Davis, 2006). De Vreese (2005) contends that communication is not static but rather a dynamic process that involves frame-building (how frames emerge) and frame-setting (the interplay between media frames and audience predisposition).

At a theoretical and descriptive level, framing research offers a rich explanation for how various actors in society define science-related issues in politically strategic ways, how journalists from various beats selectively cover these issues, and how diverse sections of the public differentially perceive, understand, and participate in these debates (Nisbet & Scheufele, 2009). Numerous studies in communication and related fields reveal that changes to the way an issue is framed, even if trivial, can significantly affect how audiences perceive the issue (Schuldt & Roh, 2014).

Framing could have significant connotations as frames highlight some

aspects of reality while excluding other elements, which might lead individuals to interpret issues differently (Borah, 2011). The media can, therefore, educate the populace on the need and means to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change by the way they frame news reports on the issue.

### Method

This study utilised the content analysis research method. Content analysis is a research method that allows the qualitative and quantitative data collected in research to be analysed systematically and reliably so that generalisations can be made from them in relation to the categories of interest to the researcher (Haggarty, 2009). The purposive sampling technique was employed in choosing two Nigerian newspapers (*The Punch* and *Leadership*) and two South African newspapers (*Mail & Guardian* and *News Everyday*). While *The Punch* is a popular national newspaper based in southern Nigeria, *Leadership* is a national newspaper based in northern Nigeria, a region which has been hard hit by climate change. In the same vein, *News Everyday* is a newspaper with nationwide circulation in South

Africa, while *Mail and Guardian* does not only cover South Africa well but equally other countries in the Southern Africa region. The online editions of these newspapers from January to September 2018 were analysed. The keywords "climate change" and "global warming" were used to search for articles on climate change. The unit of analysis consisted of news stories on climate change, and the instrument for data collection was the coding sheet. Articles that talked about climate change using words like 'carbon sinks,' 'emission and reduction of GHGs,' 'renewable energy,' 'driving less' and 'adopting environmentally friendly technologies' were coded as mitigation frames, while articles that reported climate change using 'drought-resistant crops,' 'building flood defences,' 'setting up early warning system,' 'building resilient societies and economies,' 'redefining communication systems' and 'business operations and government policies' were coded as adaptation frames. However, stories that contained both features of mitigation and adaptation were coded as "both." The results are first presented quantitatively using simple percentages and tables in the following section.

## Results

### A. Frequency of coverage

**Table 1: Frequency of coverage by the selected newspapers**

Newspapers	Frequency
<i>The Punch</i>	14
<i>Leadership</i>	27
<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	28
<i>News Everyday</i>	<u>21</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>

A total of 90 stories were obtained from the four newspapers studied. *Mail & Guardian* of South Africa, with 28 (31.1%), had the highest number of climate change stories, followed closely by *Leadership*, with 27(30%) stories. *News Everyday* had 21 (23.3%) stories, while *The Punch* Newspaper of Nigeria had 14 (15.6%) stories

### B. Story genres

**Table 2: Story types used by the Nigerian and South African newspapers**

Story Type	<i>The Punch</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	<i>News Everyday</i>	Total (%)
<b>Straight news</b>	8	15	8	12	43(47.8)
<b>Features</b>	1	9	10	8	28(31.1)
<b>Editorials</b>		2	-	-	2(2.2)
<b>Opinion</b>	5	1	9	-	15(16.7)
<b>Special report</b>		-	1	-	1(1.1)
<b>Adverts</b>	-	-	-	1	1(1.1)
<b>Total</b>	14	27	28	21	90(100%)

In covering climate change, the newspapers utilised diverse story genres. As shown in Table 2, the straight news format was the most used (47.8%), followed by features (31.1%). The only two editorials during the study period

came from the *Leadership* (Nigeria). Moreover, *News Everyday* had an advertisement for a Samsung air conditioner as a way to adapt to the effects of climate change

### C. Sources of climate change reports

**Table 3: Sources of news reports on climate change**

Sources	<i>The Punch</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	<i>News Everyday</i>	Total (%)
Reporters	7	23	4	21	55(61.1)
Experts/Private individuals	5	1	12	-	18(20)
Agency Reports	1	3	12	-	16(17.8)
No known source	1	-	-	-	1(1.1)

Table 3 above shows that reporters (61.1%) were the sources of most stories on climate change. Experts/private individuals (20%) were the next most used sources and were followed closely by Agency reports (17.8%).

## D. Frames

**Table 4: Frames used by the Nigerian and South African newspapers in reporting climate change**

Frames	<i>The Punch</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Mail &amp; Guardian</i>	<i>News Everyday</i>	Total (%)
Mitigation	3	5	10	6	24(26.7)
Adaptation	7	12	17	15	51(56.7)
Both	4	10	1	0	15(16.6)

The most used frame by the four newspapers, as indicated in Table 4, was adaptation (56.7%), which was followed by the mitigation frame (26.7%). Some news stories employed both frames (16.6%) in covering the issue of climate change

## Discussion

Climate change is a global issue that affects countries and their resources. Nigeria and South Africa make use of fossil fuel, which has been identified as one of the contributors to the global climate change. The newspapers covered the issue of climate change during the period under study, even though 90 stories may still be considered too small for an issue that is global in nature. The finding that climate change is underreported is in line with the findings of Ajaero & Anorue (2018), Nwabueze & Egbra (2016) and Tagbo (2010). Although the straight news format dominated, there were quite some educative features and opinion articles that addressed

climate change mitigation and adaptation. The reason is that some of the reports were on news items like conferences and symposia on climate change. However, the editorial was a welcome idea and has shown that climate change awareness is increasing among African journalists.

The sources of news stories on climate change show that reporters are now conversant with the issue of climate change. Also, the use of climate change experts and researchers by the newspapers showed that they acknowledge the need for urgent action to combat the impact of climate change. However, due perhaps to issues like funding, as pointed out by Ajaero &

Anorue (2018), agency reports are relied on mostly for foreign stories on climate change.

The adaptation frame was the most used frame, and this is a welcome development. It is high time developing countries contributed to the fight against climate change. This finding differs from that of Batta et al. (2013), who found that the mitigation frame was the most used by the Nigerian newspapers. This study was conducted in 2013, a year before the Adaptation Committee of the UNFCCC came up with a three-year work plan that emphasises the importance of adaptation and the need for indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices for adaptation.

The Nigerian and South African newspaper stories were filled with warnings on the need to take action. Examples include:

*Even if one decides to disregard the warning from scientists, experts and climatologists, we cannot wish away what is already happening today right before us (Odogwu, 2018, The Punch, July 18).*

*The reality is here; we ought to understand that the earth belongs to all of us, and therefore, we must do something about it (Leadership Editorial, April 8, 2018).*

*African nations need to do more than just catch up, they must lead. On a warming planet, it won't be enough to simply adopt existing cooling technologies. African business[es] and policymakers must set an example for the world in adopting sustainable policies and energy-efficient cooling technologies (Birmibili, 2018, Mail & Guardian, September 12).*

*But the drought which pushed Cape Town to the edge isn't over yet. The threat of water rationing could still become a reality in 2019. And there will be other droughts, too, in Cape Town and beyond. Moving beyond coping with a crisis in the short-time to building the capacity to avoid, or at least better manage, such situations over the long-term lies at the heart of climate adaptation (Taylor, 2018, Mail & Guardian, June 26).*

The newspapers also called on several stakeholders, especially religious leaders, to help preach climate change and educate their congregations on its effects.

*Environmental awareness among faith-based institutions was identified as one of the first steps to use in evangelising and engaging followers of all faith institutions in driving action on environmental protection (Asu, 2018, The Punch, September 17).*

The economic consequence of climate change on the African continent was discussed as reporters tried to educate people on the effect of climate change and the need to adapt.

*Changes in rainfall are a particular problem on the African continent. Some 80% of farmers and herders rely on rainfall. When it doesn't rain, crops and cattle die. When crops fail, countries have to import critical foodstuffs, such as maize, wheat and rice, which pushes the prices up, people then have less to spend on other important foods like vegetables (Sipho, 2018, Mail & Guardian, August 31).*

*Policy makers should take their feet off the brakes, [and] send a clear signal that the new growth story is here and that it comes with exciting economic and market opportunities (Leadership, September 6, 2018).*

*In 2017, four proposed major projects by the National Agency for Great Green Wall could not see the light of day. The agency budgeted N1.354bn for dry land restoration through massive afforestation programme monitoring and evaluation, promotion of alternative livelihoods, but only N200m was released (Odogwu, 2018, The Punch, July 19).*

It is worth noting that African leaders are coming together to tackle the effects of climate change. Reports abound where they (African leaders and stakeholders) organise symposia to meet and discuss the need to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. However, reporters condemned the attitude of political leaders regarding mitigation. The idea that Africans are the least emitters and as such, should be paid for everything without contributing any is unhelpful.

*I once interacted with a particular Northern [Nigeria] governor who boldly told me that he needed a water truck to use in watering the trees he planted on the major roads. And that he was asking foreign development partners to donate the trucks! (Odogwu, 2018, The Punch, July 19).*

Experts also talked about the link between people and their environment. The symbiotic relationship between man and earth was advocated, and the psychological impact of climate change on people can lead to substance use, anxiety and depression.

*Restoring our link to the more-than-human-world involves awakening to the impact that we have on the world around*



us, moving from a position of commodification, objectification and consumption of the environment to one of symbiosis (Barnwell, 2018, *Mail & Guardian*, August 8).

In all, the Nigerian and South African newspapers gave fair coverage of the issue of climate change and, as much as possible, linked it with everyday life for easy comprehension. However, compared to politics and sports, climate change reports remain under-discussed. Africans still need to move from making policies to implementing them. Governments and organisations involved in the climate change fight should focus more on adapting to the effects of climate change for a sustainable environment. For Africa to take meaningful actions, all hands must be on deck, where individuals and communities must make concerted efforts to adapt to climate change.

## Conclusion

The issue of climate change is one that calls for collective action from scientists, policymakers, the media and the people. It requires urgent mobilisation for action to mitigate and adapt to its effects. This study assessed Nigerian and South African newspapers' framing of climate change in order to understand the dominant frames used to shape public perception of the issue of climate change. The findings show that the media indeed covered the issue of climate change, although not quite extensively. Also, the use of the adaptation frame as the dominant means of conveying information shows that the media are certainly mobilising the public and relevant stakeholders to combat the effects of climate change. However, this study cannot be used to generalise on the framing of climate change in Nigerian and South African newspapers, given its small-sized sample.

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