



Assessment of Newspaper Framing of the October 2020 #EndSARS Protests in Nigeria

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Abstract

The October 2020 #EndSARS protest in Nigeria marked a transformative moment in the country's history, driven by widespread grievances against police brutality and the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). This study explores the critical role played by Nigerian newspapers in framing and covering these historic protests. Drawing on Framing Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory, the research employs a quantitative content analysis approach to examine newspaper coverage from October 8, 2020, to January 7, 2021, in four prominent Nigerian newspapers: Daily Trust, Leadership, Nigerian Tribune, and Thisday. The study found out that the majority of coverage was on inside pages, with lower percentages on front and back pages. The Motivational Frame dominated, followed by Diagnostic and Prognostic/Causal Frames, emphasising motivations behind the protests. Critical tones prevailed, contrasting with supportive tones and minimal neutral tones, indicating substantial scrutiny and critique in reporting. The study concludes that there was a significant attention to the protests but a lack of prominence on front and back pages. The dominant Motivational Frame underscores a focus on motivations, and critical tones prevail in media representation. The study recommended that newspaper organisations reevaluate front and backpage priorities to elevate coverage of vital events like #EndSARS, ensuring more informed and balanced coverage decisions, enrich coverage by expanding beyond conventional frames, incorporating socio-political impacts, human stories, and future implications to provide a more comprehensive understanding, strive for a balanced portrayal by incorporating diverse perspectives.

Keywords: #EndSARS protest, media framing, newspaper coverage, Nigeria, social movements, media ethics.



Introduction

In October 2020, Nigeria bore witness to a groundswell of social and political activism that transcended its borders: the #EndSARS protest. Sparked by longstanding grievances against police brutality and extrajudicial killings perpetrated by the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), the movement galvanized numerous young Nigerians. The young Nigerian who converged on the streets to demand not only an end to the atrocities committed by SARS but also to advocate for accountability, comprehensive police reform, and broader systemic change (Amnesty International, 2020). In a country where issues of police brutality had long been simmering beneath the surface, the #EndSARS movement emerged as a response to a tipping point of public sentiment. The protests, predominantly organized and driven by Nigeria's youth, not only underscored the pervasive nature of police violence but also highlighted broader concerns of governance, corruption, and human right. What began as a localized movement grew to encapsulate a nationwide demand for justice and change, with echoes resonating across international boundaries (Isichei, 2020).

This watershed moment not only reflected the potency of grassroots mobilization in the digital age but also spotlighted the media's role in shaping public perceptions and discourse surrounding the protest. With social media platforms as catalysts, the movement gained unprecedented momentum (Adekoya, 2021). It underscored the influence of digital spaces as fertile grounds for organizing, disseminating information, and rallying supporters. The viral nature of the movement showcased the potential of online platforms to amplify voices, facilitate coordination, and engender a sense of unity among a dispersed populace. Furthermore, this influential moment cast a glaring spotlight on the media's pivotal role in shaping the public's understanding and discourse concerning the protest. Traditional newspapers, in particular, played a crucial role in framing the narrative surrounding the #EndSARS movement (Akinwotu, 2020). They functioned not only as information disseminators but also as interpreters, influencing the ways in which the movement was perceived and comprehended by the broader society. The manner in which newspapers framed the protests, depicted the participants, and highlighted certain aspects of the movement played a significant role in shaping public opinion.

The concept of media framing, derived from the seminal works of Entman (1993) and Gitlin (1980), serves as a foundational framework for comprehending the intricacies of how media coverage influences public perceptions and interpretations of events (Chisom, 2021). Media framing encapsulates the idea that news outlets exercise editorial discretion in selecting and highlighting specific facets of an issue, thus molding the lenses through which audiences view and comprehend complex occurrences. This selective emphasis has the power to construct dominant narratives that may impact public attitudes and societal discourse (Bossey & Asemah, 2022). Understanding the specific frames employed by newspapers during the #EndSARS protest is pivotal, as these frames have the potential to magnify or attenuate key issues, thereby influencing public sentiment and contributing to the broader sociopolitical dialogue. For instance, a newspaper that predominantly frames the protest as a violent disruption might inadvertently overshadow the underlying issues of police brutality and systemic reform. On the other hand, a newspaper that frames the protest as a call



for justice and accountability can contribute to public empathy and support for the movement's objectives (Chisom, 2021). The study thus, delves deeply into the intricate interplay between media framing and the sociopolitical narratives that unfolded during this transformative period. The research examines the ways in which newspapers framed the protest, considering both explicit and implicit biases, discourses, and narratives that may have influenced the broader societal discourse. By scrutinising the language used, the imagery employed, and the emphasis placed on different facets of the protest, the study sheds light on how media framing can influence perceptions and, consequently, the course of sociopolitical events.

This study centers around the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria during October 2020 portrayed and contextualised in newspaper coverage. This central inquiry is pivotal in exploring the complex process of media framing, especially within a significant sociopolitical event. The primary aim of this study is to uncover the implicit and explicit frames used to depict the #EndSARS protests within newspaper coverage.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose this study is to assess newspaper framing of the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. However, the specific objectives are:

1. To investigate the degree of prominence accorded to the coverage of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests in the newspapers.
2. To analyse the predominant types of framing utilised in the portrayal of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests in the newspapers.
3. To evaluate the types of tone that dominated the framing of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests.
4. To examine the tone employed in framing the #EndSARS protests in the newspapers.

Research Question

The research is guided by the following questions:

1. What was the prominence given to the October 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigerian newspapers?
2. Which types of framing were predominant in the coverage of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests?
3. What types of tone dominated the framing of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests?

Literature Review

The #EndSARS movement, originating in Lagos and expanding to 26 Nigerian states, emerged as a significant moment in the nation's sociopolitical landscape (Aluko, 2021). Driven by organised efforts and supported by concerned citizens disillusioned with systemic governance issues (Aluko, 2021), Nigerian youths initiated the protest against the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) to advocate for broader police reforms (Chisom, 2021). However, the peaceful demonstrations turned chaotic as they were hijacked by hoodlums, leading to security deployment and widespread property damage (Aluko,



2021). The movement's roots trace back to 2018, highlighting SARS brutality and human rights violations (Akinwotu, 2020). Despite government promises, incidents of abuse persisted, culminating in a tipping point with a widely shared video depicting SARS operatives' unprovoked shooting (Adekoya, 2021). Social media outcry propelled massive protests across Lagos and Abuja, ultimately resulting in the disbandment of SARS by the Nigerian government. The protest's demands expanded beyond SARS dissolution, encompassing compensation for brutality victims, comprehensive police officer retraining, and the trial of indicted SARS officials (Ekoh & George, 2021), revealing the distrust stemming from unfulfilled promises. Transitioning to media framing, this concept shapes audience perceptions by selecting, emphasizing, and presenting specific aspects of an issue (Epkins, 2011). Various scholars have identified different framing types, such as episodic and thematic framing, and outlined methods for analyzing frames in media content (Iyengar, 1991; Tankard & Paluck, 2017). The prominence given to news events, especially in newspapers, significantly influences public attention and perception (McCombs, 2011). Story placement, headlines, and frequency of reports determine the prominence of a topic in newspaper coverage (Yeshambel & Bayable, 2016).

Newspapers, as communication mediums, framed the #EndSARS protest, shaping how the event was interpreted by the public (Goffman, 1974). The media's portrayal of the protest, while essential for mobilization, often distorts movements' messages and negatively impacts public support (Egbunike, 2015). Empirical studies have analyzed how newspapers framed the #EndSARS movement, exploring framing techniques, outcomes, and sociopolitical impacts (Nwodu & Nengi, 2022; Aigbefoh & Asemah, 2021; Bossey & Asemah, 2021). These studies dissected language, tone, imagery, and contextual cues in newspaper content to understand media framing. In this study, two key communication theories—Framing Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory—are employed to dissect how the media depicted a significant sociopolitical event, specifically the #EndSARS protests. Framing Theory centers on how media shapes perception through language, tone, imagery, and emphasis (Goffman as cited in Karlström, 2017), while Agenda-Setting Theory explores how the media's coverage influences public awareness and what topics hold importance (McCombs and Shaw, 1970s, as cited in Opeyemi, 2017).

Framing Theory delves into how information presentation influences interpretation. Frames act as cognitive structures guiding how individuals process and organize information (Scheufele as cited in Perkins, 2017). Frame building involves selecting and highlighting aspects of an issue, while frame setting is the media's role in determining what issues are presented and how they're presented. Frame priming suggests exposure to specific frames influences subsequent judgments (Snow, Vliegthart, Ketelaars, 2019). Agenda-Setting Theory revolves around media's influence on public perception by selecting and framing news stories. It shapes what topics the audience deems important (Matsaganis & Payne, cited in Zain, 2014). The media's agenda influences the public agenda, impacting what individuals consider significant. These analyses revealed dominant frames, diverse perspectives, and the impact of balanced reporting on public perception. While studies have explored media framing of #EndSARS, there's a need for broader research encompassing multiple newspapers,



methodologies, and comparative analyses to fill existing research gaps. In this study, two key communication theories—Framing Theory and Agenda-Setting Theory are analysed. Both theories provide lenses to analyze how media representation of the #EndSARS protests influenced public discourse, perception, and nuanced perspectives. Framing Theory delves into language, imagery, and context, revealing the media's role in shaping understanding. Agenda-Setting Theory, on the other hand, examines how the protests were prioritized in news coverage, showcasing the media's impact on societal agendas and public awareness during critical events.

Methodology

The research methodology involved an approach that relies on quantitative method. The data collection process utilized a systematic approach, involving the use of a comprehensive coding sheet. This coding sheet was systematically applied to extract information from a representative subset of the study population, consisting of articles published in four prominent Nigerian newspapers during a three-month period from October 8, 2020, to January 7, 2021. The selected newspapers were *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and *Thisday*, and a total of 1301 articles were included in the analysis. While the study's population initially comprised all 310 newspapers published in Nigeria during the research period, practical constraints led to a purposive sampling approach. Four prominent newspapers were selected for analysis, allowing for a manageable dataset while capturing diverse regional perspectives and the evolving narrative of the #EndSARS protests over three critical months. The unit of analysis in this study included words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, and entire genres within the selected newspapers. Content categories relevant to the framing of the #EndSARS protest were identified, including straight news reports, feature stories, editorials/opinions, interviews, and photos/illustrations. The coding sheet is used for data collection for quantitative content analysis. Coding involved assigning codes to segments of data to capture essential attributes or themes within the content. Data analysis involved presenting and analyzing the information using statistical figures, tables, and charts. Quantitative data on the #EndSARS protest are measured, analysed, and presented in a straightforward statistical manner, aligning with the research questions.

Results

This research focuses on the coverage and framing of the October 2020 #EndSARS protest in four Nigerian newspapers: *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and *Thisday*. Using a quantitative approach and a comprehensive coding sheet, 1301 articles published from October 8, 2020, to January 7, 2021, were analysed. The study aimed to capture diverse regional perspectives and the evolving narrative of the protests. The findings shed light on the prominence of the protest in newspapers, the framing techniques used, and how they reflect the socio-political realities that the #EndSARS protests sought to address. This contributes to understanding the media's role in shaping public discourse during moments of social change and activism. The presentation and analysis is based on three research questions.

Table 1: Genre of Coverage of the October, 2020 #EndSARSProtests

The table below shows the genre of coverage of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests by selected Nigerian newspapers.

News Paper	News Report	Editorial	Feature Story	Opinion/ Column	Interview	Photo/ Illustration	Total
Daily Trust	157 (12%)	6 (0.5%)	18 (1.4%)	46 (3.5%)	3 (0.2%)	74 (5.7%)	304(23.4%)
Leadership Nigerian Tribune	165 (13.4%)	4 (0.3%)	25 (2%)	54 (4.4%)	4 (0.3%)	92 (7.5%)	344(23.5%)
Thisday	143 (13.9%)	5 (0.5%)	18 (1.8%)	36 (3.5%)	4 (0.4%)	61 (5.9%)	267(20.5%)
	176 (15.3%)	9 (0.8%)	38 (3.3%)	61 (5.3%)	5 (0.4%)	97 (8.4%)	386(29.6%)
Total	641 (54.6)	24 (2.1%)	99 (8.5%)	197 (16.7%)	16 (1.3%)	324 (35.5%)	1301(100%)

Source: Content analysis 2023

Table 1 presents a comprehensive quantitative analysis of how different newspapers framed their coverage of the October 2020 #EndSARS protest in Nigeria. This analysis categorises the content into various units of analysis, including news reports, editorials, feature stories, opinion/columns, interviews, and photo/illustration sections. The table examines four newspapers: *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and *Thisday*. Each newspaper's coverage is analysed in terms of the units of analysis and frames used. The table provides a detailed breakdown of the content across different units of analysis. For example, *Daily Trust* had 157 news reports (12%), 6 editorials (0.5%), 18 feature stories (1.4%), 46 opinion/column pieces (3.5%), 3 interviews (0.2%), and 74 photo/illustration elements (5.7%) related to the #EndSARS protests. In terms of the cumulative total of frames, *Daily Trust* had a total of 304 frames, with 23.4% focused on the definition/motivational frame, 9.6% on the diagnostic frame, and 7.9% on the prognostic/causal interpretation frame. Among the different units of analysis, news reports (12%) and photo/illustrations (5.7%) were the most common. *Leadership* newspaper had a total of 344 frames, with 23.5% focused on the definition/motivational frame, 9.9% on the diagnostic frame, and 8.8% on the prognostic/causal interpretation frame. News reports (13.4%) and feature stories (2%) were the most common units of analysis.

Nigerian Tribune had a total of 267 frames, with 20.5% focused on the definition/motivational frame, 8.6% on the diagnostic frame, and 6.7% on the prognostic/causal interpretation frame. News reports (13.9%) and photo/illustrations (5.9%) were the most common units of analysis. *Thisday* had the highest total frames at 386, with 29.6% focused on the definition/motivational frame, 12.2% on the diagnostic frame, and 9.9% on the prognostic/causal interpretation frame. News reports (15.3%) and photo/illustrations (8.4%) were the most common units of analysis. In total, there were 641 news reports (54.6%), 24 editorials (2.1%), 99 feature



stories (8.5%), 197 opinion/column pieces (16.7%), 16 interviews (1.3%), and 324 photo/illustration elements (35.5%) across all newspapers. The total number of instances for each frame is also provided, allowing for an overall assessment. From the table, it can be observed that news reports were the most common unit of analysis, making up the majority of the content at 54.6%. Opinion/column pieces and photo/illustration elements also played a significant role in framing the protest. Among the units of analysis, news reports were the most common, followed by photo/illustrations, indicating that newspapers heavily relied on traditional news reporting and visual elements to cover the protests. Overall, this data underscores the multifaceted nature of newspaper coverage, with a balance between defining and motivating the protests, analyzing their causes, and predicting their potential outcomes. The choice of units of analysis, such as news reports and photo/illustrations, also reflects the diversity of methods used by newspapers to convey their framing of the protests.

Research Question 1

What was the prominence given to the coverage of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests in the Nigerian newspapers?

Table 2: Prominence Given to the Coverage of the October, 2020 #EndSARS Protest

Publication	Front Page Coverage	Inside Page Coverage	Back Page Coverage	Total
Daily Trust	55 (4.22%)	216 (16.59%)	33 (2.53%)	304 (23.3%)
Leadership	64 (4.91%)	234 (17.98%)	46 (3.53%)	344 (26.4%)
Nigerian Tribune	45 (3.46%)	193 (14.81%)	29 (2.23%)	267 (20.6%)
Thisday	75 (5.76%)	258 (19.85%)	53 (4.07%)	386 (29.7%)
Total	239 (18.32%)	901 (69.18%)	161 (12.37%)	1301 (100%)

Source: *Content analysis 2023*

Table two presents a quantitative data analysis that assesses the newspaper framing of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. This analysis is primarily focused on how the newspapers placed their coverage of the protest in different sections, namely front page, inside page, and back page. The table lists four newspapers: *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and *Thisday*. These are the sources of the data being analysed. The table provides data on how the coverage of the #EndSARS protest was distributed across the newspapers' pages. This information is categorised into front page coverage, inside page coverage, and back page coverage. For example, *Daily Trust* allocated 55 articles (4.22%) to the front page, 216 articles (16.59%) to inside pages, and 33 articles (2.53%) to the back page.



The table also presents the total coverage for each newspaper, which is the sum of articles across all page placements. For instance, *Daily Trust* had a total of 304 articles covering the protest. The table goes further by analysing the frames used in the newspapers' coverage. At the bottom of the table, there is a row labeled total that provides an overview of the cumulative data for all newspapers. This row tells us that, in total, there were 239 articles (18.32%) on the front page, 901 articles (69.18%) on inside pages, and 161 articles (12.37%) on the back page, summing up to 1301 articles in total. Furthermore, it shows the distribution of frames across all newspapers. From the table, it can be observed that the majority of the coverage across all newspapers was on inside pages, with 69.18% of the total coverage. This indicates that the protest was not given as much prominence on the front page or the back page. Additionally, the table allows us to compare how different newspapers framed the protest. For example, *Leadership* had the highest percentage of front page coverage at 4.91%, while *Thisday* had the highest percentage of inside page coverage at 19.85%. In summary, the table provides a comprehensive quantitative analysis of how newspapers in Nigeria framed and placed their coverage of the #EndSARS protest in October 2020. It highlights variations in page placement and framing strategies across different publications, offering valuable insights into media representation of this significant event.

Research Question2

Which types of framing were predominant in the coverage of the October 2020 #EndSARS protest?

Table 2: The Frame Types for Newspapers Under Investigation

<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Motivational</u>	<u>Diagnostic</u>	<u>Prognostic/Causal</u>	<u>Total</u>
Daily Trust	<u>Frame</u> 125 (9.6%)	<u>Frame</u> 103 (7.9%)	<u>Frame</u> 76 (5.9%)	304 (23.4%)
Leadership	129 (9.9%)	115 (8.8%)	100 (7.6%)	344 (26.5%)
Nigerian Tribune	109 (8.6%)	89 (6.7%)	69 (5.2%)	267(20.5%)
Thisday	160 (12.2%)	129 (9.9%)	97 (7.5%)	386 (29.6%)
Total	523 (40.3%)	436 (33.4%)	342(26.3%)	1302(100%)

Source: *Content Analysis 2023*

The table provides a breakdown of the frame themes covered by different newspapers during the October 2020 #EndSARS Protests in Nigeria. The newspapers analysed include *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and *Thisday*. The distribution is categorised into three frame themes: Motivational Frame, Diagnostic Frame, and Prognostic/Causal Frame. *Daily Trust* published a total of 304 articles (23.4% of the total), with 125 (9.6%) on Motivational Frame, 103 (7.9%) on Diagnostic Frame, and 76 (5.9%) on Prognostic/Causal Frame. *Leadership* published a total of 344 articles (26.5% of the total), with 129 (9.9%) on Motivational Frame, 115 (8.8%) on



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Diagnostic Frame, and 100 (7.6%) on Prognostic/Causal Frame. *Nigerian Tribune* published a total of 267 articles (20.5% of the total), with 109 (8.6%) on Motivational Frame, 89 (6.7%) on Diagnostic Frame, and 69 (5.2%) on Prognostic/Causal Frame. *Thisday* published a total of 386 articles (29.6% of the total), with 160 (12.2%) on Motivational Frame, 129 (9.9%) on Diagnostic Frame, and 97 (7.5%) on Prognostic/Causal Frame. In total, out of the 1302 articles analysed across all newspapers: Motivational Frame was covered in 523 articles (40.3% of the total). Diagnostic Frame was covered in 436 articles (33.4% of the total). Prognostic/Causal Frame was covered in 342 articles (26.3% of the total). This analysis shows that Motivational Frame was the most covered theme across all newspapers during the #EndSARS Protests.

Table 4: Distribution of Tone of Framing in Newspapers

Newspaper	Supportive Tone	Neutral Tone	Critical Tone	Total
Daily Trust	101 (7.7%)	77 (5.9%)	126 (9.6%)	304(23.4%)
Leadership	129 (9.9%)	49 (3.7%)	166 (12.7%)	344(26.4%)
Nigerian Tribune	96 (7.3%)	27 (2.0%)	144 (11.0%)	267(20.6%)
Thisday	146 (11.2%)	52 (3.9%)	188 (14.4%)	386(29.6%)
Total	472 (36.2%)	205 (15.9%)	624 (47.9%)	1301(100%)

Source: *Content Analysis 2023*

The table provides a breakdown of the newspaper framing of the October 2020 #EndSARS Protests in Nigeria. The newspapers analysed include *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and *Thisday*. The framing is categorised into three tones: Supportive, Neutral, and Critical. For *Daily Trust*, out of 304 articles (23.4% of the total), 101 (7.7%) had a supportive tone, 77 (5.9%) were neutral, and 126 (9.6%) were critical. For *Leadership*, out of 344 articles (26.4% of the total), 129 (9.9%) had a supportive tone, 49 (3.7%) were neutral, and 166 (12.7%) were critical. For *Nigerian Tribune*, out of 267 articles (20.6% of the total), 96 (7.3%) had a supportive tone, 27 (2.0%) were neutral, and 144 (11.0%) were critical. For *Thisday*, out of 386 articles (29.6% of the total), 146 (11.2%) had a supportive tone, 52 (3.9%) were neutral, and 188 (14.4%) were critical. In total, out of the 1301 articles analysed across all newspapers: 472 articles (36.2% of the total) had a supportive tone. 205 articles (15.9% of the total) had a neutral tone. 624 articles (47.9% of the total) had a critical tone. This analysis shows that nearly half of the articles had a critical tone towards the #EndSARS Protests, while over a third was supportive and less than a fifth remained neutral.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis of newspaper coverage of the October 2020 #EndSARS protests in Nigeria revealed insightful findings regarding prominence, framing types, and tones used by different newspapers. *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *Nigerian Tribune*, and *Thisday*, spanning from October 8, 2020, to January 7, 2021. In terms of prominence, Table 1 showcases the allocation of coverage



across different sections of the newspapers. The majority of the coverage, constituting 69.18% of the total, was observed on inside pages. Conversely, the front page and back page had relatively lower coverage percentages, with 18.32% and 12.37% respectively. This suggests that while the protest received substantial coverage, it was not prominently featured on the most visible sections of the newspapers. Notably, Thisday had the highest inside page coverage at 19.85%, while Leadership led with 4.91% on the front page. These variations indicate differing editorial priorities among newspapers. Moving to framing types, Table 2 delineates the prevalence of different frame themes in the coverage. Across all newspapers, the Motivational Frame emerged as the most dominant, comprising 40.3% of the total coverage. This was followed by the Diagnostic Frame at 33.4% and the Prognostic/Causal Frame at 26.3%. This analysis underscores a significant emphasis on understanding the motivations behind the protests in the media narratives.

Furthermore, Table 3 delves into the tone of framing employed by the newspapers. Critical tones were predominant, accounting for 47.9% of the total coverage, while supportive tones constituted 36.2%. Neutral tones were relatively minimal, at 15.9% of the total coverage. This indicates a substantial level of scrutiny and critique in the reporting, with nearly half of the articles adopting a critical stance toward the #EndSARS protests. This contrasts with supportive tones present in over a third of the articles and the relatively low incidence of neutral tones. In summary, the analysis presents a comprehensive quantitative breakdown of how Nigerian newspapers covered the #EndSARS protests in October 2020. It highlights the predominance of coverage on inside pages, the prevalence of the Motivational Frame, and the substantial presence of critical tones in the media representation of the protests. These findings offer valuable insights into the varied approaches and perspectives adopted by different publications in portraying this significant societal event.

Conclusion

The study concludes that although the protests received significant attention in newspapers, they were not prominently featured on front and back pages. This suggests they might not have been deemed headline-worthy by some publications. In terms of framing, there was a strong focus on understanding the motivations behind the protests, with the Motivational Frame being the most dominant, followed by the Diagnostic and Prognostic/Causal Frames. Regarding tone, the analysis showed a notable prevalence of critical tones, present in almost half of the articles, contrasting with supportive tones found in over a third of the coverage. Neutral tones were relatively scarce, indicating a high level of scrutiny and critique by the media in portraying the protests.

Recommendations

The study recommends as follows:



1. Nigerian newspapers should reconsider front and back-page priorities to highlight vital events like #EndSARS, raising awareness and importance. Evaluating event significance for front-page inclusion can ensure more informed coverage decisions.
2. Expanding beyond motivational, diagnostic, and prognostic/causal frames can enrich coverage. Including sociopolitical impacts, human stories, or future implications offers a more comprehensive understanding of complex events.
3. Publications should strive for a balanced portrayal by incorporating diverse perspectives. Alongside critique, featuring constructive suggestions or positive aspects from the protests creates a nuanced narrative. Providing a platform for neutral tones aids in unbiased opinion formation.

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