

Open Access Article

### Media and the Fight against Corruption in Nigeria: An Assessment of Selected Newspapers' Coverage of the Maina Case

Anthony Okoeguale

*School of Media and Communication, Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos, Nigeria*

*Received: October 12, 2021 ▪ Reviewed: November 10, 2021*

*▪ Accepted: December 15, 2021 ▪ Published: January 28, 2022*

**Abstract:**

Although Nigeria has gained some marginal stride in its fight against corruption, there are still some significant milestones yet to be attained. The role of the press as the watchdog of society in this fight is undeniable. In light of the need for continuous assessment of the media's performance, this study investigated the newspaper coverage of the Abdurashheed Maina case. *The Guardian Newspaper* and *The Daily Trust Newspaper* were selected and content-analyzed to assess how the news around the case was framed. Primary data were collected from all the editions of these newspapers, accounting for seven weeks, and covered 98 newspapers. The unit of analysis included the story categories of the Abdurashheed Maina case were examined as News stories (Headlines). The framing theory and watchdog model formed the theoretical framework. While the content analysis was employed to investigate the tonality of the news content, critical discourse analysis assesses the linguistic style used by both newspapers, thus determining their ideological position. The research findings showed disparities in the tonality of reportage for both newspapers, although proprietary or regional influences did not affect their ideological position. This research novelty is in using content analysis and critical discourse analysis to analyze the news contents of a national and regional newspaper.

**Keywords:** media, corruption, framing, the Nigerian government, news.

### 尼日利亚的媒体与反腐败斗争：对选定报纸对迈纳的案的报道的评估

**摘要：**

尽管尼日利亚在反腐败斗争中取得了一些微不足道的进步，但仍有一些重要的里程碑有待实现。媒体在这场斗争中的作用是不可否认的，因为它们是社会的监督者。鉴于需要持续评估媒体的表现，本研究调查了报纸对阿卜杜拉希德·迈纳案件的报道。选择了《卫报》和《每日信托报》这两家报纸并对其进行了内容

Corresponding Author: Anthony Okoeguale, PhD Candidate, School of Media and Communication, Pan-Atlantic University, Lagos, Nigeria; email: [aokoeguale@pau.edu.ng](mailto:aokoeguale@pau.edu.ng)

*This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)*

分析，以评估围绕此案的新闻是如何被诬陷的。原始数据是从这些报纸的所有版本中收集的，时间总计为7周，共计98份报纸。分析单元包括阿卜杜拉希德·迈纳案的故事类别，作为新闻故事（标题）进行审查。框架理论和看门狗模型形成了理论框架。内容分析用于调查新闻内容的语调，批评话语分析用于评估两家报纸使用的语言风格，从而确定它们的意识形态立场。研究结果表明，两家报纸的报道语调存在差异，尽管专有或区域影响并未影响它们的意识形态立场。这项研究的新颖之处在于使用内容分析和批评话语分析来分析国家和地区报纸的新闻内容。

**关键词：**媒体，腐败，诬陷，尼日利亚政府，新闻。

## 1. Introduction

Corruption indicates weak institutions and structures within a nation-state and is a bane in many developing countries such as Nigeria. For instance, corrupt practices such as bribery and criminal embezzlement deplete a country's wealth, impacting peace, stability, and national development. The consequences accruing from these circumstances are far-reaching since loyal citizens perceive exploitation and social imbalance. Similarly, corruption can harm the social framework of the nation, if not nipped, since it deprives people of the necessities of life, thus further engendering economic hardship. This situation is evident in the misappropriation of funds meant to provide basic amenities and the subsequent outcomes. Ayeni & Nwaorgu (2018) emphasized the ubiquity of corruption in Nigeria, implicating the quest for survival and austere economic conditions as underlying influences.

Arguably, the military regime is particularly implicated in the history of corruption in Nigeria since it seems to have engendered looting of the civic assets at an exponential rate and established a culture of clandestineness in governance. Furthermore, Ribadu (2009) argues that this era saw the obliteration of all the noble things inherent within the country. Surprisingly, the supposed rationale for the emergence of the military regime was to forestall the perceived corruption among politicians and democratic leadership. Notwithstanding, several attempts have been made by previous governments to combat corruption through policy-making and the enacting of laws. Notably, Obasanjo's regime saw the establishment of agencies like the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) geared towards fighting corruption. However, these regimes were not spared from the malaise of corruption (Odalonu, 2021).

It is noteworthy that efficient media is a vital stimulus for driving the anti-corruption campaign. The media is necessary for facilitating a culture that is averse to corrupt practices through influencing, reporting, agenda-setting, etc., without intervention by the government, especially in a multi-ethnic state like Nigeria. Among other roles, the media sets an agenda around corruption, bringing its foundations, influences, and probable alleviation to the fore. However, the Nigerian media are not exempt from corrupt practices. Odionye et al. (2016) argued that the press, which is expected to beam searchlight on corruption, is

hampered. This is evident in the "brown envelope" syndrome in which several journalists are somewhat implicated. These practices place an obstacle on objective media coverage. Arguably, the persistence of Transparency International (2018) in ranking Nigeria among the bottom forty nations in its annual Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) signals the underperformance of the media in the anti-corruption campaign.

Arguably, Nigeria has not performed very well in matters of corruption. In nearly two decades of uninterrupted democracy, Nigeria has continued the fight against corruption by leveraging EFCC and ICPC to apprehend criminals in the public and private sectors. Notably, these attempts at eradicating corruption paid off slightly since the country made progress at Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index. Nigeria has moved from being ranked as the most corrupt country globally in 2000 to being ranked 148 out of 180 countries surveyed (Transparency International, 2018).

Nevertheless, despite marginal improvements, the fight against corruption is still a long way off in Nigeria since a lot remains to be achieved. Furthermore, the campaign of the President Buhari-led government was premised on the war against corruption. This is illustrated in his popular chant: 'If Nigeria does not kill corruption, corruption will kill Nigeria' (Olaniyan, 2018). In fact, upon taking on his responsibility as President, the chant served as his code of conduct in his fight against corruption. However, in his sojourn, the President has had to deal with cases of corruption within and outside his cabinet.

The press has been described as having the role of a watchdog. It is noteworthy that the Nigerian 1999 Constitution empowered the press to undertake its role as watchdog, a democratic function. This enablement of the press is captured in Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution, which states that "the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people" (The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, p.34). However, there are concerns about the commitment of the press in performing its function as a watchdog. Arguably, the press alerts the public regarding public office holders' misconduct, although there are uncertainties about the intensity of their warnings. Furthermore, Ojo (2006) implicated

sensationalism, flippancy, proprietorial influence, regional chauvinism, and the emergence of junk journalism as likely influences militating against the performance of the press. Consequently, the media should be continually appraised in light of its role as watchdog, and the Abdulrasheed Maina case, which trended in the last quarter of the year 2017, presents an interesting context through which the coverage of the press in Nigeria can be investigated.

The circumstances surrounding the Abdulrasheed saga are significantly dramatic. In 2013, the senate accused Maina of re-routing civil servants' pensions (two billion nairas) into his accounts. These allegations were made while he was heading the Presidential Team on Pension Reforms (PTTPR). Consequently, the Federal Civil Service Commission sacked him, and the accused escaped being arrested by law enforcement. He was then charged in July 2015 on a 24-count charge regarding fraudulence practices and was declared wanted by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in November 2015. However, despite the incessant court summons and police searches, Maina remained off the radar.

Maina appeared into the scene declaring that he had been exonerated from the allegations and demanded an apology from the national assembly for the defamation of his character. He again disappeared from the scene after his declaration. Thereafter, he was reported to have been reinstated (and promoted) and returned to the public service payroll. This event sent shock waves across the nation, eliciting a public outcry against the development. Notably, Abdulrahman Dambazu (the Interior Minister) corroborated the report of Maina's reinstatement in October 2017 only to deny involvement in Maina's reinstatement. He further blamed the office of the Head of Service for the development. Notably, President Buhari fired Maina and demanded a detailed report of the development by the Head of Service. Nonetheless, the reinstatement of Maina had left an indelible smear on the President Buhari administration and an impediment to the administration's fight against corruption.

Following the issues highlighted above, this study addressed the following questions: 1) How did the press frame the issues around the Abdulrasheed Maina case? 2) Did the proprietary and regional influences affect the opinion of the press regarding the Abdulrasheed Maina case? This study focused on the reportage of two selected Nigerian newspapers regarding the Abdulrasheed Maina case.

It is noteworthy that the choice of newspapers was based on the following: the political status of the newspapers, the geographical location, reach of the newspapers, and the ready availability of research materials. Upon consideration of the criteria, *The Guardian* (a national newspaper) and *Daily Trust* (a regional newspaper) emerged. The study investigated the reportage of both newspapers. These newspapers are private-owned and represent the key (and authoritative) independent newspapers in circulation within the

country. Furthermore, *The Guardian*, on its website, claims to be entirely independent and balanced in its reportage of news having no political, ethnic, or religious affiliation hence attesting to its liberality, while *The Daily Trust* describes itself as being well-focused and market-driven.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. *Print Media and Corruption in Nigeria*

Tade (2019) offered a simple conception of corruption to include the misappropriation of public funds to individual gains. Consequently, the following issues could emerge from corruption, including economic hardship and social imbalance, since it involves an intended diversion of national wealth meant for development. Lewis (2017) introduced the idea of legitimacy in their definition of corruption, arguing that it involved coveting resources illegally for personal gains at the expense of the public. Peters (2019) defined corruption as violating rules for individual benefit in the same vein. From the foregoing definitions and descriptions, one can deduce the following features of corruption: deliberation, illegitimacy, responsibility, human agency, personal gains, social imbalance, economic hardship, misappropriation, etc.

Olasupo et al. (2017) asserted that the history of the print media in Nigeria could be divided into three eras; pre-colonial, colonial, and postcolonial. The pre-colonial era saw the establishment of the *Iwe Iroyin* by Rev. Townsend in 1859. Arguably, religious factors influenced the print media, later supported by political ones. The colonial era, which was characterized by British imperialism, heralded the establishment of newspapers like the *Standard* (domiciled among the Yorubas), the *West African Pilot* (inclined towards the Igbos), and the *Nigeria Citizen*- later the *New Nigeria* (which was sympathetic to the cause of the Hausas). Notably, the motives for establishing these papers were political and nationalistic in nature. The owners of the newspapers were strong critics of British imperialism and used the media as a tool to heighten national consciousness among the people. However, the Federal Government established the *Morning Post* and later acquired major shares in the *Daily Times Newspaper*. There are over 75 newspapers in Nigeria, with the larger proportion produced in Lagos, Abuja, and state capitals (Dauda, 2010). This phenomenon is indicative of the skewed manner in which the media is domiciled in the region within the country, owing to the presence of economic and political seats.

Although there are extant studies investigating the role of media in the war against corruption in Nigeria (for instance, see Akani, 2017; Ahmed et al., 2019), I will build on the study carried out by Adesoji (2010). Notably, Adesoji (2010) made significant efforts in investigating the role of the press in the anti-corruption fight, where he analyzed the media coverage of corruption in Nigeria spanning 1999 -2009. His study suggested: 1) A significant performance of the coverage

of corruption among government officials; 2) The indifference among segments within the press regarding the anti-corruption drive; 3) An underlining relationship between the government's interest and the attitude of the press towards the cases of corruption.

However, this study develops from Adesoji's (2010) study. The study analyses the press coverage of Abdurashheed Maina's saga. It assesses the position or disposition towards the saga as illustrated in the editorial opinions of the two selected papers, *The Guardian* and *Daily Trust*.

## 2.2. Framing Theory

This study leans significantly on the framing theory, which concentrates on how the media presents news stories to the audience. Notably, a description of the framing theory would require an understanding of frames as abstractions that are instrumental to the organization of the meaning in a message (D'Angelo, 2019). Consequently, they enable a better understanding of the meaning inherent in the information. They also serve as mental routes that connect stories to the macro picture (Freyenberger, 2013).

Jung (2019) argues that framing is domiciled at the 'second level' of agenda-setting since it goes beyond the topic to explain the essence of the issues surrounding the topic; thereby transcending the scope of agenda-setting (which focuses on the topics of discourse) and influences the issues around topics. At the same time, Kuan et al. (2020) argued that framing involved attention to certain qualities of the objects of news coverage and the objects themselves. Ardèvol-Abreu (2015) argued that the framing theory also accounted for the way individuals classify information either at the macro or micro level construct. The disparity between the macro and micro levels stems from how information is handled. While the macro-level refers to how journalists and other communicators present information, the micro-level explains how individuals use the information they receive to form impressions about the issue. In this sense, the Media can generate a specific reaction from the public by the way the story is portrayed.

Ultimately, framing theory focuses on how the media portrays news stories. It is based on the assumption that the characterization of the news story can influence the audience's interpretation. Furthermore, recipients of a new story receive it and juxtapose it with their own individual frames. Additionally, the audience interprets and processes information based on the tone of the news story (Scheufele & Tewksbury 2007). Interestingly, this idea of tonality of news stories was put forth in the research of Freyenberger (2013), who focused the content analysis on examining the tone of news stories in a bid to determine how journalists frame news stories. It is noteworthy that this form of content analysis will be adapted for this study.

## 2.3. Liberal Media Theory (The WatchDog Model)

Arguably, a significant role of the media is the watchdog, as articulated in the watchdog model. The watchdog role empowers the media in its function of scrutinizing the activities of the government (Amodu et al., 2016). Consequently, the media can reveal misdemeanors such as corruption. Accordingly, the theory describes the media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm, which underscores the media's oversight regarding activities of the State.

Furthermore, Mcquail & Deuze (2020) highlights the role of Edmund Burke (an Anglo-Irish philosopher and political leader) in the definition of the media as the Fourth Estate in 18th century England thus placing the media at the same level with other noble estates. Edmund's definition ensued from the apparent political weight of the press at the time. Consequently, the watchdog role became the principal function of the media. Similarly, Santas & Ogoshi (2016) argued for the media's watchdog role, reiterating its normative nature.

Additionally, Onyemaobi (2018) argues that the media performs the watchdog role by informing and educating the audience, setting the agenda, shaping opinions regarding socio-political matters, and monitoring the activities of the government. He further describes the various elements implicated in the concept of the Fourth Estate of the Realm, including: 1) Media access (which is indicative of a democratic structure in which everyone has a voice); 2) Diversity and Pluralism (particularly concerning media ownership and service to society); 3) Professionalism and Media Ethics; 4) Watchdog Press. Notably, the liberals and political economists support watchdog theory (see Mcquail & Deuze, 2020), calling for the total independence of the media from the control of the government to facilitate its role as the watchdog or Fourth Estate. Interestingly, newspapers in Nigeria are quick to declare their role as watchdogs using suggestive names. For instance, *The Guardian* and *The Daily Trust* indicate a trustworthy protector of the people who prevent misdemeanors like government corruption. Accordingly, this article assesses the ideological position and disposition of the selected newspapers to the corruption issues in Nigeria, especially regarding the Abdurashheed Maina case.

## 3. Research Method

This study employs two diverse but corresponding methods: content analysis and critical discourse analysis to analyze newspaper headlines and editorials of two Nigerian newspapers. The framing theory and watchdog model guide the overall study. While the content analysis was employed to investigate the tonality of the news content, critical discourse analysis assesses the linguistic style used by both newspapers in composing their editorials on the Abdurashheed Maina case during the period under review, thus determining their ideological position. Primary data were obtained from all the editions of *The Guardian* and *The Daily Trust*

newspapers from October 2, 2017 (three weeks before the report on the reinstatement of Abdulrasheed Maina – October 23) to November 20, 2017 (three weeks after the report on the reinstatement of Abdulrasheed Maina). The period accounted for seven weeks, amounting to 98 newspapers. Notably, the period under review also includes the date of the report on the Maina's sack by Buhari (October 24).

The analysis was conducted by purposive sampling in which 16 editions were analyzed (13 editions of these editions contained headlines about The Maina case while three editions contained editorials regarding the Maina case. Copies of the newspapers were retrieved from the Institute of Chartered Accountants library, Victoria Island in Lagos. In addition, the unit of analysis included the story categories of the Abdulrasheed Maina Case were examined as News stories (Headlines).

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

As earlier stated, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To determine how the press framed the issues around the Abdulrasheed Maina case;
2. To determine whether the proprietary and regional influences affected the opinion of the press regarding the Abdulrasheed Maina case.

The first objective of this study was achieved by examining the tone of the headlines on the Abdulrasheed Maina case (as reported by *The Guardian* and *The Daily Trust* newspapers) in a bid to determine how both newspapers framed the news stories. Consequently, the research was conducted to provide answers to the following research question:

*RI:* How did the press frame the issues around the Abdulrasheed Maina case?

In seeking to answer the question above, the tone of the headlines was examined. Table 1 provides answers to the question above. It provides details about the headlines on the Maina case as reported by *The Guardian*. Critical words or language is taken from the news headlines to show bias and preferences.

Words or phrases against the government include corruption, lip service, no fairness in approach, looting by government officials, reinstatement of an accused, etc.

Furthermore, the table showed that most reports were heavily critical of Buhari's administration relative to Abdulrasheed Maina. It is noteworthy that the newspaper starts reporting about the Maina case some hours after the first report in *The Daily Trust*. There were also instances of political undertones, with a report heavily blaming PDP (October 26 edition) and another (October 27 edition) in favor of the Jonathan administration. Although it is not clear the reason for this phenomenon, however, it may indicate the subtle political leaning by *The Guardian*.

Table 1. Content analysis on *The Guardian* reportage of the Maina case (October 2- November 20, 2017)

| Headlines  | Date       | Type | Count | Rating   |
|--|------------|------|-------|--|
| Buhari sacks Maina, orders probe of recall, posting            | 24/10/2017 | News | 1042  | Critical of Maina and government                       |
| I will open a can of worms against the cabal, says Maina       | 26/10/2017 | News | 789   | Balanced reporting with political undertones           |
| Stop linking me with Maina's reinstatement, says Jonathan      | 27/10/2017 | News | 448   | Critical of the current government                     |
| NANS threatens FG with mass action over Maina saga             | 30/10/2017 | News | 691   | Blatantly critical of the current government and Maina |
| PDP seeks impeachment as Buhari sacks SGF, NIA boss            | 31/10/2017 | News | 1,096 | Blatantly critical of the current government and Maina |
| Maina fights back, alleges £6m pension loot in London accounts | 01/11/2017 | News | 1,119 | Critical of the government                             |
| Oyo-Ita confronts Kyari at FEC                                 | 02/11/2017 | News | 763   | Balanced reporting                                     |

Table 2 provides answers to the question above. It provides detail about the headlines on the Maina case as reported by *the Daily Trust*. Critical words or language is taken from the news headlines to show bias and preferences. It is noteworthy that a greater percentage of the headlines were neutral and cautious in concluding. However, there is an indictment of government officials, especially about the blame game by the Head of Service and Director-General Department of State Service.

Table 2. Content analysis on Daily Trust Newspaper reportage of the Maina case (October 2 - November 20, 2017)

| Headlines   | Date       | Type | Count | Rating   |
|---|------------|------|-------|--|
| How Maina was Recalled- FG (Reinstated official still wanted by EFCC) | 23/10/2017 | News | 492   | Neutral and Balanced Reporting                       |
| Why Buhari fired Maina  | 24/10/2017 | News | 1622  | Neutral  |
| More trouble for Maina  | 25/10/2017 | News | 1034  | Subtly critical of Maina, Critical of the government |
| Buhari's govt invited Maina, family says                              | 26/10/2017 | News | 1625  | Neutral and Balanced Reporting                       |

Continuation of Table 2

|   |            |      |     |                                |
|---|------------|------|-----|--------------------------------|
| Dogara constitutes panel on Maina's probe | 30/10/2017 | News | 147 | Subtly critical of Maina       |
| Maina: Kyari, HoS fight at Aso Rock       | 02/11/2018 | News | 640 | Neutral and Balanced Reporting |

There was subtle criticism of Maina and, interestingly, praise for the presidency (October 25 edition). In addition, *The Daily Trust* newspaper broke the news about Maina before *The Guardian* Newspaper. Furthermore, it can be observed that the paper did not play up political sentiments as in the case of *The Guardian*.

*The Daily Trust* report seemed to provide more detail on the Maina case. The paper had a graphical illustration of the Maina case. It also gave much salience to the case. In three editions, it dedicates about 75% of the front page to the report on the Maina case.

Words or phrases against the government include reinstatement of Maina, corruption, government officials' denial, references to allegations, the indictment of government, corruption tendencies of Maina, etc.

Words or phrases in favor of the government include disengagement of Maina, initiating a probe of Maina, sealing of Maina's properties, etc.

The second objective of this study was achieved by studying the editorial opinions of newspapers in determining the ideological position of the newspaper owners (*The Guardian* and *The Daily Trust* newspapers, respectively) in a bid to determine whether the proprietary and regional influences affected the opinion of the press regarding the Abdurashheed Maina case. Consequently, the research was conducted to provide answers to the following research question:

R2: Did the proprietary and regional influences affect the opinion of the press regarding the Abdurashheed Maina case?

The following provides details about the critical discourse analysis of the editorials. Evidently, both papers were not sparing in their criticism of the Abdurashheed Maina and the Buhari-led government. The analysis shows that proprietary or regional influences did not affect their ideological position, especially *The Daily Trust* (a northern newspaper). However, *The Guardian* goes a step further to proffer solutions to the menace of corruption.

*Analysis 1: The Guardian Newspaper*

*Editorial Caption: Nigeria and the Maina Case*

*Date of Publication: November 7, 2017*

*Semantic macro-proposition:* The editorial title gives a brief insight into the matter of discourse. The first paragraph further provides more details about the subject matter, the series of events following the Maina case. In addition, the first paragraph also contains the crux of the argument, which includes a direct criticism

of the Maina and the Buhari-led administration. *The Guardian* was not sparing in its illustration of the Maina case. There was the usage of terms like 'impunity', 'cronyism' in reference to the activities of the government. *The Guardian* goes on to buttress its major argument in the editorial.

The title and the lead paragraph of the editorial also provide answers for the question: the what, who, where, and why. The 'what' is the main theme of the article, which is the issue of corruption in Nigeria (illustrated by the Maina case) – and the government's inefficiency in fighting the menace.

The 'who' are the main actors in the event referred to by the editorial article: Abdullahi Abdurashheed Maina, President Muhammadu Buhari, and his administration. The 'where' is the country (with a special focus on Abuja). The 'why', which is the reason for the newspaper's call for action, is the "unfolding drama" stemming from the Maina case.

In its choice of terms, *The Guardian* also clearly indicts the President, the Federal Government, the Head of the Civil Service, and the Federal Civil Service Commission in the corruption case. It further argues that the President's cabinet is filled with corrupt leaders who do not have the will to promote the anti-corruption campaign. To buttress this argument, they allude to the First Lady, Aisha Buhari's descriptions of the members of the famed Aso Rock cabal as hyenas, reptiles, rats, who have taken over the presidency'.

In general, *The Guardian's* editorial opinion presents blatantly skewed commentary against the government and accuses the government of lacking the will and effectiveness to combat corruption.

Finally, *The Guardian* reiterated the role of the media in facilitating the anti-corruption fight by providing the platform 'for citizens to be free and self-governing which is proudly expressed by the candor and social awareness of the informed public' in addition to informing and educating the public.

*Analysis 2: The Guardian Newspaper*

*Editorial Caption: Making drudgery of a presidency*

*Date of Publication: November 10, 2017*

*Semantic macro-proposition:* The title of the editorial clearly depicts the main argument in the editorial. The first paragraph also elaborates on the title. The first paragraph states that 'delay is dangerous, especially in governance, and can destroy the greatest of statesmen'. *The Guardian* implicates President Buhari's 'delayed action on many issues' as a major contributor to the deterioration occasioned by the Maina case. This opinion was vividly expressed with the usage of words such as procrastination. It lists the various instances in which the presidency allowed procrastination to undermine its reputation. For instance, his delayed action regarding 'report of a panel he set up since April to investigate corruption allegations against two principal officers of his government: the head of the presidential bureaucracy, Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF),

and the Director-General of the National Intelligence Agency (NIA)'.

Additionally, the editorial indicates what, who, where, and why. The 'what' is the main theme of the article, which is President Buhari's response to the issue of corruption (illustrated by the Maina case).

The 'who' is President Muhammadu Buhari. The 'where' is the country (with special focus on Abuja), the 'why', which is the reason for the newspaper's call for action, is the delayed action by the President concerning The Maina case, among other issues.

Notably, this editorial is a follow up to the previous, in which *The Guardian* suggests that the presidency should go beyond the sack of Maina and investigate those implicated in the case.

In general, *The Guardian's* editorial opinion presents commentary that is not skewed in favor of the presidency.

However, the paper concluded by asking the presidency to act quickly to prevent further deterioration.

*Analysis 3: The Daily Trust Newspaper*

*Editorial Caption:* Maina: Mess, messiah, or menace?

*Date of Publication:* November 7, 2017

*Semantic macro-proposition:* Although the editorial title does not entirely capture the essence of the argument, the first and second paragraph depicts the crux of the argument. *The Daily Trust* blatantly criticizes the government of President Muhammadu Buhari for its inability and lack of commitment in the fight against corruption in Nigeria. The second paragraph explicitly illustrates this argument describing the government's action as 'floundering', 'grasping at straws' when it comes to issues regarding corruption.

*The Daily Trust* supported their claim by narrating the events that transpired in the Abdulsheed Maina case, including the controversies and contradictions ensuing from the case. For instance, *The Daily Trust* argues that no one in government was willing to take responsibility for the reinstatement of Maina (who had been accused of corruption).

The editorial provides answers to the questions: what, who, where, and why. The 'what' is the main theme of the article, which is the issue of corruption in Nigeria (illustrated by the Maina case) – and the government's inefficiency in fighting the menace.

The 'who' are the main actors in the event referred to by the editorial article: Abdullahi Abdulsheed Maina, President Muhammadu Buhari, Interior Minister Abdulrahman Dambazau, and the Attorney-General of the Federation, Abubakar Malami, and DSS Director-General Lawan Daura. The 'where' is the country (with special focus on Abuja), the 'why', which is the reason for the newspaper's call for action, is the "unfolding drama" stemming from the Maina case.

## 5. Conclusion

This study showed that *The Guardian* and *The Daily Trust* newspapers performed their role as a watchdog to

a significant degree during the period of review. Although the reports from *The Guardian* had some political undertones, the Nigerian press characterized attributes of independence, showing no significant affiliation to any government, thus exemplifying the watchdog model as engraved in the Nigerian Constitution (1999). Nonetheless, the function of the media ought not to be blown out of proportion, and subtle political proclivities seem to plague the media in its role as watchdog.

The ideological independence of the newspapers was evident in how they framed the reports, clearly expressing their disappointments in developments surrounding the Maina case. Their reports highlight the lack of impetus by the Nigerian government to fight corruption. A clear reason for this phenomenon is that governments and their acquaintances are beneficiaries of this malaise.

This study contributes to explaining the role of media in the fight against corruption by analyzing two selected newspapers (a national newspaper and a regional newspaper) within the Nigerian context while employing content analysis and critical discourse analysis to investigate the tonality and ideological positions of the reportage. Compared to previous research, this study underscores the wide scope of the role of the media while underpinning within the framework of the framing and the liberal media theories.

## 6. Limitations and Further Study

This study is limited to content analysis and critical discourse analysis to highlight the role of the media in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, with a particular focus on the newspaper hence further research is needed to employ other research methods. It is recommended that more studies be done to investigate other media forms, including traditional and new media. Further research is also recommended that conduct longitudinal studies that span several years, investigating various cases while seeking possible influences of the normative role of the media in society.

## References

- [1] ADESOJI, A. O. (2010). Old wine in new bottle: The Nigerian Press in the Era of Constitutional Democracy, 1999-2009. *Journal of International Social Research*, 3(10), 22-32.
- [2] AHMED, K. A., ABDULBAQI, S. S., & ADISA, R. M. (2019). Anti-corruption campaigns and Nigeria development: An appraisal of media roles. *Acta Universitatis Danubius*, 13, 99-116.
- [3] AKANI, C. (2017). The media and corruption in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 10, 39-49.
- [4] AMODU, L., YARTEY, D., EKANEM, T., ORESANYA, T., & AFOLABI, O. (2016). Assessing the media's watchdog role in ensuring the accountability of the Nigerian government. *3rd*

- International Conference on African Development Issues* (pp. 451-454). Covenant University Press. Retrieved from <http://eprints.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/8214/1/icadi16pp451-454.pdf>
- [5] ARDEVOL-ABREU, A. (2015). Framing theory in communication research. Origins, development and current situation in Spain. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 70, 423-450. <http://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2015-1053en>
- [6] AYENI, E. O., & NWAORGU, H. C. (2018). Corruption and development in the contemporary Nigerian society (2010-2015). *Lafia Journal of History and International Development*, 1(2), 83-100.
- [7] D'ANGELO, P. (2019). Framing theory and journalism. In T. P. Vos, & F. Hanusch, *The International Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies* (pp. 1-10). Wiley.
- [8] DAUDA, S. (2010). The print media landscape in Nigeria and reporting conflict. *Maiduguri Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 279-286.
- [9] FREYENBERGER, D. (2013). *Amanda Knox: A content analysis of media framing in newspapers around the world*. East Tennessee State University. Retrieved from <https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2281&context=etd>
- [10] JUNG, H. (2019). Agenda-setting in the realm of popular culture: The case of the Korean Wave in East Asia. *Global Media and Communication*, 361-377. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766519872782>
- [11] KUAN, D., HASAN, N., ZAWAWI, J., & ABDULLAH, Z. (2020). Framing theory application in public relations: The lack of dynamic framing analysis in competitive context. *Media Watch*, 333-351. <http://doi.org/10.15655/mw/2021/v12i2/160155>
- [12] LEWIS, J. (2017). Social impacts of corruption upon community resilience and poverty. *Journal of Disaster Risk Studies*, 1-8. <http://doi.org/10.4102/jamba.v9i1.391>
- [13] MCQUAIL, D., & DEUZE, M. (2020). *McQuail's Media and Mass Communication Theory*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- [14] ODALONU, B. H. (2021). Persistent rise in corrupt practices in Nigeria: The irony of fighting corruption in president Buhari's administration (2015-2020). *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies*, 56-84.
- [15] ODIONYE, C. M., & YARE, M. D. (2018). Coverage of corruption cases in Nigerian newspapers and magazines and print editors' perception about the fight against corruption in Nigeria. *UNIUYO Journal of Humanities*, 163-183.
- [16] OJO, E. O. (2006). Imperative of sustaining democratic values. In OJO, E. O. *Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria*. John Archers [Publisher] Limited.
- [17] OLANIYAN, K. (2018, June 17). *Buhari's anti-corruption fight and the rule of law*. Retrieved from The Guardian Newspaper: <https://guardian.ng/opinion/buharis-anti-corruption-fight-and-the-rule-of-law/>
- [18] OLASUPO, O., OLADEJI, I., & IJEOMA, E. O. (2017). Nationalism and nationalist agitation in Africa: The Nigerian trajectory. *The Review of Black Political Economy*, 44, 261-283. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12114-017-9257-x>
- [19] ONYEMAOBI, K. (2018). *The role of the press in emerging democracies: An analysis of newspaper coverage of political violence and corruption in Nigeria*. The University of Leicester.
- [20] PETERS, A. (2018). Corruption as a violation of international human rights. *Article Navigation*, 1251-1287.
- [21] RIBADU, N. (2009, May 19). Capital loss and corruption: The example of Nigeria. *Centre for Global Development*. Retrieved from [https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/archive/doc/Opinions/Ribadu\\_corruption\\_05-19-09.pdf](https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/archive/doc/Opinions/Ribadu_corruption_05-19-09.pdf)
- [22] SCHEUFELE, D. A., & TEWKSBURY, D. (2007). Framing, agenda setting, and priming: The evolution of three media effects models. *Journal of Communication*, 9-20. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00326.x>
- [23] TADE, O. (2019). Policing looted funds with the whistle: Newspaper coverage of the anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria. *Africa Development / Afrique et Développement*, 44 (4), 73-90. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26873445>
- [24] THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA. (1999): Government Press.
- [25] TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL (2018). Nigeria. Retrieved May 31, 2018, from Transparency International: The Global Coalition against Corruption. Retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org/country/NGA>
- [26] SANTAS, T., & OGOSHI, J. D. (2016). An Appraisal of Mass Media Role in Consolidating Democracy in Nigeria. *African Research Review*, 73-86. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/afrev.v10i1.7>

#### 参考文献:

- [1] ADESOJI, A. O. (2010)。新瓶装旧酒：宪法民主时代的尼日利亚出版社，1999-2009。国际社会科学杂志，3(10)，22-32。
- [2] AHMED, K. A., ABDULBAQI, S. S. 和 ADISA, R. M. (2019)。反腐败运动和尼日利亚发展：对媒体角色的评估。丹努比斯大学学报，13, 99-116
- [3] AKANI, C. (2017)。尼日利亚的媒体和腐败。国际教育科学研究杂志，10, 39-49。



- [4] AMODU, L.、YARTEY, D.、EKANEM, T.、ORESANYA, T. 和 AFOLABI, O. ( 2016 )。评估媒体在确保尼日利亚政府问责方面的监督作用。第三届非洲发展问题国际会议 (第 451-454 页)。圣约大学出版社。取自 <http://eprints.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/8214/1/icadi16pp451-454.pdf>
- [5] ARDÈVOL-ABREU, A. (2015)。传播研究中的框架理论。西班牙的起源、发展和现状。拉丁社会传播杂志, 70, 423-450。 <http://doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2015-1053en>
- [6] AYENI, E. O. 和 NWAORGU, H. C. (2018)。当代尼日利亚社会的腐败与发展 (2010-2015)。拉菲亚历史与国际发展杂志, 1 ( 2 ) , 83-100。
- [7] D'ANGELO, P. (2019)。框架理论和新闻学。在 T. P. Vos 和 F. Hanusch, 国际新闻学百科全书 (第 1-10 页)。威利。
- [8] DAUDA, S. (2010)。尼日利亚的印刷媒体格局和报道冲突。迈杜古里艺术与社会科学杂志, 279-286。
- [9] FREYENBERGER, D. (2013)。阿曼达诺克斯：世界各地报纸媒体框架的内容分析。东田纳西州立大学。取自 <https://dc.etsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2281&context=etd>
- [10] JUNG, H. (2019)。流行文化领域的议程设置：以东亚韩流为例。全球媒体和传播, 361-377。 <http://doi.org/10.1177/1742766519872782>
- [11] KUAN, D.、HASAN, N.、ZAWAWI, J. 和 ABDULLAH, Z. ( 2020 年 )。框架理论在公共关系中的应用：缺乏竞争环境下的动态框架分析。媒体观察, 333-351。 <http://doi.org/10.15655/mw/2021/v12i2/160155>
- [12] 刘易斯, J. ( 2017 年 )。腐败对社区复原力和贫困的社会影响。灾害风险研究杂志, 1-8。 <http://doi.org/10.4102/jamba.v9i1.391>
- [13] 麦奎尔, D., 和 DEUZE, M. (2020)。麦奎尔的媒体和大众传播理论。智者出版有限公司
- [14] ODALONU, B. H. (2021)。尼日利亚腐败行为持续上升：布哈里总统政府打击腐败的讽刺 ( 2015-2020 年 )。尼日利亚社会研究杂志, 56-84。
- [15] ODIONYE, C. M. 和 YARE, M. D. (2018)。尼日利亚报纸和杂志对腐败案件的报道以及印刷编辑对尼日利亚反腐败斗争的看法。海胆人文杂志, 163-183。
- [16] OJO, E. O. (2006)。维持民主价值观势在必行。在 OJO, E. O. 尼日利亚可持续民主的挑战。约翰弓箭手 [出版商] 有限公司。
- [17] OLANIYAN, K. ( 2018 年 6 月 17 日 )。布哈里的反腐败斗争和法治。取自卫报：<https://guardian.ng/opinion/buharis-anti-corruption-fight-and-the-rule-of-law/>
- [18] OLASUPO, O., OLADEJI, I., 和 IJEOMA, E. O. (2017)。非洲的民族主义和民族主义鼓动：尼日利亚的轨迹。黑人政治经济学评论, 44, 261-283。 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12114-017-9257-x>
- [19] ONYEMAOBI, K. (2018)。新闻在新兴民主国家中的作用：对尼日利亚政治暴力和腐败的报纸报道分析。莱斯特大学。
- [20] 彼得斯, A. ( 2018 )。腐败是对国际人权的侵犯。文章导航, 1251-1287。
- [21] RIBADU, N. ( 2009 年 5 月 19 日 )。资本损失和腐败：以尼日利亚为例。全球发展中心。取自 [https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/archive/doc/Opinions/Ribadu\\_corruption\\_05-19-09.pdf](https://www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/archive/doc/Opinions/Ribadu_corruption_05-19-09.pdf)
- [22] SCHEUFELE, D. A. 和 TEWKSBURY, D. (2007)。框架、议程设置和启动：三种媒体效果模型的演变。通讯杂志, 9-20。 <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00326.x>
- [23] TADE, O. (2019)。用哨子监管掠夺的资金：报纸对尼日利亚反腐败运动的报道。非洲发展/非洲与发展, 44(4), 73-90。取自 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26873445>
- [24] 尼日利亚联邦共和国宪法。(1999)：政府出版社。
- [25] 透明国际 (2018 年)。尼日利亚。检索于 2018 年 5 月 31 日, 来自透明国际：全球反腐败联盟。取自 <https://www.transparency.org/country/NGA>
- [26] SANTAS, T. 和 OGOSHI, J. D. (2016)。评价大众媒体在巩固尼日利亚民主中的作用。非洲研究评论, 73-86。 <http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/afrrrev.v10i1.7>