

**Evaluation of *The Punch* and *The Nation* Newspapers' Reportage of COVID-19
Pandemic between 1st January and 31st December, 2020**

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Certification

This is to certify that this study was carried out by Sediku Musa Umoru with the Matric No. LCU/PG/001088 in the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, Faculty of Communication and Information science, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State and that this work has not been previously submitted.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to God Almighty, the giver of life.

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Abstract

The media is known for its critical evaluation of issues such as COVID-19 outbreak to help the public understand concepts associated with news and events. Framing a news story in the newspapers can be influenced by different factors such as highlighting news angle that arouse reader's interest, economic motive of the reporter and competitive media debacle. Therefore, this study evaluated *The Nation* and *The Punch newspapers'* reportage of COVID-19 pandemic between January and December, 2020. The study was based on Framing Theory, Agenda Setting Theory and Social Responsibility Theory. Content analysis design was employed for the study. The population of the study consisted of editions of *The Nation* and *The Punch*, between 1st January and 31st December, 2020 with a total of 732 editions. The method of data presentation and analysis was descriptive and contextual analysis. The findings from the study showed that *The Punch* and *The Nation newspapers* reported above average on COVID-19 cases and developing stories on the pandemic. Both newspapers' report on COVID-19 were placed in the inside pages of their publications. While less stories were reported at the back page of the newspapers and most of COVID-19 reportage in *The Punch* covered a full page, while most in *The Nations* covered half page. The study recommends that as the watchdogs of the society, newspaper should constantly cover and report health matters so as to inform and educate the society on the dangers these discuss could pose to humanity. Also, as watchdogs and the fourth estate of the realm of the society newspapers reportage should go beyond just reporting health matters as they break, they should carry out surveillance by investigating into developing issues of such health issues.

Keywords: agenda setting, COVID-19 pandemic, Newspapers Reportage, Fourth Estate, Social Responsibility,

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List of Acronyms

Abbreviation	Meaning
COVID-19	Coronavirus
MERS	Middle East Respiratory Syndrome
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome