
ISSN:

Print - 2277 - 078X

Online - 2315 - 747X

© UNAAB 2026

Journal of
Humanities, Social
Sciences and Creative
Arts

MEDIA REPORTAGE OF POLICE HARASSMENT AND BRUTALITY OF NIGERIANS: A STUDY OF THE PUNCH AND THE GUARDIAN NEWSPAPERS

*¹O. F. AKINKOYA, ²K. G. ADEOSUN, ³A. A. OLUYEMI, AND ¹A. O. BELLO

¹Department of Mass Communication, Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State

²Institute of Communication and General Studies, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Ogun State

³Department of Mass Communication, Crawford University, Igbesa, Ogun State

*Corresponding Author: akinkoya.omoniy@oouagoiwoye.edu.ng Tel. +234 8066308248

ABSTRACT

Mass media keep the members of a society well informed about what is happening around them, and failure on this duty could result to public distrust in the media. Social ills of police brutality and harassment have resulted into death of young Nigerians, just as many are maimed and imprisoned unjustly, which has culminated into anger from various quarters, with resultant protests experienced in Nigeria in recent times. In view of this, this study was conducted as a content analysis of media reportage of police harassment and brutality of Nigerians. The population of this study were the Punch and Guardian newspapers (July to September, 2021) and a multistage sampling technique deployed with purposive and systematic sampling technique to draw the sample size. It was discovered that a gap exists in newspaper reportage of contents on Police Harassment and brutality against Nigerians. Less prominence is given to the issue of a social menace that could degenerate into violence and unrest in the country. There were no editorial, opinion, feature writing, letter to the editor or cartoon on the focus of the study, but mainly straight news stories and pictures. Bribery and extortion were the leading themes in the categorisation of harassment and brutality. The study, therefore, recommends that stories on police brutality and harassment should be given more prominence and frequent reportage for quality public engagement on the issue and to maintain public trust in the mass media as agent of positive change.

Keywords: Mass media; Print Journalism; Police; Assault; Nigerians

DOI:

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of media convergence, allowing the combination of text, images, graphics, and illustration has revolutionized the mass communication channels such as broadcast media, print media, online media, outdoor media etc. Mass Media acts as means of communication for the purpose

of disseminating, transferring and relaying information, ideas and concepts in general to a large and heterogeneous target audience. It also serves the functions of information, education, entertaining, agenda setting, etc. to a large heterogeneous audience. The role of the mass media in the Nigerian society cannot be overemphasized with its countless

daily reports of events and happenings in the society.

McQuail (2010) believed that mass media is a means of communication that operates on a large scale, reaching and attracting most people in a society. He further described the mass media as an organized means of communicating openly, at a distance and to many people in a short space of time. The mass media can be identified as the different types of communication technologies used to disseminate different contents to a large and heterogeneous audience. The concept of mass media revolves around media technologies, large, heterogeneous audience and contents intended for distribution. Kawamoto (2003) defined mass media as a process using a single communicator or sender and many receivers, e.g., an audience, readers, viewers, etc. to receive content through a specific channel.

In general, media technologies refer to the vehicles used to deliver contents to a wide audience. Media technologies can be classified into two types, which are old media also known as traditional media and new media. The traditional media is the media that predates the advent of technology. Some examples of traditional media are radio, television, newspapers and magazines. New media came into existence due to the emergence of communication technologies and can be identified as the media platforms that use internet and digital devices.

Journalism is the process of reporting on facts, happening, ideas, people and other interactions that are gathered, produced and distributed. According to Umar (2015), cited in Togh (2019), journalism is the profession of reporting, writing, editing, photographing or disseminating information or

running a news organization as a business, while McNair (1998) considered journalism as any published text, in written, audio or visual form, that is presented to an audience as a truthful statement about, or record of, some hitherto unknown new feature of the real social world. Journalism works within the frame of disseminating facts and not rumours to the audience just as objectivity is one of the main characteristics of the profession. Journalism tends to cover new happenings or occurrence and organize the details of these findings which are then disseminated to the target audience. Journalism can be done in different forms depending on the medium of transmission namely: broadcast, print, and digital journalism. Print journalism is the activity of carrying out investigations and findings related to events and information in general, then reporting the news through print media such as newspapers and magazines to communicate it to an intended audience. Reportage entails the process of giving an account as regards to what has been observed, identified, researched or investigated. Such content could be an event or subject. It is also presented as a journalistic presentation of factual information (Merriam-Webster, n.d.; Panasenko & Petrovičová, 2024).

Reporting is the factual, impartial, objective and journalistic presentation of events, situation, and happenings from various sources, which can also be described as the dissemination of news through the newspaper, television, radio and online platforms. Reporting can be seen as the process of giving the account of a newsworthy event. It entails the gathering and disseminating of impartial information for the knowledge of members of public. The gathered facts are analyzed and the most important information put together and presented, transmitted, and communi-

cated in a detail to the appropriate audience (Prayogi, 2023; Vaia, 2024). Events covered by newspaper include crime, economy, politics, sports, technology, and more with beats for specialized reporting. Security of lives and properties is fundamental in any society, which is why the police force, by decree, is empowered to monitor this aspect of the social super system. The Police is a law enforcement agency that has the sole responsibility of enforcing the law to ensure citizens comply with the keeping of the laws. According to Alemika (1992) cited in Audu, *et al.* (2023), all over the world, the police are servants of government, assembled, trained, deployed and rewarded for enforcing the law and maintaining order in society as guardians of social order. To effectively carry out this function, the police are empowered to exercise state power, if necessary through coercion and violence. The concept of this study deals with the reportage that occurs in print media, specifically newspapers. Print journalism is therefore at the core to this study as it relates to how information about police harassment and brutality is reported and presented to the public through newspapers.

Under the of law of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Nigeria Police Act, 2020 Gazette stated that the Police shall be employed to prevent and detect crimes, apprehend offenders, preserve public order, protect life and property, and properly enforce all laws and regulations imposed by the country and shall be directly responsible for and shall perform such military duties within or outside Nigeria as may be required of them, or under the authority of this Act or any other law.

The Nigeria Police Act, (2020) as amended, stipulated the duties of the Nigerian Police

Force and the manner in which they carry out these functions. However, in recent times, members of the Nigerian Police Force have become increasingly notorious as many of them abuse the power of the state vested in them when it comes to the task of dealing with Nigerian Youths with brutality, harassment, coercion and violence even in unnecessary circumstances. The Longman Dictionary (2021) defined brutality as a cruel and violent behaviour, or an event involving cruel and violent treatment. Harassment can be described as the intentional acts of intimidation, which tends to cause fear, worry and distress. Many young Nigerians who live ostentatious lifestyle and own expensive technological devices such as an iPhone, MacBook or drive a car with some other unrelated categories are usually the object of harassment by the Nigerian Police Force.

Police brutality, at its mildest level, refers to the use of excessively violent methods by the police and violations of human rights as provided for in Chapter IV of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999. Police brutality and harassment seem to have become a daily occurrence in Nigeria as there are daily reports, posts and messages from citizens being stopped on the side of the road by police as they drive or walk on the ways and end up experiencing acts of violence, harassment, brutality etc. for going about their usual business.

Omojuyigbe of the Punch Newspaper, (8 September, 2021), said operatives of the Nigeria Police Force continue to extort and harass Nigerians, who they are meant to protect and save despite huge protests against their atrocities at recent times. The Nigerian Police Force has long been accused of abuse of power and extortion to the point of being ranked the country's

most corrupt public institution in a 2019 survey and the lowest-ranked police force of the 127 countries profiled in a 2016 index report. It is therefore imperative to conduct this study to examine how newspaper reports incidences of police brutality and harassment.

According to Austin (1995), law is a set of rules laid down by men with politically superior power to men as politically subject. Austin reported, a law is a commandment that binds one or more people to a course of action. From the above definition, it can be seen that law comes from a place of authority guiding people to behave in a certain way. Due to the attribute of law coming from a place of authority, it demands that laws must be obeyed by those subject to it and its authority. Blackstone (1765) as cited in Lonang Institute (2022), averred law in its fullest and most general sense means a rule of action and is applies indiscriminately to all kinds of action whether, reasonable or unreasonable. Garner's Black Law Dictionary (2019) said that law is a body of rules of action or conduct prescribed by controlling authority, and having binding legal force. Hames and Ekern (2020) corroborated this position by their assertion that law is the set of rules established by a government to preserve order and foster fairness. It is that which must be obeyed and followed by citizens subject to sanctions or legal consequence is a law. Law refers to a set of rules enforced by the courts for the purpose of regulating the authority of the state, regulating the relationship between the State and its citizens as well as between citizens and others. Laws can be established and enforced by social and government bodies that regulate human behaviour. Once laws are established, those who are affected by them must obey them, as this helps keep

society in order.

In Nigeria, the laws that guide the conduct of citizens and the expectation of respect from citizens of the country are enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The current constitution in force in Nigeria is the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Among the various laws that can be found in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, relevant to this study is found in Chapter 4, from section 33 to 46 of the Constitution which are identified as being for fundamental human rights of a Nigerian. The rights listed in Chapter 4, section 33 to 46 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria are identified as: Right to life, Right to human dignity, Right to personal liberty, Right to fair hearing, Right to privacy and family life, Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, Right to freedom of expression and the press, Right to peaceful assembly and association, Right to freedom of movement, Right to non-discrimination, Right to acquire and own immovable property, Compulsory acquisition of property, Restriction on violations of fundamental human rights, etc. Three branches of government are recognized in Nigeria, being the legislative, executive and judiciary. The legislative branch makes the law, the executive arm executes and implements the laws that have been established, and the judiciary basically determines when law has been broken. This study is centered on the Nigerian Police Force identified under the executive arm of government. From recent developments and interactions in the country between the Nigeria Police Force and many citizens of the country, it can be identified on a large scale that the fundamental human rights of citizens are constantly being disregarded and violated by members of the Nigeria Police

Force.

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, whether threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in, injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation World Health Organization (2002). De Vries (2002) expressed that violence is any cause, any justified or illegitimate force that is exerted, physically or otherwise, by one thing (event or instance, group or person, and, perhaps, word and object) on another'. The act of violence entails the maltreatment of a person or a set of people through the use of force resulting into a form of negative physical impact. Violence can be identified to take place in different forms but it is conceptualized in this study on harassment and brutality, precisely police harassment and brutality of Nigerians. Harassment in this context has to do with Nigerians being faced with random needless arrests, unwarranted stops and searches in the sense that, most of the time when police officials stop individuals on the road, the first action that is usually done is to go through the phone and other personal possessions of individual that has been stopped rather than carrying out searches that are relevant. Also within this context, brutality can be identified to be the situation whereby harassment is blown out of proportion, in that, extreme use of force is used on individuals in situations that do not warrant such actions.

Noted works have been done on the nature of police brutality and human rights abuse with media angle to it. Soladoye and Ojo (2020) examined the impact of social media on police brutality awareness in Nigeria with the aim of investigating how Nigerians

use social networking sites - Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Instagram as a platform to reach out and create awareness of the act of police brutality in Nigeria. This study revealed that social media served as a useful tool of alerting the public and pressing the government into taking prompt action on the matter. It was observed that awareness on social media spread faster than the traditional media making the Nigeria Police to take responsibility for their actions which may not have happened with mainstream media reportage if they were to be used.

Nzarga (2014) developed a paper on the analysis of human rights violation by the Nigerian Security Services for the purpose of investigating what human right stands for, what constitutes human rights violation and the analysis of several human rights violation by men of the Nigerian security services. This paper observed various acts of human rights violation committed by members of the Nigerian security services, the likes of the rape of women in Wuse Zone 2, Abuja in 2012 by security agents, the killing of a three year old along Warri-Sapele road in 2010 by a police officer and several other menace of this nature that have been perpetrated by members of the Nigerian security services. Also, Nzarga's research has identified various factors that create obstacles to human rights such as poverty, illiteracy, esprit de corps, and lack of adequate legal aid. The paper was concluded by outlining various structures that could be put in place to curb the act of violation of human rights violation by members of the Nigerian Security Services.

Nwabueze, Ugochukwu and Egbra (2014), conducted a content analysis on police activities in Nigeria as reported in the Nation, the Punch and the Sun newspapers from January

to March, 2012. Their study showed that police activities were presented mostly as straight news and the direction of stories were mostly negative. The study advanced that newspapers should give more in-depth coverage of police activities in Nigeria and that positive aspects of police activities should also be reflected in the media.

In the context of this study, the focus is on the study of the frequency and degree of reportage of the social conflict between Nigerians who are the minorities often harassed and brutalized by the dominant group (the Nigeria Police) empowered by government and law to use civil means with force and coercion to subdue the minorities into subjection. It content analyzed news and editorial contents relating to the Nigeria Police in the two selected newspapers to evaluate the crossing of the red line of using their power and position as law enforcement agents in maintaining law and order into degenerating to the harassment and brutality of the weak group who need their protection.

Statement of the Problem

The Nigeria Police's use of force, violence and general use of extra-legal measures against citizens at the point of stopping or questioning the suspect are practices that often lead to accidental shooting that has killed many Nigerians with resultant violence between the Police and groups within the society. Serious misconduct by the Nigerian Police has not spared media workers who are regularly harassed and assaulted in the performance of their duties, and having their equipment confiscated or damaged.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

i. Determine the frequency of reports on

police harassment and brutality.

- ii. Determine the prominence of the reportage of police harassment and brutality.
- iii. Ascertain the type of report that has the highest frequency of coverage.
- iv. Identify the tones and themes used in reporting news stories on police harassment and brutality.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is premised on quantitative data. The research method is content analysis because it is suitable for observing the contents related to this study in the selected newspapers. Due to the nature of this study, it revolved around an observance of the mode and frequency identified to be made use of by newspapers in the activity of publishing information on police harassment and brutality. This research method enables the study to denote, analyze and arrive at conclusions concerning the level of attention and manner of approach employed to contents regarding police harassment and brutality of Nigerians.

The population of this study consisted of two Nigerian newspapers: *The Punch* and *The Guardian*. Sample size was 184 editions of the two newspapers calculated based on the number of days in each month (July - September, 2021). The units of analysis in this study were news stories, feature articles, opinion articles, editorials, and cartoons.

This study employed purposive sampling technique to select two Nigerian newspapers, based on the newspaper's popularity, credibility, coverage and the content that focus on national and human-interest issues. The newspapers' editions sampled covered three months period, from July to September 2021 and all the issues (daily editions) were content analyzed. The research instrument for

this study was coding sheet. For each of the variables measured and the range of possible outcome that can follow, codes were assigned from 01 to infinity for easy identification and analysis. Data gathered through the news stories reported on police harassment and brutality in the two selected newspaper were analyzed using descriptive statistics of simple percentage and frequency distribution tables.

RESULTS

Two well-circulated Nigerian newspapers (*Punch & Guardian*) were analyzed focusing on the depiction of police brutality and harassment, examining the themes and tones employed to depict harassment and the prominence and frequency given to the

coverage of such social menace that pervade the society which has led to youths’ protest that rocked the country with wanton destruction of properties and killing of law enforcement agents and youths.

RQ 1: What is the frequency of report on police harassment and brutality?

A total of 83 news stories were reported on police brutality and harassment in Nigeria within the period under consideration (Table 1). *Punch* reported 69 (83.1%) of the total stories while *Guardian* reported 14 (16.86%) of the entire stories. This showed that the *Punch* newspaper reported more stories on police brutality and harassment in Nigeria (Table 1).

Table 1: Newspaper Coverage of Police Harassment & Brutality in Nigeria

Name of Newspaper	Number of Stories	Percentage
Punch	69	83.1%
Guardian	14	16.86%
Total	83	100%

The month of September recorded highest number of stories on police brutality, followed by the month of July (Table 2). *Punch* reported 34 cases of police brutality

in September (40.9%) *Guardian* reported 9 cases (10.8%). In July, *Punch* recorded 27 (32.5%) cases of police brutality while *Guardian* reported 3 (7.1%). - Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency of Report within the period of Study

Months	Punch	Guardian	Total
July	24	3	27
August	19	2	21
September	26	9	34
Total	69	14	83
Percentage	83.1%	16.86%	100

RQ 2: What is the prominence of the reportage of police harassment and brutality? Out of the 69 stories reported by the *Punch* Newspaper on police brutality and harassment in Nigeria, eight were on the front page major story, three of the news stories featured as front page minor, seven were inside page majors while 30 were

page minors (Table 3). Five news stories featured on back page major while 16 also featured as back page minor. For the *Guardian* newspaper, of the 14 stories reported on police brutality and harassment in Nigeria for the period of review, one was on the front page major, two were on front page minor, two featured on inside page major while five

feature on inside page minor. Two stories featured on back page major and two fea- tures on back page minor (Table 3).

Table 3: Placement of stories on police brutality in Nigeria

Name of Newspaper	Front page major	Front page minor	Inside page major	Inside page Minor	Back page Major	Back page Minor	Total
Punch	8	3	7	30	5	16	69
Guardian	1	2	2	5	2	2	14
Total	9	5	9	35	7	18	83
Percentage	10.8%	6.02%	10.8%	42.1%	8.4%	21.6%	100%

On the presentation of the diverse form of stories on police brutality and harassment, the Punch reported a total of 69 stories with the period sampled (Table 4). Of the 69 stories, 32 were presented in straight news format while 37 were in picture to depict the concept of police brutality; there are none in form of features, editorial, opinion and cartoons. The Guardian had the lowest

number of stories, 10 were written in straight news format and 4 were pictures. There were no editorial, no feature written no opinion and no cartoons reported.

In summary, the total number of straight news stories of the two newspapers was 42 (50.6%) and those that were pictures were 41 (49.39%). - Table 4

Table 4: Forms of Reporting of Police Brutality and Harassment in Nigeria

Name of Newspaper	Straight News	Features	Editorial	Opinion	Cartons	Pictures	Total
Punch	32	0	0	0	0	37	69
Guardian	10	0	0	0	0	4	14
Total	42	0	0	0	0	41	83
Percentage	100%	0	0	0	0	100	100

RQ 3: What type of report has the highest frequency of coverage?

A total of 890 stories were reported in the month of July, 2021 (Table 5). Examining the content in categories, police brutality stories were 27 (3.03%); Crime features were 162 (18.02%); Politics news reportage were 181 (20.33%); finance 224 (25.16%); Sports news stories shows 171 (19.21%);

technology featured 47 (5.2%); Education featured 80 (8.9%) and Agriculture content was portrayed with 3 story news at 0.33% (Table 5). This result shows that agricultural content reportage was extremely low, followed by content on police brutality with 3.03% of the news stories for the month under review (Table 5).

Table 5: Comparison of content(s)

Name of Newspaper	Police Brutality	Crime	Politics	Finance	Sports	Tech	Educa-tion	Agric	Total
Punch	24	110	88	127	101	20	44	2	516
Guardian	3	52	98	97	70	27	36	1	384
Total	27	162	181	224	171	47	80	3	890
Percentage	3.03%	18.02%	20.33%	25.16%	19.21%	5.2%	8.9%	0.33%	100

RQ 4: What are the tones and themes used in reporting news stories on police harassment and brutality? (73.4%) that comprised of pictures and straight stories were positive as they established the fact that there are cases of police brutality while 17 (20.4) of the stories were negative and 5 (6.02%) of the stories were neutral (Table 6).

Table 6: Tone used for reportage of new stories on police harassment/brutality

Tone	Frequency	%
Positive	61	73.4
Neutral	5	6.02
Negative	17	20.4
Total	83	100

RQ 5: What themes were used in reporting stories on police harassment and brutality? (21.6%) depicted as battering/beating of suspects without fair hearing; 10 (12.04) were presented as killing of suspect without fair trial at the court of law and 15 (18.7%) were reported as violence against citizen (Table 7). All these themes are key forms of harassment and brutality.

Table 7: Themes of reportage on police harassment and brutality

Themes	Frequency	%
Extortion	18	21.6
Bribery	22	26.5
Battering/beating	18	21.6
Killing of suspect	10	12.04
Violence against citizen	15	18.7
Total	83	100

DISCUSSION

The outcome of the study revealed that stories on police brutality and harassment are not frequently covered. Unlike news stories on finance and politics that featured daily in the selected and sample newspaper, reportage on stories on police brutality is only sparsely done. The study has also revealed

that in terms of frequency per month, the highest number of stories on police brutality sample from July to September, 2021 was reported in September. Of this total; Punch reported higher number of cases on police brutality that comprises of both straight news and pictures while Guardian newspaper reported less. However, police brutality and harassment with grain of violence that erupt between police and Nigerian youth is a thing of daily occurrence; it may not be out of place to conclude that police brutality did not enjoy enough coverage in order to set agenda for the public to deliberate on it before it degenerated to violence that erupted across the country.

On the examination of the prominence of news stories on police brutality, it was observed that news stories on police brutality appeared on few occasions on front page while majority of them appeared on the inside page, with minor space allocation. Also, all the news stories appeared as straight news and pictures. In terms of the prominence accorded to the stories on police brutality and harassment of Nigerian youth in Nigeria, the study revealed that newspapers do not give prominence to stories of police brutality. From the two sample newspapers, there were no editorial, opinion, feature writing, letter to the editor and no cartoon. However, straight news and pictures depict all stories about police harassment and brutality in Nigeria.

Considering the content categorization for this study, it was observed that finance has larger percentage of reportage, followed by politics and sports. It can therefore be said that the print media did not fully cover news stories on police brutality.

To investigate what tones were used to re-

port stories of police harassment and brutality that was examined by the tone of reportage, it was revealed to be positive, which was largely due to the use of pictures in the newspapers and premised on the general statement that “a picture speaks more than one thousand words”. However, on the identification of the themes used in reporting news stories on police harassment and brutality, it was observed that the most renowned theme was bribery and extortion of money and material things from the citizens.

CONCLUSIONS

The study has revealed gaps not only in newspaper news stories, but also in other editorial contents, especially as it relates to reportage on police brutality and harassment against Nigerian youths. It also found that news reportage on police brutality is lacking in depth and analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is imperative for sensitive issues like police brutality to receive adequate coverage in order to educate and inform the public of the danger of violence and correct the anomalies committed by the police. Therefore this study recommends that:

1. The gatekeepers such as media managers, editors, and journalists working in the print media should play effective roles in effecting great change in the coverage of stories that is of great relevance to the society.
2. Gatekeepers should see the issue of police brutality as a social menace with dire consequences that could plunge the whole country into chaos and violence.
3. Stories on police brutality should receive prominence at the front page major of newspaper with tones and themes that are critical and active.
4. Prominence should also be accorded

news stories that have to do with the teeming youth of Nigeria as they constitute large percentage of the population.

5. The media by the use of editorial should keep reminding the public of the danger of brutality, harassment, marginalization and other social ills that could lead to protest and campaign for calumny.

REFERENCES

Audu, B. N., Ogazi, A. C., Eweka, P. B. E., & Ilekendi, S. S. (2023). A review of law enforcement and policing in Nigeria. *Nigeria Police Academy Journal of Humanities*, 3 (1). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381313571_A_REVIEW_OF_LAW_ENFORCEMENT_AND_POLICING_IN_NIGERIA

Austin, J. (1995). *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined* (W. E. Rumble, Ed.). UK: Cambridge University Press. DOI:10.1017/CBO9780511521546

De Vries, H. (2002) *Religion and Violence: Philosophical Perspectives from Kant to Derrida*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2020). *Nigeria Police Act, 2020. Official Gazette*, 107(148), Government Notice No. 154, 21 September 2020).

Garner, B. A. (Ed.). (2019). *Black's law dictionary* (11th ed.). Thomson Reuters.

Kawamoto, D. (2003). *Media and Society in the Digital Age*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary

English (6th ed.). (2014). Pearson Education.

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848). *The communist manifesto*. Retrieved from: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/index.htm>

McNair, B. (1999). *Journalism and democracy: An evaluation of the political public sphere*. London & New York: Routledge.

McQuail, D. (2010). *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory* (6th ed.), Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Reportage. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved June 27, 2025, from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reportage>

Nonang Institute (2022). *The nature of laws in general*. Retrieved from: <https://lonang.com/library/reference/blackstone-commentaries-law-england/bla-002/>

Nwabueze, C., Ugochukwu, C., & Egbra, O. (2014). Newspaper coverage of Nigeria police activities: A content analysis. *AFRREV LALIGENS: An International Journal of Language, Literature and Gender Studies*, 3 (1), 92–113.

Nzarga, F. D. (2014). An analysis of human rights violation by the Nigerian security services. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*, 30, 1–8.

Omojuyigbe, S. (2021, September 8). *Despite #EndSARS, police still extort, harass Nigerians – Investigation*. Punch Newspapers. Retrieved from: <https://punchng.com/despite-endsars-unrepentant-policemen->

continue-life-of-extortion-harassment-intimidation/

Panasenko, N., & Petrovičová, I. (2024). The narrative in literary journalism. *RUDN Journal of Studies in Literature and Journalism*, 29(1), 103–113. <https://doi.org/10.22363/2312-9220-2024-29-1-103-113>

Pignard-Cheynel, N., & Amigo, L. (2023). (Re)connecting with audiences: An overview of audience-inclusion initiatives in European French-speaking local news media. *Journalism Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849231173299>

Porlezza, C. (2023). Accuracy in journalism. Oxford Bibliographies. doi:10.1093/obo/9780199756841-0295

Prayogi, A. (2023). Social change in conflict theory: A descriptive study. *ARRUS Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 3(1), 37-42. <https://doi.org/10.35877/soshum1652>

Soladoye, A. A. & Ojo, A. O. (2020). Im-

pact of social media on police brutality awareness in Nigeria. *International Journal for Management and Modern Education*, 1(1); 14–27.

Szczecińska-Musielak, E. (2016). Social conflict theory in studying the conflict in Northern Ireland. *Polish Sociological Review*, 1(193)16.

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. National Assembly of Nigeria www.nass.gov.ng/document/download/1002

Togeh, S. (2019): The role of journalism in society. *International Journal of Media Studies*, 7(2), pp.45-60.

Vaia (2024, October). News reporting: Techniques & examples. Vaia. Retrieved June 22, 2025, from <https://www.vaia.com/en-us/explanations/media-studies/journalism/news-reporting/>

World Health Organization (2002). World report on violence and health. <https://www.who.int/publications/item/9241545615>

(Manuscript received: May 14, 2025; accepted: April 8, 2026).