

A MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED COVID-19 CARTOONS IN NIGERIAN NEWSPAPERS

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Abstract

The goal of this present study is to investigate the pictorial meanings embedded in COVID-19 cartoons in newspapers. Primarily, the usefulness of cartoons in newspapers as a means of communication is emphasized. To carry out this study, a survey of Daily Trust newspaper was carried out in order to purposively sample suitable and relevant cartoons for the paper. The theory adapted for the analysis of the cartoons is a triangulated version of Kress and Leeuwen, and Halliday's social semiotic theory, amongst other theorists. Kress and Leeuwen (2006) create the Visual Grammar of the analytical image with the representational meaning, the interactive meaning and the composition meaning as the core content, which provides the theoretical basis and analytical method for a multimodal discourse analysis. The visual resources guided the discussions in the study. The study finds that the authors of the cartoons are not only Nigerians but critics and political analysts who follow the activities of the government of the day and their reactions to matters that concern the citizens. The COVID-19 pandemic provided the opportunity for Nigerians to assess the proactiveness of the Nigerian government in a case of emergency such as that of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study concludes that signs are effective forms of communication. It can be understood and interpreted by anyone including those with hearing and speech impairment. Through COVID-19 cartoons, the Nigerian citizens are enlightened about the effect of the pandemic on their society.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Multimodal Discourse Analysis, Visual Grammar, Visual Resources, Communication, Newspapers, Nigerian Government

Introduction

Cartoons usually appear in periodic publications that highlight political or public issues. However, social problems are also sometimes targeted. For example, cartoons in publications also comment on people's living habits, address sporting events, or view one's personality. In other words, cartoon is a visual metaphor of expression and interpretation of the results of the socio-political environment faced by an artist or author (see Atabey, 2021). A cartoonist picks up an important story of the day and builds caricature around it. These cartoons may be direct, harsh, and straight to the point, with a sense of humour. The cartoons never go unnoticed by the reader of a newspaper or in whatever literature, it is found and its objective is to make the reader think about the current events or happenings in his immediate environment or in across the globe. Although, a cartoon does not directly persuade readers or influence readers but it tries to convey a view-point on a prevalent issue. Therefore, the cartoon has the capability to change reader's mind on an issue.

In this study, a multimodal discourse analysis of some COVID-19 cartoons published in selected Nigerian newspaper (Daily Trust) have been analysed in order to contribute to knowledge on the importance of cartoons as a tool for communication in the society. Cartoons are known as caricatures, usually in form of drawings in which a person or an action is depicted with exaggerated or distorted features (Collins, 2022). They are purposely created to represent men and their environment in an exaggerated, comical or serious manner. The two main forms/types of cartoons are either those that appear in printed periodicals such as newspapers, magazines, and comic books or the animated cartoons of motion pictures and television. Cartoons are essential components of communication. As part of visual communication, cartoons have been found to be useful and integral part of media content. Both print and electronic media make use of cartoons. Cartoons feature on the pages of newspapers and on the television (see Hayman & Pratt 2005). The goal of this present study is to investigate the meanings embedded in COVID-19 cartoons in newspapers. The specific objectives hinge on identifying and classifying the selected COVID-19 cartoons in newspapers, for decoding the encoded messages in the cartoons. Primarily, the usefulness of cartoons in newspapers as a means of communication is emphasized after all.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The sudden outbreak of the novel Coronavirus pandemic has plunged the world into unprecedented crisis with its rapid spread bringing about great changes in global politics, economy, health, socio-cultural and religious practices (WHO, 2021). Over the months, COVID-19 has claimed thousands of lives with constant rise in daily mortality rate in countries of the world. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and various governments of the world had been doing everything within their capacity to salvage the situation. At its emanation, China, as part of its preventive and curative measures, declared weeks of lockdown on different regions. Other countries, including Nigeria, also responded with travel bans (see NIS, info@immigration.gov.ng 2022).

The occasioned ban which has recently been relaxed by the Nigerian Federal Government through the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has not ended the fear of the pandemic. COVID-19 has remained a prevailing virus that is actively plaguing the world. This global pandemic has caused severe damage to the world health care system and other spheres of human life, such as the economy, security, immigration and tourism. As Nadeem (2020) corroborates, human history is going through a very challenging era trying to combat this COVID-19 which we can hardly see. Ezeah et al. (2020) say that COVID-19 is an indication that the health system of the entire world requires a complete reorganization so as to better respond to public health emergencies. According to Wu et al. (2020), COVID-19 first broke out in Wuhan, Republic of China, in late December 2019. From China, the virus began to spread like wildfire.

Nigeria reported its first case of COVID-19 on February 27, 2020 with the arrival of an Italian in Lagos who was tested positive for the virus. On the 9th of March 2020, a second case of the virus was reported of a Nigerian in Ewekoro, Ogun State, who came in contact with the Italian. Since then, the number of the victims of this virus kept on increasing. In order to prevent the virus from spreading, different preventive measures were taken, such as the implementation of curfew in various states, only those on essential duties were permitted to go to work. Also, all citizens were expected to maintain good handwashing practices, local and international travels were restricted, businesses, offices, public gatherings (including religious places), and schools were closed. Alongside all these measures, the media also participated in depicting the COVID-19 pandemic, (cartoon publication inclusive). Beyond the satirical and humorous depictions of the pandemic, cartoonists also captured the state of the Nigerian society, by paying attention to the reactions of the Nigerian government as well as the Nigerian citizens to the pandemic and also accounted for other prevailing issues during the pandemic, such as; insecurity, kidnapping, ASUU strike amidst others.

Newspaper Cartoons

The cartoons adorn a small part of a newspaper, often in a corner but leaves a huge impact on the reader. Newspaper cartoons are important source of information and entertainment for readers and they convey a lot of information in a creative way. The newspaper cartoons are of sociological significance and provide visual rhetoric. It also provides an understanding of popular culture and politics and can escape constraints of political correctness. At times, cartoons are also used as agenda-setting tool by newspapers.

Over the years, cartooning has served as a means of satirical communication. These seemingly innocuous stripes of caricature are capable of subtly expressing covert messages and ideas. When properly deployed, cartoons can convey an intended message without attracting dissenting attention of a readership that might critique the same message if encoded in a spoken or written form. The analysis of cartoons has also proved to be useful. Some current studies have emerged in journals, in print and online by Nigerians which dwell on COVID-19. A few of them include, Lorfa et al (2020), on COVID-19 knowledge, risk perception, and precautionary behaviour among Nigerians: a moderated approach, Ale (2020), focuses on information exchange on coronavirus, and Melugbo et al (2020), on entrepreneurial potential self-assessment among Nigerian youth in times of COVID-19. To the best of our knowledge these earlier studies have not focused on COVID-19 cartoons in newspapers, whether in prints or online. Thus, this study seeks to analyze COVID-19 cartoons in selected Nigerian newspaper (Daily Trust) to assess how they convey information to the readership of newspapers and the society at large during the pandemic.

Multimodal Discourse Analysis

According to Kress (2009), multimodality is a set of modes where a single mode is “a socially and culturally shaped resource for meaning making (p. 79). The importance of multimodality emerges from the less focus on visual communication. Various scholars have given different definitions of Multimodal Discourse. Kress (2011) states that “Multimodality names the field in which semiotic works take place, a domain for enquiry, a description of the space and of the resources that enter into meaning in some way or another (p. 46). “ O’Halloran, Smith, Tan & Podlasov (2011) assert that “multimodal discourse involves the interaction of multiple semiotic resources such as language, gesture, dress, architecture, proximity lighting, gaze, camera angle. Jewitt (2009), posits that “multimodality describes approaches that understand communication and representation to be more than about language, and which attend to the full range of communicational forms people use (gesture, image, posture, gaze) and relationships between them” (p. 19)

Many scholars have researched into multimodal discourse as well as cartoons and discourse from different perspectives. Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) discuss image and visual design. O’Toole (2010) applies systemic functional mode to arts, painting, sculpture and architecture symbols. Kay O’Halloran (2011) makes a multimodal discourse analysis of Australian multi-party debate. Tian and Zhang (2013) apply Kress and van Leeuwen’s Visual Grammar to a multimodal discourse analysis of images on the Olympic torch lighting ceremony. The ideologies hidden in the Chinese and British media was revealed by them. Study shows that the media agents have expanded its image from representative meaning, interactional meaning and compositional meaning to different ideologies.

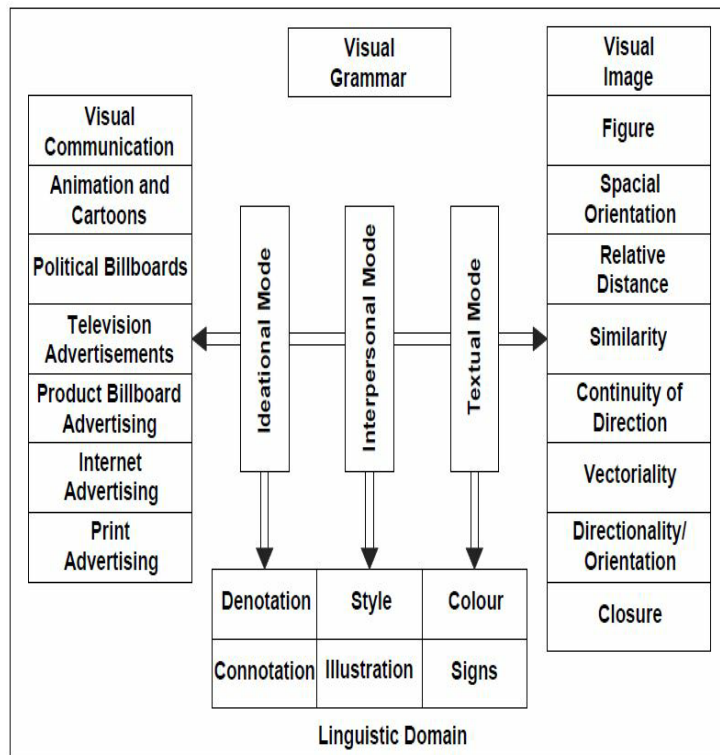
From another perspective, Al-Masri (2016) adopts a multimodal stance to analyze the Jordanian cartoon editorials drawn by Emad Hajjaj. Accordingly, she adopts a multimodal stance in her attempt to uncover the different messages delivered in the cartoons under scrutiny. To this end, 300 cartoons were investigated. The analysis was couched within van Dijk’s (2008) theory of context models. In this regard, the researcher analyzed both the verbal and non-verbal modes found in the editorial cartoons by taking into consideration three different types of contexts that appear to be fundamental for the understanding of the cartoons’ messages. These include the macro

context, micro context and dynamic context. The findings of Al-Masri's study tease out the fact that Emad Hajjaj adopts a combination of the verbal, visual and sociocultural dimensions to deploy different messages in his cartoons which project sociocultural pertinent issues. In the same way, this study attempts to present the cartoons which convey the events in Nigeria at this time before the 2023 general elections.

According to Akpati and Adegboyega (2019), Ingutia and Matu (2016), and Rivas-Carmona (2014), cartoons largely drive their messages and meanings through the characterization or depiction of the visual elements used. Likewise, Naghy (2010) states that cartoons carry irony and satire with them as visual metaphors to depict political views which makes them interpretative. However, this does not mean meanings in cartoons can always be interpreted without the linguistic messages. Sani, Abdullah, Ali and Abdullah (2012) citing Tsakona (2009) note that the target audience need to give equal attention to both the verbal and visual elements in cartoons to properly comprehend their meaning. Similarly, Macková (2012) notes that the visual part and the written part of a comic are often intertwined, hence, both affect the holistic meaning produced. In accordance with all the reviewed works of different researchers as stated above. This study attempts to explore the qualitative interpretations and meanings that both the visual and the textual part of a cartoon captures by analyzing each data from both the visual and textual mode as well as other non-verbal modes of communication.

Theoretical Framework

Kress and Leeuwen believe that image is also a kind of social symbol, which can be analyzed and described by Halliday's social semiotic theory. According to the three metafunctions of the language, Kress and Leeuwen (2006) create the Visual Grammar of the analytical image with the representational meaning, the interactive meaning and the composition meaning as the core content, which provides the theoretical basis and analytical method for a multimodal discourse analysis. This means that any semiotic system has to be able to represent objects and their relations in the world outside the representational system (representational meaning). It has to have the capacity to form texts (compositional) and has to be able to project the relations between the producer of a sign and the receiver (interactive meaning). The data collected for this research were analysed using the tenets or framework of Visual Grammar. Those frameworks include: ideational mode, interpersonal mode, textual mode, denotation mode, connotation, style, illustration, colour, signs. A schema is drawn below to capture all the provisions in the Visual Grammar. This framework according to Olaniyi (2021) is credited to Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, Machin 2007, Royce & Bowcher 2007, Canning-Wilson 2001 and Halliday, 1985.



Source: Oyinbo &Olaniyi (2021)

The framework above is a multi-tasking combination of visual and discourse resources for multimodal purposes of analysing images and utterances. The schema purposes or proposes to foreground the fact that the import of visuals to contemporary information technology is not controversial as its utilization enhances arriving at a robust interpretation of the intended cartoons sampled for this project. In the framework above, to the left are visual resources which enhance the audience’s imaginative power to create their own mental picture of the visual image presented to them in their social context. The varieties of modalities in which visual images are employed for effective communication include: animation and cartoons, political billboards, television advertisement, product billboard advertisement, internet advertisement and print advertisement.

To the right, are varieties of modalities which enhance the ability of audiences to organically and harmoniously relate to each other as a whole, results in achieving structural coherence in visual images. These include: figure, spatial orientation, nearness or relative distance, similarity, continuity of direction, vectoriality (image carrying medium), directionality or orientation and closure. Occupying the visual grammar and linguistic domain are the communicative functions of colours: ideational, interpersonal and textual.

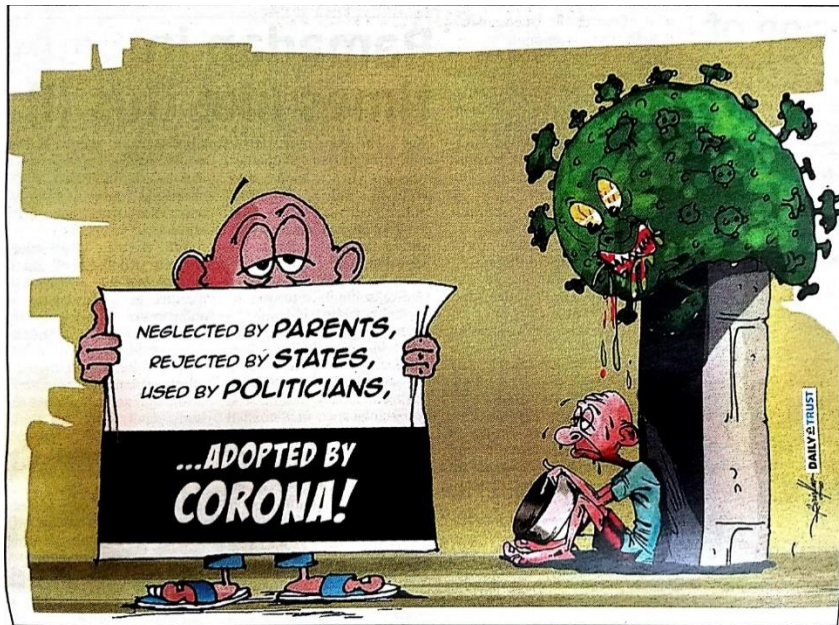
The ideational function of colours is expressed by its ability to denote specific people, places and things. The interpersonal function of colours is expressed in such a way that it has a strong and peculiar effect on people. The textual function of colours is expressed in such a way that it creates coherence, i.e., colour combinations and matchings in dress patterns and identity of a people. For coherent expression, the metafunctions help to connote and denote meanings using specific styles and colours for illustrations and signs.

Methodology

Ten (10) cartoons were collected from *Daily Trust* Newspapers as the primary data for this research. The sampling was determined by the content of the cartoons which must be strictly relating to COVID-19 pandemic. Data selected were therefore in order of importance to the study. The type of sampling technique adopted for this study is purposive sampling. This type of sampling involves the researcher relying on personal judgement to select a sample that is most useful to the purposes of the research. It is often used in qualitative research. Therefore, the researcher sampled different newspaper publications to know how information about COVID-19 are portrayed through cartoons in newspapers. The data sampled were then discussed using the theoretical provisions of Kress & van Leeuwen 2006, Machin 2007, Royce & Bowcher 2007, Canning-Wilson 2001 and Halliday, 1985.

Data Analysis

Cartoon 1: Neglected by Parents, Rejected by States, Used by Politicians... Adopted by Corona! (Daily Trust, May 11th, 2020)

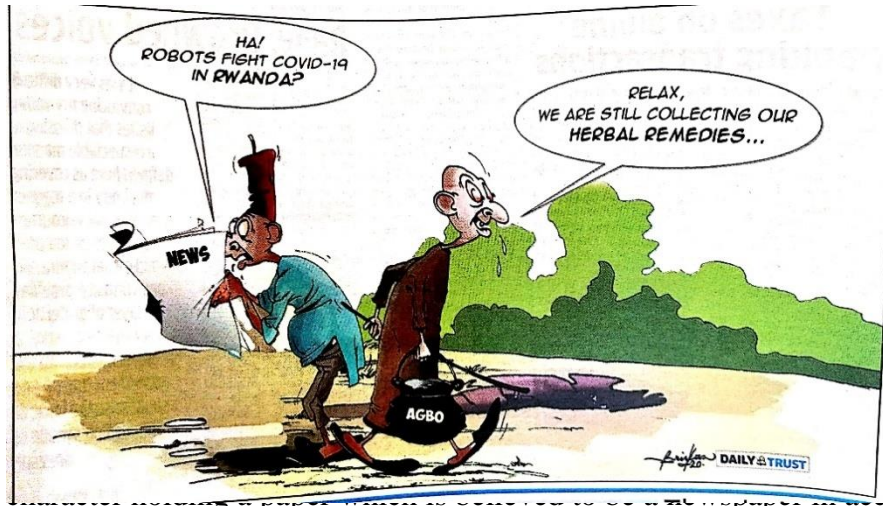


cartoon 1. It is to indicate the c. Interpersonally, although the wers. They however, invite the ch is an emotional outburst of ght reflects an average Nigerian

youth, who is lonely, without a shelter and holding an empty pot which is a symbol of starvation. Also, the image above has a head which is the symbol of the COVID-19 virus indicates how vulnerable he is to be infected by the virus. The image by the right on the other hand, best captures the textual mode with the inscription on the newspaper. The inscription reads "NEGLECTED BY PARENTS, REJECTED BY STATES, USED BY POLITICIANS, ...ADOPTED BY CORONA! The above inscription illustrates the state of an average Nigerian youth during the pandemic period, whose parents neglected as they also are struggling for survival, were rejected by the Nigerian state, as there were no provisions from the state to meet the needs of the people during the pandemic. The Nigerian youths are always being used by the politicians and there was no difference during the pandemic era. All these terrible circumstances that surrounded the youth of Nigeria left many with no choice than to take the risk of survival by going all out in search of what to feed on; leaving them vulnerable to the virus and in other words adopted by corona.

Denotatively, the cartoon shows how helpless the Nigerian youth were during the COVID-19 pandemic. Connotatively, it could mean hatred and condemnation of the inconsiderable state of the Nigerian government. The participants look tired, devastated and helpless. Therefore, the cartoon depicts signs of hatred, rejection, neglect, starvation and hopelessness.

Cartoon 2: Ha! Robots fight COVID-19 in Rwanda? (Daily Trust, June 11th, 2020)

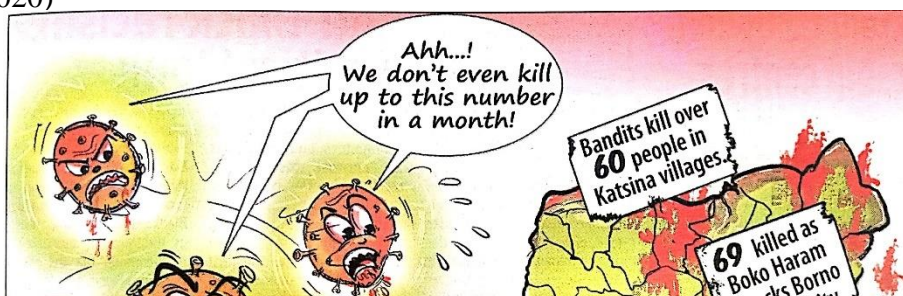


ce in the political, scientific Nigeria and Rwanda. The discussion and also calling cartoon. Textually, the first rdance with what is written

on the back page of the paper which is “NEWS”, although the readers do not have access to the full information in the newspaper that this character is reading, an information gotten from what he is reading is however written in a chat box above him which is, “HA! ROBOTS FIGHT COVID-19 IN RWANDA? The above writeup is a question that is directed to the other character in at the right hand who is passing by but paying attention to the question that the first character raised by giving him an answer which is also written in a chat box above him. His answer reads, “RELAX, WE ARE STILL COLLECTING OUR **HERBAL REMEDIES...**”. He is also holding a pot with an inscription on it which is “**AGBO**”. “Agbo” is actually a Yoruba word which means “herbal medicine”. Denotatively, the cartoon expresses development and underdevelopment.

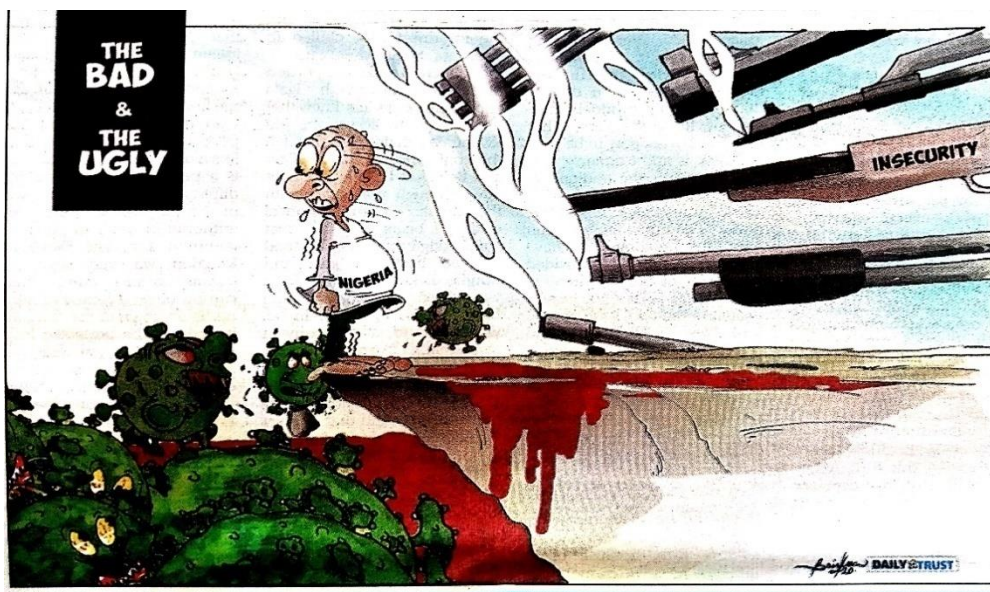
Connotatively, the cartoonist satirized Nigeria as a nation which is thirty-five times bigger than Rwanda but could not provide necessary facilities that can help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus and also aid the quick recovery of those that are affected by the virus, compared to Rwanda, a small country who could provide robots to assist the health workers in the country to manage and control the COVID-19 virus. While Rwanda amidst other nations in the world are exploring possible means such as science and technology to see to the protection of their citizens from the COVID-19 pandemic, Nigeria seems to be too quiet and only focused on locking people down without any solid provision to help citizens that are vulnerable to this virus. This makes some ignorant Nigerians resolve to self-protection and self-treatment by arming themselves with local herbal medicines. Thus, the cartoon depicts signs of ignorance, bad governance, development and underdevelopment.

Cartoon 3: Ahh....! We don't even kill up to this number in a month! (Daily Trust, June 12th, 2020)



The main idea in this cartoon 3 is the chaos and pandemonium prevailing in Nigeria amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Interpersonally, there is only one body of participant in this cartoon reacting to the news generated in the cartoon by (no specific character). By the left are three characters but symbolizing one thing which is COVID-19 virus, above their heads is a chat box with a writeup that states; “Ahh....! We don’t even kill up to this number in a month!” which is a response to other two chat boxes by the right of the cartoon and stationed on one part of the Nigerian map. The first box reads; “Bandits kill over 60 people in Katsina villages” while the second box also reads; “69 killed as Boko Haram attacks Borno community”. The above two statements capture how terribly terrorism has prevailed over the Northern parts of Nigeria resulting to massive deaths of the inhabitants of these territories. As deadly as the COVID-19 virus is, it saddens the heart to realize that Nigeria lost many of her citizens to terrorism compared to the COVID-19 virus. The shocking reaction and response of the COVID-19 symbol as depicted in the cartoon reveals the terrible state Nigerians, especially the northerners were during the COVID-19 pandemic. Denotatively, the cartoon illustrates terrorism, insecurities and deaths in the Nigerian society, while it may connote bad governance and awareness for the Nigerians. From the analysis, the carton shows signs of insecurity, terrorism, sadness and deaths.

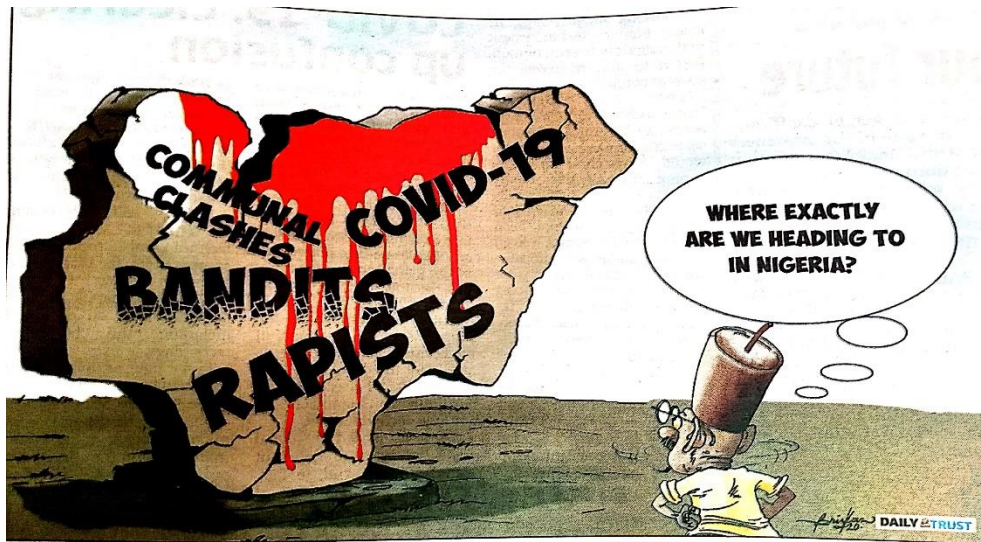
Cartoon 4: THE BAD & THE UGLY (Daily Trust, June 18th, 2020)



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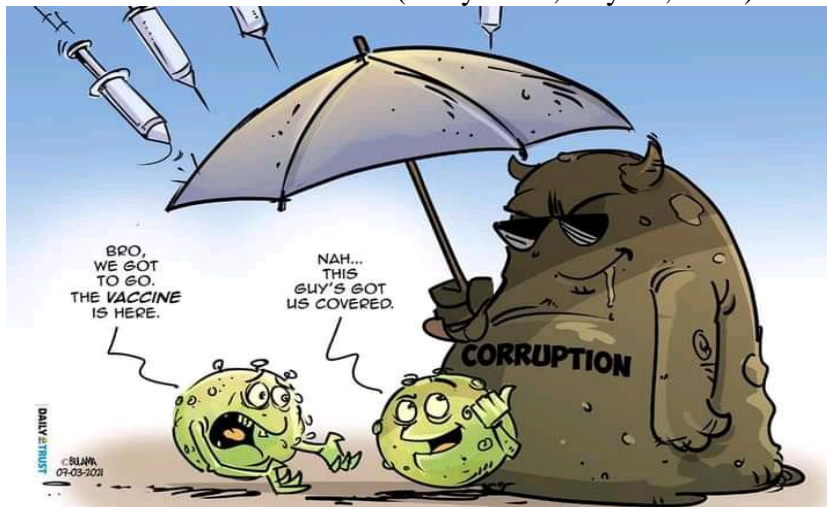
in the image starting with the first by the left which reads; “**THE BAD & THE UGLY**”, which describes the state of the preoccupation in the entire image. The next text is written on the character in the middle of the image, which reads; “**NIGERIA**” and the last one is on the right side of the image inscribed on a gun which reads; “**INSECURITY**”, although the green symbols behind the character by the left is a text which is the covid-19 virus. Thus, illustrating how bad and ugly the Nigerian situation is as well as the struggle for survival of Nigeria amidst the covid-19 pandemic and insecurities. The image denotes insecurity, COVID-19, bad and ugly scenario, it may also connote fear, helplessness and disappointment. The colour, red drooling down from the plains where the guns lie, covering the COVID-19 symbols beneath portrays blood of the Nigerian citizens that have been killed both by the terrorists and the COVID-19 virus. The cartoon expresses fear, insecurity, helplessness and deaths.

Cartoon 5: WHERE EXACTLY ARE WE HEADING TO IN NIGERIA? (Daily Trust, June 5th, 2020)



of Nigeria by the left side of the image which are; **“COMMERCIAL CLASHES, COVID-19, BANDITS, RAPISTS”**. Thus, the image denotes unpleasantness, danger, confusion and hopelessness, it may also connote fright and uncertainty. The blood splashed on top of the map dropping down on each of the cases inscribed on the map also portrays the effect of the damage each of these cases has caused which resulted to the death of many Nigerians. Therefore, the cartoon expresses signs of sadness, soberness, fear and tiredness.

Cartoon 6: CORRUPTION (Daily Trust, July 3rd, 2020)

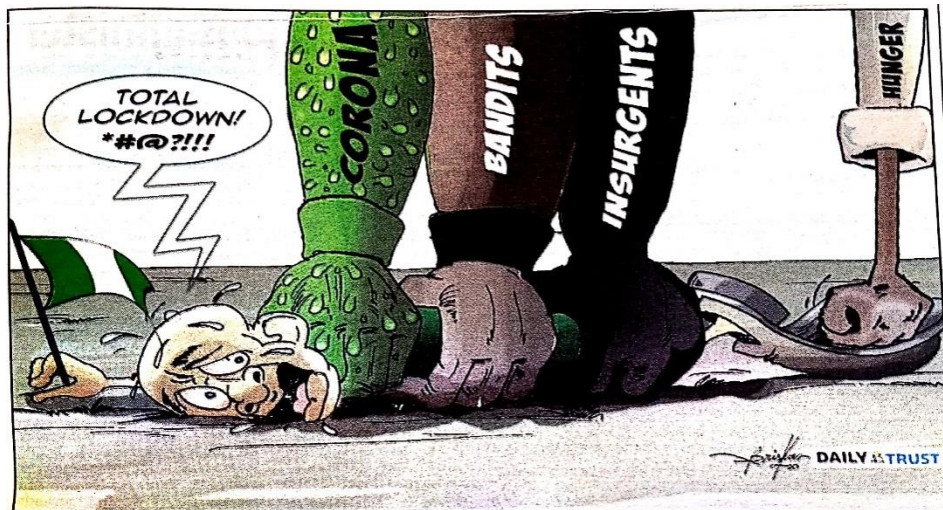


ruption and its effect in Nigeria. active while the third is passive, room for the readers/viewers to The two characters by the left ation, the first says to the other; **“BRO, WE GOT TO GO, THE VACCINE IS HERE”**, while the other replies that; **“NAH... THIS GUY'S GOT US COVERED”**, standing behind the second character is the third character

by the right, holding an umbrella which is preventing the vaccine meant to incapacitate the COVID-19 virus from reaching the virus, also inscribed on this character is; “CORRUPTION”.

This cartoon denotes corruption and COVID-19 pandemic, also it may connote the state of corruption in Nigeria. Through the analysis, we can say this cartoon expresses signs of corruption, inconsideration and satirical depiction of bad governance and leadership.

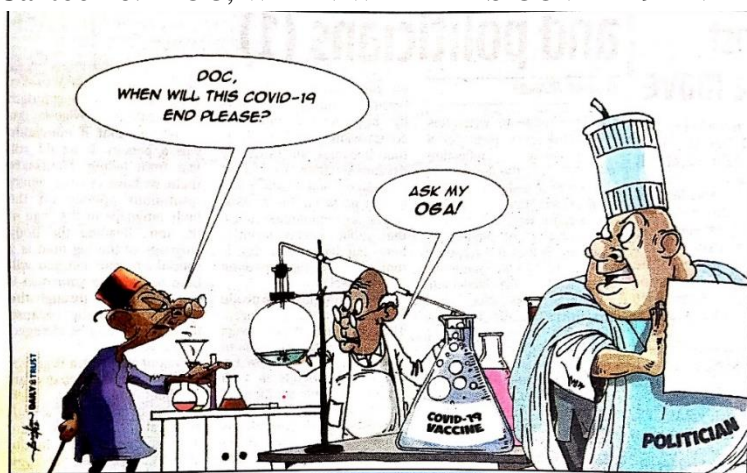
Cartoon 7: TOTAL LOCKDOWN! *#@?!!! (Daily Trust, April 6th, 2020)



of Nigeria during the down to the floor and an, his mouth is wide in the chat box above character to the ground, the first from the left represents “**corona**” virus as inscribed on the hand as well as the colour of the hand, followed by the second hand which represents ‘**bandits**’ also has inscribed on the hand, it wasn’t just the covid-19 that Nigerians were battling with during the pandemic, but bandits were also a major problem that Nigerians were facing especially in the northern part of the country.

The next hand that is seen pressing Nigeria to the ground is ‘**insurgents**’, amidst the covid-19 pandemic, and banditry was also rebellious people, those who chose to oppose the rules and guidelines given by the state to prevent the spread of the covid-19 virus. Lastly, the hand pressing Nigeria to the ground is ‘**hunger**’, this became a major challenge for an average Nigerian during the covid-19 pandemic as it became difficult for people to go out and work, many families suffered hunger. Denotatively, the image indicates problems, hardships, helplessness, and sufferings, it may also connote passiveness of the Nigerian government. Therefore, the image expresses signs of sufferings and complete breakdown.

Cartoon 8: DOC, WHEN WILL THIS COVID-19 END PLEASE?(Daily Trust, July 21st, 2020)



The main idea in this cartoon is portrayal of a medical setting and the influence of the politicians over the health workers. The interpersonal mode indicates three participants engaging one another in a conversation about the COVID-19 virus. Starting with the character by the left is the text written above the character which reads; “DOC, WHEN WILL THIS COVID-19 END PLEASE?”, this is a citizen of Nigerian asking a doctor about when the COVID-19 pandemic will end, next to this character is the character that represents the doctor and written above him is his reply to the question asked by the first character which says; “ASK MY OGA!”, by ‘Oga’ the doctor is referring to the politician standing next to him by the right side of the image, the character of the politician is fat and bigger compared to other characters, written on his stomach is whom he is which is; “POLITICIAN”, although he did not say anything, his look indicates that he is unwilling to answer such question. Also, there is an inscription on one of the lab vessels placed on the table which reads; “COVID-19 VACCINE”. This image denotes a conversation between a Nigerian citizen, doctor and politician. Also, it may connote the corrupt acts of the Nigerian politicians amidst the health workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, the cartoon reflects signs of corruption and unaccountability.

Cartoon 9: CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN: (Daily Trust, April 10th, 2020)



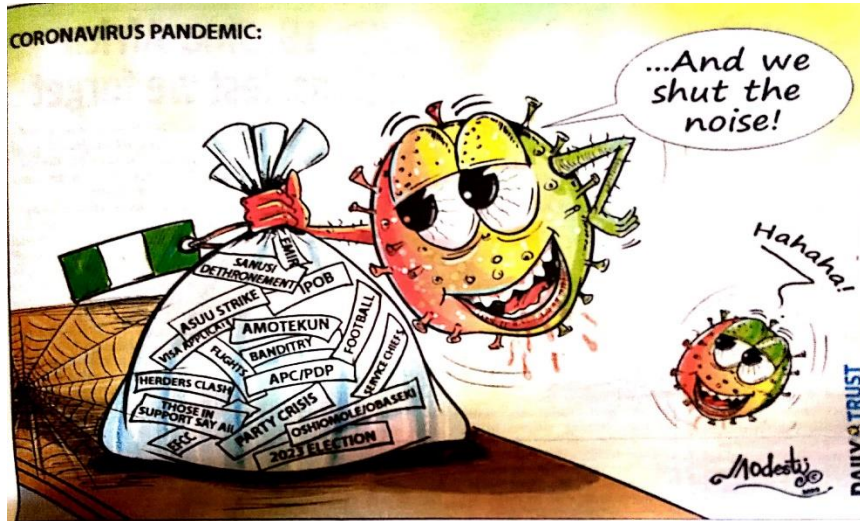
rona virus lockdown in by the left, dressed as a 'ords and action, written E.”, during the COVID- e in order to prevent the

spread of the virus, military personnel were deployed to effect this rule on the citizen, in the above written text, it is obvious that the emphasized word is ‘**STAY AT HOME**’, which is bolder than the rest, meaning that, the military man was punishing the civilian for being outside against the rule of the government.

The other character by the right which indicates an average civilian is seen serving a form of punishment as given to him by the military man, above him is written a text which reads; “Yes officer! Na hunger push me **OUTSIDE!**”, this serves as a response to what the military man said to him. The civilian here is not arguing with the military man about breaking the rule given by the state authority, rather, he made his plight known to the military man as he emphasized on the fact that he was forced out of the house due to hunger, the last textual mode in this image is a box above by the left with the writeup that says “CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN:”, this defines what the situation of this image looks like so as to help the readers/viewers have a background knowledge of the setting of the contents. This image can be said to denote disobedience and

punishment, but it can also connote imbalance judgement and irresponsible governance. Thus, the image expresses pity, hunger and suffering.

Cartoon 10: ...And we shut the noise!(Daily Trust, April 20th, 2020)



Coronavirus pandemic over the...ants which are the coronavirus...e!”, while the other laughs in... on the left side of the image at the top is “CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC:”, this is to help the viewers/readers grasp the setting of the image, below this is the Nigerian flag tied to what looks like garbage collector, held by the first coronavirus character, inside this garbage collector is written diverse issues that are prevalent in Nigeria before the emergence of the coronavirus which are, EMIR, SANUSI DETHRONEMENT, IPOB, ASUU STRIKE, VISA APPLICATION, AMOTEKUN, FOOTBALL, BANDITRY, FLIGHTS, HERDERS CLASH, APC/PDP, SERVICE CHIEFS, PARTY CRISES, THOSE IN SUPPORT SAY AIL, EFCC, OSHIOMOLE/OBASEKI, 2023 ELECTION”. All the above-mentioned issues were the talk of the town in Nigeria and they are random topics that one will surely find any Nigerian talking about until the emergence of the coronavirus which literally silenced all these issues as it became the absolute preoccupation of Nigerians and the world at large. The image denotes excitement and victory; connotatively however, it may mean the power of disease and death. With the analysis, it can be deduced that the image shows signs of bondage and a satirical depiction of a nation without focus.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has shown that signs are effective forms of communication. It can be understood and interpreted by anyone including those with hearing and speech impairment. Through COVID-19 cartoons, the Nigerian citizens are enlightened about the effect of the pandemic on their society. Also, it is expedient to know that one can become aware of the happenings around one and have access to vital information, most especially, information about the rulers/leaders of one’s community. Thus, it is worthy of note that, cartoons are worth viewing and paying enough attention to by the newspaper readers.

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