

NIGERIAN NEWSPAPER EDITORIALS AND FRAMING OF ECONOMIC POLICIES

NWAEZEIHENATUOHA, PETER CHUKWUGHALUM

Department of Mass Communication

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

peter.nwaezeihenatuoha.93049@unn.edu.ng

08038725325

ABSTRACT

Just only six months, and President Tinubu administration had already thrown the citizens into more hardship than his predecessor, Muhammadu Buhari, left them. This paper investigated the economic policies of President Tinubu's six months in office. It covered the period of March 1 to August 20, 2023. Anchoring on framing and Systemic Functional Linguistics, the paper content-analyzed 76 editorials of two randomly selected online private newspapers – Punch (56) and Premium Times (20) – to compare their manifest contents, framing language, headline stylistics, slant, semantics, syntactic features and impact. Stories were sourced through motif sampling, and data presented on tables using simple percentages. Findings showed 17 themes with 235 stories. Punch had 139 stories and Premium Times 96. It was also found that the lengths of the editorials according to the number of paragraphs were Punch 1,082 (80.8%) and Premium Times 257 (19.2%) with a grand total of 1,339 paragraphs. The ten longest paragraphs in Punch had 279 lines (61.7%) while that of Premium Times constituted 173 lines (38.3%). Again, Punch was more elaborate in its editorializing than Premium Times whereas the latter was more consistent in paragraph structuring. It was discovered that Premium Times, bending towards the state, chose to underreport the case, remain silent, or neutral. Finally, the paper found the impact of the economic policies were highly negative and had thrown the people into untold hardship. Policy recommendations were proffered.

Key words: Editorials, framing, SFL, economic-policies

Code: G38, H4 (5, 8, 11, 12), I13, J8, L7 I

1. INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian political space is filled with charlatans who scarcely make and execute policies or keep their campaign promises when they finally assume office through the help of the clever gimmicks of the electoral umpire, INEC. These “honourables” see those who elected (or selected them) as mere gullible citizens, easily deceived with empty and fake electioneering promises and unrealizable policies. Akaruese (2015), rightly points out that “the success or failure of any government largely depends on the nature and characters of the dominant class in power”. The character and nature of Nigerian politics is the winner-grabs-it-all syndrome which is not in line with the liberal ideology. Fadakinte (2013), Ali (2014) and Akaruese (2015) agree the Nigerian politicians are merchants and political shareholders who recoup their investments with ill-gotten profits from public coffers.

To Ifamose (2009), “democratic governance requires that people should be governed on the basis of their wish, be given opportunity to freely choose who they choose to govern them and those that are chosen on the basis of their mandate should be responsible and accountable to them when

elected". This truth is a mere wish in Nigeria. The Tinubu administration, as early as possible, began to send out telltale signs to the citizens, suggesting that their mandate and welfare never mattered. This was evident in the negative economic policies that were already social epidemics, spreading and eating up the marrows of the society and the people's wellbeing.

Findings have shown that a greater percent of over 200 million Nigerians live below poverty line in a country with innumerable natural resources. Corruption and lip-service policies worsen this situation due to little, poor or no execution resulting in negative implications. This was exactly the problem with Tinubu's six months in office, which practically threw the citizens into more hardship than Buhari left them. World Bank (2023) exposed that "no fewer than four million Nigerians were pushed into the poverty trap in the first six months of this year, with another 7.1 million more expected to join the conundrum if properly targeted measures are not taken to manage the impact of fuel subsidy removal". Kifordu (2013) also regretted the irony that "Nigeria, a country blessed with various natural resources, starves her children to death – without caring a hood. The paradox of the significant changes in economic fortunes and sources of government revenue is that instead of socioeconomic development, poverty has worsened in the country". Aljazeera (2023, May 29); Arise News (2023, May 29) and (Akinwale, 2023) expected that President Tinubu "will have to tackle a struggling economy and widespread insecurity in Africa's most populous country". However, the opposite was now the case. President Tinubu's new government, Nigeria's 16th democratic administration after independence, had this early begun to demonstrate that there was a symbiotic interrelatedness between collapsing economy and insecurity. Yusuf (2023) testified Nigerians expected Tinubu's coming would alleviate the hardship into which his predecessor, Muhamadu Buhari, buried them. To their greatest chagrin, however, on his inauguration, Tinubu quickly announced fuel subsidy removal. This tripled the prices of petroleum products, goods and services. Oyedepi (2021, December 4) defined fuel subsidy as an economic arrangement in which the federal government paid a certain amount of the Naira for every litre of fuel for users. In March, 2021, the federal government announced it spent N102.4 billion on just fuel subsidy. This figure rose to N150 billion. In 2023, it galloped into the skies with the speed of geometrical progression.

There were two relevant questions the researcher posed to the federal government, since it had abrogated fuel subsidy: What was government going to do with the excess money it saved from the stopped subsidy? Would the oodles of money get diverted into personal projects or be used to fix the moribund local refineries that had for years sunk into oblivion? Ogwu (2023, June 5) highlighted the relationship between local refining and the prices of petroleum products. He agreed refining petroleum products in Nigeria, not importing them, would automatically remove the issue of subsidy because the commodities would be cheap. The truth remains that fuel subsidy removal worsened socioeconomic activities and living standard in the land. Fuel subsidy removal was not the only economic plan that went wrong and dealt the economy and the people a heavy dizzying blow: Tinubu merged foreign exchange rates, executed poorly the student loans and tertiary education funding. Another problem was excessive borrowing in less than six months, which piled up debts for the nation. Ministerial redundancy, which led to "bloated spending", was another issue (TheCable, 2023, August 2).

But why did we decide to evaluate or investigate President Tinubu, six months after inauguration, instead of later? The earlier the better. Again, the formation stage of a process or thing interplays with its ending; and, in addition, a wrong methodology usually yields a wrong result, vice versa. Therefore, this early assessment of his early months in office, if appreciated and the findings utilized, would help jolt Mr. President back to reality as well as aid him wear better "character" and "nature" for the gargantuan task of liberating the country from the quagmire of abject poverty, poor living standard, insecurity and endemic socioeconomic retrogression.

The above problems, therefore, initiated this study. Its general aim was to investigate the opinions of Nigerian newspapers on the economic policies of the President Tinubu administration, six months into office. The specific objectives were as follows: to discover the frequency of editorials in each of the select newspapers on President Tinubu's economic policies during his six months in office; dig out the dominant themes from the stories through motif and purposive methods; to determine the total paragraphs in each newspaper sample; identify the longest paragraphs and number of lines in the editorials; investigate the direction of opinion and framing language of the select newspapers; ascertain the stylistics of grammatical, semantic and syntactic structures of headlines; and, finally, to examine briefly the impact of the economic policies on the economy and the people. To achieve the above objectives, the following research questions were designed to guide the study: What was the frequency of editorials in each select newspaper sample?; What dominant themes could be dug out of the editorials?; How many paragraphs were there in each newspaper sample?; What were the ten longest paragraphs and the number of lines in each sample?; What was the direction of opinion (slant) and framing language of the newspapers?; To what extent were the stylistics of grammar, semantics and syntax used in the dailies?; How did the negative economic policies impact on the economy and the citizens?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Newspaper Editorials

Firmstone (2020, June 29), Bonyadi and Samuel (2013) defined the editorial as a well-articulated and constructive article which represents the general opinion of an entire newspaper organization on any timely issue of public concern. Every newspaper or magazine has an editorial page where they document their opinion on an ongoing and important issue. Sagheer (2017) argued that "each and every newspaper is incomplete without the editorial section". The editorial board, in addition to registering their opinion on a social or political matter of the day, persuades the reader to think and see the issue exactly the same way it views it. Ugondo (2018) added that the basic function of editorial was to interpret, explain, analyze, criticize, persuade the audience, as well as proffer suggestion. To Omozuwa (2022), editorial served as "instrument of issue identification, ethical advocacy, setting agenda for public deliberations, analysis of facts and figures, contestation of ideas, and interpretation of social phenomena". This paper, therefore, investigated the level of adoption of these functions by the Nigerian newspaper editorials on President Tinubu's economic policies in the first six months of his administration.

2.2. Theoretical Review

The two frameworks that guided this study were framing and Systemic Functional Linguistics. Wogu (2008) quips that framing is a media effect theory, which explains the impact of mass media on the audience. Nwaezeihenatuoha (2023) and Tewskbury (2015) agree that mass media persuasively influences users and makes them react in a certain way. Siroski and Matthes (2020) describe framing as a two-way activity, when journalists and the audience "select some aspects of a particular issue and make them salient while other aspects are ignored". In this study, the implication was that the editorial board decided what the audience saw or read, from the editorial caption to the body. The editorial board, therefore, can only influence the reader's choice but not his entire personal opinion on the story.

Frames are needed to construct effective framing language. Scheufele (1999) defines frame as a central organizing idea or storyline that can offer a meaning to an unfolding strip of incidents. A frame, therefore, is a positive or negative perceived reality in a text. Some negative frames are panic, fear, horror, threat, danger, attack and blame, etc, while some positive frames are hope, expectation, truth, freedom and peace. In this study, it was found that Nigerian newspapers used more negative frames than positive to report Tinubu's economic policies.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) was developed by Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday. It is applied in the critical analysis of both oral and textual discourses to investigate "the manner by which is utilized in social settings so as to attain a specific target" (O'Connell, 2012) quoted in (Almurashi, 2016). SFL does not study the quantitative aspect of a text but focuses on the qualitative nature of a text to bring out its function, meaning and manner of composition (Matthiessen and Halliday, 1997). Almurashi (2016) recommended that SFL should be done by focusing on: Contexts (genre/register); Semantics (meaning); Lexico-grammar (lexis/structure); Phonology (sound).

2.3. Empirical Review

The media, especially the print, has severally been accused of injecting its opinion into news reportage (Ukonu and Ajaero, 2017). This is not only in Nigeria but also globally. However, with editorials, the story is different because *editorialization* involves *opinionation*. In editorials, newspapers are permitted to inject their views on issues of public concern, frame, set agenda and represent community voice. Therefore, editorials are more subjective than objective (Firmstone, 2020, June 29). There have been lots of newspaper editorials critiquing the economic policies of governments and nations. Many communication and social science researchers have also studied the various frames newspapers have used to present economic policies (and the policy makers). Take for instance, Siddique (2022), studied how the Bangladeshi newspapers framed the country's economic policies and crises during COVID-19. He found that out of 117 editorials, economic consequence of the pandemic was the highest frame. Also, Hanson (2019) and Field et al (2018) before the war with Ukraine, critically examined Russian economic policies under President Putin. Using more of positive frames, Hanson discovered low inflation, economic stability, budget surplus, low national debt and huge reserve. Hanson established that politics, public sentiment, morality and fairness were the frames adopted. In Ghana, Donkor (2023) evaluated Ghana's economic policies and growth under President Nana Akufo Addo. He discovered that government blamed COVID-19 for its economic woes, whereas it was due to corruption and selfish overspending by politicians that led to the problem.

Asuzu and Anyanwu (2023) found the relationship between economic growth and select macroeconomic variables like inflation and money supply. They concluded that the levels of economic growth in Nigeria were determined by other factors, not only inflation and money supply. This is true because in this study, the researcher discovered many factors and themes that aided and abetted poor economic growth. Among them were misdirected policy, youth unemployment, poor implementation of student loan, insecurity, fuel subsidy removal without alternative arrangements for local refining, CBN and naira crises, food insecurity, merging of exchange rates, etc (Ogheneruemu and Opeyemi, 2023) and Yusuf et al (2023).

Furthermore, researchers have also investigated the linguistic and stylistic levels of the economic policies by looking at their semantic, syntactic and lexical qualities. Murana and Hafsar (2019) studied the stylistics employed by Daily Trust in its editorials on the September 3, 2015 military debts in Nigeria. The study utilized the discourse method to investigate the level of impartiality, balance and judgment by looking at the appropriate use of lexis, structures, figures of speech and diction. The researchers proved that Nigerian newspaper editorials were committed to reporting economic issues such as debts. Ukpong (2021) studied editorial appeals in Punch, Nation and Sun, between January 1 and July, 2021). He was concerned with subject matter, direction of opinion, content and graphic appeals. Adopting content analysis and guided by the rhetorical theory, the paper found that The Nation had the highest number of editorials. He also noticed that most of the editorials focused on economy, politics and social issues. This is where the studies of Ekeanyanwu and Olaitan (2009), Murana and Hafsar (2019) and Ukpong (2021) intersected. Bukola (2021) investigated the use of narrative modalities like lexical qualities by Nigerian newspapers in their

reportage of security issues during the Buhari regime. Six national dailies were regionally selected and studied: The Sun, Vanguard, Punch, Vanguard, Leadership and Daily Trust. Sixty editorials were pulled and subjected to textual and lexical analysis. Results revealed that six national dailies strongly expressed unbiased concerns over the Boko Haram insurgency whether or not the newspaper is situated in northern region.

Many mass communication experts and social scientists all over the world have done several works on the framing of economic policies. However, none of them compared, like this present work, the private newspapers' editorial framing and narrative language on the economic policies of President Tinubu's first six months in office. In addition, this study ascertained the headline stylistics as well as the number, frequency, length and consistency of the paragraphs.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data Collection and Variables

Secondary data from online platforms of Punch and Premium Times were utilized for both quantitative and qualitative content analyses, to investigate the manifest contents of Nigerian newspaper opinions on the economic policies of President Tinubu's first six months in office. Therefore, the study only covered the period between March 1 and August 20, 2023. However, the two newspapers were randomly selected from the plethora of Nigerian newspapers. There were **76** editorials from Punch (**57**) and Premium Times (**20**). Motif and purposive sampling methods were used to source themes and variables for the study. Self-structured code-sheets were repeatedly used to code **17** themes with **235** stories to ensure reliability, consistency and accuracy. The following editions were involved in the selection of sample size for the editorials used for the study:

Month	Days (Punch)	Days (Premium Times)
March	3, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 24, 31	6, 13, 27
April	3, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17, 21, 26, 28	3, 10, 27
May	4, 11, 12, 15, 16, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31	1, 29, 31
June	1, 2, 5, 9, 15, 16, 19, 21, 22	5, 12, 20
July	3, 7, 13, 17, 20, 24, 31	3, 7, 17, 23, 31
August	6, 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18	7, 21, 29

Sample size selected via purposive method, 2023.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Table1: Frequency of the editorials

SN	Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
1	Punch	56	73.7
2	Premium Times	20	26.3
	Total	76	100.0

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2023.

The number of editorials published was **76**. Punch released **56**(73.7%) while Premium Times had **20**(26.3%). This indicated that Nigerian newspapers really registered their views on the matter under investigation; but this was not enough. The findings of Ukonu and Ajaero (2017) supported this result.

4.2. Table2: Themes from the Editorials

S/N	Themes	Punch	Premium	Freq.	%
1	Fuel subsidy removal	5	3	8	3.4
2	Ministerial redundancy & bloated spending	4	2	6	2.6
3	Excessive borrowing & accumulated debts	7	2	9	3.8
4	Palliative, foods and drugs issues	9	3	12	5.1
5	Monetary policy and high inflation rates	4	3	7	3.0
6	Student loans & tertiary education sponsorship	2	-	2	0.9
7	NNPC & Ajaokuta Steel Industry	3	-	3	1.3
8	Insecurity	5	2	7	3.0
9	Infrastructure	8	3	11	4.7
10	Naira crisis and CBN	6	5	11	4.7
11	Youth employment issues	4	1	5	2.1
12	Corruption cases and hardship	6	5	11	4.7
13	2023 census for allocation	2	-	2	0.9
14	Foreign exchange merging	4	2	6	2.5
15	Politico-economic policies	6	8	14	5.9
16	Minimum wage stagnation	4	2	6	2.5
17	Recommendations for solution	60	55	115	48.9
		139	96	235	100.0

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2023.

Out of **76** editorials from the two dailies, **17** themes were derived through *motif* and *purposive* methods to achieve the expected objectives. Comparatively, Punch had **139**(59.1%) categories while Premium Times had **96**(40.9%). The difference was 18.2%. The implication was that Punch was more in-depth and elaborate because it had more stories and themes on the issue investigated. The findings of Ekeanyanwu and Olaitan (2009) agreed with this result. However, the *dominant theme* was full of recommendations for solution 115(48.9%). This was because no matter the negative impact of President Tinubu's economic policies, Nigerian newspapers were bent on looking for panacea. Politico-economic policies 14(5.9%) gained the second position on the list followed by the policies on palliatives, food and drugs 12(5.1%). Infrastructure decay, naira crisis, corruption and hardship had 11(4.7%) each.

4.3. Table 3: Total Number of Paragraphs

SN.	Newspaper.	Frequency.	Percentage
1	Punch	1,082	80.8
2	Premium	256	19.2
	Total	1339	100.0

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2023.

The coverage depth and quantity of Punch editorials **1082**(80.8%) were far greater than those of Premium Times **257**(19.2%). This means Punch was more in-depth in its editorializing of the matter than Premium Times. The gap was a yawning **61.6%**. The findings of Ugondo (2018) corroborated this submission.

4.4. Table 4: 20 Longest Paragraphs

Daily	Date	Headline	No of Lines
Punch	26/4	Nigeria's intractable petrol subsidy conundrum	25
	28/4	The Buhari years: An era of gross economic fiasco	26
	5/5	Buhari years: How the anti corruption law floundered	27
	24/5	Buhari years: Infrastructure deficit remains wide	34
	26/5	Buhari years: Education, health take severe bashing	28
	30/5	Tinubu: Reunite the country, restructure or fail	30
	31/5	Tinubu: Economy requires radical revamp	26
	01/6	Tinubu: Infrastructure, the key to economic revival	26
	05/6	Tinubu: Restoring peace in a country at war	27
	24/7	Economy: Before Tinubu loses the plot	30
Total			279 (61.7%)
Premium Times	6/3	The president-elect and the job on his lap	17
	13/3	The highs and lows of Nigeria's 2023 presidential election	22
	24/4	Benue's 134-person massacre and failure of intelligence	17
	01/5	The tenth national assembly and challenges ahead	17
	29/5	The Buhari years: Another era of dashed expectation	16
	05/6	CBN and urgency of reform	18
	12/6	Yes to subsidy removal,... Tinubu should go the whole hog	18
	23/7	Impunity and human rights concerns in Kano's gale of demolition	16
	31/7	National assembly's obscene largesse in a season of privation	16
	07/8	Hunger in the land and the ominous Adamawa warehouse looting	16
Total			173 (38.3%)

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2023.

Table 4 presents the issue of length and consistency in paragraphs and paragraphing system in both newspapers. Punch had paragraphs with more lines **279(61.7%)** than Premium Times **173(38.3%)**. On the other hand, Premium Times was more consistent in paragraph structuring. It was also found that some of Punch editorials were not only inconsistent but also possessed abnormal lengths. For instance, the 22nd paragraph of "*how to rescue the naira, economy*" contained **33** lines – equivalent to a full scalp sheet! (Punch, 2023, July 20)

4.5. Table 5: Direction of Opinion and Framing Language

Direction of Opinion	Punch	Premium Times	Total	Percentage
Negative/Unfavourable	79	20	99	19.2
Positive/Favourable	10	30	40	7.8
Neutral	5	41	46	8.9
Blame/Attack	79	16	95	18.5
Consequence	70	50	120	23.3
Solution (hope)	60	55	115	22.3
Total	303	212	515	100.0
Percentage	58.8	41.2		

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2023.

Punch was more unfavourable and negative (**79:20**) to President Tinubu's economic policies during the period while Premium Times was more favourable (**30:10**) and neutral or in-between (**41:5**). Punch attacked the policies more than Premium Times (**79:16**). Premium Times was pro-government in its slant. Punch used more consequence and solution frames than Premium Times.

4.6. Stylistics of the Editorial Headlines

Our investigation discovered that the select newspapers adopted certain grammatical and syntactic structures for special effects, easy expression and flow of ideas. We concentrated on *sentence and phrase structures, sentence functions and framing*. Premium Times did not utilize any sentence in its editorial headlines on the issue studied, so we focused only on Punch.

Sentence Structure

- | | | | | | | |
|------|---|--|----------------|----------------|---|---|
| | S | | V | | C | |
| i. | Bloated federal cabinet / is /insensitive = SVC (Punch, October 16). | | | | | |
| | S | | V | | O | |
| ii. | Economy/ requires / carefully planned policies = SVO (Punch, July 3). | | | | | |
| | S | | V | | O | |
| iii. | Looming food shortages/ requires /emergency response = SVO (Punch, July 13) | | | | | |
| | S | | V ₁ | V ₂ | | O |
| iv. | Federal government/ shall halt / the frenzied borrowing= SV₁V₂O (Punch, June 19) | | | | | |
| | S | | V | | O | |
| v. | Nigerian youths/ desire /sustainable future = SVO (October 11) | | | | | |

The above sentences are active because they follow the **SV-Format** and are divided into *subject* and *predicate*. The subjects (**S**) come first and either perform action (See ii, iii, iv & v), or something is spoken about them (sentence i). The predicate begins with an action of verb (**V**). For instance, **is, requires, desires, shall halt**, and says something about the subjects. The object (**O**) receives action (Sentences ii, iii, iv, v) while the complement (**C**) such as “insensitive”, comes after the be-verb “**is**”, to complement the phrasal subject “Bloated federal cabinet”

The implication of the above sentence structures was that the simple sentences made the headlines more direct, meaningful and understandable to the reader.

4.7. Table 6: Sentence Function/Structure, Framing Language and Meaning

Sentence Headline	Function	Frame	Source
Federal government should halt the frenzied borrowing	Imperative	Order, Command, Advice, Necessity, Attack.	June 19, 2023.
Economy requires carefully planned policies	Declarative	Advice, Instruction	July 3, 2023.
Nigerian youths desire sustainable future	Declarative	Pity, Necessity, Hope	October 11, 2023
Bloated federal cabinet is insensitive	Declarative	Uncertainty, Probability, Projection Metaphor, Blame, Attack	October 6, 2023.
CBN may lose control of the naira	Declarative	.	August 14, 2023
Federal government must recover ₦4trn AMCON debt	Imperative	Order. Command.	May 5, 2023

Source: Researcher's Findings, 2023.

4.8. Phrasal Structure

A phrase is a group of words without a finite verb thereby expressing no full meaning or sense. Phrases can be simple, compound, multiple, infinitive or gerundial:

- a). "Student Loans and tertiary education funding crises" = Compound Phrase (Punch, June 21)
- b). "Arresting the drug abuse, trafficking menace" = Compound/Gerundial Phrase (Punch, July 7)
- c). "The President-elect and the job on his lap" = Compound Phrase. (Premium Times, March 6)
- d). "West Africa and the cost of living crises" = Compound Phrase. (Premium, August 21).

4.9. Negative Impact of President Tinubu's Economic Policies

a) The removal of fuel subsidy was done in a hurry without alternative arrangements for local refining. This tripled the price of petrol and threw the people into untold hardship. Premium Times, July 2023, blames that "*petrol subsidy removal...aggravated hardship in the land*". The reports of FAO and IMF concurred with this finding (Thomas and Turks, 2023). b) The rate of hardship was unbearable because the Tinubu policies made the prices of goods and services skyrocket. c) The Naira was highly devalued and it depreciated at the stock exchange markets. d) The economic policies led to food crisis, food insecurity and shortages. Ogheneruemu and Opeyemi (2023) discovered that, in addition to this, farmers struggled with the shock that resulted. e) Unscrupulous borrowing for palliatives to cushion the effect of subsidy removal was detrimental because "*state debts may hit N1.34trn over palliative loan*" (Punch, 2023, Aug. 24). (f) Minimum wage stagnated while President Tinubu lavished a whopping 180 billion naira on ministerial luxury and flamboyancy (Ugwu, 2023, August 9).

5. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Conclusion

President Tinubu's economic policies in his first six months threw the Nigerians into untold poverty and hardship than Buhari left them (Nwaezeihenatuoha, 2023). There were **76** editorials and **17** themes with **235** stories. Twenty longest paragraphs yielded Punch 279(61.7%) and Premium Times 173(38.3%). Punch was more unfavourable and negative to the issue 79(26.1%) thereby blaming, discouraging and attacking the negative policies. On its part, the slant of Premium Times was more neutral, favourable, positive 30(14.2%), thereby tilting towards the state. The IMF and FAO agreed with the findings of this paper that fuel subsidy removal affected all aspects of the economy including agriculture, food security, food availability and food price (Thomas and Turks, 2023, March 6)

5.2. Policy Recommendations

This paper recommended that President Tinubu should immediately reverse all economic policies whose results turned negative and subjected the citizens to abject penury, hardship and death. **1).** President Tinubu should immediately swing into action with a view to recovering the innocent electorate affected by his negative economic policies and their implementation. **2).** The president should collaborate with the CBN to curtail the rate of borrowing and accumulated debts. **3).** The federal government, NNPC and Ministry of Petroleum Resources should rebuild the moribund refineries for local refining of petroleum products. This will make the commodity cheaper than when imported, especially now that government has jettisoned fuel subsidy. **4).** The NNPC should be revamped in staffing, management and infrastructure for effective operation and performance. **5).** It is not wise for one person to double as both President and Minister for Petroleum Resources. It is quite impossible for one person to chase two lizards in different directions. He will either end up catching one, or lose both. For the sake of transparency and efficiency, the President should not

be the Petroleum Minister, vice versa. **6).** The CBN and Finance Ministry are urged to control the naira crisis, high inflationary trends and foreign exchange merging. It should also come up with viable fiscal policies which can lead to economic revival and the recovery of the naira. **7).** Federal Government and the Ministry of Agriculture should deal with the current food crisis by funding agriculture, enhancing food availability, food affordability, and food price stability. **8).** To support the poor and hungry, federal government should support the war against hunger by implementing palliative measures across the country. **9).** Federal government should review minimum wage upward, and the Ministry of Labour implement youth employment. **10).** Nigerian newspapers, editors and editorial boards should uphold ethical standards of objectivity and neutrality in their editorial narratives. As the voice of the community, they should also set in-depth agenda on all issues of public concern.

REFERENCES

- Akaruese, L.O. (2015). Today's Political Actors in Nigeria and the Dialectics of Peaceful and Fair Elections. *A Conference Paper*. University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria. June 30.
- Akinwale, A. (2023). INEC Declares Bola Ahmed Tinubu President-Elect. *This Day Live*. Mar 1.
- Akinwotu, E. (2023). Nigeria: Africa's Most Populous Nation, Elect Bola Tinubu as New President. February 28. *Health News Florida*. February 28.
- Ali, A.D. (2014). Political Character of the Nigerian State Since Independence (1960-2013). *ResearchGate*. <https://www.researchgate.net>3590> , 80-93.
- Aljazeera Live. (2023). Bola Tinubu Sworn in as Nigeria's President, Succeeds Buhari. *Aljazeera Live Online*. May 29.
- Almurashi, W.A. (2016). An Introduction to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 4(1). URL:<http://dx.org/10.5296/jsel.v4i1>
- Arise News. (2023). Bola Tinubu Sworn in as Nigeria's 16th President. *Arise News*. May 27
- Asuzu, O.C. and Anyanwu, S.O. (2023). Empirical Investigation of Money Supply, Inflation and Economic Growth Nexus in Nigeria. *Journal of Economic and Allied Research*, 8(2), 1-18.
- Azeez, V. (nd). Influence of Editorials on the Policies of Lagos State Government. *Research Methods in Social Sciences*.
- Boyandi, A. and Samuel, M. (2013). Headlines in Newspaper Editorials: A Contrastive Study. *Sage Open*, April- June. doi:10.1177/215824401349
- Bukola, A. (2021). Constructing Ideology Through Modality in Newspaper editorials on Security Challenges in Nigeria. *Linguistic Online*, 108(3), 1-18.
- Donkor, A. (2023). How Unfounded Campaign Promises Crashed Ghana's Economy. *Geopolitical Matters*. June 26.
- Ekeanyanwu, N.T. and Olaitan, J. (2009). Analysis of the Content of Nigeria's Newspaper Editorials. *Okò Journal of Communication and Information Science*, 1(2), 73-103, September.
- Fadakonte, M.M. (2013). The Nature and Character of the Nigerian State: Explaining Election Crisis in a Peripheral State. *British Journal of Art and Social Sciences*, 12(11). <http://www.bjournal.co.uk/BJASS.aspx>

- Field, A; Kliger, D; Jurafsky, D; Wintner, S; Pan, J; Julia, T. (2018). Framing and Agenda Setting in Russian News: A Computational Analysis of Intricate Political Strategies, *Conference Paper*, 3570-3580, October 31.
- Firmstone, J. (2020). Editorial Journalism and Newspaper Editorial Opinion. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia, Communication*. 1-24. June 29.
- Hanson, P. (2019). Russian Economic Policy and the Russian Economic System Stability Versus Growth. Russia and Eurasia Programme. December. *Research Paper*, 1-21
- Ifamose, S. (2009). The Behavior and Attitude of the Political Class in Nigeria with Particular Reference to Democratic Ethos, Culture and Practice. *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 18, 61-78.
- Ihugba, O.A.; Orji, C. A; & Duru, E.E. (2023). Empirical Evidence from Nigeria on the Relationship Between Inflation and Manufacturing Growth, *Journal of Economics and Allied Research*, 8(2), 60-75
- Izuaka, M. (2023). Nigeria's Economic Growth Slowed to 2.51% in Q22023 Amid Subsidy Removal. *Premium Times*.
- Kifordu, H.A. (2013). Nigerian Political System Since Political Independence: Changes and Trajectories. Artigo Original Hegemonia Revista Electronica de RelecosInternacionais do Centro Univasitario Unieuro, Brazil, 1-32
- Matthiessen, C. and Halliday, M. (1997). *Systemic Functional Grammar: A First Step into the Theory*. World Cat, 1-30
- Murana, M.O. and Hafsat, A.W. (2019). The editor's art: A Stylistic Study of the Daily Trust Editorial of September 3, 2015, on Military Debt. Bulletin of Advanced English Studies. 2(2), 66-72. (<http://doi.org/10.31559/bae2019.2.2.2>)
- Nigeria News Network (1999). Punch Opens New Press. *Punch Newspaper*. March 20.
- Nwaezeihenatuoha, P. C. (2023). Addressing a Muslim-Muslim Tickets in the 2023 Presidential: Insights from Newspaper Editorials. *Conference Paper*, University of Nigeria, June 28.
- Nwaezeihenatuoha, P. C. (2023). Public Opinion on Influence of Naira Redesign on Socioeconomic Activities and Living Standard in Nigeria. *IMSU Journal of Communication Studies*, 7(1), 171-180.
- Nwaezeihenatuoha, P. C. (2023). Sociolinguistics of Crisis and Emergency Reporting in Nigerian Newspapers. Conference Paper. University of Nigeria, May 20-12th.
- Ogheneruemu, O.E. and Opeyemi, E.O. (2023). Agricultural Shock Coping Strategies and Food Security Among Farming Households in Nigeria. *Journal of Economics and Allied Research*, 8 (2), 211-219
- Ogwu, S.M. (2023). Myths, Facts, Benefits of Fuel Subsidy Removal. *Daily Post*. June 5.
- Olatunji, K. (2023). Again, Tinubu Pledges to Honour Campaign Promises to Nigerians. *The Guardian*. January 9.

- Olugbenga, A.S. (2019). Analysis of Thematic Highlights of Nigeria's Newspaper Editorials. *International Journal of Scientific Research Publications*, 9(12), December. <https://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.9.12.2019.p96114>
- Omozuwa, O.G. (2022). Ethical functions of Newspaper Editorials in Nigeria's Anticorruption Campaign. *New Media and Mass Communication*. 100, 30-39. doi. 10.7176/NMMC.
- Oyededeji, O. (2021). Much Ado About Fuel Subsidy: What it Means and Why Nigerians Should Care. *Extractive*. December 4.
- Praskova, E. (2009). Grammar in Newspaper Headlines. *A Bachelor Paper*. University of Pardubice, 1-53, June 30.
- Research Directorate (2000). Nigeria: Mandate, Coverage and Circulation of the Punch, a National Daily Newspaper in Lagos, Names of Past and Current Editors and Staff (1997). *Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada*. May 15.
- Sagheer, S. (2017). Editorial: Definition, Importance and Types. *Sociology Group*. October 31.
- Scheufele, D.A. (2018). Framing as a Theory of Media Effect. *Journal of Communication*. March
- Siddique, S.A.R. (2022). Framing Economic Crisis: Newspaper Coverage During COVID-19 in Bangladesh. World of Media. *Journal of Russian Media and Journalism Studies*. 3:84-106.
- Siroski, C. V., and Matthes, J. (2020). Framing and Journalism. H Ornebring (Ed). *Oxford Encyclopedia of Journalism Studies* Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780170228613.013.817
- Tewskbury, D. (2015). News Framing. Oxford University Press.
- TheCable. (2023). With 47 Nominees, Tinubu Sets New Record for Highest Number of 'Ministers' Since '99. August 2.
- Thomas, A.H. and Turks, R.A. (2023). Food Insecurity in Nigeria: Food Supply Matters. *International Monetary Fund*. Selected Issues Paper. March 6.
- Ugondo, P.I. (2018). Influence of Newspaper Editorials on Voter Attitude Toward the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria. *Ph.D Thesis*. April.
- Ugwu, C. (2023). Akpabio Stairs Controversy After Ggaffe Revealing Payment of Senators' "Holiday allowance". Premium Times. August 9.
- Ukonu, M.O. and Ajaero, I.D. (2017). Newspaper Framing of Incumbent President and Challenger in Nigeria 2015 Presidential Election. *Covenant Journal of Communication*. Volume 4(2). Retrieved from <https://journals.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/index.php/cjoc/article/view/755>
- Ukpong, E. (2021). Editorial Appeals in Nigerian National Newspapers: Analysis of Selected Newspapers Between January and July, 2021. December 23. (<https://ssrn.com/abstract/3992119>)
- Wogu, J.O. (2008). Introduction to Mass Communication Theories. University of Nigeria Press
- Yusuf, K. (2023). Analysis: As Fuel Subsidy Goes, Nigerian Government Must Cut Cost of Governance. *Premium Times*.