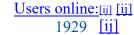


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News Sourcing, Positioning and Thematic Focus: Examining Newspaper Portrayal of Herdsmen-Farmers Conflict in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined how Nigerian newspapers reported the herdsmen and farmers' conflict in Nigeria. It analyzed the contents of six newspapers to explore the primary sources, the prominence accorded the conflict reports, and the themes focused on their reportage. Findings show that out of the 159 stories considered for the study, newspapers relied mostly on their correspondents and herdsmen representatives as primary news sources. Public condemnation/protests and government/public intervention were the dominant thematic focus. The northsouth media

axis phenomenon in Nigeria resonated in the coverage as the frame of 'herdsmen-against-farmers' is indicated more in the southern-based newspapers consistent with the prevailing public notion. The study suggests that the media in Nigeria relied mainly on third party sources with the consequence their reports on the issue could be subject to source credibility deficiency. In addition to addressing the general theme of reportage of the herdsmen conflict, this study explicitly addresses how the newspapers covered the conflict in Benue and Enugu states.

Top

Keywords

Benue and Enugu states, representation, herdsmen and farmers, news sources, Nigerian newspaper.





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