

Review of: "“We Only Came Home to Find His Body Dangling”: Voices and Practs in Selected Nigerian Newspapers Reportage on Suicide"

Chikaire Ezeru

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

I must commend the authors for this important article and their efforts in this research work.

However, the use of “reportage” in the title and throughout the body of the article is inappropriate. Instead, the use of “coverage” would have been more appropriate for this article. In media, reportage and coverage have two different meanings and connotations. Reportage is primarily about the personal opinions or views of the news reporter, while coverage is the real account of the event reported, which excludes the personal views of the reporter. Having gone through this article, the authors are solely focused on the selected Nigerian newspapers' coverage of suicide and not on the personal views or opinions of the news reporters involved in the reported suicide news items. To that effect, the use of “coverage” should have sufficed.

In the area of research methodology applied to this article, some aspects of it would have been approached differently to make this research work more credible and invaluable. On the basis of the infrequency of the coverage of suicide, this research would have benefitted more from using a longitudinal approach with a minimum of ten years' sample duration than the short timeframe of 2020-2022, applied by the authors. With a longitudinal approach, it would have been much easier and more convincing to unravel patterns of suicide coverage in Nigeria, which would have been a novel and original contribution to this subject.

Also, the choice of newspapers did not reflect a fair, balanced, and proportionate representation of Nigeria's diversity, in terms of ethnicity, regions, religion, language, among others. Even though the three newspapers - Punch, Vanguard, and Nation - are deemed as among the most read in Nigeria, it is important to note that they are all Lagos-based newspapers. As a key news sourcing practice, news items reported by a media outlet are largely sourced from where it is based or located. Based on that, the use of three Lagos-based newspapers is not sufficient nor balanced to represent the coverage of suicide in Nigeria as a whole.

In the concluding part of this article, the authors' linkage of this article to Africa could be seen as unsubstantiated wide generalizations.

