

**FEAR, CONTROL AND UNCERTAINTY IN NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF
THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS**

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this study was carried out by ADEYANJU VICTORIA OLUWAMAYOWA (ART2004433) in the Department of English and Literature, University of Benin, under my supervision.

.....

DR A.M AIKORIOGIE
(Project Supervisor)

.....

DATE

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the ONE who is the giver of wisdom and excellence- GOD Almighty, my comforter, my confidant, the one who loves me unconditionally, and also to my amazing family.

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I would like to express my profound gratitude to God Almighty for the strength, wisdom, knowledge, favour and resilience He provided me to start and complete this project. His divine mercies have been a constant source of inspiration.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. PURPOSE OF STUDY

This study examines the use of fear, control and uncertainty in news media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. It aims to analyze how the use of fear, control and uncertainty in news media reflects and shape the attitudes of the society. This study provides insight into the ways in which news media outlets can shape public opinion.

1.2. SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope covers the use of fear, control and uncertainty in news media coverage of the pandemic. The boundaries of this research exist within the news coverage of the pandemic within Nigeria. The spatial scope is mainly, Vanguard, Punch, Guardian and Daily newspapers. The geographical scope is the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019. Theoretically, this research will be based on the Critical Discourse Analysis with close reference to Norman Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis.

1.3. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology chosen for this study is the qualitative approach, which allows for a flexible standpoint of analysis. It draws primarily on the work of Norman Fairclough to form the basis for the analytic approach to discourse analysis. The study will

explore how the discourse reflects media perception; fear, control strategies and uncertainty about the COVID-19 pandemic.

The analysis is based on the extraction of various instances of fear, control and uncertainty as portrayed by news media. The research carry out a textual analysis of all data collected. This method facilitates a structured and in-depth analysis of the strategies employed in 2019 pandemic.

1.4. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in late 2019 and swiftly spread worldwide, emerged as one of the most significant public health challenges in contemporary history. As governments and health organizations made efforts to control the virus, the influence of the media in shaping public perceptions, spreading information, and impacting behaviors became increasingly evident. Although the media was vital in keeping the public updated, its coverage often leaned on fear, control, and uncertainty as central strategies. These aspects not only influenced public understanding and reactions to the pandemic but also led to considerable psychological, social, and political effects. Conducting a critical discourse analysis (CDA) of news media during this time offers a crucial perspective to explore how language was employed to frame the crisis, assert authority, and manage public reactions.

During crises, media acts as the main source of information for the public, guiding behaviors and shaping opinions. The coverage of pandemics in news media has been

extensively examined in past health emergencies, including SARS in 2003, H1N1 in 2009, and Ebola in 2014. Studies have indicated that the discourse in the media during these crises often heightened fear, stressed government control, and generated uncertainty through conflicting information. The COVID-19 pandemic followed this pattern, with media channels across the globe employing specific linguistic and rhetorical approaches that increased public unease, underscored the need for state intervention, and, at times, created confusion regarding the virus and its management.

Fear emerged as a potent element in media communication, especially during a global health crisis. Throughout the pandemic, news coverage frequently utilized sensational headlines, distressing visuals, and alarming statistics to accentuate the gravity of the situation. Reports often highlighted overwhelmed hospitals, mourning families, and rapidly escalating death tolls, fostering a sense of immediate threat. The use of war metaphors, such as "the battle against COVID-19" or "the war on the invisible enemy," depicted the virus as a significant foe, warranting extraordinary actions to overcome it. Moreover, an ongoing focus on infection and mortality rates, often devoid of context regarding survival and recovery rates, added to the culture of fear. While fear-driven narratives may encourage adherence to health protocols, an excess of fear can trigger increased anxiety, panic behaviors, and stigmatization of specific demographics.

Tied closely to the fear discourse was the depiction of governmental intervention and control. The media was instrumental in legitimizing state actions, frequently framing lockdowns, curfews, and emergency legislation as essential measures to fight the virus.

News reports relied heavily on authoritative statements from government officials, scientists, and health experts to endorse stringent public health guidelines. Additionally, media sometimes engaged in public shaming, portraying those who defied restrictions as reckless. While this coverage aimed to promote compliance with health directives, it also raised concerns about potential violations of civil liberties, the politicization of the crisis, and the normalization of authoritarian governance under the guise of public safety.

Alongside fear and control, uncertainty was another defining characteristic of COVID-19 media discourse. As the scientific understanding of the virus advanced, news outlets often presented conflicting expert views on transmission, treatment, and prevention methods, causing confusion among the public, particularly given the frequent changes in health guidelines and governmental policies. The evolving nature of mask mandates, social distancing rules, and vaccine recommendations bred skepticism and, at times, distrust towards authorities. The rise of misinformation and the dissemination of false or misleading news further exacerbated uncertainty, complicating crisis management efforts. While uncertainty in news discourse can foster caution and flexibility, it can also engender distrust in institutions and make the public more vulnerable to conspiracy theories and misinformation.

To effectively analyze these discursive strategies, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a valuable framework. CDA scrutinizes the interplay of language, power, and ideology within media texts, uncovering the foundational structures that shape public discourse. Applying CDA to COVID-19 news coverage allows researchers to identify

dominant narratives, analyze power dynamics, and reveal biases and ideological foundations within media reporting. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of how language has been utilized to create fear, justify control, and perpetuate uncertainty, ultimately affecting public perceptions and behaviors during the pandemic.

In summary, the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the critical impact of media on public comprehension and responses to a global health crisis. The themes of fear, control, and uncertainty were central in news coverage, shaping emotions, compliance, and trust in authorities. While media coverage was integral to informing the public and promoting health measures, its portrayal of the crisis also resulted in unintended consequences, such as increased anxiety, acceptance of authoritarian governance, and public confusion. A critical discourse analysis of this coverage yields key insights into the interactions between media, power, and crisis communication, contributing to broader discussions about media ethics, misinformation, and the influence of language on public discourse.

1.5. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study relies on Norman Fairclough's socio-cultural approach to discourse analysis. Norman Fairclough is one of the scholars that propounded the theory called "critical discourse analysis". According to Fairclough, CDA has to do with language as it is used in the society (Fairclough 57). He based his analysis on the ideology concealed behind language. The central idea of the CDA is too deeply look at conversations, text,

written or spoken communication, discussion and speeches and analyze how they are socially formed by belief (69).

Fairclough states that language is “a form of social practice” (25). He believes that every communicative event possesses three dimensions; the text, the discursive practice and the social practice. He then creates three stages for CDA; description, interpretation and explanation.

Fairclough’s framework includes; textual analysis, which entails all linguistic features of and analyses of the formal properties of text. The interpretation stage deals with the social connection between text and interaction. The explanation stage deals with the social effect of the social effect of the production process of the text(115).Norman Fairclough’s socio-cultural method of discourse analysis offers a robust framework for examining the complex connections between language, power, and ideology. His work is part of the broader Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) field, which investigates how discourse is employed to create, uphold, and contest social structures. Fairclough posits that discourse transcends mere communication; it is a social practice that both reflects and influences our reality. Consequently, language is intricately linked to social, political, and economic contexts, acting as a vital instrument for perpetuating or altering prevailing ideologies.

One of Fairclough’s key contributions is his assertion that language is never neutral. Each choice of word, sentence structure, and rhetorical tactic carries underlying meanings shaped by larger social forces. This challenges the conventional belief that language merely mirrors reality. Instead, Fairclough suggests that discourse actively constructs reality,

affecting how people understand events, institutions, and social groups. For instance, the language used by political figures regarding economic matters can significantly sway public opinion on issues like taxation, wealth distribution, and government policies. Likewise, media portrayals of marginalized communities can either reinforce stereotypes or confront existing biases.

At the heart of Fairclough's theory is the notion that discourse constitutes a form of social practice. This indicates that language is not standalone; it is influenced by social institutions, cultural standards, and historical contexts. His idea of social practice highlights that language actively engages in shaping social interactions, reinforcing power dynamics, and sustaining ideological frameworks. For example, legal language is designed to confer authority on legal professionals, while political discourse frequently incorporates strategic rhetoric to sway public sentiment. Because language is intertwined with power, those in authority often dictate the prevailing discourses in society. Governments, media organizations, corporations, and educational institutions can all manipulate discourse to align with their agendas. Fairclough's approach is crucial as it uncovers the latent power structures present in everyday language. By conducting critical discourse analysis, scholars can reveal how dominant ideologies are perpetuated through subtle linguistic choices.

Fairclough developed a three-dimensional model for analyzing discourse, encompassing text, discursive practice, and social practice. Each dimension provides unique insights into how discourse functions in society.

Textual Analysis (Micro-level Analysis): This dimension focuses on the text itself, analyzing linguistic features like vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and rhetorical devices. Textual analysis reveals how specific word choices affect meaning. For example, in reporting, a protest might be characterized as a "riot" in one outlet and a "demonstration" in another, which illustrates differing ideological perspectives.

Discursive Practice (Meso-level Analysis): This dimension examines how texts are produced, circulated, and interpreted. It explores the social and institutional contexts that shape language use. For example, journalistic outlets adhere to editorial standards that influence story framing. Likewise, political parties tailor their messages to resonate with various voter groups. This dimension also involves intertextuality, where texts reference one another, as seen when politicians borrow phrases from historical documents to bolster their credibility.

Social Practice (Macro-level Analysis): The third dimension situates discourse within broader social frameworks, power relations, and ideologies. This analysis explains how discourse either fosters social change or upholds existing hierarchies. For instance, advertising might promote consumerism and capitalist values, while political discourse may legitimize policies that suppress dissent. Examining discourse at this macro level enables researchers to uncover how language maintains or challenges dominant ideologies. Fairclough's three-dimensional model empowers researchers to delve deeper than surface interpretations, allowing them to discover the underlying social meanings within discourse.

By connecting texts to their production and societal contexts, Critical Discourse Analysis offers a thorough understanding of how language operates as a mechanism of power.

Fairclough's three-stage method for CDA consists of description, interpretation, and explanation: **Description:** This first stage involves scrutinizing linguistic characteristics of a text. Analysts identify patterns in word usage, sentence structures, and stylistic elements reflecting ideological stances. For instance, the frequent use of "tax relief" in political discourse might indicate a preference for tax reduction over increased public spending.

Interpretation: The second stage seeks to understand how discourse is produced and received, factoring in audience interpretation based on social backgrounds and ideologies. For example, a news article on immigration may be interpreted differently by conservative versus progressive readers. This stage also considers historical and cultural influences shaping discourse.

Explanation: The final stage links the text and its interpretation to overarching social structures, probing the power dynamics involved and how discourse helps maintain or challenge social hierarchies. It raises critical questions, such as who benefits from the discourse and how it influences power relations. For instance, media descriptions that repeatedly label certain racial groups as criminals can perpetuate racial profiling and discrimination.

A critical aspect of Fairclough's CDA is its emphasis on ideology. Ideologies—sets of beliefs and values—shape perceptions of reality. According to Fairclough, ideologies are

often embedded in language in a manner that makes them seem natural or self-evident, making them harder to contest.

For example, political discourse might frame economic inequality as stemming from "personal failure" instead of "systemic inequality," thereby reinforcing an individualistic ideology that deflects attention from societal institutions. Similarly, advertisements that tout "empowering consumers" can obscure exploitative labor practices behind a veneer of choice.

By scrutinizing the role of ideology in discourse, Fairclough's framework helps to reveal hidden biases and power dynamics influencing public understanding. This is particularly significant in today's media-driven landscape, where language significantly shapes opinions and upholds dominant narratives.

In conclusion, Fairclough's socio-cultural approach to discourse analysis serves as a potent framework for exploring the interplay among language, power, and ideology. His three-dimensional model—concerning text, discursive practice, and social practice—provides a thorough method for analyzing the role of discourse in society. Through the application of Critical Discourse Analysis, researchers can unveil hidden power dynamics, contest dominant ideologies, and gain a richer understanding of how language shapes social realities. Fairclough's insights remain highly pertinent in an era where media and political discourse are central to public life. Fairclough's model is effective in analyzing ideological structures of discourse just like the one under this study.

1.6. REVIEW OF RELATED SCHOLARSHIP

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unparalleled global emergency, with news media playing a crucial role in shaping how the public perceived the situation, influenced their behaviors, and legitimized governmental actions. Researchers have deeply analyzed how news reporting used fear, control, and uncertainty to frame the pandemic. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has become a common method for investigating how language, power, and ideology intersect in media during crises. A literature review identifies three main areas of inquiry: the strategic deployment of fear as a persuasive instrument, the reinforcement of governmental authority, and the impact of uncertainty on public trust and misinformation.

Fear has long been acknowledged as an effective tool in crisis communication, and research indicates that media outlets deliberately employed fear-inducing language and images to reflect the seriousness of the COVID-19 crisis. Wahl-Jorgensen (833) contends that fear became a central aspect of pandemic news, with headlines and narratives highlighting the virus's lethal nature, the rapid infection rates, and the immense stress on healthcare systems. Phrasings such as “unprecedented crisis,” “global catastrophe,” and “deadly virus” were commonly used to foster urgency and collective anxiety.

Masroor (460) delves into how fear influenced public reactions, pointing out the prevalent use of war metaphors in discussions about COVID-19. Expressions like “fighting the invisible enemy” and “on the frontlines” framed the pandemic as akin to warfare, underlining the necessity for drastic actions. This aligns with Lakoff and Johnson’s (110)

conceptual metaphor theory, suggesting that framing of crises shapes public understanding and response.

Beyond linguistic choices, researchers have focused on the impact of imagery in evoking fear. Garfin, Silver, and Holman (356) find out that media frequently showcased distressing visuals—like overcrowded hospitals, fatigued healthcare workers, and mass burials—to emphasize the crisis's severity. Such portrayals heightened public anxiety and amplified panic buying and mental health issues. Ahmed et al. (67) argue similarly that prolonged exposure to fear-laden media coverage escalated stress levels, contributing to public paranoia and increased susceptibility to misinformation.

Although fear-based reporting has faced criticism for causing distress, some researchers maintain that it wielded positive effects. Dryhurst et al. (997) assert that an elevated risk perception led to greater adherence to health guidelines like social distancing, mask-wearing, and vaccinations. This dual role of fear—acting both as a source of anxiety and a driver of behavioral change—remains a significant theme in analyses of pandemic media.

Another key research area investigates how media discourse bolstered governmental authority and control during the pandemic. Drawing from Foucault's (145) biopolitics concept, scholars argue that news coverage generally backed state-imposed restrictions, framing them as vital for public safety. Van Dijk and Alinejad (3) explore how mainstream media portrayed lockdowns, travel bans, and digital surveillance as crucial strategies

against COVID-19. By consistently referencing government officials and health experts, media narratives portrayed these policies as scientifically validated and unassailable.

A recurring theme is the depiction of non-compliance as a societal danger. O'Shea, Davies, and Giles (1236) discover that media often characterized individuals resisting government measures—like anti-lockdown protestors and vaccine skeptics—as foolish and irresponsible. Labels such as “super-spreaders” and “COVID-deniers” established a moral divide between rule-abiding citizens and those endangering society. Wodak (245) further posits that crisis narratives depend on "othering" strategies, categorizing specific groups as threats to public order, which justified more stringent enforcement of government policies.

While mainstream media generally upheld government control, some academics analyzed how alternative and social media questioned these prevailing narratives. Lischka (563) compared COVID-19 policy framing across various media platforms, discovering that independent news outlets and online communities frequently raised concerns about the legitimacy and necessity of emergency actions. These counter-narratives emphasized civil rights, economic repercussions, and the lasting effects of restrictive measures, highlighting the contentious nature of media discourse, wherein conflicting interpretations of government actions emerged.

Uncertainty emerged as another prominent aspect of COVID-19 media discourse. As the pandemic progressed, scientific understanding of the virus evolved, leading to fluctuating guidelines and contradictory messages. Researchers have scrutinized how this uncertainty impacted public trust in both media and governmental institutions.

Chater (439) and Zarocostas (676) point out that changing scientific recommendations—such as early discussions on mask efficacy, virus origins, and vaccine safety—contributed to widespread confusion. According to Bridgman et al. (5) this inconsistency weakened public trust in official sources and sometimes incited skepticism regarding health measures. When guidance appeared unreliable or inconsistent, individuals were more likely to pursue alternative explanations.

Moreover, misinformation intensified the uncertainty surrounding the pandemic. A large-scale study by Cinelli et al. (16598) showed that false information regarding COVID-19 often spread more rapidly than verified reports. Conspiracy theories—like claims that the virus was engineered or that vaccines included microchips—gained traction as individuals sought clarity in a chaotic information landscape. Nielsen et al. (752) argue that uncertainty provides fertile ground for conspiracy beliefs to flourish, as people look for order in unpredictable situations.

Conversely, some studies highlight how media sought to mitigate uncertainty through emphasis on scientific authority. Hargrave et al. (295) contend that journalists often leaned on expert opinions to clarify information, positioning virologists, epidemiologists, and health officials as credible sources. However, this tactic sometimes resulted in oversimplification, presenting complex scientific debates as resolved facts. Subsequent changes in guidelines—such as adjustments to mask mandates—further eroded public trust.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has been instrumental in revealing how language and power dynamics influenced media representations of the pandemic. Kuo and Marwick (60) conducted a CDA of international news reports and identified persistent patterns of fear-based language, government-backed narratives, and the strategic manipulation of uncertainty. Their research indicates that media discourse actively shaped public attitudes rather than simply reflecting objective reality.

Comparative studies have also underscored how political and cultural contexts affected COVID-19 discourse. Bauder and Devlin (812) explored news coverage across various countries, demonstrating that media narratives differed based on governmental ideologies. In some democratic nations, media depicted government policies as responses to health needs, whereas in more authoritarian regimes, coverage illustrated state control as crucial for national safety.

Another significant aspect of CDA research focuses on the representation of marginalized communities during the pandemic. Unger (740) argues that media narratives often reinforced racial and socioeconomic disparities, depicting certain groups—like migrant workers and low-income populations—as high-risk individuals responsible for the virus's spread. Such discourse exacerbated stigma and discrimination.

The existing research on COVID-19 media discourse reveals the intricate ways in which fear, control, and uncertainty were articulated in news coverage. Fear-driven narratives not only heightened anxiety but also promoted public adherence to health guidelines.

1.7. THESIS STATEMENT

A critical discourse analysis of the media coverage of Covid-19 shows that fear, control and uncertainty were discursively engaged to control and manipulate the people.

CHAPTER TWO

ANALYSIS OF FEAR IN NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Fear is a multifaceted emotional and physiological reaction to a perceived threat or danger, functioning as a crucial survival mechanism. It involves complex interactions among cognitive, neurological, and behavioral systems, enabling individuals to evaluate, respond to, and minimize potential risks.

From a psychological viewpoint, fear is regarded as a fundamental emotion that is universal across cultures and deeply rooted in human cognition (Ekman 87). It is marked by heightened arousal, increased focus on potential threats, and behavioral responses such as fighting, fleeing, or freezing (Öhman 214). Fear can be either innate, such as the fear of loud noises or sudden dangers, or acquired through experiences and social conditioning (Mineka & Öhman 356).

2.2. FEAR

“Much of the fear is logical. Is it safe to go to a restaurant or a pub again? Is it less likely we'll catch it now that we're more cautious about going out? Will the "new normal" always look like this?” (the guardian newspaper, 26th March 2020)

By applying Norman Fairclough's sociocultural framework for discourse analysis, we can analyze the excerpt by examining how language both mirrors and influences social structures, ideologies, and power dynamics. Fairclough's model comprises three interconnected dimensions: textual analysis (description), discursive practice (interpretation), and social practice (explanation).

At the textual level, the excerpt features rhetorical questions like "Is it safe to go to a restaurant or a pub again?" and "Will the 'new normal' always look like this?" These inquiries express a sense of uncertainty and collective anxiety regarding life after the pandemic. The term "new normal" is particularly significant as it suggests a profound change in societal behaviors and expectations, indicating that former lifestyles may not resume. Furthermore, the phrase "now that we're more cautious" implies that society has collectively embraced new habits born out of past experiences, underscoring that caution has become normative. Additionally, the term "fear" used at the outset frames the conversation in emotional and psychological terms, highlighting that risk and safety are central issues rather than just individual choices.

In terms of discursive practice, the excerpt reflects wider societal narratives concerning public health and social conduct. It likely forms part of a broader media discourse that significantly influences public perceptions of safety and risk. The widely used term "new normal," for instance, has appeared extensively in government communications, media coverage, and public discussions, establishing it as a critical intertextual reference. This illustrates how discourse is informed by prevailing communicative practices and how

audiences are situated within them. The excerpt assumes a shared experience of increased caution among its readers, reinforcing a collective understanding of post-pandemic existence.

At the social practice level, the excerpt connects to larger ideological and structural changes within society. It highlights the impact of public health governance on daily choices, such as whether to dine out. The text also aligns with neoliberal beliefs that stress individual accountability, implicitly suggesting that individuals should assess and manage their own risks instead of depending on governmental support. Moreover, the concept of a “new normal” alludes to enduring societal shifts, including changes in economic frameworks, consumer behavior, and social interactions.

“Fear, by design, is a warning system that puts us on alert and demands attention. It is a necessary neurobiological response to a stimulus that says: “Heads up, get ready to assess and act”. When we watch the news, listening to a breaking segment about the crisis on our doorsteps, we are priming ourselves to react. We are wired for fear. But even with the very real fears of a pandemic, we don't need nearly as much of it as we experience. So how do we manage it?” (the guardian newspaper, 26th March 2020)

By applying this same approach to discourse analysis, we can explore how this excerpt creates meaning, mirrors prevailing ideologies, and strengthens specific societal viewpoints on fear. Fairclough's approach encompasses three dimensions: text analysis (description), discursive practice (interpretation), and social practice (explanation).

On the textual level, the excerpt employs clear statements to portray fear as an instinctive and biologically based response. Expressions like "Fear, by design, is a warning system" and "We are wired for fear" imply that fear is a fundamental, evolutionary trait rather than a socially constructed feeling. This biological perspective validates fear as a natural and crucial aspect of human life. The phrase "Heads up, get ready to assess and act" further anthropomorphizes fear, emphasizing its role as a survival mechanism. However, the latter portion of the excerpt shifts the narrative by questioning the necessity of fear, stating that "we don't need nearly as much of it as we experience" and asking, "how do we manage it?" This pivot indicates a mismatch between essential fear and excessive fear, suggesting that external factors, such as media, may amplify fear beyond its practical limits.

In terms of discursive practice, the excerpt interacts with wider media and societal discourses surrounding crises and fear. The mentions of "watching the news" and "listening to a breaking segment about the crisis on our doorsteps" link fear to media engagement, indicating that news reporting plays a role in escalating anxiety. This reflects critical perspectives on how media outlets use fear-laden content to attract audience attention and drive interaction. The rhetorical question "So how do we manage it?" invites readers to

take an active role in regulating their emotional responses, promoting a narrative of self-control. This shift characterizes fear not as a mere instinctive reaction but as something that individuals must consciously manage, resonating with themes of personal accountability.

At the social practice level, the excerpt connects with larger ideological and institutional influences that shape public discussions on fear and crisis management. By depicting fear as a neurobiological response, it minimizes its social and political contexts, subtly reinforcing the notion of fear as an individual challenge rather than a systemic issue. However, the discussion on excessive fear and media's role suggests a critique of the manipulation of fear in modern society. This perspective aligns with neoliberal ideas that expect individuals to handle their emotional states rather than questioning or challenging the external systems that heighten fear. Therefore, the text encapsulates a conflict between recognizing fear as a natural survival instinct and critiquing how societal structures, especially the media, amplify it.

“Now we find ourselves in a time when fear has become our new currency. Throughout the pandemic there has been a constant dripping of fear, a sense of catastrophic possibilities. There is a deep feeling of something having shifted, and we're not quite sure what it means yet.” (the guardian newspaper, 26th March 2020)

Through the application of this Norman Fairclough’s sociocultural framework for discourse analysis, we can explore how this passage generates meaning, amplifies social fears, and mirrors wider ideological trends. Fairclough’s approach consists of three components: text analysis (description), discursive practice (interpretation), and social practice (explanation).

At the textual level, the excerpt uses metaphorical expressions to depict fear as a prevailing force in society. The metaphor “fear has become our new currency” equates fear with money, suggesting it has evolved into a key medium of exchange that influences behaviors, decisions, and interactions. This idea positions fear as more than just an emotion; it is viewed as a societal asset that influences power relations and public discourse. The expression “constant dripping of fear” creates an image of fear as something persistent and unavoidable, underscoring ongoing psychological strain. The term “sense of catastrophic possibilities” further intensifies this feeling of uncertainty, hinting at a

continuing crisis with no clear resolution. The concluding line, “There is a deep feeling of something having shifted, and we’re not quite sure what it means yet,” introduces an element of ambiguity, situating the audience in a shared state of uncertainty and transition.

In terms of discursive practice, the excerpt aligns with prominent media and political narratives regarding crises. The pandemic has often been portrayed through themes of fear, uncertainty, and transformation, affecting how people perceive and react to the situation. The language used in the excerpt reflects the way media frequently depict extended periods of uncertainty, reinforcing a sense of instability. Furthermore, inclusive phrases like “we find ourselves” and “we’re not quite sure” engage the audience in a collective experience, fostering a shared atmosphere of anxiety and confusion. This illustrates how discourse not only describes reality but also influences public emotions and societal views.

At the social practice level, the excerpt relates to larger ideological and structural changes within society. The notion that “fear has become our new currency” implies that fear is a crucial mechanism within governance, public discourse, and even economic choices. This aligns with risk society theory (Beck, 1992), suggesting that contemporary societies are increasingly directed by perceptions of risk and uncertainty. The phrase “something having shifted” indicates that the pandemic has initiated transformations in social structures, while the uncertainty implied by “we’re not quite sure what it means yet” underscores the challenges in identifying these changes. This reflects a phase of ideological transition, where traditional norms are being undermined and new ones are still in development.

Fairclough's approach illustrates how this excerpt frames fear as a significant social force, bolstered by media and political discourse. The use of metaphors and collective phrasing enhances a sense of uncertainty, portraying fear as both a consequence and a catalyst of societal change. This analysis emphasizes the critical role of discourse in shaping public consciousness during crises, reflecting and actively constructing reality.

“The COVID-19 pandemic had also affected access to malaria services in health facilities the people are afraid of being suspected to have COVID-19 if they presented symptoms at the facilities.” (punch newspaper, 8th July 2020)

Employing Norman Fairclough's sociocultural approach to discourse analysis, we can investigate how this statement mirrors larger social structures, power dynamics, and ideological influences. Fairclough's framework operates on three levels: text analysis (description), discursive practice (interpretation), and social practice (explanation).

At the textual level, the statement indicates a cause-and-effect relationship between the COVID-19 pandemic and access to malaria services. The term “affected access to malaria services” suggests a disruption in healthcare delivery but does not clarify whether this disruption stems from institutional failures, changes in policy, or shifts in behavior. The phrase “people are afraid” adds an emotional aspect, portraying fear as a significant

influence on health-seeking behavior. Furthermore, the expression “being suspected to have COVID-19” implies that suspicion brings negative outcomes, potentially including stigma, isolation, or increased medical scrutiny. This points to a deeper anxiety about misdiagnosis or the social consequences, rather than merely the illness itself.

At the discursive practice level, the statement illustrates how public health emergencies influence the discourse surrounding healthcare access and patient behavior. It aligns with broader narratives about the pandemic that highlight fear as an obstacle to obtaining medical care—a theme prevalent in media reports and public health messages. The underlying assumption is that healthcare facilities are perceived as risky locations rather than safe havens, leading to negative effects on the management of other diseases like malaria. This illustrates how discourse shapes real-world actions, as fear—bolstered by official narratives and societal views—can discourage individuals from pursuing essential medical care.

At the social practice level, the statement connects to larger systemic issues, such as the effects of global health crises on routine healthcare services, the role of stigma during public health emergencies, and the complexity of disease narratives. It reveals how the COVID-19 pandemic not only dominated medical discussions but also altered perceptions of healthcare facilities, transforming them into potential sites of danger rather than places for healing. Moreover, it highlights the structural vulnerabilities within healthcare systems, especially in regions where malaria is endemic, demonstrating how crisis responses can sometimes worsen existing health inequalities.

2.3. Conclusion

Fairclough's approach uncovers how this statement captures the unintended repercussions of health discourses driven by crisis. While COVID-19 was portrayed as an immediate global threat, its occurring effects disrupted access to other vital healthcare services, fueled by fear and stigma. The conversation surrounding suspicion and avoidance of healthcare reflects broader societal fears, illustrating how language both depicts and reinforces real-world behaviors during crises.

CHAPTER THREE

DISCOURSE CONTROL STRATEGIES

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Building on the analysis of fear in the news media coverage of the pandemic explored in the previous chapter. This chapter shifts focus to the control strategies employed by the government as portrayed by the news media.

3.2. CONTROL STRATEGIES

“The Gombe State Chairperson of ACOMIN Hassana Maisanda, said this during an advocate meeting in Gombe where she stressed the need to make adequate PPE's available for health workers.” (punch newspaper, 8th July 2020)

By applying Norman Fairclough’s sociocultural framework for discourse analysis, we can investigate the statement to reveal the underlying power dynamics, ideologies, and social practices present in this discourse. Fairclough’s model encompasses three interrelated levels: text analysis (description), discursive practice (interpretation), and social practice (explanation).

Textual Level (Description)

At the textual level, the statement is succinct and formal, presenting Hassana Maisanda as the authoritative voice. The term “the Gombe State Chairperson of ACOMIN” quickly establishes her official role, adding weight to her message. The verb “said” indicates that this is a reported statement, which incorporates an external authority into the discourse. The term “advocate meeting” situates the statement within a formal event aimed at shaping public opinion or policy, suggesting a gathering of stakeholders to discuss specific concerns. The emphasis on “adequate PPEs” implies a critique of current conditions, indicating that health workers lack sufficient resources to ensure their safety. The term “stress” expresses urgency and underscores the critical need for addressing PPE availability.

Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

At the discursive practice level, the statement contributes to a wider dialogue regarding public health and the safety of health workers. The use of the term “advocate” positions the speaker within a tradition focused on calling for changes in public policy or resource distribution. The expressed “need” for PPEs is framed as an urgent matter, suggesting criticism of the prevailing health infrastructure and resource allocation. Within the context of the pandemic or any public health emergency, this statement engages with discussions on crisis management, workers' rights, and the protection of healthcare professionals. The focus on PPEs highlights a power disparity, revealing that the requirements of frontline workers are not adequately addressed by state or institutional frameworks. Furthermore,

the manner in which the information is conveyed indicates that this discourse seeks to reach a broader audience, promoting the speaker as an advocate for health workers, a vulnerable group. The formal and authoritative tone reflects the social practice of institutional communication aimed at influencing policy or drawing attention to societal issues.

Social Practice (Explanation)

At the social practice level, the statement signifies broader systemic challenges within the healthcare system. The call for sufficient PPEs highlights disparities in healthcare resources, particularly in areas where they are limited. This aligns with ongoing global conversations about the difficulties faced by health workers, especially in under-resourced settings, and the advocacy groups working to bridge these gaps. The statement resonates with public health discussions regarding worker safety and the moral obligation of governments and organizations to safeguard frontline workers. The fact that the ACOMIN chairperson is speaking at an advocacy meeting indicates an acknowledgment that systemic reforms are necessary, as the current situation has not effectively tackled the issues confronting healthcare professionals. The demand for adequate PPEs also implicitly critiques the existing distribution mechanisms, which may be subpar or uneven. Such advocacy forms part of the larger movement for social justice in healthcare, insisting that health workers should be properly protected to perform their roles safely and effectively.

“State governments told The PUNCH that they had fulfilled all the guidelines released by the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 to prevent a further spread of COVID-19 during WASSCE.” (Punch newspaper, 17th August 2020)

By applying Norman Fairclough’s sociocultural framework for discourse analysis, we can dissect this statement to reveal the hidden power dynamics, ideologies, and societal practices present within the discourse. Fairclough’s model comprises three interconnected dimensions: textual analysis (description), discursive practice (interpretation), and social practice (explanation).

Textual Level (Description)

On the textual level, the statement is clear and factual, functioning to report on actions taken by state governments. The phrase “state governments told The PUNCH” suggests the information originates from an authoritative source—state governments—and gains credence through the media outlet, The PUNCH. The term “fulfilled” indicates that these governments claim to have fully adhered to the COVID-19 protocols established by the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19. Furthermore, stating “to prevent a further spread of COVID-19” frames their adherence to guidelines as a preventative effort, highlighting ongoing concerns about virus transmission.

Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

At the level of discursive practice, the statement engages with public health discourse emphasizing the necessity of following guidelines during critical events such as the WASSCE. It casts state governments as responsible agents, reinforcing their duty to enforce public health measures. By asserting their fulfillment of guidelines, these governments aim to portray themselves as proactive and accountable in combating the pandemic, thereby fostering an image of diligence and readiness. Referencing the Presidential Task Force aligns this discourse with governmental responses to the crisis, while the media (The PUNCH) acts as the channel for these official declarations to the public. The phrase “to prevent a further spread” discreetly acknowledges previous transmission issues, yet frames government actions as sufficient to mitigate future outbreaks. The implication is that successful containment relies on adherence to these guidelines.

Social Practice (Explanation)

At the social practice level, the statement links to larger political and public health contexts. The government’s assertion of having met the guidelines communicates a sense of competence and seeks to shape public perception during a national crisis. The guidelines from the Presidential Task Force symbolize the state’s authoritative governance over the pandemic response. By complying with these directives, state governments are legitimizing their actions to the public, especially concerning a pivotal event like the WASSCE, which significantly affects students' futures. Additionally, the directive to prevent further virus

spread reflects the wider global efforts aimed at pandemic containment and the responsibility of governments to safeguard public health. This statement also highlights a societal concern regarding education, public health, and the socioeconomic consequences of an extended pandemic, illustrating the tension between the need for educational continuity and the obligation to ensure public health safety.

“An interview with a parent stated that “the school of my children has mandated us to get them at least three face masks, tissue papers, sanitizers and face towels, which were to be shown at the school entrance and if students don't have them won't be allowed into the school.” (Punch newspaper, 17th August 2020)

By applying Norman Fairclough’s sociocultural discourse analysis approach, we can examine this statement to understand how it generates meaning, illustrates power dynamics, and positions individuals within wider social and institutional contexts. Fairclough’s model encompasses three dimensions: text analysis (description), discursive practice (interpretation), and social practice (explanation).

Textual Level (Description)

At the textual level, the statement is framed as a direct quote from a parent's interview, lending it an informal and personal touch. The use of the parent’s first-person viewpoint enhances relatability and connects it to real-life experiences. The enumeration of required

items—three face masks, tissue papers, sanitizers, and face towels—provides concrete details, suggesting a systematic and organized approach to health and hygiene management in schools. The phrase “to be shown at the school entrance” establishes a clear expectation for behavior, instilling a sense of oversight and responsibility. The concluding remark, “if students don’t have them won’t be allowed into the school,” introduces a penalty for non-compliance, implying a direct consequence for failing to adhere to the regulations. This part of the statement emphasizes the critical need for following health protocols, indicating strict enforcement.

Discursive Practice (Interpretation)

At the discursive practice level, the statement reflects a larger conversation about compliance and regulation stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. The stipulation for PPEs and hygiene items embodies the public health discourse that has permeated educational environments during this period, presenting health protocols as mandatory. The school is depicted as an authority that enforces rules and possesses the right to exclude non-compliant students. This aligns with a broader societal theme in which institutions such as schools and workplaces exert power to enforce health-related regulations for the sake of public health. The statement outlines how these inclusion and exclusion policies are now driven by health regulations, framing their implementation as crucial for community welfare. The term “mandated” accentuates the authoritative nature of the school system, reinforcing the hierarchical dynamics between the institution and the individuals involved.

Social Practice (Explanation)

At the social practice level, this statement reveals evolving relationships in education and public health due to the pandemic. The necessity for masks, sanitizers, and face towels signals a shift in institutional priorities, placing public health higher than traditional educational practices. The school's role has evolved into part of a larger state initiative aimed at controlling the virus's spread. Confirming the requirement to display these items at the entrance highlights the disciplinary aspects of the new educational setting, where access to education hinges on compliance with health measures. The practice of excluding those who do not meet these standards underscores how educational institutions are now closely tied to public health strategies and prompts discussions about social equity and accessibility. The responsibility now falls on parents to ensure their children possess the necessary items for school access, potentially imposing further strain on families, especially in low-income contexts.

This transformation also mirrors broader societal trends where adherence to health regulations becomes integral to daily life, affecting the operations of schools, workplaces, and other institutions. Overall, this discursive practice indicates a more surveillance-focused society, where individuals (students, in this instance) are monitored for adherence to health protocols, thereby fostering a culture centered on control and risk management.

“According to the newspaper report there was the introduction of a 3,000 fee for COVID 19 and an increment of School fees in a particular school which was reported anonymously by a parent.” (Punch newspaper, 17th August 2020)

When applying Fairclough’s framework to a newspaper article discussing a new COVID-19 fee and rising school fees, we can start with the textual analysis. The language in the article likely portrays the situation as a pressing issue, especially as it centers around the financial burdens faced by parents. The inclusion of a parent’s anonymous comments suggests an effort to express dissatisfaction while keeping their identity confidential, hinting at fears of possible backlash or a lack of transparency in communications among stakeholders. Furthermore, specifying an exact fee (3,000) anchors the issue in reality, emphasizing the financial pressures on families.

At the discursive practice level, the fact that this issue is reported in a newspaper signals an intention to draw public attention, potentially impacting discussions on school fees and COVID-19-related costs. The anonymous nature of the parent’s comments raises intriguing questions about power dynamics: why was anonymity necessary? This may reflect a broader social framework where parents feel powerless or apprehensive about repercussions from school authorities. Additionally, how the newspaper presents the issue—balancing the school’s viewpoint, parental responses, or official comments— affects how the audience perceives the situation.

In terms of social practice, the report addresses larger societal concerns such as economic disparity, the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on education, and institutional power dynamics. The introduction of extra fees may signify financial challenges for educational institutions, but it also prompts ethical questions regarding educational accessibility for lower-income families. The choice to report this issue in a newspaper rather than through direct institutional communication might indicate flaws in the participatory decision-making processes within the school system. More generally, the article reveals the tension between institutional authority and parental agency, reflecting broader socio-economic issues during periods of crisis.

In summary, through the lens of Fairclough's discourse analysis, the newspaper report transcends mere fact-reporting; it illustrates power relations, economic difficulties, and how discourse influences public understanding. The choice of language, the dissemination of information, and the wider social backdrop all enhance the comprehension of the existing tensions within the education system amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

3.3. Conclusion

The findings collectively demonstrate that discourse, when examined through Fairclough's framework, is an influential means of influencing public perception, asserting authority, and challenging power relations in society. In contexts like government messaging, educational policies, or healthcare initiatives, language legitimizes actions, enforces adherence, and exposes systemic inequalities. The media is vital in this process,

serving both to propagate dominant narratives and to provide a space for questioning current systems, thereby shaping social practices and public discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNCERTAINTY IN THE NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is set to explore the various reactions of the public towards the pandemic through the lens of uncertainty.

4.2. UNCERTAINTY

“Claims by state governments that they had made adequate preparations for students taking the West African Senior School Examinations, which would start on Monday (today), attracted mixed reactions from parents and teachers on Sunday.” (Punch newspaper, 17th August 2020)

Using Norman Fairclough's method of discourse analysis to evaluate the statement uncovers a nuanced relationship between official narratives and public perceptions. Fairclough's framework includes three main components: text (description), discourse practice (interpretation), and sociocultural practice (explanation).

At the textual level, the assertion by state governments that they had made "adequate preparations" for the West African Senior School Examinations conveys an impression of preparedness. However, the term "adequate" is subjective, allowing for varying

interpretations and discussions. The mention of "mixed reactions" implies differing opinions among stakeholders, particularly parents and teachers, who do not wholly support the government's claim. This disparity indicates a potential disconnect between official statements and the actual experiences of those involved in the examination process.

On the level of discourse practice, the statement illustrates the interactions among various parties: the government, parents, and teachers. The government's assertion reflects institutional discourse, where authorities aim to project control and efficiency. Nonetheless, the recognition of "mixed reactions" points to competing views. Parents and teachers, who are directly impacted by exam preparations, offer a counter-narrative that challenges the government's position. The media's coverage of these differing opinions underscores an ongoing struggle within the discourse, as official claims are not automatically accepted.

From a sociocultural lens, this discourse reveals broader tensions in governance and education in West Africa. Government assertions of preparedness often encounter skepticism due to persistent challenges such as poor infrastructure, lack of educational materials, and last-minute decisions. The varied responses from parents and teachers highlight deeper societal concerns about the efficacy of educational policies. This situation also reflects power dynamics, where the government seeks to assert its authority through official narratives, which are contested by those with firsthand experience in the education system.

In summary, Fairclough's perspective demonstrates that public discourse regarding government policies is dynamic, characterized by negotiation and resistance. While the government strives to present a prevailing narrative of preparedness, parents and teachers contribute alternative views that question this narrative. This interaction underscores the complexity of discourse in governance, where official claims are rigorously examined in light of real-world experiences.

There is also the inadequate provision of Personal protective equipments particularly at primary health centers exposed and as such, they may not be able to provide optimum services as required by the clients,"(punch newspaper, 17th August 2020)

Examining this statement through Fairclough's discourse analysis approach reveals key insights into how deficiencies in healthcare are articulated and challenged. Fairclough's framework encompasses three essential dimensions: text (description), discourse practice (interpretation), and sociocultural practice (explanation).

At the textual level, the statement identifies a significant problem: the "inadequate provision of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)." The term "inadequate provision" indicates a failure to fulfill essential healthcare requirements. Furthermore, the phrase "particularly at primary health centers" points to the institutions most impacted, highlighting vulnerabilities at the grassroots level of healthcare delivery. The word

"exposed" conveys a sense of risk for both healthcare workers and the wider public who rely on these services. Additionally, the expression "may not be able to provide optimum services as required by the clients" subtly pivots the discussion to the repercussions of this inadequacy, implying a compromised ability of healthcare workers to meet patient needs.

At the discourse practice level, the statement captures the perspectives of healthcare professionals, policymakers, and the public. The issue of PPE shortages has frequently appeared in healthcare discussions, especially during public health emergencies like the COVID-19 pandemic. This statement contributes to a larger conversation in which healthcare providers and stakeholders express dissatisfaction with government actions and resource distribution. The choice of the term "clients" instead of "patients" introduces a more consumer-centric view of healthcare, suggesting that service delivery is expected to adhere to specific standards. This linguistic choice may be intentional, framing healthcare as a right rather than a privilege.

At the sociocultural level, the discourse emphasizes systemic challenges within public healthcare, particularly in underfunded and underserved areas. The lack of PPE at primary health centers points to deeper issues, including insufficient healthcare funding, logistical failures, and a lack of government prioritization for the safety of frontline workers. The phrase "may not be able to provide optimum services" reflects rising concern over diminishing healthcare quality, which reinforces public skepticism regarding the efficacy of governmental actions. Furthermore, the term "exposed" carries implications for both the

safety of healthcare workers and larger public health risks, as inadequate protections for medical staff could lead to greater disease transmission.

Fairclough's analysis illustrates that this statement is part of a wider critique of systemic healthcare failures. While it recognizes the issue, it also implicitly advocates for accountability and intervention, positioning healthcare workers and the public as both vulnerable and in need of immediate governmental assistance.

Despite all the preparations made by the state government some parents expressed satisfaction with preparation while other parents didn't express satisfaction by the claims of the government. (punch newspaper, 17th August 2020)

Examining this statement through Fairclough's discourse analysis framework uncovers a fundamental conflict between official assertions and public interpretation. His framework includes three essential components: text (description), discourse practice (interpretation), and sociocultural practice (explanation).

On a textual level, the statement contrasts the government's assertions of being prepared with the varied responses of parents. The phrase "Despite all the preparations made by the state government" suggests that proper measures have been implemented. However, the juxtaposition of "some parents expressed satisfaction" and "while other parents didn't express satisfaction" reveals a split in public sentiment. This discrepancy

raises questions about the effectiveness of the preparations, as the differing opinions among parents imply that the government's claims may not be universally accepted. Additionally, the phrase "didn't express satisfaction" hints at discontent without overtly stating it, allowing for diverse interpretations.

From the perspective of discourse practice, the statement illustrates the conflicting narratives between government representatives and the citizens affected by their policies. The government's narrative aims to project an image of readiness and competence, while the parents' feedback introduces a counter-narrative that challenges this portrayal. The differences in parental responses indicate that experiences with the preparations may vary based on factors such as geographic location, available resources, and personal expectations. Media coverage of these reactions significantly influences public perception, amplifying voices that either contest or support government claims.

At the sociocultural level, this discourse signifies wider societal trends regarding trust in government actions. Education is a vital area, and any perceived shortcomings in preparations for a major exam like the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) can prompt public criticism. The mixed responses from parents imply that government initiatives in education often face skepticism, particularly in areas where previous experiences have exposed gaps between official statements and their actual execution. This also highlights a broader concern of accountability, as government claims are scrutinized by those most affected by their policies.

4.3. Conclusion

Fairclough's analysis illustrates that the discussion about the government's readiness extends beyond mere logistics to encompass public trust and credibility. The differing viewpoints presented underscore the complexities of policy implementation, where official narratives are consistently negotiated and sometimes contested by the lived experiences of citizens.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1. Conclusion

This study has examined the use of fear, control and uncertainty in news media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first chapter which served as the introductory chapter, highlighted the purpose, scope, methodology, theoretical framework, reviews of related scholarship and thesis statement of the study. The study adopts a qualitative research method, alongside Norman Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis. The various sociocultural approach which includes text(description), discourse practice(interpretation), and sociocultural practice(explanation) served as a framework for the presentation and analysis of data. Furthermore, Literature related to the study were reviewed to prove that there are existing study on the use of fear, control and uncertainty of COVID-19, hence, a justification for this research.

Chapter two focused on the portrayal of fear in news media. The analysis of fear based on the various excerpts taken from news report reveals how the media portrays the pandemic.

Chapter three concentrated on the control strategies carried out by the government to put in place the right measures to prevent the spread of the pandemic.

Chapter four explored Uncertainty in news media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. This chapter reveals the mixed reactions of the citizens in relation to the report of the pandemic by the media.

In the analysis of fear, control and uncertainty, the researcher realizes that the news media has a way of shaping public mindset. It's reports of the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the public perception, thereby causing mixed reactions and fear despite all the laid down rules for the further spread of the virus.

This research was undertaken to investigate how fear, control and uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic is portrayed throughout the lens of the news media. By analyzing these variables using Fairclough's approach to discourse analysis, the study reveals the connection between language and public perception.

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APPENDIX

Much of the fear is logical. Is it safe to go to a restaurant or a pub again? Is it less likely we'll catch it now that we're more cautious about going out? Will the "new normal" always look like this?

Fear, by design, is a warning system that puts us on alert and demands attention. It is a necessary neurobiological response to a stimulus that says: "Heads up, get ready to assess and act". When we watch the news, listening to a breaking segment about the crisis on our doorsteps, we are priming ourselves to react. We are wired for fear. But even with the very real fears of a pandemic, we don't need nearly as much of it as we experience. So how do we manage it?

Now we find ourselves in a time when fear has become our new currency. Throughout the pandemic there has been a constant dripping of fear, a sense of catastrophic possibilities. There is a deep feeling of something having shifted, and we're not quite sure what it means yet.

The Gombe State Chairperson of ACOMIN Hassana Maisanda, said this during an advocate meeting in Gombe where she stressed the need to make adequate PPE's available for health workers.

State governments told The PUNCH that they had fulfilled all the guidelines released by the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 to prevent a further spread of COVID-19 during WASSCE.

An interview with a parent stated that "the school of my children has mandated us to get them at least three face masks, tissue papers, sanitizers and face towels, which were to be shown at the school entrance and if students don't have them won't be allowed into the school.

According to the newspaper report there was the introduction of a 3,000 fee for COVID 19 and an increment of School fees in a particular school which was reported anonymously by a parent.

Claims by state governments that they had made adequate preparations for students taking the West African Senior School Examinations, which would start on Monday (today), attracted mixed reactions from parents and teachers on Sunday.

There is also the inadequate provision of Personal protective equipments particularly at primary health centers exposed and as such, they may not be able to provide optimum services as required by the clients,"

Despite all the preparations made by the state government some parents expressed satisfaction with preparation while other parents didn't express satisfaction by the claims of the government.

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