

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF NIGERIA'S ANTHEM REVERSAL-RELATED MEMES

Abiola Sanni Oremeyi & Sekinat Oluwatoyin Disu

Abstract

This study undertakes a descriptive discourse analysis of Netizens' opinions expressed in memes on X (formerly known as Twitter) on the subject of the change of Nigeria's national anthem. The selected memes contain various linguistic modes that convey the psychological, physiological, and ideological reactions of some Nigerians to the adoption of the old national anthem. Twelve posts were purposively collected on Twitter (X) from May to June 2024 and subjected to qualitative analysis by employing the tenets of Appraisal Theory propounded by Martin and White (2005). The findings of the study reveal that the passion of netizens was ignited following the change in the national anthem which elicited negative responses some of which were conveyed through expressions such as "wahala" and the rhetorical question "What is the need for a new national anthem?" to convey outright rejection of the anthem. The study concludes that netizens are powerful agents of social change when they react to government policies and therefore, recommends active participation of citizens to foster peace and unity in the country.

Keywords: Discourse Analysis, National Anthem, Netizens, Nigeria, Social Media

Introduction

With the rise of the internet and technological innovations, including various applications, social media has permeated homes and become essential to daily life (Yan, 2021). In Nigeria, the availability of smartphones and access to the internet has fueled the use of social media for communication, content creation, and social-political mobilization. Conventional communication which involves face-to-face interaction occurs in social media when someone comments on posts or initiates a conversation (Othman, Apaudi, & Noah, 2016). Social media platforms allow information to be disseminated conveniently from one's home or phone to audiences worldwide, leading many people to rely heavily on information shared on social media. The process of communication draws on several inter and intra-personal skills such as observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, and assimilating (Fatimayin, 2018). These features present the basis for the investigation of netizens' reactions on social media platforms.

Every nation takes pride in its identity and the markers of such identities. The national anthem is one of the markers of the identity of a country; it espouses a people's passion, their past, and a projection of the future (Mutemererwa, Chamisa, & Chambwera, 2013). National anthems serve as symbols of identity, with language carefully chosen to convey their core messages. Having fulfilled its purpose and embodied the essence of nationhood, the proposal to change Nigeria's national anthem to the current version, which was an old one, came as a surprise. The rapid progression through readings, followed by its approval and adoption on May 29th, 2024,

marked a new era for the national anthem. The Nigerian government's 2024 re-adoption of the old anthem sparked a significant response from citizens and netizens alike. The socio-political awareness generated a series of comments from "citizens of the net" or "net citizens" who are referred to as netizens. (Netizens is a neologism formed through a morphological blend of two lexical items, "citizens" and "Internet" (Maledo & Edobor, 2023)). Given the symbolic importance of a national anthem, this reaction was predictable. The need to examine netizens' comments and consider the implications of these responses regarding the recent change to this vital symbol of national identity formed the basis for this study. Kelen (2014) posits that the lyrics of national anthems are suitable for exploring identity and socio-economic considerations; this study, therefore aims to conduct a discourse analysis of the comments made by netizens on social media regarding the changed Nigerian national anthem, examine the linguistic and rhetorical strategies and assess the overall sentiment expressed in the comments to understand the response to the new anthem. Consequently, the response of netizens provides the background to the study.

Literature Review

The national anthem helps to unite the citizens of a country despite their ethnic differences. In some instances, composers of national anthems remain unknown; for example, the origin and the author of the British national anthem, "God Save the Queen" is unknown (Rosler, 2022). Coming home to Nigeria, the new version, "Nigeria, We Hail Thee" which took effect

in May 2024, was first introduced in 1960 when Nigeria gained independence from Britain before it was changed by the military in 1978. The lyrics of "Nigeria, We Hail Thee", were written by Lillian Jean Williams, a British expatriate, who lived in Nigeria at its independence while the music was composed by Frances Benda. The song was used as the national anthem until 1978 when a new anthem, composed by Taiwo Akinkunmi, was introduced. The previous anthem, "Arise, O Compatriots", was replaced with "Nigeria, We Hail Thee" when the bill was signed into law by President Bola Tinubu on 29 May 2024.

Several studies have been conducted on national anthems. Silaghi-Dumitrescu (2023) is based on trends in the texts of national anthems with an emphasis on a comparative study of national anthems and their lyrics. The study reveals that the sentiment scores of the anthems vary by country. Amenorvi and Grumah (2019) investigate the major themes espoused in the national anthems of English West Africa and their findings confirm that national anthems of countries that share colonial history, language, and geographical location are similar in content and style. Osler and Starkey (2005) observe that reintroducing the old anthem can serve as an educational tool that is capable of bridging the gap between generations affirming that older Nigerians who remember the anthem from their youth may feel a renewed connection to their heritage, while younger generations can learn about the historical context of their country's independence. In all, these studies agree that the national anthem is a unifying factor in a country.

Memes and Social Media: Tools for Socio-political and Economic Engagement

Meme which is derived from the Greek word ‘mimena’ means imitated thing. It was originally introduced by Richard Dawkins in 1989 to describe the concept of cultural transmission. Knobel and Lankshear (2019) examine the three characteristics of memes namely: fidelity, fecundity, and longevity, and their findings reveal that the three characteristics are essential for the circulation of memes. Backhauge (2011) posits that a meme carries textual information and/or images with various kinds of messages shared mainly using electronic mail, instant messaging, forums, blogs, and other social media platforms, a position Wang and Wood (2011) corroborate. They assert that digital memes are infectious based on their ability to spread across the internet, that is, ‘go viral’. Shifman (2014) affirms that internet memes often represent fleeting trends while Brown (2022) notes that memes are highly versatile and serve as tools for enlightenment, self-expression, social commentary, and political discourse; they appeal to diverse demographics because the mode of presentation resonates with such groups. Maledo and Ativie (2022) aver that memes and language complement each other as viewers are made to gain easy and quick access to the messages being communicated with a visual understanding of the realities on ground. Meme as a phenomenon disseminates information through social media to propagate information with spectacular speed and elicit humour which is enjoyed by a wide audience hence they are passed around the internet (Milltner, 2014).

According to Kamalu and Osisanwo (2015), discourse analysis is the analysis of language in use or better put, it is the study of language at use. Discourse analysis is a vast discipline and insights from it have been used in solving problems that originate from so many other disciplines and domains of studying the world (Gee 2011). Discourse analysis is interested in ‘what happens when people draw on the knowledge they have about language . . . to do things in the world’ (Johnstone 2002, p.3). Discourse analysis, in addition to studying language use “beyond the sentence boundary”, also analyzes naturally occurring language use. Stubbs (as cited in Rahim, 2018) describes discourse analysis as the study of language above the sentence or the clause in conversational exchanges or written texts. Discourse analysis as an interdisciplinary field draws on various theories such as Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962), Conversational Analysis (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974), (Sinclair & Coulthard 1975), Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995), Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005), among others. Several studies have applied the theories of discourse analysis in specific types of discourses; hence, the need to adopt the Appraisal Theory of Martin and White (2005) for this study.

Moy (2010) notes that social media, and specifically news media, play an essential role in democratic societies by enabling citizen participation. She reiterates that for democratic networks to remain healthy, news must be accurate to sustain public trust, which is crucial for a well-functioning democratic system. Okocha and Chigbo (2024) examine the social media landscape in Africa and focus on how social media has advanced the

mobilization of youths for social-political change in Africa. Their findings indicate that social media can be a double-edged sword that is capable of either empowering the youth for active participation in good governance or undermining the process. Yaqub et al. (2021) note that the proliferation of social media has created a unique platform for communication between government institutions and citizens, providing a massive number of people with the ability to gather information and express their views. Social media has become a powerful tool for governments to engage with the public and foster dialogue, ultimately resulting in more transparent and accountable governance. In Nigeria and the world at large, almost everyone in the community is connected. This advancement has made it possible for the instantaneous dissemination of information both locally and globally. Kalyango and Adu-Kumi (2022) note that netizens across Africa, particularly, in Kenya Ghana, Egypt, and Tunisia have used social media to get their various governments to respond to their needs.

Ovuorie (2022) observes that people who have social media access, mainly the urban youth, use it to criticize the government. For example, the reaction of netizens to the changed national anthem is a clear consequence of unfettered access to social media and how it facilitates freedom to comment on government policies. Social media platforms facilitate the smooth dissemination of information as it can now be done from the comfort of one's home or phone to other parts of the world. With this opportunity, many individuals rely heavily on information shared on social media by using writing as one of the skills to interact with others.

Consequently, Twitter (X), a social media platform, is central to this study as the primary source of data collection.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs the Appraisal Theory of Martin and White (2005) which is theoretically grounded in Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. It is a new development of the interpersonal meaning in systemic functional linguistics which in recent years, has been widely used in different genres to study how different appraisal methods are used. The Appraisal Theory which is primarily a tool in discourse analysis, focuses on the interpersonal dimension of discourse to interpret 'the subjective presence of writers/speakers in texts as they adopt stances towards both the material they present and those with whom they communicate' (Martin & White, 2005, p. 1). Appraisal theory examines how language is used to evaluate and express attitudes, emotions, and values in extended texts and communicative contexts by considering the grammatical and lexical resources used in the expression of attitudes, the modality, the degree of commitment, and the stance of the speaker towards the audience. It also takes into cognizance pragmatic strategies which include hedging and boosting and speech acts such as compliments and criticism. Hyland (2005) lists directives, questions, personal asides, and pronouns as resources to convey engagement while White (2015) emphasizes the use of evidential markers such as: 'apparently', and 'it's probable'. Through an examination of the choices that speakers make regarding the use of appraisal resources, Eggins (2004, p. 184) suggests that

‘We can see speakers making meanings about such interpersonal dimensions as: the power or solidarity of their relationship, the extent of their intimacy, their level of familiarity with each other and their attitudes and judgments’. Thompson and Hunston (2000, p.6) describe the expression of the writer's opinion as an important feature of the language, and add that ‘it needs to be accounted for in a full description of the meanings of texts’. Firth (as cited in Osuchukwu, 2022, p. 157) notes that ‘the complete meaning of a word is always contextual, and no study of meaning apart from a complete context can be taken seriously but the evaluative status of a word can be determined through its context’.

The Appraisal framework is useful in the analysis of written discourse in scientific research articles (Moyano, 2019) and political discourse (Aloy Mayo & Taboada 2017; Ross & Caldwell, 2020). The choice of the theory for this study is predicated on the versatility of the theory to facilitate interpretation of the comments particularly when situated in the right context. By exploring these aspects, a better understanding of how language conveys and negotiates attitudes, emotions, and values in social interactions is made more appreciable.

Methodology

The study is a descriptive one hence the data which are memes tweeted by ‘netizens’ on Twitter (X) were selected for the study. The selected memes contain various linguistic modes that convey the psychological and ideological reactions of some Nigerians to the changed national anthem. Twelve tweets were purposely sourced from Twitter from May to June 2024 and subjected to

qualitative analysis by employing the Appraisal theory by Martin and White (2005). The analysis focuses on how the sentences express attitudes (affect), evaluate actions (judgment), and construct interpersonal meaning (appreciation).

Data Presentation and Analysis

A total of twelve comments by netizens sourced from Twitter (X) were labelled as Image 1-12 for analysis. Each text was analyzed using the three main categories of the appraisal theory namely: Affect (emotions), Judgment (ethics and morality), and Appreciation (aesthetics and valuation).

Datum1



Affect: The sentence, "Pass the New Minimum Wage Act" is a demand, appraising the proposed action as

necessary and urgent; it expresses the speaker's desire to see that the government does what will benefit the working class who need the minimum wage.

Judgment: "Pass the New Minimum Wage Act in 48 hours the same way you did for the national anthem", appraises the government's previous action on the national anthem. The statement is tinged with sarcasm and condemnation as they were efficient and effective when it suited their purpose but do want to act decisively on the minimum wage bill. The speaker adjudges the lack of consideration as a manifestation of incompetence on the part of the government.

Appreciation: the speaker sees some urgency in the need for the government to take similar decisive action on the minimum wage bill as it did with the national anthem.

Datum 2



Charlexcasa ★ 🌐 @Charlex... · 01 Jun
So person will wake up thinking of what to eat and still thinking about how to learn the **new National Anthem**



💬 14

🔄 20

❤️ 28

👁️ 798



Affect: The phrase "and still think about how to learn the new national anthem" appraises the person's mental

energy which he believes ought to be dedicated to important issues instead of being devoted to the significant matter of learning the new national anthem.

Judgment: The tweeter evaluates the national anthem as being unimportant considering the harsh economic environment which requires immediate attention. The implication is that instead of using the time to source for a means of livelihood, he is being burdened with the trivial matters of a new national anthem when an anthem is already in place.

Appreciation: The entire sentence suggests that the government's actions of passing a new national anthem will distract the person from more pressing concerns if he is not mindful of how he spends his time.

Datum 3



Foundational Yorùbá Boy @... · 2d

To those saying
"I will not sing the **New Nigerian National Anthem**, "Nigeria, we hail thee..."
"It's not my anthem"
Yada yada yada yada.
Tell them, the Director General of NOA
has this message for them.
Tag them for me pls



🗨️ 1

🔄 3

❤️ 9

👁️ 821

🔖 🔊

Affect: The speaker's emotions are indirectly conveyed through the dismissive phrase "yada yada yada yada," suggesting frustration or lack of respect.

Judgment: There is a clear moral judgment against those refusing to sing the anthem, emphasized by the involvement of the Director General and the directive to tag them.

Appreciation: The bolding of "New" and "National Anthem" emphasizes its significance and value as a national symbol, suggesting that the national anthem is appreciated and valued, while the refusal to sing it is devalued and dismissed. The tweeter expressed a negative stance towards those who refuse to sing the anthem, while simultaneously stressing the authority and importance of the anthem through the involvement of the Director General. "The Director General has this message for them" introduces an authoritative figure, suggesting that the message carries official weight and importance. The sentence also performs the speech act: "Tell them," and "Tag them for me please" are directives ordering the listener to perform actions while the expressive act "Yada yada yada yada" conveys the speaker's displeasure at those who do not want to sing it. The combination of these elements constructs a powerful and persuasive discourse that emphasizes the importance of the anthem and the authority of the Director General.

Datum 4



Effect: The phrase "wahala" is supposed to convey concern or anxiety the school children may encounter while learning the national anthem but is intended as a touch of sarcasm as reinforced by the sentence, "the old

one sef I don forget am”. This sentence reflects a lack of concern; he appears indifferent to singing the anthem.

Judgment: The use of "wahala" suggests a negative judgment about the requirement for children to sing the anthem. The tweet implies that it is an unfair or challenging situation for them. His admission of not remembering the old anthem indicates that the speaker does not consider this a moral failing.

Appreciation: By using “wahala” in describing the children’s expected inability to learn the new anthem, the speaker indirectly criticizes the effectiveness of the anthem. The subtext suggests that the anthem may not have much significance or practical value going by the tweeter’s inability to remember the old one.

Datum 5



Uwagbale Edward-Ekpu @uwa... · 6d

The new Nigerian national anthem is racist.

It is no accident that the contemporary uses of the term tribe were developed during the 19th-century rise of evolutionary and racist theories to designate alien non-white peoples as inferior or less civilized and as having not yet evolved from a simpler, primal state.

"Tribe" and "Tribalism" - The Africa Center -
University of Pennsylvania
www.africa.upenn.edu › Tribe

2 15 22 2.8K

Affect: The term 'racist' expresses strong negative feelings toward the anthem while the second part of the sentence examines the historical context which in the past

saw 'non-white' people as inferior thereby suggesting a sense of injustice. Both sentences indirectly convey strong negative emotions and also challenge existing power structures.

Judgment: It is obvious that the anthem has been categorized as ethically and morally wrong as demonstrated by the use of the term "racist" which is verdictive and laced with prejudice. In addition, the term "tribe," which is described as a product of "evolutionary and racist theories", and the words "inferior" and "less civilized" further emphasize the level of recrimination.

Appreciation: The sentence assesses the new Nigerian national anthem negatively; it considers it as promoting racist ideologies which is inimical to the development of the country.

Datum 6



Affect: The word "Imagine" invites the reader to visualize a scenario, evoking anticipation or curiosity while the exclamation "yeeeeeee, wahala, wahala" emphasizes the seriousness of the situation as well as anticipates trouble.

Judgment: The phrase "wahala, wahala" implies a negative judgment about the scenario. It suggests that having the Super Eagles recite the new anthem in this context could be a problem for them considering the limited time they have to rehearse it and the subsequent poor performance they may display in South Africa.

Appreciation: The term "wahala, wahala" is a negative evaluation of the imagined scenario. The mention of South Africa has some undertones as it relates to sports rivalries, political relations, or other socio-political factors. The use of "Imagine" and the exclamation "yeeeeeee" engage the reader, creating a sense of shared concern or anticipation of impending trouble as he anticipates the difficulties the Super Eagles may encounter while reciting the new national anthem in South Africa.

Datum 7



Affect: The speaker expresses strong emotions of frustration and pessimism about Nigeria's political situation as can be seen from the phrase "Nigeria will never move forward" which connotes a strong sense of frustration and pessimism.

Judgment: The text criticizes the leadership for not having an agenda and for launching initiatives without discussing it in the National Assembly. This is seen as a failure on the part of the leadership; it also shows a lack of consultation considering how speedily the anthem was approved.

Appreciation: The overall evaluation of Nigeria's political situation is negative while the statement "Biafra is the only way" connotes a positive evaluation of Biafra as a probable solution. The tweeter distances himself from the current Nigerian leadership and those perceived as insensitive in their thinking. The emotional and evaluative

language used conveys the tweeter's perspective on the political situation and the proposed alternative.

Datum 8



Affect: The tweet expresses confusion and frustration. The rhetorical question "What's the need for a new national anthem??" conveys bewilderment and a sense of unnecessary disruption. The use of "wahala" (a Nigerian Pidgin term for trouble or problems) underscores the tweeter's exasperation with the current state of affairs, by using this common language and expressions, the speaker aligns themselves with the general public who are also experiencing these troubles, creating a sense of solidarity and shared frustration.

Judgment: The tweet questions the rationale behind creating a new national anthem, implicitly criticizing the decision as ill-timed or misguided given the current issues ("current wahala"). This suggests a moral judgment emphasizing misplaced priorities of the leadership. The question "Was national orientation agency even carried

along?" criticizes the lack of inclusiveness in the decision-making process which implies a failure in proper governance and stakeholder engagement.

Appreciation: The need for a new national anthem is evaluated negatively, especially in the context of existing problems. The rhetorical question suggests that the new anthem is unnecessary and poorly prioritized.

Datum 9



Affect: The tweet conveys a sense of irony and frustration. The rhetorical question "Wahala no too much?" (meaning "Isn't this trouble too much?") indicates annoyance about the situation. The mention of the Ambassador "eating his lips" during the anthem suggests that he could not sing the anthem hence the lip chewing to mimic singing. This embarrassing act reflects the speaker's emotional response to the observed scenario.

Judgment: The tweet criticizes the political leadership for the decision to change the national anthem. It suggests that those who praised Tinubu for his bold political moves are now unable to handle the consequences, implying that the leadership's actions are inconsistent or misguided. The

mention of the former Ambassador "eating his lips" during the anthem serves as a subtle critique, implying that even esteemed individuals are struggling with the new anthem. This tweet questions the sensibility of the change and the decision-making process behind it given the poor timing and the lack of public reception.

Appreciation: The tweet negatively evaluates the decision to change the national anthem. The irony in the statement about Tinubu's political will and the discomfort of a former Ambassador underscore a sense of disapproval and skepticism.

Datum 10



Affect: The tweet conveys surprise and confusion. The phrase "Nigeria we inhale you or wetin I dey hear?" suggests disbelief at the content of the new national anthem. The use of "wahala" (trouble) indicates frustration or concern about the situation. The deliberate

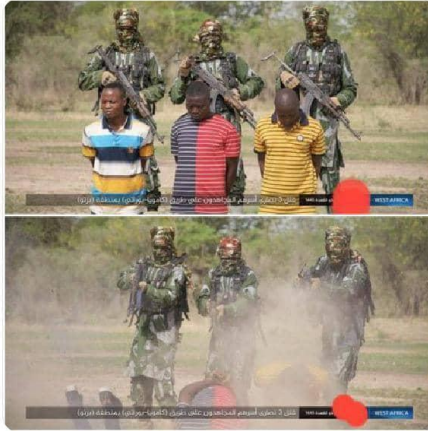
use of 'inhale' which rhymes with 'hail' the last word of the first line of the national anthem, adds a layer of sarcastic amusement.

Judgment: The tweet implicitly criticizes the change in the national anthem. By questioning the lyrics with "Nigeria we inhale you or wetin I dey hear?", the speaker implies that the new anthem is nonsensical or poorly conceived. Also, the rhetorical question and the term "wahala" suggest that the speaker disapproves of the national anthem and consequently, questions the change of the anthem.

Appreciation: The tweet evaluates the new national anthem negatively. The rhetorical question and the expression of surprise indicate that the speaker does not appreciate the content or the quality of the new anthem. The tweet implies that the new anthem is causing confusion and dissatisfaction among the public as illustrated by the phrase "Wahala be like new National Anthem" which shows a negative appraisal of the change. The tweet therefore expresses a sense of public dissatisfaction as well as questions the sensibility of the change.

Datum 11

 @FineSilverBack · 1h
Nigeria: A country where Christians are shot in the back of their heads, execution style by terrorists while the government occupies itself with a **new national anthem** and the citizens revel in tribal politics.



  1  2  23  

Affect: The tweet reveals some degree of frustration, anger, and despair as conveyed by the vivid imagery of Christians being "shot in the back of their heads, execution style by terrorists". This sentence induces a sense of deep sorrow and thus contrasts sharply with the activities of the government and citizens who do not seem to be bothered by these happenings.

Judgment: The tweet seems to criticize the government for its perceived negligence and misplaced priorities. The statement, that the government is "occupying itself with a new national anthem" while people are being brutally

killed, condemns the authorities failing to protect citizens. In the same manner, the phrase "citizens revel in tribal politics" condemns the general populace for engaging in superficial matters instead of addressing critical issues which include terrorism and violence, and thus assumes the stance of moral judgment against societal behaviours and priorities.

Appreciation: The tweet serves to appraise the priorities of both the government and the citizens. It considers the attention being given to the new national anthem as absurd in comparison to the dire security situation and this underscores a deep sense of dissatisfaction and incredulity.

Datum 12



Affect: The comparison between the old and new national anthems communicates sarcasm. The phrase "Fatherland BEFORE, Motherland NOW" suggests that the country is

not sure if it is fatherland or motherland. The comment "At least DNA wahala no go dey" adds humour, indicating a light-hearted response to what he views as the dilemma of national identity.

Judgment: The tweet subtly criticizes the shift from "fatherland" to "motherland." The contrast between the two terms implies some level of uncertainty in the national ideology. Regarding the DNA issue which he describes as "wahala no go dey", gives the impression that since the 'father' and the 'mother' form a family unit, there will be no question of illegitimacy.

Appreciation: The change from "fatherland" to "motherland" is noted with a hint of scepticism which shows a lack of consistency on the part of the country while the humourous interjection suggests an appreciation for humour in addressing contentious topics while using wit to diffuse the tension.

Discussion and Findings

This study has attempted to investigate comments by netizens on the new national anthem. The data was sourced from Twitter (X) and the appraisal theory of Martin and White (2005) was the theoretical underpinning for the study. The study identifies the main themes and topics discussed by netizens in their comments about the new national anthem. For the first objective, our findings show that most netizens did not react positively to the change in the national anthem. Most of the tweeters used "wahala", which is a Nigerian Pidgin term for trouble or problems to express their dissatisfaction with the new national identity that the anthem represents. This validates the findings of Mutemererwa, Chamisa, and Chambwera

(2013) who observe that the national anthem is one of the markers of the identity of a country as it espouses a people's passion. From the reaction and comments of netizens, it is obvious that the passion of netizens was ignited as seen in their comments. The second objective was to examine the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used by netizens in expressing their views. As observed by Martin and White (2005), the appraisal theory examines how language is used to evaluate and express attitudes, emotions, and values in texts and communicative contexts. From the analysis, Figures 1, 4, and 12 have elements of humour and sarcasm that serve to express their attitudes toward the new national anthem. In addition, the use of Nigerian Pidgin in the tweets and retweets helps to promote linguistic inclusivity of people from diverse linguistic backgrounds as almost everyone can relate to Nigerian Pidgin. According to Osuchukwu (2022), the complete meaning of a word is always contextual. It is obvious in Figure 7 that there was no mention of the national anthem in its tweet, but by applying context, one could decipher that the topic of discussion was the national anthem.

The third objective of the study is to establish the overall sentiment expressed in the comments and understand the emotional responses to the new anthem. By applying the appraisal theory in the analysis, it was found that the change in the national anthem elicits a lot of negative responses some of which were conveyed through expressions such as 'wahala' and the rhetorical question in Figure 8 'What is the need for a new national anthem?' convey outright rejection of the anthem. The emotions of netizens such as condemnation and

dissatisfaction concerning the changed national anthem were adequately communicated in the tweets; consequently, the study concludes that netizens are powerful agents who are capable of influencing their sphere when they decide to comment on societal issues. Based on the findings, the study recommends that citizens ought to be given opportunities to participate in governance.

References

- Aloy M. M. & Taboada, M. (2017). Evaluation in political discourse addressed to women: appraisal analysis of Cosmopolitan's online coverage of the 2014 US midterm elections. *Discourse, Context and Media*, 18, 40-48
- Amenorvi, C.R. & Grumah, G.Y. (2019). A thematic analysis of the national anthem of English West Africa. *The Journal of Applied Linguistics and Applied Literature: Dynamics and Advances* 7(1) Winter and Spring 2019, pp.141-151
- Backhauge, C. (2011). *Insights into internet memes*. Proceedings of the fifth international AAAI conference on Weblogs and Social Media, Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (www.aaai.org)
- Dawkins, R. (1989). *Memes: The new replicators*. The Selfish Gene (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. p. 368. ISBN 9780192177735
- Eggins, S. (1994/2004) *An introduction to Systemic Functional Linguistics*. Continuum.
- Fatimayin, F.F. (n.d). https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337649561_What_is_Communication.
- Halliday, M.A.K (1994/2004) *An introduction to Functional Grammar*. Edward Arnold. (2004 third edition revised by Christian Matthiessen).

- Hyland, K. (2005). Stance and engagement: A model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies* 7 (2), 173-192
- Kalyango, Y. & Adu-Kumi, B. (2013). Impact of social media on political mobilization in *East and West Africa. Global Media Journal*, 12(1).
<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Impact-of-Social-Media-on-Political-Mobilization-in-Kalyango-Adu-Kumi/d190b3a377ecaa05cc3af2298d56685cf791a9dd>
- Kamalu, I. & Osisanwo, A. (2015) *Discourse analysis*. In Ikenna Kamalu and Isaac Tamunobelem. (Eds.) Issues in the study of language and literature Pp 169-195 Kraft Books Limited. ISBN 978-918-321-0.
- Kelen C.K. Intellect Ltd.; Bristol: 2014. *Anthem quality: National songs and a theoretical survey*. [Google Scholar]
- Lankshear, Colin; Knobel, Michele (2019). "Memes, Macros, Meaning, and Menace: Some Trends in Internet Memes". *The Journal of Communication and Media Studies*. 4 (4): 43–57. doi:10.18848/2470-9247/CGP/v04i04/43-57. ISSN 2470-9247. S2CID 214369629.
- Maledo, R. O. & Ativie K. (2022). Visuality, Language and Communication in COVID-19 Nigerian Social Media Images. *International Review of Humanities Studies* 7(2). <https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/irhs/vol7/iss2/9>
- Maledo, R.O., & Edobor, H.O. (2023). A Morpho-semantic Analysis of Some Nigerian Internet-based Slangs. *KIU Interdisciplinary Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 4(1), 110-12
- Martin, J.R. & White, P.R.R. (2005). *The Language of Evaluation. Appraisal in English*. Macmillan. Available from <https://www.palgrave.com/us/book/9781403904096>

- Miltner, K. M. (2018) *Internet Memes*. The Sage Handbook of Social Media. Sage Publications. pp. 412–428. doi:10.4135/9781473984066.n23.
- Moy, P. (2010). Media Effects on Political and Social Trust. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*. 77 (4): 744–759. doi:10.1177/107769900007700403. S2CID 144975182.
- Moyano, E. (2019) Knowledge construction in discussions of research articles in two disciplines in Spanish: The role of resources of Appraisal. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 139, 231-246
- Mutemererwa, S., Chamisa, V. & Chambwera, G. (2013). The national anthem: A mirror image of the Zimbabwean identity? *Journal of Music Research in Africa* 10 (1), 52-61 <https://doi.org/10.1080/18125980.2013.805969>
- Oishimaya S. N. (2019) *What is the purpose of a national anthem?* In Special articles. <https://www.worldatlas.com/what-does-the-national-anthem-mean.html>
- Okocha, D.O. & Chigbo, M. (2024) *Social media landscape in Africa: mobilizing and engineering youths for socio-political change in Sub-Saharan Africa*. The Changing Global Media Landscapes: Convergence, Fragmentation and Polarization DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-3767-7 ch10
- Osler, A. & Starkey, H. (2005). *Changing citizenship: Democracy and inclusion in education*. McGraw-Hill Education.
- Osuchukwu, C.N (2022) The Role of context in meaning construction beyond semantics to pragmatics *African Journal of Humanities & Contemporary Education Research* 5 (1)
- Ovuorie, T. (2022). *Increased social media use puts African leaders on edge*. DW. <https://corporate.dw.com/en/increased-social-media-use-puts-african-leaders-on-edge/a-61303854>

- Rahim, N.A. (2018) Discourse analysis theory: a new perspective in analysis Infrastructure University *Kuala Lumpur Research Journal* 6. (1) 46 -53
- Rosler, P. (2022) God Save the Queen. A brief history DW-TV <https://amp.dw.com/en/god-save-the-queen-a-brief-history-of-the-anthem/a-63071682>
- Ross, A. S. & Caldwell, D. (2020). Going negative: An appraisal analysis of the rhetoric of Donald Trump on Twitter. *Language and Communication*. 70, 13-27.
- Silaghi-Dumitrescu R. (2023) *Trends in the texts of national anthems: A comparative study*.
- Thompson, G. & Hunston, S. (2000). 'Evaluation: An introduction.' In S. Hunston & G. Thompson (eds.) *Evaluation in Text*. Oxford University Press, pp. 1-27.
- Shifman, L. (2014). *Memes in Digital Culture*. MIT Press. ISBN 9781469063256. OCLC 929971523.
- Yan, N. (2021, June). Social media is redistributing power. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*. 9 (6). DOI: [10.4236/jss.2021.96010](https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2021.96010)