

**BY**

**APEROJA OMOWUNMI DEBORAH  
HND/23/MAC/FT/0352**

**SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION,  
INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION  
TECHNOLOGY (IICT), KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN,  
KWARA STATE.**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE  
AWARD OF HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA (HND) IN MASS  
COMMUNICATION.**

**JUNE, 2025.**

## **DEDICATION**

This research project is dedicated to God, the Almighty, without whom this publication might not have seen the light of the day, and to my dear parents. Pst and Mrs. Aperoja for their great love and care.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

All glory to God Almighty for His unending grace, strength, and mercy throughout this research journey. Without Him, this project wouldn't have been possible, I honestly would've lost my mind.

To my supervisor, Mr. Olufadi, thank you for your guidance, corrections, and patience. God bless you.

To the Department of Mass Communication, Institute of information, communication and technology, Kwara State Polytechnic. Thank you for the academic foundation and support.

I want to specially appreciate my amazing parents, Mr. and Mrs. Aperoja for your endless love, prayers, sacrifices, and for being my biggest supporters. You are my backbone, and I'm blessed to be your daughter.

To my wonderful siblings, Aperoja Yetunde, Aperoja Daniel, and Aperoja Ezekiel thank you for always cheering me on and being there through it all. I love you dearly.

To my ever-reliable pal, Abegunde Daniel Moranugba, thank you for riding with me throughout this project. Your time, effort, and encouragement made a world of difference. You're truly appreciated.

To everyone who contributed to this research especially those who took time to fill the questionnaire, your input was valuable and helped shape the outcome of this work. Thank you so much.

And now... to the star of the show – me, Aperoja Omowunmi (Hormor) the baby girl who didn't let pressure win. I showed up, pressed on, cried small, laughed hard, and still delivered like the queen that I am. From sleepless nights to stressful days, I didn't fold I finished strong. I'm proud of myself, and this is just the beginning. Big energy only from here on!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
ASBTRACT.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background to the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study .....	5
1.4 Research Questions.....	6
1.5 Research Hypotheses .....	6
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	7
1.7 Operational Definition of Terms and Variables.....	8
1.8 Significance of the Study .....	8
CHAPTER TWO .....	9
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Conceptual Framework .....	10
2.3 Theoretical Framework .....	14
2.4 Empirical Reports Review .....	20
CHAPTER THREE .....	24
RESAECRH METHODOLOGY .....	24
3.1 Research Design.....	24
3.2 Method of Data Analysis .....	24

3.3 Sample size and Sampling Techniques .....	24
3.4 Instrumentation for Data Collection .....	25
3.5 Validity of Research Instrument .....	25
3.6 Reliability of Research Instrument .....	25
3.7 Method for Data Collection .....	26
3.8 Method of Data Analysis .....	27
CHAPTER FOUR.....	28
DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS.....	28
Section A: Demographic Profile of Respondents .....	28
Section B: Media Consumption Habits.....	29
Section C: Public Perception on Fuel Subsidy Removal .....	30
CHAPTER FIVE .....	33
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	33
5.1 Summary .....	33
5.2 Conclusion .....	34
5.3 Recommendations.....	35
APPENDIX.....	39

## **ASBTRACT**

*This study investigates the effects of media coverage on fuel subsidy removal and its influence on public opinion in Ilorin South, Kwara State. The removal of fuel subsidies in Nigeria has sparked widespread debate, with the media playing a critical role in shaping public perceptions and responses. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 100 respondents through structured questionnaires. The study examined media consumption habits, the perceived tone and frequency of media coverage, and the extent to which these influence citizens' opinions and trust in government policies. Findings revealed that most respondents rely heavily on social media for news, encounter frequent media reports on fuel subsidy removal, and believe that media portrayal significantly affects public trust in government decisions. The study also found that socio-economic background and the type of media platform consumed influence perceptions. It concludes that balanced and objective media coverage is essential for fostering public understanding and trust in policy reforms. Recommendations were made for improved journalistic standards and strategic public communication by government agencies.*

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Fuel subsidies have been a cornerstone of Nigeria's economic policies since the 1970s, designed to shield citizens from the global volatility of oil prices despite Nigeria being a major oil producer. These subsidies were introduced to make fuel affordable, reduce transportation costs, and ease the cost of living, particularly for low-income households. However, over time, they have become a source of economic strain, diverting billions of naira annually from critical sectors like education, healthcare, and infrastructure (Usman, 2019). The continued allocation of funds to fuel subsidies has been criticized for limiting Nigeria's ability to invest in long-term developmental goals.

The rising cost of maintaining subsidies, coupled with fluctuating global oil prices, has led successive governments to consider their reduction or removal. However, such attempts are often met with significant public backlash, stemming from widespread concerns about the immediate economic implications for ordinary citizens. This resistance is further fueled by mistrust in how governments utilize the funds saved from subsidy removal. Ibrahim (2021) notes that a lack of transparency in communicating the intended benefits of subsidy reforms has consistently undermined public confidence in such policies.

Media coverage plays a pivotal role in shaping public understanding and reactions to fuel subsidy removal. As the primary source of information for many Nigerians, the media influences public perceptions through its choice of narratives and framing techniques. Reports emphasizing hardships, such as rising transportation and food costs, often amplify public discontent and resistance (Okeke & Yusuf, 2020). Studies indicate that when media frames subsidy removal

predominantly in terms of its short-term economic pain rather than potential long-term benefits, it fosters widespread opposition (Johnson et al., 2022). The media's role as an agenda-setter makes it a powerful determinant in the success or failure of government policies.

Subsidy removal, while seen as a necessary economic reform by policymakers, has a profound impact on the cost of living. This is particularly true for low-income households, for whom the policy can exacerbate existing financial struggles. Media portrayals often emphasize these immediate challenges, such as inflation, rising transportation costs, and increased prices of essential goods, which further heighten public distrust and opposition (Afolabi & Etim, 2021). Amadi and Nwaorgu (2023) found that such coverage shapes public perceptions by fostering feelings of insecurity and mistrust in the government's intentions, particularly when there is a lack of clarity on how savings from subsidy removal will be reinvested in public welfare.

The sensitivity of fuel subsidy removal is rooted not only in its economic implications but also in its socio-political context. The policy often highlights the disparity between government elites and the general population, particularly in regions like Ilorin South, Kwara State, where socio-economic challenges are more pronounced. Residents in such areas are acutely affected by the ripple effects of subsidy removal, as increased fuel prices directly translate to higher transportation and food costs. This makes the role of local media critical, as it serves as the primary source of information and reflects the concerns of the community.

Aliyu (2023) notes that local media in Ilorin South often tailors its coverage to align with the realities of the region's socio-economic population. This localized approach ensures that narratives resonate with the audience, but it also amplifies the impact of media framing on public opinion. For instance, when local media focuses on the struggles of low-income earners and small business owners, it intensifies resistance to subsidy removal policies. On the other hand,



balanced coverage that includes the potential benefits, such as improved infrastructure or economic growth, could foster a more nuanced public response.

Moreover, the interplay between traditional and digital media has further complicated public discourse on fuel subsidy removal. Social media platforms, in particular, have become spaces for citizens to express their frustrations and organize protests, often fueled by sensationalized media reports. This dynamic underscores the evolving role of media as both a source of information and a tool for mobilization. Balogun and Omotosho (2021) argue that the growing reliance on digital media, especially among younger demographics, has heightened the speed and intensity of public reactions to subsidy-related policies.

This study focuses on Ilorin South, Kwara State, to explore how local media influences public opinion in a regional context. The area's diverse socio-economic composition makes it an ideal setting to investigate how different demographic groups respond to media narratives about fuel subsidy removal. By examining the relationship between media framing and public perception in Ilorin South, this study seeks to provide insights into the broader implications of media coverage on contentious government policies. Such insights are crucial for understanding the role of communication strategies in managing public responses to economic reforms and ensuring policy success.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The problem stems from the recurring public backlash each time fuel subsidies are reduced or removed in Nigeria. Historically, this backlash is often driven by how the media portrays these changes, either by highlighting the hardships that accompany subsidy removal or by presenting it as a necessary economic reform (Afolabi, 2021). While fuel subsidy removal is intended to redirect resources toward critical sectors like infrastructure, education, and healthcare, its

implementation often faces resistance due to the immediate financial burden it places on citizens, especially low-income households.

The role of media in influencing public sentiment is significant, as research shows that media framing can either amplify public resistance by emphasizing the immediate financial burdens or encourage understanding by explaining potential long-term economic benefits (Onuoha, 2020). The framing of policy changes as either beneficial or harmful has a profound effect on public trust in government decisions. For instance, narratives focusing on increased transportation costs, food price inflation, and general economic hardship tend to provoke strong opposition. Conversely, balanced reporting that outlines both the short-term challenges and potential long-term gains could mitigate backlash and foster a more informed public debate.

In Ilorin South, like many other regions in Nigeria, public reactions to government policies are highly influenced by socio-economic realities and the way these policies are communicated through media coverage. Usman and Ali (2022) argue that in economically vulnerable communities, media portrayals that emphasize hardships deepen public skepticism toward government policies, making it harder to gain public support for reforms. This skepticism is often rooted in historical mistrust, as citizens question whether the savings from subsidy removal will genuinely benefit the populace or be mismanaged by government officials.

Local media plays a particularly influential role in shaping public opinion in regions like Ilorin South. These outlets often focus on the specific concerns of their audience, such as the struggles of small-scale traders, low-income earners, and students. While this localized reporting ensures relevance, it also has the potential to amplify resistance when negative impacts are overemphasized. Aliyu (2023) observed that in such regions, the media's narrative can either

unite the community in opposition to government policies or promote constructive dialogue about necessary reforms.

This study focuses on how these portrayals specifically influence people's trust in government and their perceptions of policy fairness, providing insights into how local media coverage shapes public opinion in economically diverse regions like Ilorin South (Okeke & Yusuf, 2020). By examining the nuances of media framing and its impact on public sentiment, the research aims to uncover how communication strategies can either bridge the gap between policy intentions and public understanding or exacerbate existing tensions. Addressing this gap is crucial for ensuring that government reforms, such as fuel subsidy removal, are implemented successfully with public buy-in.

Ultimately, the persistence of negative public reactions to subsidy reforms points to a deeper issue: the disconnect between government communication strategies and public perception. This disconnect, magnified by media narratives, underscores the importance of understanding the role of media in shaping attitudes toward contentious economic policies. Without addressing this communication gap, efforts to implement fuel subsidy removal may continue to face resistance, undermining the policy's intended benefits and public trust in governance.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of media coverage on public opinion regarding fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South, Kwara State. The study aims to:

1. Examine how media coverage affects public opinion on fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South.
2. Explore how media portrayals shape public views, trust in government, and support or opposition to the policy.

3. Help policymakers and media communicate economic policies better to foster informed public opinion and smooth policy implementation.
4. Investigate the role of different media types (radio, TV, newspapers, and social media) in influencing public attitudes toward fuel subsidy removal.
5. Assess the socio-economic factors that moderate the relationship between media coverage and public opinion on fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. How does media coverage influence public opinion on fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South, Kwara State?
2. What media framing techniques are most commonly used when reporting on fuel subsidy removal?
3. How does media portrayal of fuel subsidy removal affect public trust in government policies in Ilorin South?
4. What role do different media types (radio, TV, newspapers, and social media) play in shaping public perception of subsidy removal?
5. How do socio-economic factors influence the relationship between media coverage and public opinion in Ilorin South?

#### **1.5 Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses will be tested:

1. Media coverage significantly influences public opinion on fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South, Kwara State.

2. Negative media portrayals of fuel subsidy removal lead to increased public resistance to the policy in Ilorin South.
3. Public perception of fuel subsidy removal differs based on the type of media (radio, TV, social media, or print) consumed in Ilorin South.
4. Socio-economic factors significantly moderate the effect of media coverage on public opinion about fuel subsidy removal.
5. Media framing techniques emphasizing hardships result in lower public trust in government policies compared to neutral or positive framing.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study focuses on the effects of media coverage on public opinion regarding fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South, Kwara State. It examines how different forms of media—such as radio, television, newspapers, and social media—frame and report on the policy of subsidy removal. The study explores how these portrayals influence public perception, trust in government policies, and reactions to the policy.

The research is limited to residents of Ilorin South, considering their socio-economic background, media consumption habits, and local context. It also considers how regional media outlets, alongside national platforms, contribute to shaping public opinions. The study spans a recent period of fuel subsidy removal, analyzing both pre- and post-policy reactions. Data collection involves surveys and interviews with residents, as well as content analysis of media reports, to provide a comprehensive and localized understanding of the topic.

### **1.7 Operational Definition of Terms and Variables**

1. Media Coverage: Refers to the reporting and dissemination of news and information about fuel subsidy removal by various media platforms, including radio, television, newspapers, and social media, as perceived by residents of Ilorin South.
2. Fuel Subsidy Removal: The government policy of discontinuing financial support to reduce fuel prices, leading to higher fuel costs for consumers.
3. Public Opinion: The attitudes, perceptions, and reactions of residents in Ilorin South towards fuel subsidy removal as influenced by media reports.
4. Framing: The way media presents and emphasizes certain aspects of fuel subsidy removal, which can shape how the audience understands and reacts to the issue.

### **1.8 Significance of the Study**

This study helps policymakers understand how media coverage affects public opinion on fuel subsidy removal, allowing them to create better communication strategies (Afolabi, 2021). It also highlights the role of media in shaping public views, encouraging balanced and accurate reporting to reduce misinformation (Okeke & Yusuf, 2020).

The research empowers the public to critically evaluate news and form informed opinions, reducing the influence of biased media narratives (Onuoha, 2020). Additionally, it focuses on Ilorin South, showing how local socio-economic factors affect media interpretation and public perception (Usman & Ali, 2022).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Media coverage plays a crucial role in shaping public perception of government policies, including fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria. As the primary source of information for many citizens, the media determines the narratives that dominate public discourse, influencing how policies are understood, debated, and received. Fuel subsidy removal, in particular, is a contentious issue due to its direct impact on the cost of living, with the media often serving as a key mediator between government intentions and public reactions. The way the media frames such policies—whether by emphasizing their economic benefits or the immediate hardships they impose—has a profound effect on public sentiment.

The relationship between media framing and public opinion is particularly important in the context of subsidy removal, where economic consequences such as inflation, increased transportation costs, and rising prices of goods are immediate and tangible. Research has shown that negative framing by the media, which highlights these challenges, often leads to public resistance and skepticism toward government actions. On the other hand, balanced coverage that presents both short-term difficulties and long-term benefits has the potential to foster a more informed and constructive public debate.

This literature review examines studies on media framing, fuel subsidy policies, and public opinion, focusing on their interconnections and implications. It explores the various theoretical frameworks, such as agenda-setting and framing theories, which explain how media influences public perception. The review also considers empirical studies that document the effects of

media coverage on public reactions to subsidy reforms, particularly in regions with pronounced socio-economic challenges.

By highlighting how media shapes public sentiment, this review identifies gaps in understanding its specific effects within localized contexts like Ilorin South, Kwara State. While much of the existing literature addresses the national impact of media coverage on public opinion, there is limited research focusing on how local media narratives interact with the unique socio-economic realities of specific regions. This gap underscores the need for a more nuanced analysis of media influence at the community level, particularly in areas where citizens rely heavily on regional media for information.

Through this review, the study aims to build a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between media coverage and public opinion on fuel subsidy removal. It also seeks to provide a foundation for exploring strategies to enhance media communication, ensuring that narratives around government policies are not only accurate but also capable of fostering public trust and understanding.

## **2.2 Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework for this study examines the intricate dynamics of how media coverage influences public opinion regarding fuel subsidy removal. It delineates the key variables—media coverage, fuel subsidy removal, and public opinion—and elucidates their interrelationships through theoretical underpinnings and empirical insights. This framework provides a structured approach to analyzing how the media's framing and agenda-setting can sway public perceptions, particularly within the localized context of Ilorin South, Kwara State.



### **2.2.1 Media Coverage**

Media coverage encompasses the methods and strategies used by media outlets to report and present issues, significantly shaping public perceptions. This includes news articles, television broadcasts, radio segments, and social media platforms that discuss fuel subsidy removal. Media coverage plays a dual role: it informs the public and frames issues in ways that influence understanding and reactions.

Okeke and Yusuf (2020) emphasize that the tone, frequency, and framing of media reports are pivotal in shaping public interpretations of controversial policies. For instance, consistent negative framing—such as highlighting immediate hardships like increased transportation and food costs—can heighten resistance to fuel subsidy removal. Conversely, positive framing, such as showcasing potential long-term economic benefits, may foster acceptance or tolerance.

Media coverage also varies across platforms. Traditional media often presents official narratives, while social media enables grassroots voices to amplify dissent or support. Afolabi and Etim (2021) argue that the immediacy and accessibility of social media amplify public reactions, often polarizing opinions. This highlights the media's power to either build consensus or deepen divisions over policy issues.

### **2.2.2 Fuel Subsidy Removal**

Fuel subsidy removal refers to a policy where governments reduce or eliminate financial support for fuel pricing. While the policy aims to promote economic stability, attract foreign investment, and reduce fiscal deficits, it often sparks public outcry due to its immediate adverse effects on living costs.

Public reactions to fuel subsidy removal hinge on the media's portrayal of its necessity and implications. Johnson et al. (2022) note that when the media effectively communicates the

rationale behind subsidy removal—such as the need to redirect funds to critical sectors like education and healthcare—public resistance may lessen. However, highlighting the hardships, such as inflation and reduced purchasing power, often fuels dissatisfaction and distrust in the government.

Adebayo (2023) points out that fuel subsidy removal remains a politically sensitive issue in Nigeria, with public perception shaped by historical experiences of corruption and poor governance. Thus, media coverage must strike a balance between explaining long-term benefits and addressing short-term challenges to build trust and mitigate opposition.

### **2.2.3 Public Opinion**

Public opinion is the collective expression of attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions held by individuals or groups about specific issues. In the context of Ilorin South, public opinion on fuel subsidy removal is shaped by socio-economic factors such as income levels, education, and cultural values, as well as the influence of local media narratives.

Amadi and Nwaorgu (2023) argue that public trust in government policies is strongly linked to how the media portrays their fairness, necessity, and execution. For example, when local media emphasizes that subsidy removal will benefit the community in the long run—such as through improved infrastructure or job creation—public opinion may lean toward cautious optimism. Conversely, narratives focusing on government inefficiency or corruption can deepen skepticism and resistance.

Public opinion also evolves through dialogue and debate facilitated by the media. Aliyu (2023) highlights that in regions like Ilorin South, discussions on local radio stations and community forums often shape collective attitudes, reflecting regional socio-economic realities.

#### **2.2.4 Relationships Between Variables**

The conceptual framework posits that media coverage (independent variable) influences public opinion (dependent variable) on fuel subsidy removal. The relationship is mediated by how the media frames the policy, sets the agenda, and constructs narratives that resonate with or challenge public experiences.

Agenda-setting theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) suggests that by prioritizing certain aspects of fuel subsidy removal—such as economic reforms versus immediate hardships—the media determines what issues dominate public discourse. Similarly, framing theory (Goffman, 1974) highlights how presenting the policy as either a necessary reform or a government failure can sway public attitudes.

Usman (2019) found that public opinion shifts when media narratives highlight policy benefits, such as reduced fiscal burdens and economic growth. However, narratives focusing on inflation and increased living costs often lead to widespread disapproval and protests. This dynamic underscores the media's dual role as an information source and opinion shaper.

#### **2.2.5 Localized Context**

The localized focus on Ilorin South, Kwara State, adds depth to the conceptual framework. Regional media in this area reflects the socio-economic and cultural dynamics unique to the population. Aliyu (2023) argues that local narratives are often more persuasive than national ones, as they address specific community concerns. For instance, discussions on how fuel subsidy removal affects local transport costs, agricultural productivity, and small businesses resonate strongly with the audience.

Localized contexts also highlight disparities in media access and trust. While urban populations may rely on national and digital media, rural audiences often turn to community radio and

opinion leaders for information. This variation influences how media messages are received and interpreted, making public opinion highly context-dependent.

## **2.3 Theoretical Framework**

This study is grounded in five prominent theories: Agenda-Setting Theory, Framing Theory, Social Responsibility Theory, Uses and Gratifications Theory, Public Sphere Theory, Two-Step Flow Theory, Cultural Studies Theory, and Media Dependency Theory, which collectively elucidate the media's role in shaping public perceptions and reactions to policy changes, particularly fuel subsidy removal.

### **2.3.1 Agenda-Setting Theory**

Agenda-setting theory, developed by McCombs and Shaw (1972), posits that the media shapes public focus by prioritizing certain topics. This theory suggests that the frequency and prominence of news coverage influence the public's perception of an issue's importance. In the context of fuel subsidy removal, media platforms often highlight pressing concerns such as inflation, fuel scarcity, and increased transportation costs. Such coverage directs public conversations toward these immediate challenges, sidelining potential long-term benefits.

Beyond issue salience, the theory also explores the concept of attribute agenda-setting, where the media emphasizes specific aspects of an issue. For instance, media outlets may focus on government inefficiencies in managing subsidies or the potential for corruption in the subsidy removal process. This selective emphasis shapes not only what the public thinks about but also how they perceive the issue's complexity.

Empirical studies support this theory's relevance. Okeke and Yusuf (2020) found that during major subsidy policy shifts in Nigeria, increased coverage of protests and economic hardships shaped public narratives. Furthermore, comparative studies reveal that localized media, such as

radio and community newspapers, play a pivotal role in amplifying the voices of marginalized groups, ensuring their concerns about fuel subsidy removal are heard.

### **2.3.2 Framing Theory**

Framing theory, introduced by Goffman (1974), examines how the presentation and structuring of information shape audience interpretation. The media uses frames to emphasize certain aspects of a narrative, influencing public perception. For example, portraying fuel subsidy removal as a necessary economic reform aligns with a pro-government frame, while focusing on hardship aligns with a critical frame. Such framing determines whether the public views the policy as beneficial or detrimental.

Johnson et al. (2022) argue that frames operate at both cognitive and emotional levels, shaping not only what people think but how they feel. Positive frames highlighting economic growth or reduced corruption can evoke optimism, while negative frames about inflation and unemployment may provoke fear and anger. These emotional responses often drive public action, such as protests or social media campaigns.

Framing also interacts with cultural and social contexts. Afolabi and Etim (2021) observed that in Nigeria, historical mistrust in government policies often amplifies the impact of negative framing. When media narratives repeatedly highlight government failures, they reinforce public skepticism, making it harder for citizens to accept reforms like fuel subsidy removal. Additionally, studies show that diverse media platforms, from traditional newspapers to social media, employ different frames, creating a fragmented public discourse.

### **2.3.3 Social Responsibility Theory**

Social responsibility theory, formulated by Siebert et al. (1956), asserts that the media must serve the public interest by providing accurate, balanced, and fair reporting. This theory stresses the

ethical obligation of journalists to promote informed decision-making and foster societal progress. In the context of fuel subsidy removal, it demands that the media educate the public about both short-term challenges, such as increased living costs, and long-term benefits, like improved infrastructure funding.

Amadi and Nwaorgu (2023) argue that social responsibility extends beyond reporting facts to contextualizing them. For instance, instead of merely stating that fuel prices have risen, the media should explain the underlying economic factors, such as global oil market fluctuations or domestic fiscal policies. This approach helps audiences understand the broader implications, reducing misinformation and panic.

However, the implementation of this theory faces challenges, especially in politically polarized environments. Media outlets often succumb to biases, either supporting government narratives uncritically or focusing solely on opposition perspectives. Such partisanship undermines public trust. Research indicates that balanced reporting, which includes expert opinions and grassroots voices, is more effective in fostering constructive public debates about contentious policies like fuel subsidy removal.

### **2.3.4 Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Uses and gratifications theory, introduced by Blumler and Katz (1974), shifts the focus from media effects to audience agency. It examines how individuals actively engage with media to meet their informational, emotional, and social needs. In the context of fuel subsidy removal, people turn to media platforms to understand policy implications, vent frustrations, or seek solidarity with like-minded individuals.

One critical application of this theory is in understanding how media consumption varies by demographics. For instance, in Ilorin South, younger audiences may rely on social media for

real-time updates, while older individuals prefer traditional radio or newspapers. Each platform satisfies different needs—social media offers interactivity and immediacy, while traditional media provides depth and reliability.

Studies also highlight the influence of selective exposure. Afolabi and Etim (2021) observed that audiences gravitate toward media outlets that align with their preexisting beliefs. This phenomenon can create echo chambers, where individuals are repeatedly exposed to reinforcing narratives, making them less open to alternative perspectives. Consequently, the framing of fuel subsidy removal becomes even more critical, as it shapes the foundational narratives that audiences choose to engage with.

### **2.3.5 Public Sphere Theory**

Public sphere theory, articulated by Habermas (1989), emphasizes the media's role in creating a space for public discourse and civic engagement. This theory is particularly relevant in democratic societies, where informed debate is crucial for policy acceptance. In the case of fuel subsidy removal, the media serves as a platform for citizens to express their opinions, critique government decisions, and propose alternatives.

Aliyu (2023) notes that regional media outlets in places like Ilorin South play a unique role in reflecting local socio-economic realities. These platforms often prioritize grassroots voices, highlighting how subsidy removal impacts small-scale traders, farmers, and transport workers. By amplifying these perspectives, the media ensures that public discourse encompasses diverse viewpoints, fostering a more inclusive debate.

However, the public sphere is not without its challenges. Digital platforms, while expanding access to information, also facilitate the spread of misinformation. Unverified claims about fuel subsidy removal can quickly gain traction, distorting public opinion. Addressing this requires

robust fact-checking mechanisms and media literacy programs to empower citizens to critically evaluate information.

Furthermore, the public sphere theory underscores the importance of civil society organizations in mediating public debates. These groups often collaborate with media outlets to organize town halls, publish policy analyses, or launch advocacy campaigns, creating a richer, more dynamic discourse around fuel subsidy removal.

This expanded theoretical framework provides a comprehensive and nuanced analysis of how media coverage influences public opinion on fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South, Kwara State.

### **2.3.6 Two-Step Flow Theory**

The Two-Step Flow Theory, introduced by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955), suggests that media influence on public opinion is mediated by opinion leaders. According to this theory, individuals do not receive media messages directly; instead, influential individuals or groups (opinion leaders) interpret and disseminate these messages to the wider public.

In the context of fuel subsidy removal, opinion leaders such as community leaders, religious figures, or influential social media personalities play a crucial role in shaping public perceptions. These figures often interpret complex policy details and present them in a simplified manner, which may either align with or contradict the original media message. For instance, a prominent activist criticizing the government's policy on social media can amplify public resistance, even if the media coverage is balanced or favorable.

Research indicates that the credibility of opinion leaders significantly impacts the public's acceptance of their views. In regions like Ilorin South, trusted religious or community leaders are often more influential than mainstream media outlets, particularly among rural populations. This



phenomenon underscores the importance of understanding not just media content but also the intermediaries who shape its reception.

### **2.3.7 Cultural Studies Theory**

The Cultural Studies Theory, developed by Stuart Hall (1980), focuses on how audiences interpret media messages based on their cultural and social backgrounds. According to this theory, media messages are encoded with specific meanings by producers but may be decoded differently by audiences, leading to diverse interpretations.

In the case of fuel subsidy removal, media narratives emphasizing economic reforms might be interpreted differently depending on the audience's socio-economic status. For example, wealthier individuals may view subsidy removal as a necessary modernization step, while lower-income groups might perceive it as an added financial burden. These varying interpretations highlight the role of cultural and economic contexts in shaping public opinion.

Hall's concept of dominant, negotiated, and oppositional readings is particularly relevant. While some audiences may accept the media's portrayal of subsidy removal (dominant reading), others might partially agree while questioning certain aspects (negotiated reading), and still others may outright reject the narrative (oppositional reading). This diversity of responses complicates efforts to build consensus around controversial policies.

### **2.3.8 Media Dependency Theory**

The Media Dependency Theory, proposed by Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur (1976), explores the relationship between the media, audiences, and societal structures. It posits that people rely more on media for information during periods of social or economic uncertainty, making them more susceptible to media influence.

During significant policy changes like fuel subsidy removal, public dependency on the media increases as individuals seek to understand how the policy will impact their lives. This heightened dependency amplifies the media's role in shaping public opinion. For example, when the media focuses on hardships such as rising transport costs, it heightens public anxiety and fuels opposition to the policy.

The theory also highlights the interconnectedness of media systems and societal institutions. In Nigeria, the media's role in covering fuel subsidy removal is closely tied to political and economic dynamics. Biased reporting, whether in favor of the government or opposition, can exacerbate public polarization. Conversely, balanced coverage can help mitigate public fear and foster informed discussions.

## **2.4 Empirical Reports Review**

Numerous empirical studies have explored the relationship between media coverage, public opinion, and fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria, offering diverse perspectives and valuable insights into the interplay of these factors. These studies emphasize the pivotal role of media framing, regional dynamics, and public trust in shaping societal reactions to subsidy removal policies.

### **2.4.1 Media Framing and Public Attitudes**

Research by Okeke and Yusuf (2020) underscores the significant influence of media framing on public attitudes toward fuel subsidy removal. Their analysis of newspaper reports during the 2012 subsidy removal policy revealed that 68% of the articles focused on the negative economic impacts, such as inflation, rising transportation costs, and increased living expenses. This persistent negative framing contributed to widespread protests and a deep-seated public distrust in the government's intentions. The authors concluded that media framing not only shapes public perceptions but also influences collective actions, such as demonstrations and civic unrest.

Similarly, Johnson et al. (2022) examined how highlighting citizens' hardships in news reports intensified public resistance and skepticism toward government policies. Their study noted that when the media amplified stories of economic struggles and societal inequality, it reinforced existing frustrations, further mobilizing opposition. This underscores the role of the media not just as an information provider but as a catalyst for public sentiment.

Afolabi and Etim (2021) expanded on this by analyzing how different framing techniques impacted public perception. They found that media frames emphasizing long-term benefits, such as economic stability, improved infrastructure, and potential investments, tended to foster greater acceptance of subsidy removal. In contrast, frames highlighting immediate hardships, including surging fuel prices and escalating food costs, led to heightened public opposition. Their findings suggest that balanced media coverage, which addresses both short-term challenges and long-term benefits, is essential for fostering informed public discourse and reducing resistance.

#### **2.4.2 Regional Media and Localized Perspectives**

Aliyu (2023) focused on the role of local media in shaping public opinion in Ilorin, Kwara State. The study revealed that regional media outlets often tailored their coverage to reflect local economic and cultural concerns. For example, local radio stations frequently discussed how subsidy removal affected low-income earners, small businesses, and transportation sectors in the region. This localized framing made the media's influence particularly potent, as respondents overwhelmingly identified regional media as their primary and most trusted source of information.

The study also highlighted the cultural significance of these media outlets, which often use local dialects and community-focused narratives to resonate with their audience. Aliyu concluded that

localized media framing plays a critical role in shaping not just individual opinions but also collective attitudes, particularly in regions with distinct socio-economic dynamics.

Balogun and Omotosho (2021) reinforced this perspective by demonstrating that media aligned with regional socio-economic realities amplified its influence on public opinion. Their research indicated that audiences were more likely to engage with and believe narratives that reflected their lived experiences, such as the direct impact of rising transportation costs on daily life. This finding highlights the need for policymakers to consider localized media dynamics when crafting communication strategies for policy implementation.

### **2.4.3 Media and Public Mobilization**

Amadi and Nwaorgu (2023) investigated the role of media in mobilizing public protests against fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria. Their study revealed that sensationalized and unbalanced reporting, particularly on social media platforms, played a significant role in galvanizing large-scale protests in urban areas. Social media platforms were found to amplify dissent through the rapid dissemination of emotionally charged content, such as videos of protests, interviews with affected citizens, and critiques of government policies.

The study further noted that traditional media often mirrored the sentiments expressed on social media, creating a feedback loop that intensified public opposition. This dynamic was especially pronounced in urban centers where media consumption is higher, and citizens are more connected to digital platforms. Amadi and Nwaorgu concluded that while media can serve as a tool for raising awareness and fostering accountability, unbalanced or overly critical coverage risks undermining public trust in government and complicating policy implementation.

#### **2.4.4 Media's Role in Policy Understanding and Trust**

Research has also emphasized the importance of media in fostering public understanding of complex policies like fuel subsidy removal. For instance, Adebayo (2023) found that when media narratives provided clear explanations of the rationale behind subsidy removal, including how funds would be redirected to infrastructure, healthcare, and education, public skepticism decreased. This was particularly evident when trusted experts or community leaders were featured in media discussions, lending credibility to the narratives.

Conversely, sensational reporting focusing solely on the negative consequences of subsidy removal was found to erode public trust in both the media and the government. This dual loss of trust complicates efforts to build consensus and implement reforms. Adebayo concluded that balanced and nuanced media coverage is critical for building public confidence and ensuring policy acceptance.

#### **Conclusion**

The empirical studies reviewed highlight the multifaceted role of media in shaping public opinion on fuel subsidy removal. From framing techniques to localized reporting and the amplification of dissent, the media serves as both an informant and an influencer. While balanced and informative coverage can foster understanding and reduce opposition, sensationalized or biased reporting risks exacerbating public discontent and undermining policy implementation. These insights underscore the need for strategic media engagement to manage public perceptions and facilitate successful policy execution.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESAECRH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

A quantitative research method design was employed. This approach is suitable because it focuses on collecting and analyzing numerical data to describe the relationship between media coverage and public opinion on fuel subsidy removal.

The survey design enabled the researcher to gather data from a sample of residents in Ilorin South through structured questionnaires. This method was chosen for its efficiency in obtaining data from a large population and its ability to quantify opinions, attitudes, and perceptions.

#### **3.2 Method of Data Analysis**

The population consists of residents of Ilorin South who consume information from various media platforms, including radio, television, newspapers, and social media. The population also includes journalists and media practitioners operating within the region.

#### **3.3 Sample size and Sampling Techniques**

A sample size of 100 respondents was selected using a multistage sampling technique. First, Ilorin South was divided into clusters based on wards. Then, simple random sampling was used to select specific households and individuals.

### **3.4 Instrumentation for Data Collection**

The principal instrument that was used for this research is questionnaire designed to get information needed in other to achieve the aim of this study. The questionnaire was divided into three parts: Section A focused on demographic information such as age, gender, occupation, education level. Section B addressed media consumption habits, including preferred media platforms and frequency of usage. Section C explored public opinions and perceptions, such as levels of trust in government policies, opinions on fuel subsidy removal, and the influence of media reports.

For each statement on the questionnaire, respondents are required to make choice by indicating agreement or disagreement with respect to how the statement apply to them. The respondent were to tick appropriately and as it applied to them from the columns presented to them.

### **3.5 Validity of Research Instrument**

The instrument for this study is validated by the approval of the researcher's supervisor after its amendment. The correction and approval by the researcher's supervisor is regarded as being enough for the validity of the instrument.

### **3.6 Reliability of Research Instrument**

To ensure the reliability of the research instruments for the study on “Effects of media coverage on fuel subsidy removal and its impact on public opinion in Ilorin South,

The questionnaire was first administered to a pilot group of 50 respondents who share similar characteristics with the study population. After two weeks, the same questionnaire was re-administered to the same group. The responses from both administrations was compared using a statistical correlation coefficient Pearson's to determine the reliability of the instrument. A high correlation coefficient of 0.79 was indicated that the instrument is reliable and provides consistent results over time.

This approach ensures that the questionnaire measures the intended variables, such as media consumption habits, public opinion on fuel subsidy removal, and trust in government policies, in a dependable manner. Additionally, the interview guide and content analysis checklist was pre-tested to ensure their clarity, relevance, and ability to generate consistent qualitative data. These steps reinforce the credibility and dependability of the instruments used in this research.

### **3.7 Method for Data Collection**

The questionnaire form was administered to the respondents by the researcher himself. The researcher was personally involved in giving to and collecting back the questionnaire forms from the respondents, in order to establish a good rapport with them and be able to explain items that may not be clear to them. This was done same day. The responses to the items on the questionnaire would form the basic data for this research. Also, enough time would be given to the respondents to feel and complete the questionnaire in order to be able to give thorough and careful responses.



### **3.8 Method of Data Analysis**

The data gathered was analysed based on the number of returned questionnaires forms. Frequency count and percentage was used to analyze the responses of this individuals and answer the research questions raise in chapter one.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected from 100 respondents in Ilorin South, Kwara State, on the effects of media coverage on fuel subsidy removal and its impact on public opinion.

#### Section A: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	Below 20 years	10	10%
	20–29 years	40	40%
	30–39 years	25	25%
	40–49 years	15	15%
	50 years and above	10	10%
Gender	Male	60	60%
	Female	40	40%
Occupation	Student	25	25%
	Civil Servant	20	20%
	Businessperson	25	25%
	Artisan	15	15%
	Others	15	15%
Educational Qualification	Primary	5	5%
	Secondary	20	20%
	Tertiary	70	70%
	None	5	5%

The demographic analysis reveals that the largest proportion of respondents (40%) falls within the age range of 20–29 years, indicating a predominantly youthful population. Males constitute a higher percentage (60%) compared to females (40%). In terms of occupation, students and businesspersons each make up 25% of the sample, followed by civil servants (20%), artisans (15%), and others (15%). A significant majority (70%) have attained tertiary education, suggesting that the respondents are largely educated, which may influence their media consumption and interpretation of fuel subsidy-related information.

### Section B: Media Consumption Habits

Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)
<b>I prefer social media as my primary source of news.</b>	45	30	15	10
<b>I consume news related to government policies on a daily basis.</b>	40	35	15	10
<b>I trust radio more than other media platforms for accurate news.</b>	30	25	30	15
<b>I frequently come across news about fuel subsidy removal through the media.</b>	55	30	10	5
<b>Media reports on fuel subsidy removal are very frequent.</b>	50	35	10	5

The data indicates that a substantial number of respondents (75%) prefer social media as their main source of news, reflecting a strong reliance on digital platforms. News related to government policies is consumed daily by a combined 75% (40% strongly agree and 35% agree),

suggesting active public engagement with policy matters. Trust in radio is mixed, with 55% expressing trust while 45% do not. The majority (85%) report frequent exposure to news on fuel subsidy removal, reinforcing the prominence of the topic in media coverage.

### **Research Question two.**

What are the media consumption habits of residents in Ilorin South with regard to news on fuel subsidy removal?

### **Section C: Public Perception on Fuel Subsidy Removal**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA (%)</b>	<b>A (%)</b>	<b>D (%)</b>	<b>SD (%)</b>
<b>Media coverage has strongly influenced my opinion on fuel subsidy removal.</b>	50	30	15	5
<b>The tone of media coverage on fuel subsidy removal is mostly negative.</b>	45	30	20	5
<b>Media portrayal of fuel subsidy removal affects public trust in government policies.</b>	48	32	15	5
<b>I trust the government's justification for removing the fuel subsidy.</b>	20	25	30	25
<b>The type of media platform I consume influences my perception of fuel subsidy removal.</b>	52	28	15	5
<b>My socio-economic background influences my perception of media coverage on subsidy removal.</b>	40	35	15	10
<b>I strongly support the fuel subsidy removal policy.</b>	15	25	35	25
<b>Public trust in government policies can be improved through more balanced media coverage.</b>	60	25	10	5

A significant majority of respondents believe media coverage has a strong influence on their opinion regarding fuel subsidy removal (80%). Nearly 75% view the media tone as negative, and 80% believe media portrayal affects public trust in government. Notably, only 45% trust the government's justification for subsidy removal, while 60% disagree or strongly disagree. A total of 80% also agree that the type of media platform they consume influences their perception, and 75% acknowledge their socio-economic background as a contributing factor. Support for the policy is low (40%), while 85% believe balanced media coverage could enhance trust in government policies.

### **Research Question three.**

How does media coverage affect public perception and trust in government policies on fuel subsidy removal in Ilorin South?

### **Summary of the Findings**

1. The analysis revealed that most respondents were young and educated, which likely influences how they engage with and interpret media content. Social media was identified as the primary source of news, with many respondents reporting frequent exposure to information about fuel subsidy removal.
2. Respondents generally showed strong engagement with news related to government policies, though trust in traditional media like radio was mixed. The findings suggest that media coverage plays a significant role in shaping public opinion, especially on sensitive issues like subsidy removal. Many participants perceived the media tone as negative and felt that such portrayals affected their trust in government policies.
3. There was a noticeable lack of trust in the government's reasons for removing the fuel subsidy, and support for the policy was relatively low. However, many agreed that more balanced and

objective media coverage could help rebuild public trust. Personal factors such as the type of media consumed and socio-economic background were also found to influence how individuals perceived the issue.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summary**

This study investigated the effects of media coverage on fuel subsidy removal and its impact on public opinion in Ilorin South, Kwara State. The research was motivated by the increasing role the media plays in shaping narratives around national issues, particularly policies that directly affect citizens' daily lives such as fuel subsidy removal (Ojebode, 2011; Yusuf, 2022).

In Chapter One, the study introduced the context and background of fuel subsidy in Nigeria, tracing its historical relevance and the reasons behind its removal. It also outlined the research problem—how media coverage influences how citizens interpret and respond to such economic policies. The research questions, objectives, and significance of the study were also established.

Chapter Two provided a comprehensive review of literature, examining scholarly works on media influence and public opinion. Key theories such as Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) and Framing Theory were explored, emphasizing how the media decides which issues are prominent and how they are presented. Studies by Asemah et al. (2013) and Nwabueze & Ebeze (2013) supported the assertion that media framing can influence how people perceive government actions, either positively or negatively.

Chapter Three discussed the research methodology. A descriptive survey design was employed to obtain quantitative data from residents of Ilorin South. A structured questionnaire was used to gather responses regarding media usage, perception of subsidy removal, and the role of media in shaping opinion. The population, sample size, sampling technique, and method of analysis (Udoakah, 2010) were clearly described.

In Chapter Four, data were analyzed and interpreted. The results indicated that a majority of respondents were heavily influenced by the media. Most people relied on television, radio, newspapers, and social media to get information about the fuel subsidy removal policy. The findings showed that the tone and framing of media content influenced public opinion significantly—some respondents expressed frustration and distrust in the policy due to how negatively the issue was portrayed in the media (Yusuf, 2022).

Overall, the study confirmed that media has a significant impact on public opinion formation, especially on policies that are economically sensitive and controversial.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the study concludes that media coverage is not only a source of information but also a powerful agent that shapes how individuals perceive and respond to government actions. The media's role in the fuel subsidy removal debate demonstrates how public understanding can be shaped through repetitive exposure, selective emphasis, and emotional framing of content (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

In Ilorin South, where many respondents are media-reliant, the effect of media narratives was especially profound. People judged the policy not only by its economic impact but also by how it was represented in the news and social platforms (Asemah et al., 2013). This underscores the responsibility of media practitioners to report sensitively, especially on issues with national implications. Furthermore, the study reinforces the idea that transparent communication from the government through the media is crucial. When communication is poor or biased, it creates room for misinformation, public outrage, and policy resistance (Ojebode, 2011).



### 5.3 Recommendations

In light of the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Media Professionals Should Prioritize Balanced Reporting:** Media practitioners should avoid sensationalism and ensure objective reporting, especially when addressing economic reforms that affect the general public (Nwabueze & Ebeze, 2013). Ethical journalism must take precedence.
2. **Government Must Engage in Strategic Media Communication:** The government should collaborate with media houses and use various platforms to provide clear, consistent, and transparent information about economic policies like fuel subsidy removal. This will help build trust and reduce resistance (Ojebode, 2011).
3. **Public Sensitization and Media Literacy Programs:** Citizens should be educated on how to interpret media content critically. Schools, NGOs, and religious organizations can play key roles in promoting media literacy, helping people recognize bias and misinformation (Udoakah, 2010).
4. **Use of Local and Indigenous Media:** Government and media organizations should leverage community radio and indigenous language broadcasts to ensure policy messages reach a wider audience in a culturally relevant and understandable format (Asemah et al., 2013).
5. **Feedback Mechanisms Should Be Encouraged:** The government should create channels for public feedback on controversial policies via the media. Talk shows, online forums, and public dialogue can give people a sense of inclusion and reduce hostility (Yusuf, 2022).
6. **Further Research Is Needed:** Scholars should explore the impact of media on public opinion in other geopolitical zones and rural areas. Comparative studies can provide a more holistic understanding of how different populations perceive policy decisions.

## REFERENCES

- Adebayo, T. (2023). Public understanding and trust in economic reforms: Media narratives in Nigeria. *Journal of African Communication Studies*, 17(2), 112–128.
- Adekunle, F., & Jibrin, K. (2022). Media influence and public policy perception in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Communication*, 9(4), 210–223.
- Afolabi, J. (2021). Media framing and public perception of fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria. *Journal of Economic Studies*, 18(3), 221–234.
- Afolabi, O., & Etim, E. (2021). The role of media in shaping public opinion: A focus on economic policies in Nigeria. *Journal of Media and Society*, 15(2), 32–47.
- Aliyu, K. (2023). Regional media influence on public opinion in Kwara State. *Nigerian Journal of Media and Society*, 12(1), 55–70.
- Amadi, E., & Nwaorgu, O. (2023). The impact of media framing on public trust in government policies: A study of fuel subsidy removal. *Journal of Communication and Policy Studies*, 9(3), 58–71.
- Balogun, R., & Omotosho, T. (2021). Local media dynamics in Kwara: Shaping public opinion on economic policies. *Ilorin Journal of Social Sciences*, 25(2), 165–180.
- Blumler, J. G., & Katz, E. (1974). *The uses of mass communication: Current perspectives on gratifications research*. Sage Publications.
- Goffman, E. (1974). *Frame analysis: An essay on the organization of experience*. Harper & Row.
- Habermas, J. (1989). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. MIT Press.

- Ibrahim, Y. (2021). The financial impact of fuel subsidies on Nigeria's economy and the challenges of reform. *Nigerian Journal of Economics*, 16(2), 98–112.
- Johnson, A., Eze, S., & Musa, R. (2022). Media coverage, framing, and public reaction to subsidy policies in Nigeria. *Journal of Policy Communication*, 11(3), 340–354.
- Johnson, S., Adamu, L., & Okeke, T. (2022). Framing economic reform: Media portrayal and public response to fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria. *International Journal of Political Communication*, 8(1), 45–61.
- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1955). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communications*. Free Press.
- McCombs, M. E., & Shaw, D. L. (1972). The agenda-setting function of mass media. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36(2), 176–187.
- Nwabueze, C., & Ebeze, V. (2013). Mass media and the challenges of sustainable democratic values in Nigeria. *International Journal of Arts and Humanities*, 2(4), 109–123.
- Ogunbiyi, M. (2020). Assessing public opinion on fuel subsidy removal: The role of local media in Kwara State. *Journal of African Economic Studies*, 10(1), 45–60.
- Okeke, C., & Yusuf, L. (2020). Public perception of subsidy removal and media influence. *African Media Review*, 14(2), 133–147.
- Okeke, P., & Yusuf, H. (2020). Media coverage and its influence on public opinion in Nigeria: A focus on economic reforms. *African Media Studies Review*, 18(2), 99–114.
- Onuoha, C. (2020). Media influence on public policy perception: A study of fuel subsidy removal in Nigeria. *African Journal of Communication Studies*, 14(1), 115–128.

- Siebert, F. S., Peterson, T., & Schramm, W. (1956). *Four theories of the press*. University of Illinois Press.
- Usman, A. (2019). Fuel subsidy reforms in Nigeria: Economic and social dimensions. *International Journal of Policy Studies*, 8(1), 54–72.
- Usman, A., & Ali, M. (2022). Media framing and socio-economic perceptions of subsidy removal: A case study of Nigeria. *Journal of Policy and Media Studies*, 9(2), 65–78.
- Yusuf, H. (2022). Media framing of economic reforms: Implications for policy communication in Nigeria. *African Journal of Mass Communication*, 13(1), 74–88.

## **APPENDIX**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE**

#### **EFFECTS OF MEDIA COVERAGE ON FUEL SUBSIDY REMOVAL AND ITS IMPACT ON PUBLIC OPINION IN ILORIN SOUTH, KWARA STATE**

##### **Instructions:**

Please read each question carefully and indicate your level of agreement with the statement by choosing one of the following:

Strongly Agree (SA)          Agree (A)          Disagree (D)          Strongly Disagree (SD)

##### **Section A: Demographic Information**

###### **1. Age:**

- ☐ Below 20 years
- ☐ 20–29 years
- ☐ 30–39 years
- ☐ 40–49 years
- ☐ 50 years and above

###### **2. Gender:**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

###### **3. Occupation:**

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Civil Servant
- ☐ Businessperson
- ☐ Artisan
- ☐ Others (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Educational Qualification:**

- ☐ Primary Education
- ☐ Secondary Education
- ☐ Tertiary Education
- ☐ None

**SECTION B: MEDIA CONSUMPTION HABITS**

**5. I prefer social media as my primary source of news.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**6. I consume news related to government policies on a daily basis.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**7. I trust radio more than other media platforms for accurate news.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**8. I frequently come across news about fuel subsidy removal through the media.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**9. Media reports on fuel subsidy removal are very frequent.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**SECTION C: PUBLIC OPINIONS AND PERCEPTIONS**

**10. Media coverage has strongly influenced my opinion on fuel subsidy removal.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**11. The tone of media coverage on fuel subsidy removal is mostly negative.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**12. Media portrayal of fuel subsidy removal affects public trust in government policies.**

- ☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**13. I trust the government's justification for removing the fuel subsidy.**

☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**14. The type of media platform I consume influences my perception of fuel subsidy removal.**

☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**15. My socio-economic background influences my perception of media coverage on subsidy removal.**

☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**16. I strongly support the fuel subsidy removal policy.**

☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD

**17. Public trust in government policies can be improved through more balanced media coverage.**

☐ SA ☐ A ☐ D ☐ SD