

Content Analysis of Celebrity Culture on News Values in Nigerian Journalism

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Abstract:

*This study explores the growing influence of celebrity culture on news values within Nigerian journalism. It investigates how media attention has increasingly shifted toward celebrity-related content, often at the expense of traditional journalistic priorities such as public interest, investigative depth, and civic responsibility. The study design is positivist while the research method is content analysis. The population of the study consists of the 310 newspapers operating in Nigeria while the sample size constitutes the three newspapers - The Nation, Daily Trust, and The Punch. Systematic random sampling is used for selecting articles for content analysis, ensuring every *n*th article within the selected timeframe is included in the sample. The main categories for analysis include story prominence (front page vs. other sections), tone (positive, negative, or neutral), framing (sensationalism, human interest, or factual reporting), and the type of celebrity featured (e.g., entertainers, athletes, politicians). The units of analysis will include individual articles, headlines, and the frequency of celebrity news. The data was presented using simple table, percentages and frequencies. Based on the findings, the study discovered that the types of celebrity stories on politics and business were not given prominent in the selected newspapers. The implication of the findings is that the selected newspapers pay more attention on other types of celebrity like sports and entertainment, which means that the surveillance function of the selected papers was not adequate as regards to celebrity stories within the study period.*

Keywords:

Celebrity Culture, Content Analysis, News Values, Newspapers, and Nigerian Journalism

I. Introduction

In the evolving landscape of Nigerian journalism, celebrity culture has emerged as a formidable force reshaping news values and editorial priorities. Traditionally, journalism in Nigeria was anchored in the pursuit of public interest, emphasising political accountability, social justice, and developmental issues. However, the rise of celebrity culture, fueled by the proliferation of social media platforms and the public's growing fascination with the personal lives of entertainers and influencers, has significantly altered the criteria for newsworthiness. This shift is evident in the increasing prominence of celebrity-related content in mainstream media, often at the expense of more substantive reporting. Olatunji (2024) observes that the media's focus has increasingly tilted towards entertainment and celebrity news, overshadowing critical issues that require public attention. This trend is not merely a reflection of audience preferences but also a strategic response by media outlets seeking to boost readership and advertising revenue. The allure of celebrity stories, with their inherent drama and mass appeal, offers a lucrative avenue for media houses operating in a competitive and financially constrained environment.

The integration of celebrity culture into news content has also led to a redefinition of journalistic standards and ethics. Obalanlege and Adesina (2023) argue that the prioritisation of celebrity news has compromised the traditional journalistic values of objectivity and public service. The emphasis on sensationalism and entertainment has blurred the lines between news and gossip, leading to a dilution of the media's role as a watchdog and a platform for informed public discourse. This shift raises concerns about the media's capacity to hold power to account and to inform citizens effectively. Moreover, the portrayal of celebrities, particularly female figures, in the Nigerian press often reinforces stereotypes and perpetuates gender biases. Msughter et al. (2023) note that female celebrities are frequently depicted in ways that emphasize their physical appearance and personal relationships over their professional achievements. Such representations not only undermine the credibility of journalism but also contribute to the marginalization of women's voices in the media landscape (Aondover & Aondover, 2023).

The advent of digital media has further complicated the relationship between celebrity culture and journalism. The immediacy and virality of online platforms have intensified the competition for audience attention, prompting journalists to adopt more sensationalist approaches. Fadeyi and Suleiman (2023) highlight the phenomenon of news commercialisation, where financial incentives influence editorial decisions, leading to the prioritization of content that attracts clicks over stories of public significance. This commercial pressure und (ermines the integrity of journalism and erodes public trust in the media. In light of these developments, it is imperative to critically examine the influence of celebrity culture on news values in Nigerian journalism. Such an inquiry should explore the implications for journalistic ethics, media credibility, and the broader democratic function of the press (Aondover et al., 2022). By understanding the dynamics at play, stakeholders can develop strategies to balance the public's interest in celebrity news with the media's responsibility to inform and educate.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the frequency of celebrity cases in *The Nation*, *The Punch*, and *Daily Trust* newspapers.
2. To find out the journalistic genre used in presenting celebrity cases in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers.
3. To examine the type of celebrity in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers.
4. To investigate the content focus of celebrity stories in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers.
5. To determine the tone of coverage in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* Newspapers.
6. To find out the placement of celebrity stories in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers.

1.2 Theoretical Underpinning

The study employed The Economic Theory of the Press, which posits that media organisations operate within a marketplace influenced by economic incentives and constraints. This theory examines how profit motives, advertising revenue, audience demand, and market competition shape media content and practices. It traces its roots to Adam Smith's works. The economic theory of the press is an essential component of media economics, examining how economic principles apply to the functioning, organization, and regulation of media industries, including newspapers, television, radio, and online platforms. Media economics delves into how media organizations produce, distribute, and consume content while incorporating economic principles such as supply and demand, market competition, and regulation (Baker, 2007). This

field encompasses various theories and models that offer insights into media behavior and market dynamics (Maiwada et al., 2025).

One foundational model in media economics is the public goods model, which considers media content as a public good. Media content is non-excludable and non-rivalrous, meaning once it is produced, it can be accessed by anyone without diminishing its availability (Bennett & Entman, 2001). This characteristic presents significant challenges for media organizations trying to fund their operations through traditional market mechanisms. Media outlets often struggle to monetize content effectively because they cannot exclude non-paying users from accessing it. This inherent difficulty in capturing revenue highlights the need for alternative funding models or public support to sustain media operations.

The market failure model extends this discussion by suggesting that media markets may not always produce optimal outcomes due to various issues such as monopolistic practices, information asymmetry, and externalities (McChesney, 2008). The dual product market model provides another lens through which to understand media economics. According to this model, media companies sell two products: content and audiences. Media organizations create content to attract audiences and then sell access to these audiences to advertisers. This model highlights the significant role that advertising revenue plays in funding media operations (Onyejelem et al., 2024). The reliance on advertising can create conflicts of interest, as media outlets might prioritize content that maximizes ad revenue rather than serving the public interest. This can lead to sensationalism or a focus on clickbait to attract more viewers or readers, potentially compromising journalistic standards.

Ownership concentration is a critical aspect of media economics that affects market dynamics and media diversity. Ownership concentration refers to the extent to which media outlets are controlled by a few large entities. High levels of concentration can impact the diversity of media content and pluralism. When a small number of companies dominate the media landscape, it can lead to homogenized content and reduced diversity of viewpoints. This concentration can stifle competition and limit the range of information available to the public, which is a concern for maintaining a healthy democratic society. The economic theory of the press examines how ownership structures influence content production, market competition, and media representation, emphasizing the need for policies to promote diversity and prevent monopolistic practices.

The advent of digital media has introduced significant disruptions to traditional economic models in media economics (Oreoluwa et al., 2024). Online platforms like Google and Facebook have transformed the media landscape by capturing substantial portions of advertising budgets (Gillespie, 2018). These digital platforms have disrupted traditional revenue streams for media organizations, leading to shifts in how media content is produced and consumed. The economic theory of the press also considers how regulatory frameworks impact media markets and content diversity, emphasizing the importance of balancing public and private interests in media regulation. Economic factors have significant implications for journalism practices, affecting editorial priorities, investigative reporting, and coverage depth. Economic pressures can lead to a focus on sensationalism or clickbait to attract audiences and advertisers, potentially undermining journalistic integrity.

As media economics continues to evolve, future research will likely focus on the implications of emerging technologies and new revenue models for media organizations (Napoli, 2019). Innovations such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and new digital platforms are

reshaping the media landscape and presenting both opportunities and challenges for media economics. Understanding these developments will be crucial for navigating the future of media economics and ensuring a diverse and competitive media environment. The major assumptions include the ideas that media organisations are businesses that prioritise profitability. It holds that media content is influenced by market demands and the need to attract advertisers; news and information are treated as commodities, subject to the same economic principles as other goods and services; media firms will favour content that appeals to broad audiences to maximize revenue, often resulting in sensationalism and entertainment-focused news. This economic rationale often leads to the commodification of news, where content that maximizes revenue is prioritized over content that serves public interest (Vitalis et al., 2024).

Supporters argue that these theories explain the media's tendency to prioritise content that attracts advertising revenue and audience engagement. They highlight how economic pressures shape media practices and content. Various economists and media scholars, including James T. Hamilton and Herbert J. Gans, have contributed to this theory. Baker (2002) and McChesney (2008), argue that understanding the economic underpinnings of media operations is crucial for comprehending media behavior and its societal implications. Hamilton and Hewer (2013) and Mosco (2009) argue that economic imperatives shape media practices within a capitalist framework. They emphasize understanding economic underpinnings to comprehend media behavior and societal implications.

Critics argue that this approach may neglect the cultural and social dimensions of media practices, reducing complex phenomena to mere economic transactions. Critics of Economic Theory, including Hesmondhalgh (2007), argue that this perspective can be overly deterministic, overlooking the role of journalistic values, editorial independence, and cultural factors in shaping media practices. Hesmondhalgh (2007) contends that while economic pressures are significant, they do not fully account for the complexities of media production, including the influence of professional ethics, audience agency, and the diversity of media content. Additionally, critics point out that not all media organizations are driven purely by profit motives; public service broadcasters and nonprofit media entities often prioritize informational and educational content over commercial gain.

The Economic Theory of the Press is pertinent to this study as it provides insights into why Nigerian newspapers might prioritize celebrity news. Economic pressures and the need to attract advertisers and readership can drive the focus on celebrity culture, impacting the quality and nature of journalism. The theory provides a framework to understand the commercial imperatives driving the inclusion of celebrity news in Nigerian journalism (Vitalis et al., 2023). It highlights the tension between profitability and journalistic standards, explaining why media outlets prioritise content that attracts large audiences and advertisers. In the Nigerian context, where media organizations face significant financial pressures, the emphasis on celebrity news can be seen as a strategy to boost circulation and advertising revenue. This focus, however, raises concerns about the quality and diversity of news coverage, as well as the media's role in serving the public interest.

Given the economic challenges facing the Nigerian media industry, this theory analysed the financial motivations behind the emphasis on celebrity news and its effects on journalistic standards and practices. It analysed the financial drivers behind the prioritization of celebrity news in Nigerian newspapers. The theory offers valuable insights into how economic pressures influence editorial decisions and the implications for journalistic standards. By applying Economic Theory, this study aims to shed light on the broader economic context within which

Nigerian media operate, exploring how the pursuit of profit shapes the content and quality of journalism.

II. Review of Literatures

Much has been said about celebrity journalism in Nigeria. Msughter et al., (2022) delved into the media portrayal of female celebrities in Nigeria, illuminating how celebrity culture, as a facet of popular culture, is intricately shaped by media influences. Their study, "Have you Heard What They Are Doing to Women? Media Portrayal of Female Celebrities in Nigerian Press," offers an insightful analysis of the representation of female celebrities across two prominent Nigerian newspapers: the Daily Trust and The Nation. The study contributes to media studies by employing a quantitative content analysis, thus providing a structured examination of how female celebrities are depicted within these media outlets. This methodological choice underscores a commitment to a systematic and empirical investigation, leveraging purposive sampling to select the newspapers and stratified sampling to ensure a representative selection of editions.

The study's methodological framework allows for a comprehensive understanding of portrayal patterns by analyzing the frequency and nature of representations across different days of the week. This approach enables the researchers to offer a detailed examination of the media's focus on various attributes of female celebrities, presenting a nuanced picture of media practices in Nigeria. The application of framing theory within this context further enriches the study's findings, as it sheds light on the media's role in shaping public perceptions through selective emphasis on personal attributes over professional accomplishments. The framing theory analysis reveals a troubling trend where media portrayals of female celebrities often prioritize personal aspects, such as appearance and relationships, over their professional achievements. This framing not only reflects but also perpetuates societal stereotypes, contributing to a skewed public perception of women in the entertainment industry.

Moreover, the study's call for improved representation of female celebrities in the media is a significant contribution to the discourse on media and gender. The paper advocates for a shift towards portraying women in a manner that recognizes and celebrates their professional accomplishments rather than focusing predominantly on personal characteristics. This advocacy highlights the symbiotic relationship between media and society, where media portrayals both reflect and influence societal values and norms. The study's conclusions suggest that enhancing the quality and quantity of news stories about women could foster a more equitable media environment and contribute to broader societal changes regarding gender roles.

Despite these contributions, the study is not without limitations. The focus on only two newspapers, while providing valuable insights, may not capture the full spectrum of media portrayals across Nigeria. Including a broader range of media outlets could offer a more comprehensive understanding of how female celebrities are represented across different platforms. The study's reliance on quantitative content analysis, while effective for identifying patterns and frequencies, may miss the nuanced meanings and contexts of media portrayals. Complementing this approach with qualitative methods, such as interviews or discourse analysis, could provide deeper insights into the underlying motivations and implications of the media frames used.

Furthermore, while the study effectively highlights the need for improved media representation of women, it does not propose specific strategies or interventions to address this issue. Future research could explore practical solutions or policy recommendations to enhance the portrayal of female celebrities in the media. This could include examining the role of media

regulations, industry practices, and public advocacy in promoting more equitable and accurate representations of women.

Thus, Msughter et al., (2022) study makes a significant contribution to understanding media portrayals of female celebrities in Nigeria. By combining quantitative content analysis with framing theory, the research provides valuable insights into the patterns of representation and their implications for gender equality. However, addressing the study's limitations and exploring additional methodological and theoretical approaches could further enhance the robustness and applicability of its findings. Future research should continue to investigate the complexities of media portrayals and develop actionable strategies to promote more balanced and equitable representations of female celebrities.

Uzuegbunam (2017) study presents an exploration of the impact of celebrity culture on Nigerian youth, offering valuable insights into the intersection between media influence and youth behavior within the Nigerian context. The study's findings underscore the pervasive role of celebrity culture, particularly how media portrayals of celebrities, both local and international, affect various aspects of young Nigerians' social attitudes and lifestyles. By employing a theoretical framework grounded in Albert Bandura's social learning theory, which emphasizes the observational learning of behaviors from media figures, the research situates itself within a robust academic tradition, further enriching the discourse on celebrity studies.

The study's key contributions lie in its comprehensive examination of the influence exerted by celebrity culture on Nigerian youth. Through its survey of 180 undergraduates from Nnamdi Azikiwe Federal University in Awka, the research reveals that celebrity lifestyles, as depicted in both mainstream and alternative media, significantly impact the social behaviors and attitudes of young people. This influence manifests in various domains, including confidence, fashion choices, and perspectives on relationships, marriage, and sex. The study effectively highlights how media celebrities, by virtue of their high visibility and perceived glamour, become powerful role models whose behaviors and lifestyles young people are inclined to emulate.

Furthermore, the research adds a crucial dimension to the broader field of celebrity studies by differentiating between the influences of local versus international celebrities on Nigerian youth. The findings suggest a notable preference for international celebrities, who are often viewed as benchmarks for desirable appearance and behavior. This preference illuminates the globalized nature of media influence, where international celebrities often overshadow local figures in shaping youth aspirations and behaviors. The study thereby contributes to the understanding of how global media flows impact local contexts, providing a significant contribution to the global dialogue on celebrity culture.

The study conducted by Obalanlege and Adesina (2016), titled "Journalism in Crisis: Celebrity News Values and the Nigerian Press," represents a critical engagement with the increasing prominence of celebrity journalism in Nigeria's media landscape. Through an investigation that marries qualitative content analysis with interviews, the authors assert that the rise of celebrity news coverage often overrides traditional news values, thus reshaping the journalistic priorities in the Nigerian press. By focusing on the Nigerian SUN newspaper as a primary case study, the research provides nuanced insight into how editorial decisions are influenced by the celebrity status of individuals and the corresponding entertainment value of their stories. This ascendance of entertainment-driven content has not only redefined the taxonomy of news values but has also shifted the very criteria through which newsworthiness is determined in contemporary media.

The contributions of this study are significant in various ways. First, by meticulously analyzing the growing influence of celebrity and entertainment news, the authors trace the gradual subordination of traditional news values, such as bad news or surprise, to the demands of a market driven by audience appeal. The findings demonstrate how the hierarchy of news values has been reconfigured, with celebrity status gaining unprecedented leverage in determining what gets covered. This shift marks a departure from earlier journalistic conventions, wherein the social relevance or the urgency of a story was paramount. Through case studies from the Nigerian SUN, the authors provide empirical evidence showing that the volume and pervasiveness of celebrity coverage have escalated to the point where it rivals, if not eclipses, other forms of news content.

Studies by scholars such as Obalanlege and Adesina (2016) and Nwabueze (2014) show that celebrity news forms the bulk of media content in the country. Celebrities are seemingly brought in to act as beacons of journalistic taste. The presence of this celebratory journalism is a result of a synergy between the media houses, who look for journalism that would enhance the readership of the product, and the celebrities, who are always ready to explore every opportunity to promote themselves. The argument presented in this piece rests on the paper titled, “The New Journalism Syndrome: the Role of Celebrity and Entertainment News Values in the Nigerian Press” (2016). Setting out by citing prominent scholars such as Harcup and O’Neil (2001), the work is a part of the continuing discourse on journalism around the world, and particularly in Nigeria. The authors note that, since the beginning of the 21st century, the concept of news values seems to have surrendered its centrality in defining the taxonomy of news that dominated the late 20th century.

For instance, the work cites American Journalism Review which positions celebrities as one of the most important news values in the country. The noted work also invokes Gatekeeping Theory, which was introduced in the era of White in the 1950, and later conceptualised by Gieber in the 1964 to explain Gatekeeping as both the process or acts whereby various people involved in the making of news determine not only what gets into the news but also what does not. It also refers to the factors that influence editorial decisions in the newsrooms, and the professional ideologies that enhance qualitative decision making. It is worth noting that in Gatekeeping Theory, Deacon et al (2010) acknowledge that it is not only ideas, opinions and stories that are chosen by editors, but also the manner by which they present the ideas, opinions and stories. They introduced the concept of framing to capture this aspect. The study also draws on the concept of gatekeeping, as discussed by White in the 1950 and Gieber in the 1964, to explore the factors influencing editorial decisions in newsrooms, such as organizational policies, audience preferences, and professional ethics. Additionally, the paper contrasts differing perspectives on journalistic practices, with one side criticizing tabloids for sensationalism and falsehoods, while the other defends such practices as necessary for reader engagement.

By examining the coverage of celebrity stories in The Sun newspaper, the research contributes to the discourse on the prioritization of entertainment news over traditional reporting, shedding light on the complexities of news selection processes and the interplay between audience demands and journalistic integrity. The research contributes significantly to the discourse surrounding journalism by examining the increasing influence of celebrity and entertainment news values on the Nigerian press. By analyzing the coverage of celebrity stories in The Sun newspaper and conducting interviews with journalists, the study sheds light on the factors driving editorial decisions and news selection processes.

While the research paper provides valuable insights into the impact of celebrity news values on the Nigerian press, it is essential to acknowledge certain limitations inherent in the study. One limitation lies in the focus on a specific newspaper, The Sun newspaper, during a particular timeframe, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to the broader media landscape in Nigeria. The study's reliance on interviews with editors from The Sun newspaper may introduce bias or limited perspectives, as the views expressed by these individuals may not fully represent the diverse range of journalistic practices and attitudes within the industry.

Additionally, the paper primarily examines the quantitative aspect of news coverage, such as the percentage of column inches devoted to celebrity stories, without delving deeply into the qualitative aspects of journalistic decision-making processes or audience reception of such content. This narrow focus on quantitative analysis may overlook the nuanced dynamics at play in news production and consumption, thereby offering a somewhat limited understanding of the complexities surrounding the prioritization of celebrity news over traditional reporting. Future research could benefit from addressing these limitations by incorporating a more diverse range of media outlets, employing mixed-method approaches, and considering the broader socio-cultural implications of celebrity journalism in Nigeria.

Overall, these studies indicate that the emphasis on celebrity news by journalists and media houses, undermine investigative journalism and reduces coverage of critical societal issues. This trend reflects a broader challenge within the Nigerian media landscape, where economic pressures and audience preferences drive the focus on celebrity culture.

III. Research Methods

The study design is positivist while the research method is content analysis. The population of the study consists of the 310 newspapers operating in Nigeria while the sample size constitutes the three newspapers - The Nation, Daily Trust, and The Punch. Systematic Random Sampling is used for selecting articles for content analysis, ensuring every nth article within the selected timeframe is included in the sample. The main categories for analysis include story prominence (front page vs. other sections), tone (positive, negative, or neutral), framing (sensationalism, human interest, or factual reporting), and the type of celebrity featured (e.g., entertainers, athletes, politicians). The units of analysis will include individual articles, headlines, and the frequency of celebrity news. The data was presented using simple table, percentages and frequencies.

IV. Results and Discussion

Table 1. The Frequency of Celebrity Cases in *The Nation*, *The Punch*, and *Daily Trust*

Newspaper	<i>The Nation</i>		<i>The Punch</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Grand Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Celebrity Cases	538	26.2	410	3.9	425	4.1	1373	6.0
Other Items	1518	73.8	10125	96.1	9810	95.8	21,453	93.10
Total	2,056	100	10, 535	100	10, 235	100	22, 826	100

(Source: author's computation, 2024).

The table above reveals that from the total number of 1373 reports on celebrity cases identified in the three newspapers, *The Nation* has 538 items (26.2%), *The Punch* records 410 (3.9%) items and *Daily Trust* has 425 (4.1%) during the period of the study. From the analysis,

The Nation covered more cases on celebrity, followed by *Daily Trust* and *The Punch*. There seems to be a non-conformity with the regional inferences on the content of these papers as majority of the celebrity cases were recorded in the southwest of the country where *The Nation* newspaper is situated. Therefore, the more coverage of celebrity cases by *The Nation* newspaper is an indication interest of the celebrity affairs in the other region of the country. However, this may be viewed as a form of image presentation of the southwest and south-south in terms of newspaper attention in the coverage of celebrity issues. In all, using Wimmer and Dominick (2011)'s benchmark of frequency ratings of media coverage that the coverage of celebrity cases, it is seen that the frequency is very low (at 6.0%).

Table 2. The Genre Utilised in Presenting Celebrity Cases in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* Newspapers

Newspaper Story Types	<i>The Nation</i>		<i>The Punch</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Grand Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Straight News	239	46.7	240	49.5	204	54.2	683	49.7
Features	127	24.8	100	20.6	56	14.9	283	20.6
Editorials	30	5.8	24	4.9	13	3.4	67	4.9
Interview	24	4.7	22	4.5	22	5.8	68	5.0
Cartoons	14	2.7	13	2.7	11	2.9	38	2.8
Column/Opinion	78	15.2	86	17.7	70	18.6	234	17.0
Total	512	100	485	100	376	100	1373	100

(Source: author's computation, 2024).

From Table 2 above, it is evident that celebrity cases were dominantly presented by the selected newspapers in straight news with 46.7% in *The Nation*, *The Punch* with 49.5% while *Daily Trust* with 54.2. This is followed by feature stories with *The Nation* 24.8, *The Punch* 20.6% and *Daily Trust* 14.9. Based on the data, it is clearly the newspapers presented celebrity cases in straight news and features story with no significant presentation on the editorial, interview, cartoon, column/opinion pages. However, while *The Punch* presented more celebrity cases in straight news, *The Nation* presented more of celebrity cases in feature stories. The implication of the findings is that *The Nation* and *The Punch* performed more of the surveillance function as regard to celebrity cases than *Daily Trust*. Equally, in sourcing non-house perception on celebrity cases through column or opinion, there seem to be an appreciable level of opinions contents on celebrity cases by the three newspapers, *The Nation* 15.2%, *The Punch* 17.7%, and *Daily Trust* 18.6%. The table shows that the dominant genre of the celebrity content is the straight news.

Table 3. Type of Celebrity in *the Nation*, *the Punch* and *Daily Trust* Newspapers

Types of Celebrity	<i>The Nation</i>		<i>The Punch</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Grand Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Sports	67	13.9	62	15.1	60	12.4	189	13.8
Entertainment	291	60.6	241	58.9	301	62.3	833	60.7
Politics	61	12.7	51	12.4	52	10.8	164	11.9
Business	61	12.7	56	13.6	70	14.5	187	13.6
Total	480	100%	410	100	483	100	1373	100

(Source: author's computation, 2024).

In order to find out the type of celebrity in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers, Table 3 reveals that sports account for 13.9% in *The Nation*, 15.1% was recorded in *The Punch* while *Daily Trust* has 12.4%. Equally, for the entertainment, *The Nation* has 60.6%, *The*

Punch has 58.9% and *Daily Trust* 62.3%. From the data, it is evident that other types of celebrity stories on politics and business were not given prominent in the selected newspapers. The implication of the findings is that the selected newspapers pay more attention on other types of celebrity like sports and entertainment, which means that the surveillance function of the selected papers was not adequate as regards to celebrity stories within the study period.

Table 4. Content Focus of Celebrity Stories in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* Newspapers

Content Focus	<i>The Nation</i>		<i>The Punch</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Grand Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Personal life	54	10.9	45	10.1	40	9.2	139	10.1
Career achievements	161	32.6	151	33.8	135	31.2	447	32.5
Controversies	211	42.7	191	42.8	197	44.5	599	43.6
Charity or activism	68	13.8	59	13.2	61	14.1	188	13.7
Total	494	100	446	100.0	433	100	1373	100.0

(Source: author's computation, 2024).

Table 4 above shows the content focus of celebrity stories in the selected newspapers. From the data, career achievements accounts for 10.9% in *The Nation*, 33.8% in *The Punch* and 31.2% in *Daily Trust*. Also, for the controversies, *The Nation* has 42.7%, *The Punch* 42.8% and *Daily Trust* 44.5% while personal life and charity or activism were not dominant compare to career achievements and controversies in the selected newspapers. Based on the data, it is clear that the selected newspapers have a content focus on celebrity, and also there is a variation in terms of content focus within the period of the study. Obalanlege and Adesina's (2016) critique of celebrity journalism in Nigeria, which calls for a recalibration of news values to prioritize more substantive forms of reporting.

Table 5. The Tone of Coverage in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* Newspapers

Prominence Items	<i>The Nation</i>		<i>The Punch</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Grand Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Positive	223	48.5	201	46.5	200	41.6	624	45.4
Negative	95	20.6	81	18.7	78	16.2	254	18.5
Neutral	142	30.9	150	34.7	203	42.2	495	36.0
Total	460	100	432	100	481	100	1373	100

(Source: author's computation, 2024).

Table 5 examined the tone of coverage in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers. Going by the data, *The Nation* has 48.5% on the positive ground, *The Punch* has 46.5% while *Daily Trust* has 41.6%. Similarly, 30.9% was recorded on the neutral level in *The Nation*, *The Punch* has 34.7% and *Daily Trust* 42.2%. In relation to negative, all the selected newspapers have low tone of coverage. This means that the selected newspapers under investigation have positive coverage, follow by neutral within the study period. The implication is that the positive stories are celebratory and are supportive in nature. Samadoni et al., (2022) highlighted the importance of ethical engagement in the representation of celebrity humanitarian work, where the portrayal of celebrities as saviors can distort the underlying issues and perpetuate harmful stereotypes.

Table 6. Placement of Celebrity Stories in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* Newspapers

Placement	<i>The Nation</i>		<i>The Punch</i>		<i>Daily Trust</i>		Grand Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Front Page	125	27.9	146	31.8	151	32.4	422	30.7

Inside Page	266	59.4	232	50.5	246	52.8	744	54.2
Back Page	57	12.7	81	17.6	69	14.8	207	15.1
Total	448	100	459	100	466	100	1373	100

(Source: author's computation, 2024).

The data in Table 6 shows the placement of celebrity stories in *The Nation*, *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspaper. Based on the data, *The Nation* has 27.9% of celebrity stories on front page, *The Punch* has 31.8% and *Daily Trust* 32.4. For the inside page, *The Nation* has 59.4%, *The Punch* has 50.5 and *Daily Trust* 52.8% while back page has fewer stories on celebrity within the study period. This indicates that the selected newspapers place more stories on celebrity in the inside page, and the inside page stories are next to the most important stories in terms of placement. The front-page stories are the most significant stories that occupy strategic position in a newspaper.

V. Conclusion

The influence of celebrity culture on news values in Nigerian journalism represents a significant shift in the priorities and practices of the media industry. As celebrities increasingly dominate headlines, the traditional ideals of journalism, such as objectivity, public interest, and investigative depth, are being compromised in favour of sensationalism, entertainment, and commercial appeal. This evolution reflects broader societal changes, including the rise of social media and the growing importance of audience engagement in a competitive media market. Based on the findings, the study discovered that the types of celebrity stories on politics and business were not given prominent in the selected newspapers. The implication of the findings is that the selected newspapers pay more attention on other types of celebrity like sports and entertainment, which means that the surveillance function of the selected papers was not adequate as regards to celebrity stories within the study period. Similarly, the selected newspapers have a content focus on celebrity, and also there is a variation in terms of content focus within the period of the study. Also, the selected newspapers place more stories on celebrity in the inside page, and the inside page stories are next to the most important stories in terms of placement. The front-page stories are the most significant stories that occupy strategic position in a newspaper.

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