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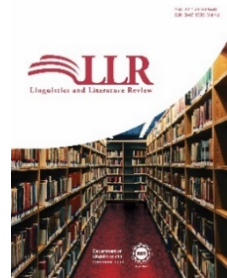
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A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of Visual Illustrations Related to COVID-19 Awareness in Nigeria

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Abstract

The current paper aims to discuss the impact of visual illustrations related to the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. To embark, this study utilizes visual resources, precisely images to facilitate a massive audience by incorporating various modes of visual communication, such as graphics, typography, and attractive layouts to engage the public. This study deploys a multimodal discourse analysis of selected COVID-19 pandemic visual illustrations. The current study examines ten (10) COVID-19 visual illustrations. These /visual illustrations were collected from the official website of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). This research identified that in creating awareness concerning the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and its mitigation, there is a dire need to enhance modes of communication using multiple modes of awareness, such as images such as graphics, typography, and other semiotic resources. To elaborate further a large range of visual resources were utilized to analyse the linguistic efficiency of selected visual resources to communicate with the larger audience with concise language and expression. When multiple modes are used effectively in the images, they become audience-affective, such that the attention of the reader or target audience is drawn to the content of the image. Moreover, this study recommended that to achieve the maximum effect of awareness concerning the COVID-19 pandemic, multiple modes model should be used by communicators to facilitate the larger audience. Furthermore, it should be used in such a way that they are harmonised and interrelate, contributing to the realisation of meaning throughout the text.

Keywords: awareness, COVID-19, Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA), NCDC, visual illustrations

Introduction

Communication is one thing human beings cannot do without, which means that almost everything we do revolves around communication, spoken or

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unspoken. Communication is simply the transfer of feelings, thoughts, ideas, and emotions from one party known as the sender to another party known as the receiver. The goal of communication is to be understood; therefore, for active and effective communication to take place, the interlocutors must understand the contents of the message shared. Communication serves different purposes which include informing, educating, instructing, and creating awareness among others (Planer & Godfrey-Smith, [2021](#)).

The global pandemic of 2019 broke out a new chronic disease in Wuhan city of China in March 2020, which spread globally. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared it a pandemic. As the global economy and community grappled with the devastating impact of COVID-19 in Nigeria, the Nigerian government declared a countrywide to take preventive measures and safety precautions regarding the reported cases. The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) actively came on board by educating Nigerians via various media and print platforms to ensure that people understood the gravity of the spread of COVID-19 and its phenomenal impact on people (Mustapha et al., [2020](#)). Therefore, posit that the motive for creating these images was that to properly sensitise the public. If the members of the public are properly sensitised and they are able to take safety precautions against the virus, there would be a reduction in the contraction rate and consequently, the outbreak would decline gradually until finally. Additionally, we posit that the awareness images released by the NCDC regarding COVID-19 were meticulously crafted with a creative touch. They skilfully employed linguistic and paralinguistic tropes, utilizing powerful tools like inscriptions, colour, font face, and font sizes to enhance the communication process. The objective behind these efforts is to deeply resonate with the public, compelling them to grasp the vital importance of adhering to the rules. This is done to also ensure that members of the public understand the need to adhere to the rules to save their own lives and the lives of their loved ones. Hence, the Nigerian government to disseminate the preventive measures and healthcare implications of the COVID-19 pandemic adopted a large number of health-related strategies. Thus, the current study analysed ten visual resources or graphic illustrations to see the impact of communicative modes, namely post, graphics, typography, and memes on the public.

Ensuring Public Awareness: Visual Illustrations in COVID-19 Pandemic

In mass literacy or education, the government or any other agent tasked with the responsibility of educating or informing the public about a particular situation, or development always ensures effective information dissemination to both literate and non-literates by using suitable and adequate communicative modes. Awareness creation is a form of mass literacy. Visual illustrations are used to create awareness among people, which would effectively facilitate the process of communication or information sharing at large. Pictures, illustrations or graphic images are utilized in communication because they have communicative potential. Feelings, thoughts, ideas, or emotions can be expressed through images. Images can also be used to facilitate awareness. Images created especially to make people know about someone or something are classified as awareness images. Awareness images are graphic images or illustrations because they are often created using special computer programs such as CorelDraw, Photoshop, and other design-oriented AI. These images were created and captured with special features to proclaim linguistic interpretations such as inscription, colour, font sizes, graphics, and so on. Essentially, these images are strategically deployed to facilitate their communicative capability. All of these were utilised in the creation of COVID-19 awareness images (Biswas et al., [2022](#)).

The Nigerian Centre for Diseases Control (NCDC) took the responsibility of spreading COVID-19-related awareness for the public. The government realized that there was a dire need to create visual illustrations to facilitate the awareness process, which would be convenient for a large number of people. These visuals were simple and catchy to present ideas in the most possible succinct way, which explained their importance in the field of communication. Therefore, the NCDC published different visual illustrations on their official website, which communicated various facts about the virus that majorly included modes of contracting the virus and safety precautions on the internet, in government offices, hospitals, and on every public place. In some instances, these visual illustrations may have little or no written text, though there was visual text embedded in these images to attract the audience. Taylor et al. ([2006](#)) demonstrated that images in awareness are used for four primary reasons for visibility, media efficiency, local presence, and tangible response. They

asserted that these four factors inform the communicative potentials of images, especially visual illustrations such as images, which are purposefully created for advertisement purposes. In a likewise manner, that awareness images are catchy, they too argue that awareness images enhance the visibility of whatever it is meant for so that more people can see it and be able to make sense of it. Gebreselassie and Bougie (2019) considered Ethiopia in their research looking at the media preferences of general public, they posited that visual resources, particularly billboards, serve as the most effective communication medium between producers and consumers. They also added that they are cost-effective and easily assessable. Similarly, Yao and Zhuo (2018) considered the visual illustrations in the promotional videos of the city of Hangzhou in China. They revealed that the city representation in the videos for 2016 G20 summit were much more effective for city marketing, expanding publicity, and engaging and aligning the viewers. Yao and Zhuo's (2018) research findings explained that visual designs of Hangzhou as portrayed in the promotional videos (which were created with the motive of creating awareness) used for the conference to facilitate the marketing of the city is an exemplification of what awareness images could do on the sublime.

Visual illustrations are products of communicative strategies used by the government and its healthcare agencies to provide the people information regarding the spread of the virus; hence, manipulations is common. Tunali (2013) argued that the visual illustrations are often manipulated. He calls this kind of manipulation a subliminal manipulation stating that "subliminal" is existing or operating below the threshold of consciousness, producing enough intensity to affect one's mental process or behaviour. There are strategies deployed into visual illustrations; these strategies cut across the stages of production, design pattern, and even post-print posting. At the production stage or design-pattern stage, the communicator has to utilise persuasive means to effectively persuade various things, which come together to make it possible. This includes the use of affective words or linguistic items, which facilitate the creation of relationship or identity between the sender and the targeted audience. The post-print stage may involve the images being placed at locations where they can hit the bull's eyes or members of the public may see them.

The relationship between visual illustration and the targeted audience is phenomenal, which explains the working of visual resources. It is in this

regard that Laba (2020) drew from Halliday's (1973) language meta-functions to express the visual illustration working in relation to three meta-functions of language, which are, namely ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions. The ideational function, which primarily deals with meaning representation, is expressed in the representational meaning of visual illustrations. The interpersonal function is expressed in the strategies in which a visual illustration has been created to maintain and change relationships between the visual illustrations and strategies employed to maintain them. In addition, in images, interaction is explored through interrelated systems of contact, power, involvement, and social distance (Krees & Van Leeuwen, 2006; Laba, 2020). Lastly, both Laba (2020) and Halliday (1973) comment on textual meaning and how different and sometimes disparate parts of an image come together in a meaningful whole.

Visual resources can be regarded as linguistic entities because they fulfil the functions of language known as meta-functions. In selected visuals, especially the concerning visual illustrations are a systematic structure, which gives room for the images to be analysable using the meta-functions of language. It is significant to note that visuals can express the communicative ideas about the pressing issue or the ideas the sender of the message intends to communicate. Visuals can also be used to create interpersonal relationships with the brand owners and their customers. The textual meaning embedded in images becomes apparent through the convergence of multiple modes that are seamlessly integrated within the visual composition. This implies that in awareness images, diverse elements including colour, fonts, actual inscriptions, and other visual modes work in unison to create significance. The image itself assumes the role of a text that can be subject to analysis and interpretation.

The Coronavirus (COVID-19)

COVID-19 is the common name for a severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The World Health Organization (WHO) recognised the coronavirus disease as a pandemic on March 11, 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic has various economic, political, social, and psychological implications and does not only threaten lives but affects the general lifestyle of people and the world at large. The virus responsible for this disease is a novel coronavirus (nCoV); a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans (WHO). As of 24th February 2021, there

have been 112 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 2.5 million deaths worldwide (Singh et al., [2021](#); Arya & Patel, [2021](#)).

Ivic ([2021](#)) examined the international organisation concerning COVID-19 discourse by stating that deployed several approaches to control the mitigating effect on COVID-19. With an emphasis on language, Ivic claimed that international organisations like the World Health Organisation (WHO), United Nations Education, and Social and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) relied on masculine concepts while calling on solidarity and neglecting the notion of care. However, gender politics is a big issue in this globalized world. This study identified the detrimental effects of being relied on gendered concepts, concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, this research did not employ any gendered terminologies in the description and analysis of the images/visuals.

Shaikh and Likhite ([2020](#)) considered it pertinent to know the current level of knowledge, perception, and practices in COVID-19 regarding the safety of children in their own community. With a total number of 786 respondents using school children between the age of 6-16 years, they administered a quiz among children, later their test scores were used to analyse their knowledge and awareness regarding the preventive measures and the virus. Their findings showed that 82.20% of the sampled population declared that they got most of their information from social media and TV campaigns. Therefore, it was concluded that there seems to be a good level of awareness among children regarding the COVID-19 symptoms and safety precautions. Television and social media sites were declared to be good sources for spreading more awareness and information among children and adults. Shaikh and Likhite's ([2020](#)) sampled population to know about the virus and preventive measures from social media, a series of platforms, which thrive on texts, images, and videos, show that awareness images are very important. Even though the researchers did not state specifically a specific aspect of social media, which informed and raised their level of awareness. Reportedly, it is probable that the visual resources have facilitated their knowledge and raised their level of awareness regarding the virus and its preventive measures. Thus, this establishes the contributions of awareness images on Covid-19, like the ones selected in this research, to nation-building.

Akwa et al. ([2020](#)) studied the awareness and perception of the general population of Cameroon and the existence and spread of COVID-19. By

using questionnaires a total number of 574 respondents were selected, a large number of respondents indicated that they were well-aware regarding COVID-19 existence, transmission, and preventive strategies. They further claimed that this knowledge could be helpful to decrease the mitigating effect of COVID-19. On the other hand, Arya and Patel (2021) conducted an online survey by focusing on COVID-19 vaccination awareness level among the Indian population. A total number of 135 respondents, 77% population was well-aware about the COVID-19 vaccination process. However, awareness of vaccination may not be enough to mitigate the effects of the virus. COVID-19 is a global challenge, which means that awareness of all aspects of it including prevention, handling, and reporting is important. This information should therefore come from government-approved sources or any other authentic source.

Multimodal Discourse Analysis

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) refers to the process of interpreting and making sense of qualitative data in projects, which mix verbal and nonverbal forms of information. Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) includes the analysis of communication in all forms, though is particularly concerned with texts, which contain the interaction and integration of two or more semiotic resources or modes of communication to achieve the textual communication functions. The presence of more than one communicative mode in a text is called multimodality. Multimodality views communication and representation more than as a language and places more attention on other modes of communication such as the visual, gesture, gaze, posture, colour, typography, composition, graphics, and others (Kress & van Leeuwen, [2006](#)).

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) is an approach that looks at multiple modes of communication such as text, colour, and images. It is a method of discursive analysis, which not only looks individual modes of communication, but more important their interaction with one another to create semiotic meaning. Kress ([1996](#), p. 1) stated further, “Using three modes in one signwriting, too long to read and writing names what would be too difficult to show. Colour is used to highlight a specific aspect of the overall message”. In a likewise manner, Olowu and Akinsulore ([2015](#)) defined Multimodal Discourse Analysis as the theory and analysis of semiotic resources and the semantic expansions, which occur as semiotic choices combined in multicultural phenomena. Snyder (2009; as cited in

Olowu & Akinsulore, (2015) defined MDA as the study of the “intersection and interdependence of various modalities of communication within a given context” (p. 1). O’Halloran (2004); therefore, agreed by stating that “multimodal analysis takes into account the functions and meaning of the visual images, together with the meaning arising from the integrated use of the two semiotic resources” (p. 1). Coskun (2015) also showed similar interest by stating MDA as a study “concerned with developing the theory and practice of the analysis of discourse, which makes use of multiple semiotic resources; for example, language, visual images, space, and architecture” (p. 40). Therefore, it is obvious that MDA combines multiple modes in texts to make meaning and appropriate interpretations.

In MDA, the analysis and interpretation of language are contextualized in the text and other semiotic resources are examined in relation to meanings formation in the texts. All the semiotic resources are analysed such as colour, size, text, images, fonts, and so on. In Multimodal Discourse Analysis, the text could be anything, which has a communicative potential. The current study aims to examine the communicative modes in COVID-19 and the role and relevance of visual illustrations by creating an awareness level for the public. Additionally, Multimodal Discourse Analysis (MDA) is deployed to understand the semiotic relevance and coherent theoretical underpinnings to understand the selected visual resources. COVID-19-related visual illustrations are graphic images; therefore, they include colour, texts, fonts, shapes, and other semiotic resources. MDA accounts for the identification, interpretation, and analysis of the communicative functions of these resources in the selected resources.

Apart from Multimodal Discourse Analysis done by Krees and van Leeuwen in 1996, there has been a wide-range of discussion in academia about Multimodal Discourse Analysis. Multimodal analysis includes the analysis of communication in all forms but is particularly concerned with texts which contain the interaction and integration of two or more semiotic resources or ‘modes’ of communication to achieve the communication functions of text.

Given that Multimodal Discourse Analysis is a branch of linguistic analysis, which accounts for the interpretation of multiple communicative modes present in a text, it, therefore, becomes suitable to analyse any kind of text. Various researchers have utilised the multimodal discourse approach in examining various discourses such as music, pictures, videos,

texts, and even performances. Gbadegesin (2019) adopted Norris' Multimodal Interaction Analysis to analyse human interaction in the musical space. Her study isolates the stage performances in MTN Project Fame West Africa and examined how performers interact on stage. Multimodal Interaction Analysis according to her helps to "determine who and what to focus on and what does not need much attention in the performance" (p. 110). Her analysis focused on the stage setting, which is the layout, studio props, the colour of the stage, and other communicative modes, which have meaning potential and helped in the overall interpretation of the performance. Pan (2015) examined the functions of non-verbal elements in the contextualization and advertisement translation using billboards in Hong Kong. He looked at the multimodal aspects of the texts and explained that translators are affected by multimodal aspects of the texts, which they translate. He also stated that the translation method tends to be pre-decided by the extra-linguistic elements of an advertisement.

Santamaria and Penalval (2021) stated that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had impact various sectors including education since educators were urged to adapt online medium and virtual tools and techniques for online learning instead of the physical. Olowu and Akinsulore's (2015) research analysed the visual and linguistic components, which conducted a research on related to the selected malaria drugs posters. Data were derived from primary and secondary sources. The primary data selected were four posters, stickers, and drug literature advertisements on malaria and the researchers deployed Multimodal Discourse Analysis theory as the framework for the analysis. A high concentration was given to on communicative modes such as colour, picture, symbol, icons gaze, and postures, which were helpful in enhancing the semantic quality of the advertisement. The article then leans on the importance of linguistic elements and visual elements in the advertising space.

Multimodal Discourse Analysis creates useful avenues to explore communicative semiotics in a text and the impact of resources in facilitating effective communication among culturally and educationally diverse people of Nigeria. MDA, as a specific approach, has been used in analysing and interpreting multiple modes embedded in texts regardless of the shape, medium or form.

Objectives

This research has certain objectives:

1. To examine the communicative modes in the selected visual illustrations concerning COVID-19.
2. To analyse the multimodal discourse strategies used in the selected COVID-19 visual illustrations
3. To investigate the communicative functions of the interplay of modes in the selected COVID-19 visual illustrations

Research Questions

1. What are the communicative modes in the selected COVID-19-related visuals?
2. Which multimodal discourse strategies are employed in COVID-19-related visuals?
3. What are the dominant communicative functions in the selected COVID-19-related visuals?
4. What significance level do these visuals have in public awareness and communication?

Significance of the Study

This research is therefore significant as it calls the attention of the government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and academia to the crucial need to enhance modes of communication to create awareness about the spread of the pandemic and its mitigation. This will enable them to take note of effective communication strategies that should be adopted when creating awareness and when seeking information on awareness posters or videos.

Methodology

The data selected are ten awareness images on COVID-19, which were posted on the official and verified handle of the Instagram page of the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC). Instagram was chosen as source of data because it was more engaged than any other social medium of the NCDC. The images were limited to 10 to allow in-depth analysis within the limited time available. The images contain the NCDC logo to

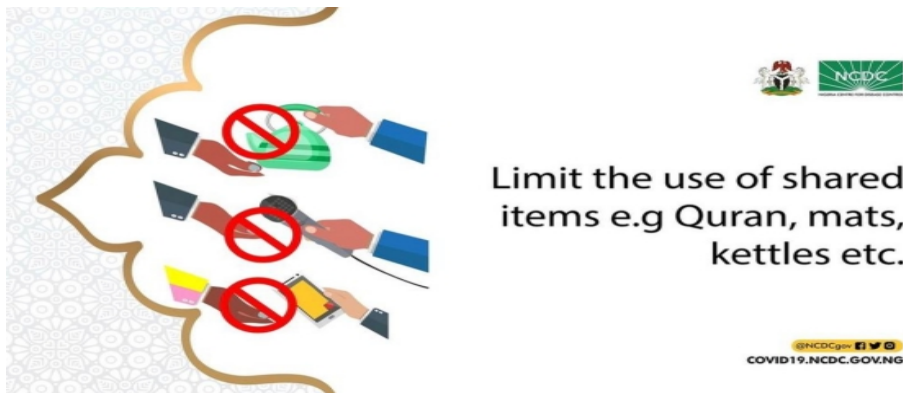
assert the originality and authenticity of the information contained in the images. The method of data analysis employed for the purpose of this research is descriptive, which also blends a Multimodal Discourse Analysis approach with the analysis of the text. The goal of this method is to present, describe, and analyse the presented data with special attention to the multiple communicative modes and strategies in each of the COVID-19-related visual illustration. The analytic method employed was taken from Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis. The language (verbal, textual, and visual images) used in the selected COVID-19 visual illustrations were examined, analysed, and interpreted using the aforementioned theoretical framework. The study looked at the communicative modes with the discourse strategies and functions to make people aware regarding the selected posters.

Discussion and Analysis

The current section critically examines each of the ten visual illustration. It analyses their roles and the objectives of using multiple modes in them. Furthermore, the researcher made an attempt to analyse the images by examining all semiotic resources, such as pictures, texts, and colours, as presented in each visual illustration. Additionally, the researcher identified the meanings and interdependences of these modes with reference to the selected visuals to fill the aforementioned gap of research.

Figure 1

Covid-19 Awareness Visual Illustration

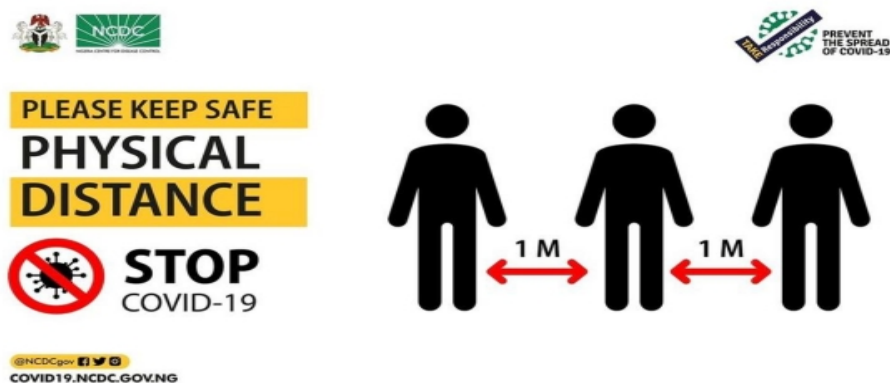


In the image above, which is a Covid-19 awareness visual illustration, multiple modes are used such as text, shapes, pictures, and colour. The

image in Figure 1 targets Muslim community. This inference can be drawn from the linguistic items such as kettle, Quran, mats, and the image of a kettle with a gold minaret often used as signs for Islam. The creator uses the image of a kettle, microphone, and mobile phone to create a mental picture of the items that are involved. The mixture of modern items of communication with other items symbolises the involvement of technology in the Islamic religion, which is a message for the global audience. The clear image of a stop traffic sign on an outstretched arm conveys the message of not accepting such items from another person as the items can harbour the virus and infect other people. One important thing to note apart from nominal items mentioned in the written text which are Quran, mats, and kettles, items such as microphones and mobile phones are used to extend the list of items. It is clear from the analysis that visual and verbal modes are interrelated and are dependent on each other. The rectangular image is sectioned into two. The sectioning is done using the shape of the dome of a minaret, which is symbolic for Islamic religion; therefore, the image of a minaret and the texts work together to widespread the information. The major colours used in the awareness image are red and black. Red is the colour of the cancellation drawn across the images of a kettle, microphone, and mobile phone. Red means stop or danger. The red signs used alongside the cancellation sign depict the dangers of sharing items in relation to COVID-19. Therefore, the combination of all these modes facilitates the purpose the image was intended for and all these modes inter-depend on each other in the image.

Figure 2

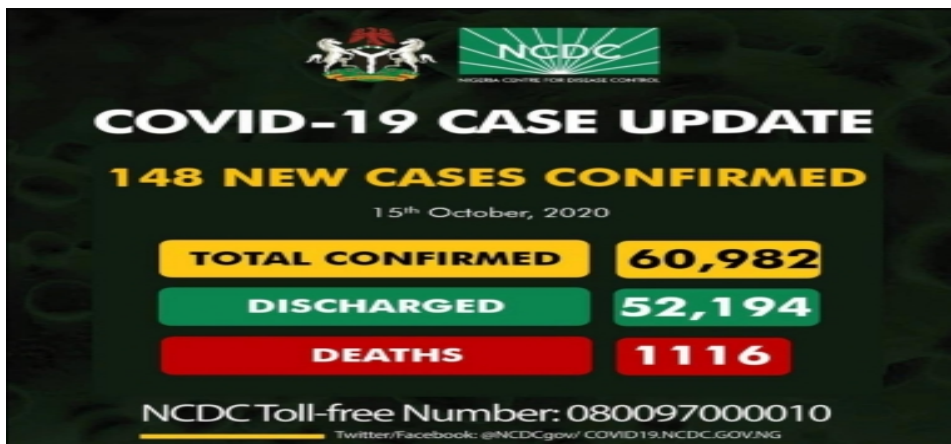
Prevent the Spread of Covid 19



In the above COVID-19-related regarding the visual illustration, multiple modes are used such as texts, shape, picture, and colour. The image is summarised in the text. The text shows that the essence of the image is to make people know that keeping safe is keeping physical distance. The words Physical Distance and Stop are written in bold to emphasise the function of the image. The three major colours in the image are black, yellow, and red. Black is used as the image of the human being drawn in the visual illustration and yellow is placed against back texts to make it more pronounced. Red is symbolic to *stop* or for *danger*, which is used to draw a cancellation mark on the virus and arrows that people should stay one metre apart. The image reflects the fact that the population density of Nigeria is high; therefore, being in a crowded place is almost inevitable. Markets, malls, hospitals, schools, religious gatherings, and any public space whatsoever are mostly crowded and to curb the spread of the virus, there should be a drastic reduction in the physical contact of people. Hence, the visual communicates that people should maintain a social distance to reduce body contact, which can mitigate the spread of the virus. The double-pointed arrow is painted red to facilitate the public's understanding of the dangers concerning the crowded places. The repetition of the pattern is an indication of the replication of the specified spacing back and forth.

Figure 3

NCDC Stats for Covid 19

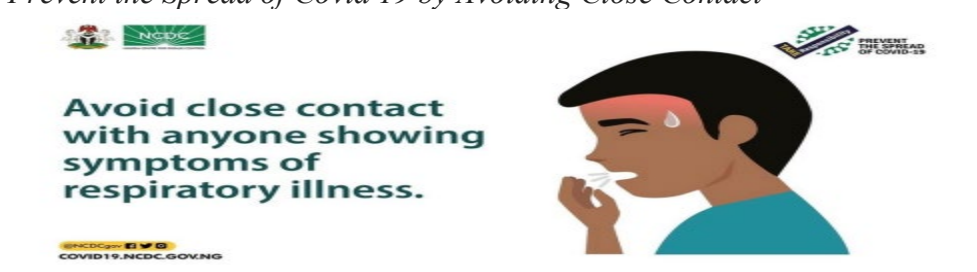


The texts express the messages contained in the awareness image. This image makes people aware about the number of cases, which have been confirmed till 15th October 2020. Hence, reportedly around 148 new cases

were confirmed, which are boldly written in large fonts with different colours to establish message prominence. The nature of the illness has prompted this study, placing significant emphasis on the escalating number of daily detected cases. Since the virus was deadly and the mortality rate was high among the Nigerians, the Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) employed a different strategy by detecting a daily number of new COVID-19 cases and recorded deaths to make people aware of the damages of this mitigating virus. In this regard, the government sanctioned COVID-19 preventives to take control of the situation. Therefore, three major colours in the visual are used to make the message prominent for the audience, namely these were yellow, green, and red. Yellow colour is used to indicate the total number of confirmed cases. Yellow, being a vibrant colour, holds a remarkable visibility, much like its use in traffic lights where yellow indicates readiness. In the context of the study, the choice of yellow colour symbolizes that the displayed number represents the count of confirmed cases reported thus far. Green is represents the number of discharged cases. Green means life and it implies that the indicated number of patients have successfully survived the infection. The use of a green background to represent the number of discharged cases can serve as an encouraging and motivating factor for individuals who have been infected. It signifies that contracting the infection does not signify the end of life. The green colour conveys a sense of renewal, growth, and vitality, providing hope and reassurance to those who have successfully recovered from COVID-19. Highlighting the number of discharged cases against a green backdrop reinforces the message that recovery is possible and that there is a path towards overcoming the illness. Red colour in the image, symbolises fatality; that is why the number of fatalities are written with a red background.

Figure 4

Prevent the Spread of Covid 19 by Avoiding Close Contact



The above visual resource highlights the fact of avoiding people in order to avoid symptoms of respiratory illness. The communicative modes used in this resource are text, colour, and graphics to present the message or textual elements clearly. The text contains a main message, however, the phrase “respiratory illness” may be quite advanced, and the average speaker of English in Nigeria may not be able to understand its meaning; hence, the picture is used to support the information communicated. The visual resources used is the picture, which presents a graphic image of a person sneezing indicates that it can cause respiratory illness by spreading germs; therefore, people who are sneezing can be considered as having symptoms of the COVID-19. Moreover, the blue colour of the shirt in the visual illustration and the text attracts the audience by facilitating the visibility of the picture.

To curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the image was created to make people understand the actual meaning of respiratory illness by depicting most common symptoms of all respiratory illness. From the image, three communicative modes are identified to facilitate the communicative aim of the visual illustration. The modes worked together to facilitate the fulfilment of the aforementioned objective of the visual resource. The image represented a man who had slightly darker skin tone, which clearly suggests that the addressed audience are Nigerians. This observation implies that during the lockdown, a significant proportion of individuals leaving their homes for work were predominantly men. As they faced a higher risk of exposure, it becomes crucial for them to take the necessary precautions and safety measures to prevent contracting the virus. The image emphasises the importance of individual responsibility in protecting one's health and the well-being of the larger community by emphasising this gendered aspect of the situation. It is a call to action for men to prioritise their safety, take preventive measures, and contribute to the collective effort to stop the virus's spread. Thus, the resource facilitates the audience by spreading awareness among Nigerians regarding the respiratory illnesses, which could be a symptom of COVID-19.

Figure 5

Prevent the Spread of Covid 19 by Washing Your Hands Frequently



The visual resource features two pairs of hands; one pair is being cleaned with a sanitizer; however, the other one is being cleaned with soap under running water. This reflects the two sanitary options of keeping the hands clean to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19. The visual illustration shows hands in motion, which reflects two things about risk and contraction reduction. Firstly, it helps in the prevention or precaution as an active task, which Nigerians must accomplish. The image effectively communicates that the mission of halting the virus's spread necessitates our unwavering commitment and proactive participation. It reminds us that we have the ability to take decisive action and make a real difference in this fight. Furthermore, the depiction of hands washing each other evokes a profound sense of communal unity and collective responsibility, which resonates particularly with the strong spirit of togetherness found in African communities. It is a poignant reminder that by coming together and supporting one another, we can effectively face the challenges that lie ahead. It also suggests that if communities can work together, the lives and wellbeing of their members will be significantly improved.

The image further suggests that synergy and personal hygiene are pertinent in the mitigation of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. The image further reiterates the indispensability of personal hygiene in curbing the spread of the virus. Soap and water are used, as precautionary measures to control the spread of this virus. Additionally, hand containing soap have been placed above than the other one, under running water. This arrangement of hands also communicates the sequence steps for hand washing, which indicates that soap must be applied first before placing hands under the running water. Whereas the written text is the message of the visual resource, which creates awareness to communicate with the larger audience. Additionally, the picture also illustrates that in case of no availability of soap one can use hand sanitizer to clean their hands. Green is predominantly used in the image; it reflects action or motion. Such is the case with mitigating the spread of the virus. It serves as a visual representation of the urgent need to curb the relentless spread of the virus. Just as green signifies vitality and growth, our collective effort to mitigate the virus demands unwavering action and vigilance. The mitigation of the virus is an active process that involves the hands. The hands become both points of protection and transmission. The hands, which are man's major point of contact with external surfaces, must be cleaned well to avoid the spread of the virus.

Figure 6
Do's to Wear A Non-Medical Fabric Mask Safely



Figure 7

Don'ts To Wear a Non-Medical Fabric Mask Safely



The current research considers data from Figures 6 and 7 as a pair. Thereby, the current research aims to investigate the modes of communication such as images, typography, and graphical representation

The icons in the visual illustration reflect what should be done or avoided in this intense COVID-19 situation. The icons are graphic creations of messages, which perform demonstrative functions, and facilitate the authorities to communicate with the public. Additionally, colours play a very crucial role in visual illustrations as they serve as pointers for important information. Looking at the images holistically, the image with green as the dominant colour symbolises the accepted patterns, whereas the image in red reflects actions, which should be avoided. In the same vein, the image is loaded with demonstrative icons, which shows all that should be done to ensure that the spread of the virus is minimised. The icons also include images of men and women, which represent two different genders and the icons have the picture of an old woman, a presumably Muslim woman wearing a hijab; men – one old and one young man. The old man and woman in the visual illustration represent people of the older generation; however, the younger generation is also represented in the visual. In contrast, the other image represents a disapproval sign, which is written in red “X” and

drawn to overlap the images to depict the things not done well. All the instructions holistically present the need for personal hygiene and non-sharing of personal belongings. Colours are an essential part in communicative modes as depicted in the images above; they interrelate with the textual mode.

Figure 8

Low Risk isn't No Risk



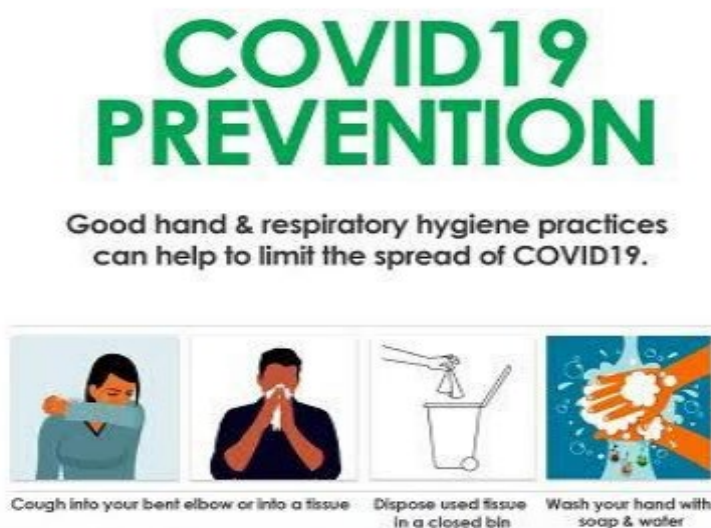
The visual resource can be divided into two parts, which are mainly the text and the image itself. The visual resource is a combination of eight (8) smaller images. The top left to right, present circular shapes, which enclosed smaller image of images and they are created to communicate mitigation strategies that have been approved by the World Health Organisation and the NCDC. Each of the encircled seven (7) visuals shows and tells a specific strategy, which includes washing hands with soap or using a sanitizer properly, coughing into bent elbows, avoiding eye touch, cleaning, and disinfecting surfaces, limiting social gatherings, maintaining a social distance, and wearing facemasks appropriately. The eighth images are a microscopic view of the coronavirus, which is faded into the background, while again emphasizing a fact that if all these precautionary measures would be followed properly the virus would gradually fade away.

The first part of the visual resource is grounded in the semantic and discursive interpretations of the text, which aims to debunk popular

misconceptions about the virus, including modes of contraction. There was a misconception that younger people have a low risk of getting infected by the virus even if they are exposed to it. From a semantic perspective, the text reads “Low risk isn’t no risk. Even if you are less than 60 years old and do not have an underlying condition, you can still become sick with Covid-19”. This suggests that there was a popular misconception that only people above than 60 years or having an underlying medical condition can get infected the virus. This enlightening approach aims to broaden people’s understanding and awareness of the virus, fostering a deeper comprehension of its impact. From a multimodal discourse perspective, the text is written in English and there is an interplay of colour and text in the image. The titular text, “LOW RISK ISN’T NO RISK,” in which “ISN’T” has been written in red and emboldened to catch the audience’s attention. This headline reflects the central message of this visual illustration. The text, which is written in red is a universal indicator of danger and ‘stop,’ this means that people should stop scrolling and read the dangers of COVID-19 in order to know the precautionary measures of COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 9

Hygiene Practices to Limit the Spread Of Covid 19

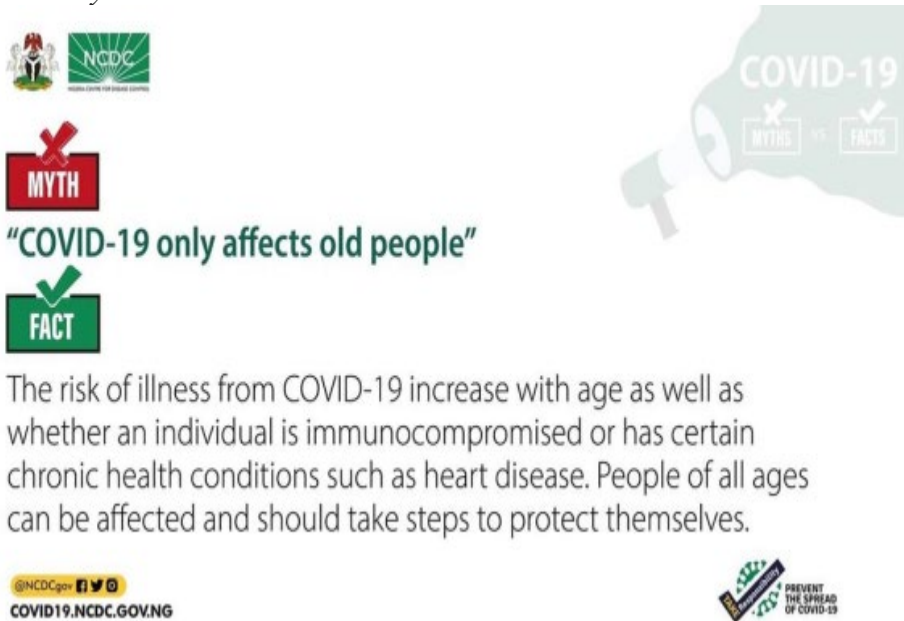


The above visual illustration is another awareness image, which presents *actions* as precautionary steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Moreover, the visual resource incorporated multiple modes in the image to communicate with the audience such as large text, attractive colours, and icons to convey the message clearly.

The written text reflects the actions, which must be comprehended to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The visual illustration also uses pictures to strengthen the textual message as a public service message. The visual resource clearly highlighted the expected actions, which the public must take to ensure the prevention of the virus. The pictures also have a short one-line description, which reflects the meanings of the written text. Thereby, it is observed that multiple modes are used in the awareness camping to facilitate the communicative potential.

Figure 10

Covid 19 Myth



The visual resource is primarily based on text and colour, which would attract the audience. The visual illustration indicates and decodes several messages for the audience, for instance the word “myth” in red clearly indicates that it is not a myth but a fact, which is explained below in green.

There is also a visual illustration of a loudspeaker in the background of the picture on which the washout effect had been applied. The loudspeaker in this picture instils that it's an announcement for a large number of people. Therefore, the image represents the purpose and binary message behind this visual illustration. As an awareness image, the loudspeaker represents the fact that the content of the visual illustration is a public service message. When a real-life loudspeaker sounds, the people within its reach would hear the sound and their attention would be drawn to the loudspeaker for the shortest or longest possible time. This also communicates that people should pay attention to the image and understands its content. The awareness image only features multiple modes; the texts, colours, and icons inter-depend on each other to facilitate the conveyance of the message.

Conclusion

Speaking of communication using multiple modes, this research concludes that the use of multiple modes in communication in awareness images is very effective and as such, they are utilised in creating awareness. The seamless integration of various modes, such as visuals, typography, and other elements, serves as a potent catalyst for creating impactful awareness. These diverse modes work in tandem, harmonising their strengths to captivate and engage the audience effectively. The findings affirm that utilising multiple modes in awareness images holds immense potential for maximising the reach and resonance of the communicated message.

In this study, impact of visual illustrations in Nigeria has been significantly discussed. Drawing extensively on the COVID-19 pandemic situation this study analysed various modes of communication such as topography and visual illustration. When colours are used effectively in the images, they could serve as an attention grabber to the images and simultaneously draw the attention of the reader to the content of the person. Visual illustrations reciprocate culturally, which can have diverse meanings for the bigger audience. The use of multiple mode model concerning the COVID-19 visual resources, it was concluded that the use of multiple modes in visual illustration was more effective than the single modes. Unlike relying solely on single modes, this multidimensional approach evoked a strong resonance within the audience, allowing them to fully embrace and comprehend the message. This fusion of modes ensured that the communication transcended mere words and visuals, touching the hearts and minds of the audience in a way that left a lasting impression. Moreover,

it was observed that people gained more awareness from visual illustrations, which had multiple modes than visual resources who had a single mode. Additionally, the use of multiple modes facilitates an in-depth understanding of the awareness image and consequently, the public is able to decipher the information and make sense of it. Therefore, it was identified that maximum effect can only be achieved by visual illustrations concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

Limitations of the Study

The current research was confined to only ten (10) visual illustrations, concerning the COVID-19 pandemic. The data was collected from website and social media pages of the NCDC. In the analysed visual illustrations, attention was primarily given to multiple communication modes, such as text, colour, size, font face, etc.

Recommendations and Directions for Further Studies

We recommend that further studies be conducted on awareness and language use during and after the pandemic. While MDA is a practical framework for such studies, we also recommend that various approaches, such as stylistic and sociolinguistic approaches, could be applied to studying the phenomenon in the future. Multiple modes should be used by the communicator as it will facilitate the spread of the information and consequently mitigate the contraction of the disease. Multiple modes should be used in such a way that they are harmonised they interrelate in the thus, contributing to the realisation of meaning in the whole body of the text.

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