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Speaking Truth to Power: The Role of Language in Shaping Resistance and Identity during the #EndSARS Protests

By

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Abstract

The #EndSARS protests in Nigeria represent a defining moment in the evolution of digital activism and youth-led resistance against systemic and systematic police brutality and institutionalized oppression. This paper explores the central role of language and narratives in shaping collective identity, mobilizing action, and challenging dominant discourses during the 2020 #EndSARS movement. Drawing on a thematic analysis of selected tweets and employing theoretical frameworks such as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Network Theory of Power, and Discourse Analysis, the study examines how protesters leveraged linguistic strategies to construct narratives of resistance, build solidarity, and counter state-sponsored misinformation. The findings reveal that language functioned as a powerful tool for both unity and resistance used not only to coordinate protests across physical and digital spaces but also to express deep emotional appeals grounded in anger, grief, hope, and resilience. Hashtags such as #EndSARS, #LekkiMassacre, and #SoroSoke became symbolic rallying points that transcended ethnic and religious divides, facilitating the formation of a cohesive protest identity rooted in shared experiences of injustice. Moreover, cultural idioms, affective expressions, and multimodal elements such as emojis, symbols, and code-switching were strategically deployed to enhance communicative reach and emotional resonance among the protesters. Importantly, this paper argues that the #EndSARS movement exemplifies the transformative potential of language in contemporary social movements not merely as a medium of expression, but as a political and ideological force capable of reshaping public discourse, negotiating identity, and sustaining resistance in the face of oppression. The analysis contributes to broader discussions on digital activism, civic engagement, and the evolving dynamics of protest communication in post-colonial contexts like Nigeria.

Keywords:

1. Introduction

Digital activism has experienced a surge when the youth led in October 2020, protests that demanded the disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS)—tagged the #EndSARS (Aboh, 2024). These protests became an important movement and moment in the sociopolitical history of the Nigerian State. It was a resistance against systematic and systemic brutality by the officers of a unit of Nigeria Police Force (henceforth, NPF) and by extension, failures of the government its inability the checkmate the excesses of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) officers and the NPF in general. The #EndSARS protests as observed by Khalid (2024), were not merely a reaction to separated incidents of abuse, extortions, brutalities but a culmination of decades of institutionalised oppressions, economic marginalization, and systemic neglect, faced mostly by the youth.

The #EndSARS protests in Nigeria represent a pivotal moment in the intersection of digital activism and social resistance. Enyinnaya (2023) notes that the #EndSARS movement originated in 2017 as an activist campaign, marked by the creation of the hashtag #EndSARS on Twitter to protest police brutality in Nigeria. This digital activism culminated in widespread street protests from October 4 to 20, 2020, amplifying demands for systemic reform. Thus, the #EndSARS protests, even though were staged both online and offline, leveraged mostly digital platforms such as X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp among others to mobilise the youth, gain momentum and amplify their voices, framing their grievances within a broader narrative of systemic injustice and becoming a social movement that championed and resisted the SARS unit of NPF.

Hashtags like #EndSARS, #EndSARSNow, #EndPoliceBrutality, #FixPolitics, #EndBadGovernanceInNigeria, #LekkiMassacre, and #LekkiTollGate among others were central to the online activism, connecting protesters and facilitating collective action. These hashtags categorized posts, made them easily searchable, and helped in the formation of a digital community sharing the same ideology.

Amidst of all the protests, one key factor that stood out was the role that language played in creating identities, narratives and strengthening the resistance in the #Endsars social movement social movements are often than not concerned with resistance as noted by Asara (2017).

Quite a number of research have been carried out on the #EndSARS protests—among many, Alfred and Oyebola, (2021) analysed the discourse strategies in president Buhari's speech on the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria; Patrick (2022) carried out a multimodal discourse analysis of #EndSARS Twitter representation as social action in Nigeria. Dalamu and Ke (2023) highlight the broader semiotic resources employed by protesters, including visual elements, gestures (kinesics), and the use of the #ENDSARS hashtag itself as a communicative mode. Similarly, Okesola and Oyebode (2023) explored the deployment of multimodal elements as appraisal resources in #Endsars civil unrest-related memes in Nigerian social media space (WhatsApp and Twitter) to express affective meanings and intersubjective positioning; Eniayejuni's (2023) analysis of emotions in the #EndSARS discourse revealed how anger and hope shaped the trajectory of the protests; Aminu and Chiluwa (2023) noted the role of moral

appeals and religious references in legitimizing resistance, a strategy also evident in the #EndSARS movement.

Emoedumhe et al.'s (2023) study, titled "Catalyzing Change: Analyzing the Dynamics and Impact of EndSARS Protests in Nigeria," examines the EndSARS protests as a pivotal moment representing a collective outcry against systemic police brutality and a demand for justice and accountability, particularly stemming from discontent with the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). The research concludes and recommends the transformative potential of grassroots movements in challenging systemic issues and underscores the necessity for sustained efforts to address the root causes of social discontent. Furthermore, the study advocates for the inclusion of policy reforms, institutional changes, and ongoing dialogue between the government and civil society to foster a more just and accountable society in Nigeria.

Faniyi's (2023) thesis provides a critical intersectional analysis of the #EndSARS movement, specifically focusing on the experiences and narratives of feminist and queer activists in Nigeria. Utilizing a qualitative approach with Critical Techno-cultural Discourse Analysis (CTDA), Faniyi examines online feminist and queer narratives and hashtags, moving beyond individual tweets to analyse them as networks that reveal the labour and visibility of these activists. The study emphasizes affective structures, bodies, rage, and feminist labour as central to their resistance, highlighting the historical context of Nigerian women's rage and the development of radical care practices in response to activist trauma and backlash. Ultimately, Faniyi's work contributes a nuanced understanding of marginalized voices within the #EndSARS movement and explores issues such as activist burnout and the complexities of transnational solidarity.

Francis's (2022) work, "Poetry of Protest as Narrative Tools in the Age of Social Media," explores the role of verse in facilitating unrestrained expression, suggesting that poetry serves as a fundamental outlet for our linguistic memories and thoughts. The study positions poetry of protest as a significant narrative tool within the context of contemporary social media. While the provided excerpt highlights the abstract of the work, it does not offer deeper insights into its specific findings or analysis within the age of social media.

KhosraviNik (2022), Bhatia & Ross (2022), and Khalid (2024), analysed how social media helped in amplifying the voices of the marginalised and oppressed youth via aiding the mobilisation of supports as well as challenging the dominant narratives during the #EndSARS; Egbe's (2023) work on the #EndSARS protests focused on the discursive strategies and semiotic resources deployed during the #EndSARS protest to underscore the role of English in the construction and counter construction of discourses; also, the multifaceted nature of the #EndSARS discourse was what preoccupied the research carried out by Alugbin and Iyoha (2024). The role played by linguistic innovations of the protesters where pidgin English, Yoruba proverbs, and cultural idioms were employed to communicate complex ideas in relatable ways was a critical theme explored by Khalid (2024) validating the earlier findings by Chiluwa (2015) on codeswitching and metaphors in Nigerian protest discourse, underscoring the adaptability of language as a tool for resistance.

Despite this research on the #EndSARS protest, there is a dearth of research on the role of language and narratives in the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. Thus, the current paper is an attempt to fill this gap and add to the body of existing literature

2. Historical Context of SARS and Police Brutality in Nigeria

The Nigerian Police Force (NPF) is an institution under the Federal Government of Nigeria and performs personal protection and guard duties. The NPF was established in the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria under Section 214. The NPF also has an Act— The Police Act (1990) which outlines the function, structure and operation of the NPF. The Act was originally drafted in 1943 (Abiodun et al., 2020). Aside the Headquarters, zonal and state commands, the NPF has several Special Forces, such as the paramilitary Mobile Police (MOPOL), the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) and the Swift Operation Squad (SOS) among others. It is in the category of the special forces of the NPF that SARS falls under. SARS as one of the Special Forces or unit of the NPF is saddled with the responsibility to combat armed robbery and other serious crimes due to the rising rate of armed robbery (Lawal, 2022).

SARS as a unit of the NPF has been reported for its long record of notoriety, committing robberies, unlawful arrests, rapes, extrajudicial killings, and extortions with impunity (Alfred & Oyebola, 2021). Thus, according Emoedumhe et al. (2023), the issue of police brutality was the central grievance fuelling the #EndSARS protests in Nigeria. The protests represented a collective outcry against the systemic and institutionalized brutality perpetrated by officers of the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), particularly the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS). The movement demanded an end to police brutality and called for comprehensive reform within law enforcement agencies

The 2020 #EndSARS protest was sparked by a deeply disturbing incident that occurred on October 3, 2020, in the Ughelli Local Government Area of Delta State. A video surfaced showing a young police officer, believed to be part of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), shooting an unarmed young man and then driving away in the victim's car. As the footage spread rapidly online, it ignited outrage across the nation. The hashtag #EndSARS quickly gained traction, stirring emotions and drawing widespread attention from both young and old, as well as people within Nigeria and abroad. The public outcry called for the immediate disbandment of the SARS unit of the NPF (Alfred & Oyebola, 2021).

3. Theoretical Frameworks

The current paper employs the network theory of power, discourse analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The network theory of power (Castells, 2010), which considers power to be embedded in networks of social interactions and emphasizes the role of technology in providing access to information and amplifying marginalized voices. This theory helps to understand power dynamics such that instead of viewing power as something inherently belonging to specific individuals or institutions, the theory suggests that power lives within the networks of social interactions that connect us all. Suggesting also that that wherever there is power, there is also resistance what Castells calls "counterpower.". The

incorporation of discourse analysis is to examine the language, narratives and feelings conveyed in texts related to the #EndSARS protest. While CDA hinged on the relationship between language and power, how language maintains unequal power relations, and how discourse is ideologically shaped.

4. Analysis and Discussion

The data used were thirty (30) tweets coded **TWT 1 to TWT 30;** randomly selected from different accounts on X (formerly Twitter). A thematic analysis of the data yielded the multidimensional role of language and narratives in the #EndSARS protests. From mobilization and coordination, emotional appeals and symbolism to evidence-based discourse and global solidarity, these themes collectively illustrate how protesters leveraged language to mobilize, resist, and demand change. In turn these narratives were used to negotiate identity and create resistance.

Mobilization and Coordination

The #EndSARS protests showcase how digital platforms enabled mobilization across geographical boundaries. Language served as a unifying and strategic tool for coordination. Khalid (2024) notes that "social media helped in amplifying the voices of the marginalised and oppressed youth by helping in the mobilisation of supports." **TWT 5** illustrates this:

> *"I was there live at the #EndSARS protest ground lekki toll gate and I will be there again who's with me let's #EndSARS Now live happily ever after we #EndSARS #EndPoliceBrutality #EndSARS #EndPoliceBrutality!!!"*

TWT 5 employs repetition of hashtags like #EndSARS and #EndPoliceBrutality to emphasize urgency and enhance visibility. Repetition reinforces key messages and fosters collective purpose. The rhetorical question "who's with me?" acts as a call to action, encouraging participation. First- person pronouns ("I was there," "let's") create a personal connection, legitimizing the author's involvement and inspiring others. This aligns with Castells' (2010) network theory of power, which argues that "power lives within the networks of social interactions that connect us all," as hashtags and shared narratives amplify marginalized voices.

TWT 25 highlights sustained activism against institutional suppression;

> *"So apparently the NPF has asked court to stop Endsars probe My question is when are we hitting the street again.. #EndSARS"*

TWT 25 critiques the Nigerian Police Force's legal tactics while urging continued action. The phrase "when are we hitting the street again" reflects a proactive stance, sustaining long-term engagement. Language organized immediate protests and maintained momentum, leveraging platforms like X to mobilize youth and amplify voices.

In its mobilisation, the #EndSARS movement did not just stay local it reached out to the world, asking for support from international organizations, foreign governments, and global audiences. **TWT 3** makes this plea clear:

"#EndSARS: They shot and killed unarmed protestors at Lekki in Nigeria and are denying the ambulance from saving lives.

@UN

@BBCNews

@AJENews

@cnnbrk

#Genocide #blacktuesday #BuhariResignNow #EndPoliceBrutalityinNigera"

Tagging international organisations and news stations like @UN and @BBCNews was a way to shine a global spotlight on the violence and push for action. **TWT 14** takes it a step further:

"General @Mbuhari cant ignore the elephant in the room. #LekkiMassacre is the turning point. Killing unarmed, peaceful #EndSARS protesters delegitimised his government. It's no longer democratic. It's a criminal enterprise and should be made a pariah by the international community."

This call for the world to treat the government as a "pariah" shows how the movement tied its fight to a bigger global struggle for justice.

Emotional Appeals and Affective Language

The #EndSARS movement was fuelled by raw emotion, and that was what gave it so much power. Protesters used heartfelt words to stir up empathy, anger, hope, and a sense of togetherness. These emotional appeals hit hard, making the movement's demands feel urgent while showing the human cost of systemic oppression. For example, **TWT 4** really captures this through a deeply personal reflection:

"I don't want to know how you can tell me that government that did this to its own citizens is what we are to vote for. Seeing this again brought back memories. Damn . Rest on our Heroes We will keep fighting for you'll. #EndSARS #LekkiMassacre"

Phrases like "brought back memories" and "Rest on our Heroes" carry a heavy mix of grief and determination, pulling readers into the pain and resilience of the moment. The emojis (, ,) add a visual touch of sorrow and hope, making the message even more moving. Also, **TWT 19**, which takes a more thoughtful tone to underline the importance of standing up:

"There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest."

This reflects what Eniayejuni (2023) noted about how "anger and hope shaped the trajectory of the protests." By blending deep emotion with a moral call to action, protesters rallied support and kept the movement's fire burning. Clearly shown from above is the effective

deployment of language (both in form of tweets and emojis) to communicate the #EndSARS message.

Furthermore, personal testimonies and witness accounts recollected in some of the tweets shared gave the #EndSARS movement a raw, human edge, turning big issues into something you could feel—making the language employed to be affective to those the messages in some of such tweets is intended to reach. **TWT 5** shares one person's experience:

> *"I was there live at the #EndSARS protest ground lekki toll gate and I will be there again who's with me let's #EndSARS Now live happily ever after we #EndSARS #EndPoliceBrutality #EndSARS #EndPoliceBrutality!!!"*

Saying "I was there live" makes it real and the repeated hashtags show how determined they are. Then there is **TWT 17**, which uses a bit of humour to call out fake allies:

> *"You see Mr. P, oil dey him head o. Shebi na him carry Seun Kuti leg come outside like this. Now we know who be who. The ones that shouted and sang #SoroSoke and #EndSARS in the day went to eat agbado with the enablers of our oppression in the night."*

"Agbado" is a Yoruba word for "Maize Corn" (Oluwamukomi, et al., 2021) and craftly using such in the expression "…went to eat agbado with the enabler of our oppression" is a way of lampooning individuals who seem hypocritical in their roles in superficially supporting the protests yet conniving with the oppressors to frustrate the genuine efforts of other protesters. The phrase "…went to eat agbado with the enabler of our oppression" effectively uses the Yoruba term "Agbado" (maize corn) as a culturally resonant metaphor to satirize hypocritical individuals. By juxtaposing the mundane act of "eating agbado" with the serious accusation of colluding with oppressors, the phrase employs vivid imagery and a biting, satirical tone to expose duplicity. This culturally grounded, emotionally charged language engages audiences, fosters shared identity, and delivers a memorable critique of betrayal, making it a powerful rhetorical tool in highlighting hypocrisy within protest movements. This mix of humour and frustration exposes hypocrisy, keeping the movement honest through real, lived experiences.

Symbolism and Iconography

Symbols and cultural references were like a unifying thread in the #EndSARS movement, helping protesters build a shared identity and purpose. They used icons, emojis, and creative phrases to express their values and dreams. Take **TWT 8**, which shows the power of the raised fist and Nigerian flag:

> *"This movement brought hope to me, to believe in a NIGERIA that works. The EndSars movement had no Religion or Tribe sentiments; it was just people who were rebelling against a failed system and their oppressors. #Lekkitollgate #LekkiMassacre #EndSARSMemorial2 #EndSARSProtest"*

The raised fist (   ) stands for defiance and unity, while the abbreviation for Nigeria flag reflects a shared pride in their nation. These symbols spoke to everyone, breaking through

language barriers. Then there is the phrase "Soro Soke" (Yoruba for "Speak Up"), which shows up in **TWT 20:**

> *"Whenever I see #EndSARS I Remember this Heros, they were not cowards, am happy to be part of the Soro Soke Generation Let's keep the #EndSARS Trending, like, retweet, follow. #RETWEEET #sorosoke #Lekkimassarce"*

"Soro Soke" became a battle cry for courage and resistance, echoing what Khalid (2024) found about language being a tool for fighting back. Through these symbols, protesters created a story of bravery, unity, and hope.

Framing and Identity Construction

Language shaped collective identities, framing grievances within narratives of systemic injustice and resistance. As Egbe (2023) also observes, "the discursive strategies and semiotic resources deployed during the #EndSARS protest underscored the role of English in the construction and counter-construction of discourses." Thus, **TWT 8** demonstrates this:

> *"This movement brought hope to me, to believe in a NIGERIA that works. The EndSars movement had no Religion or Tribe sentiments, it was just people who were rebelling against a failed system and their oppressors. #Lekkitollgate #LekkiMassacre #EndSARSMemorial2 #EndSARSProtest"*

TWT 8 rejects religious or tribal divisions, highlighting unity in Nigeria's ethnically divided context. Framing protesters as a united front against systemic failure constructs an identity based on shared grievances. Symbols like (raised fist) and 🇳🇬 (Nigerian flag) reinforce resistance and national pride. The #EndSARS protests, as a social movement, resisted the SARS unit's abuses, transcending traditional divisions.

The "Soro Soke Generation" identity emerges in **TWT 20**:

> *"Whenever I see #EndSARS I Remember this Heros, they were not cowards, am happy to be part of the Soro Soke Generation Let's keep the #EndSARS Trending, like, retweet, follow. #RETWEEET #sorosoke #Lekkimassarce"*

"Soro Soke" (Yoruba for "Speak Up") in **TWT 20** encapsulates defiance and resilience. This linguistic innovation, using pidgin English and cultural idioms, communicates complex ideas relatably, as Khalid (2024) suggests. Invoking heroes constructs a narrative of sacrifice, aligning with CDA, which examines how language shapes ideological positions and maintains power relations.

The EndSARS protesters used language to construct SARS officers as oppressors, employing strategies like nomination (using noun phrases like "they," "these people," "oppressors," "Perpetrators," "SARS") and negative predication (e.g., "ordered to be killed," "shot and killed unarmed protestors" "shooting at unarmed civilians," "beating unarmed protesters") to create a negative image of SARS and position them as adversaries.

By using pronouns like "us," "we," and "our," protesters constructed themselves as victims of SARS' actions, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity based on shared experiences. Therefore, language was used to construct a new identity for protesters based on shared experiences of police brutality, systemic oppression, and resistance.

Challenging Governmental Discourse/Narratives and Demanding Change

During the #EndSARS protests, protesters countered official narratives using evidence, testimonies, working hard to debunk the lies spread by authorities or those trying to derail the movement, using facts, logic, and moral arguments to take back the narrative. **TWT 9** shows this in action, by challenging Governor Sanwo-Olu's denial of Lekki Toll Gate casualties (Babajide Sanwo-Olu was the Governor of Lagos State in Nigeria as at the time of the protests):

> *"Lagos state government @followlasg lied that nobody died during the 2020 #Endsars Lekki tollgate shooting. @jidesanwoolu lied on national television that nobody died. But here is a contract document, for the mass burial of 103 Endsars victims, killed during the 20-10-20 protest."*

TWT 9 presents evidence like a contract document, exposing hypocrisy, aligning with KhosraviNik's (2022) view on social media amplifying marginalized voices. The #EndSARS protests addressed decades of institutionalized oppression, economic marginalization, and systemic neglect. **TWT 14** reframes President Buhari's administration:

> *"General @Mbuhari cant ignore the elephant in the room. #LekkiMassacre is the turning point. Killing unarmed, peaceful #EndSARS protesters delegitimised his government. It's no longer democratic. It's a criminal enterprise and should be made a pariah by the international community"*

TWT 14 labels the government a "criminal enterprise," shifting the narrative to unlawful oppression and escalating pressure through international scrutiny. Calling the government a "criminal enterprise" flips the script, turning those in power into the real lawbreakers. This fits with how Critical Discourse Analysis looks at language and power, showing how words can challenge unfair systems (Fairclough, 1995).

Governmental responses often delegitimized the movement. **TWT 28** critiques Governor Sanwo- Olu's framing:

> *"I have watched with shock how what began as a peaceful #EndSARS protest has degenerated into a monster that is threatening the well-being of our society" OGA SANWO OLU U B LIAR, U CANT STOP D YOUTHS, NA UNA FOR GOVT DEY SEND THUGS COME. SORO SOKE WEREY"*

TWT 28 accuses Sanwo-Olu of falsehoods and attempting to spin the protests as a threat. Informal language is used to contrast with official rhetoric, undermining authority. Here, the innovative inclusion of Pidgin English and its rendition in the short forms and carefully crafted, somehow avoid indictment. For instance, instead of using forms such as "you" "be" "it's you in" "the", such were replaced with "U" "B" "D" "NA UNA FOR" respectively. In

this tweet too, Language was used to overcome linguistic barriers and build a shared sense of purpose and identity among protesters by using Nigerian Pidgin, a language familiar and accessible to many Nigerians, for online and offline interactions.

Again, from this same tweet (TWT 28), it clearly shows that protesters did not mince words, as sharp language is used to paint government officials and police as part of the problem.

The tone here is raw—"U B LIAR," "NA UNA"—showing just how fed-up people were. It is a stark contrast to the polished words leaders often use, which makes their authority feel empty.

TWT 29 pushes back against attempts to hijack the movement:

> *"Sowore tried to hijack the movement, he didn't succeed. Sega turned into a full-blown 바보, bit he still didn't succeed. Feminist Co can do whatever they like, The fight isn't for them either. #EndSARS is for Nigerians against Police Brutality. Let's not forget our Goal."*

This keeps the focus on the movement's true purpose—fighting police brutality—while brushing off distractions.

To support the government narrative on the other hand, **TWT 30** associates the protests with criminality:

> *"We appreciate and commend the peaceful nature of the on-going "ENDSARS" protests in Rivers State. Sadly, it is becoming clear by the day that the protest has been hijacked by hoodlums to unleash carnage and destroy property."*

TWT 30 shifts focus to vandalism, potentially reducing sympathy. Such language maintains power by justifying crackdowns. This particular tweet tries to support the government narrative which tries to label protesters as "hoodlums," justifying state violence and depicting protesters as chaotic. However, while the #EndSARS protests focused on police brutality, they also shone a light on deeper problems like bad governance, corruption, and economic struggles. **TWT 6** makes this connection clear:

> *"This same thing happening in #Lekkitollgate was the same thing that brought about the #EndSARS and #EndBadGovernanceInNigeria Look at how the Nigerian Police force are beating unarmed protesters. Why will Mr Macaroni be arrested? Have they arrested any herdsmen or boko Haram?"*

That question about selective arrests points to a system that is broken at its core. **TWT 18** expands on this even more:

> *"You can't be silent like this when the country isn't working for the common man... #SoroSoke now against Oppression. Police assault, nepotism, mismanagement etc #EndBadGoveranceInNigeria #EndBadGovernanceinNIGERIA."*

This shows how the movement was not just about one issue—it was a stand against all the ways the system failed ordinary people.

5. Conclusion

The #EndSARS protests in Nigeria exemplify the transformative power of language and narratives in orchestrating social movements, negotiating collective identities, and challenging entrenched systems of oppression. Through a thematic analysis of tweets, this study reveals how language served as a multifaceted instrument mobilizing diverse communities, evoking emotional resonance, constructing symbolic identities, and countering governmental narratives. The strategic use of hashtags, affective rhetoric, cultural idioms like "Soro Soke," and evidence-based discourse not only amplified marginalized voices but also forged a unified front against systemic injustice, transcending ethnic and religious divides. Drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis, the findings underscore how protesters harnessed language to expose and resist the power dynamics perpetuated by institutional oppression, aligning with Fairclough's (1995) assertion that discourse can challenge unfair systems by reshaping ideological narratives.

Beyond its immediate context, the #EndSARS movement contributes to global discourses on resistance, illustrating how digital platforms empower grassroots activism to demand accountability and envision equitable futures. The interplay of personal testimonies, satirical critiques, and symbolic iconography crafted a narrative of resilience and hope, sustaining momentum despite governmental efforts to delegitimize the protests. This analysis enriches scholarly understanding of the nexus between language, power, and social change, offering insights into how digital discourse can redefine civic engagement in post-colonial societies. As Nigeria continues to grapple with systemic challenges, the legacy of #EndSARS endures as a testament to the enduring capacity of language to inspire collective action and advocate for a just society.

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