Intro

Since the first detection of Covid-19 in 2019, the world has experienced a global pandemic that has impacted all individuals’ lives. It has also impacted media and journalism – hardly a day goes by without another Coronavirus headline, whether it’s about the pro’s and con’s of home-office, development of a vaccine, or a new mutation that has sprung up and threatens to lock down the world once more. In an effort to analyse the spread of the Coronavirus in South Africa over the past six months, we will therefore explore the responses by various media agencies in South Africa.

This analysis comes in the form of an analysis of social media posts on Twitter made by a selection of South African and international news agencies. In the following report, we describe data collection and wrangling, followed by an analysis and overall discussion of the findings. This includes what topics have been reported on, the sentiment of this reporting, and how reporting has progressed over time, as well as a comparison to the reporting of other media agencies throughout the world.

Data

The most recent 3200 tweets for each chosen media agency were collected via the Twitter API using rtweet. For data beyond this up to the past six months, we scraped older tweets’ IDs from the Twitter website, and used these to collect the tweet data through the Twitter API.

The chosen South African media agencies are EWN Updates, News24, Cape Talk, SABC News, and the Daily Maverick. This choice was made for these reasons XXXX. The official SA government Twitter account, as well as the Economist, the Time, BBC World, Fox News, … were identified as additional relevant sources of data that might provide further insight into the Twitter conversations in South Africa surrounding the Coronavirus. For these reasons XXXX.